

Work

It has become an article of the creed of the modern morality that all labour is good in itself — a convenient belief to those who live on the wealth of others.

(William Morris, *Useful Work vs. Useless Toil* 1885)

LET'S FACE IT, work as we know and loathe it today, sucks. Anybody who has worked for a wage or salary will confirm that. Work, for the vast majority of us, is basically forced labour. And it feels like it too!

Whether you're working on a casual or temporary basis and suffer all the insecurities that that entails or are 'lucky' enough to have a permanent position where the job security tightens like a noose around your neck, it's pretty much the same. Work offers it all: physical and nervous exhaustion, illness and, more often than not, mind-numbing boredom. Not to mention the feeling of being shafted for the benefit of someone else's profit.

Think about it. Work eats up our lives. And not just the time we're physically engaged in it either. Apart from the hours we're paid for, work dominates every facet of our existence. When we're not at the job we're travelling to or from it, preparing or recovering from it, trying to forget about it or attempting to escape from it in what is, laughably, called our leisure time!

Indeed work, a truly offensive four-letter word, is almost too horrifying to contemplate. The fact that those of us 'in work' sacrifice the best part of our waking lives to work, in order to survive, in order to work... (ad nauseum) week in week out, is so scary we generally just get on with it and keep our eyes on the wage packet or, if we don't work it, the weekend. Think about it too much and even the 'cushiest' of jobs becomes pretty unbearable.

But, apart from the simple realisation that we must work (that is, sell our labour power) in order to eat (or struggle by on state benefits where they exist), we wage slaves are dragooned into 'gainful employ' by ideological factors encouraging us to see the necessity of 'having a job'. This can be described as the 'Ideology of Work'. What

we need to ask is, where did this ideology come from and how did it manage to get such a hold upon us?

Slave

Ancient Greek civilization did not consider physical labour to have any intrinsic value other than its immediate benefit to the individual and community. That an ideology of work did not develop is down to the simple fact that, in a classical slave-holding society, such an ideology was unnecessary as the captive labour force was conscripted and coerced at will. The abject powerlessness and dependency of slaves upon their masters meant that there was minimal need to convince them of their toil's worth or value. If anything, physical labour was held in contempt by Greek civilization. We have little record of what the slaves thought of the situation, although Spartacus would give the Roman slave holders of a later period something to think about.

An identifiable ideology of work began to take shape with the decline of slavery and the emergence of Feudalism. The medieval Catholic church assisted the Feudal lords in encouraging a belief that work (ing for a master) was a noble thing, ordained by God. This was in part a response to the (comparative to chattel-slavery) 'freeing-up' of labour and the independent power of artisans organising into guilds. As the guilds themselves became important players in the merchantile economy they too contributed to a new notion of work. During this period the state began to attack

'scroungers' and draconian laws were passed to prevent vagrancy and vagabondage. Individuals who had not integrated into the economy were portrayed as lazy and ungodly outlaws and forced into what would eventually become the embryonic working class.

However, the ideology of work which is identified with modern or industrial capitalism has its basis in the 16th Century Protestant revolution, the Reformation. It's from here that much-used, seldom-explained term, the 'Protestant Work Ethic', comes. It is this 'ethic' which transformed work from a simple means to an end in itself. The exact relationship between the Protestant revolution and emergent capitalism has been debated for more than a century, but that the Calvinist version of Protestantism furnished capitalism with an excellent, motivating myth is beyond doubt.

Calvinist theology maintained that only a pre-selected few would see heaven, so the doing of good deeds had no bearing upon the believer's chances of making it through the pearly gates. This was in direct opposition to Catholicism's 'good works' benevolence and suited the 'devil take the hindmost' attitude of dog-eat-dog competition. But the aspect of Calvinism most important to capitalist development was that Calvinists, being unsure that they were amongst the 'elect' with seats booked on the 'here-after express', developed the idea that God would reward ticket-holders whilst on earth by allowing them to enjoy commercial success. So Calvinists dedicated themselves to working hard and accumulating wealth, believing that success would make their destiny manifest, as it were. This single-minded, methodical and disciplined ideology was not confined to followers of Calvin, however, and as capitalism replaced feudalism so this dove-tailing ideology became the dominant one — affecting those of all religions and none. What happened is that Capitalism transformed serfs (bonded labourers) into freemen (wage labourers) and simultaneously transformed the meaning of work.

The Protestant work ethic was reinforced as industrial capitalism consolidated its grip on society. Capitalism's entrenchment and prosperity meant that it could offer vast numbers of workers permanent jobs in industries with a high division of labour. Skilled and semi-skilled workers were required and their services were attracted by offers of job security. A 'job for life' became a commonly-held aim

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ORGANISE!

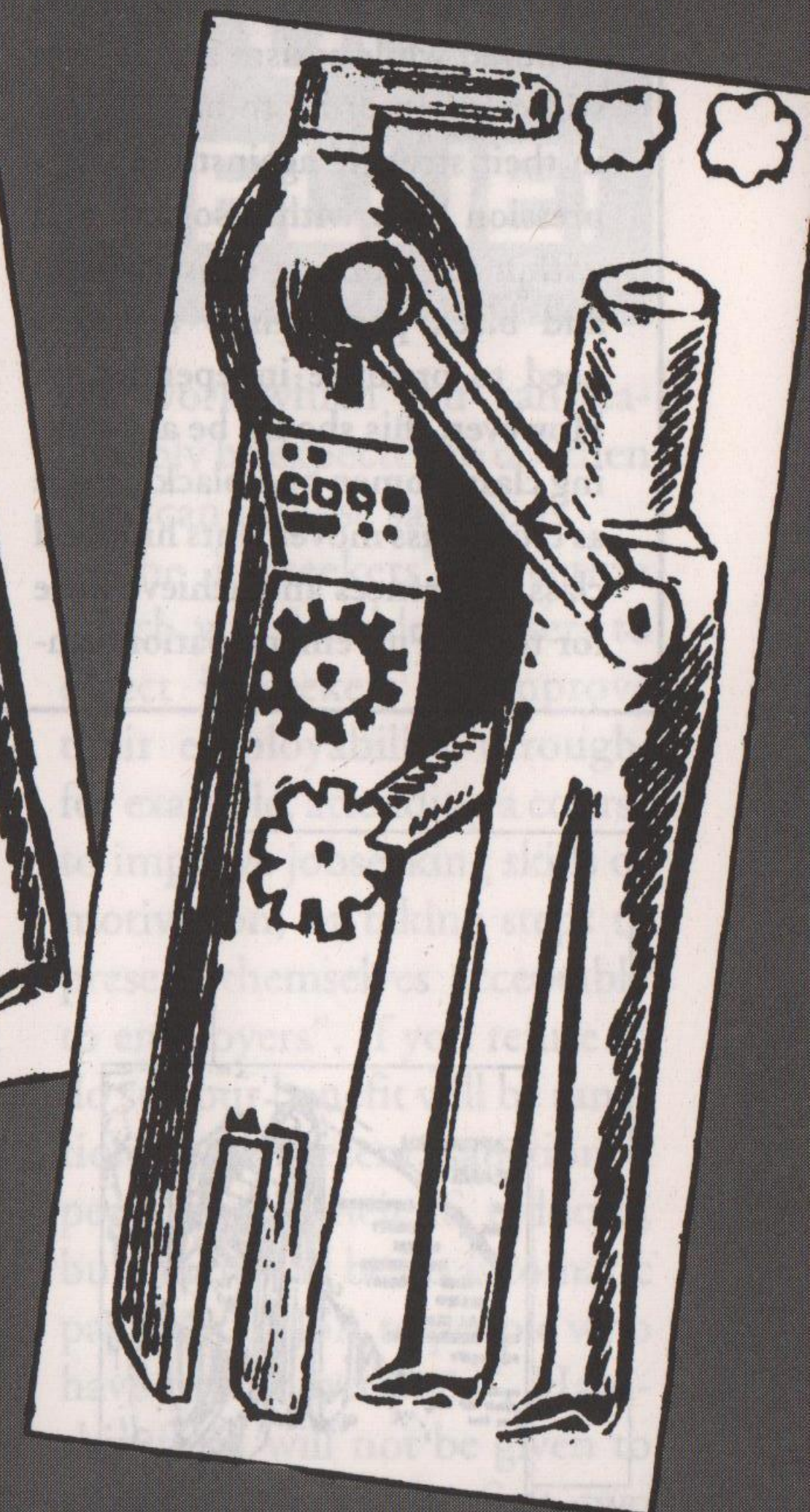
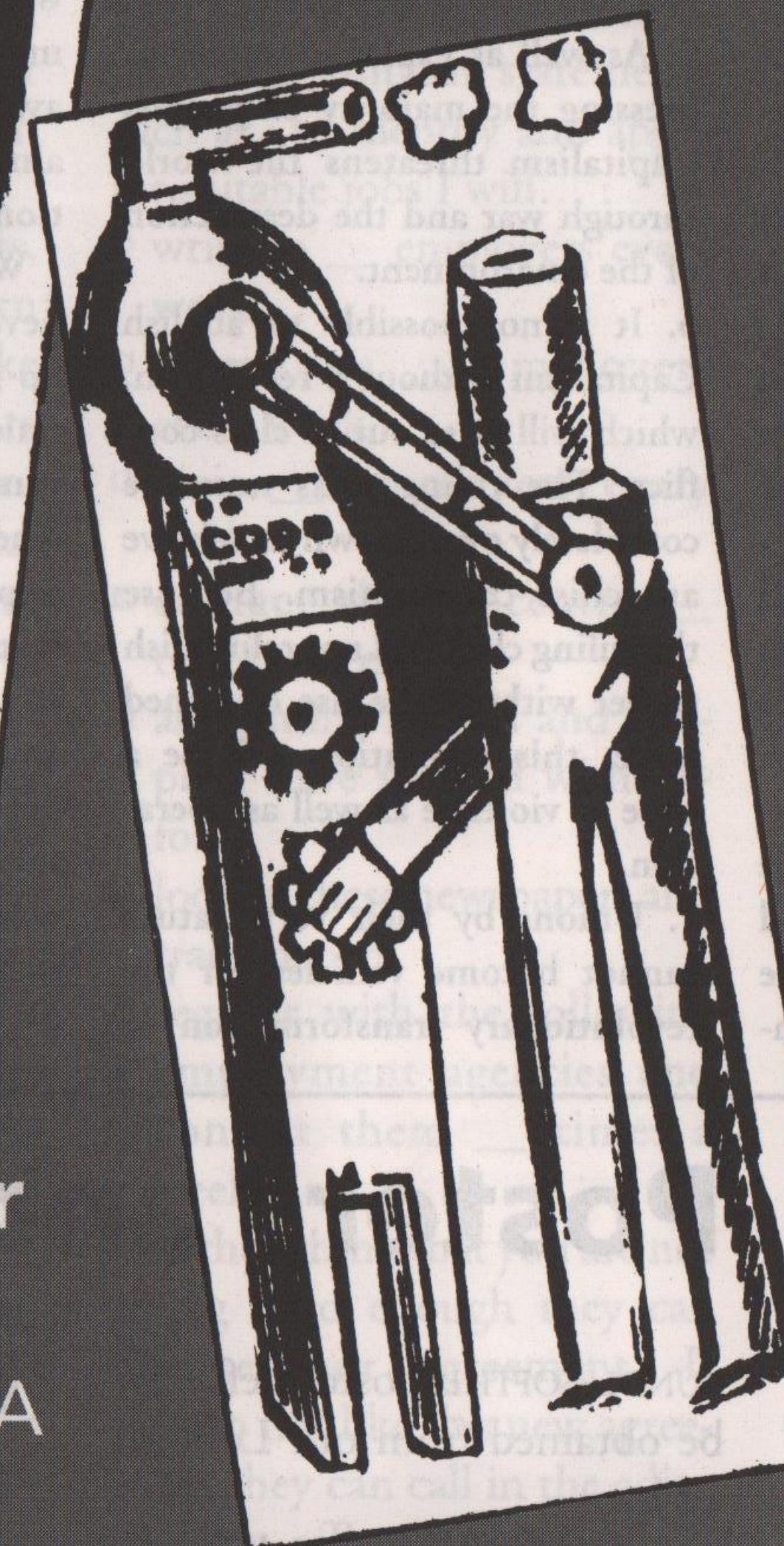
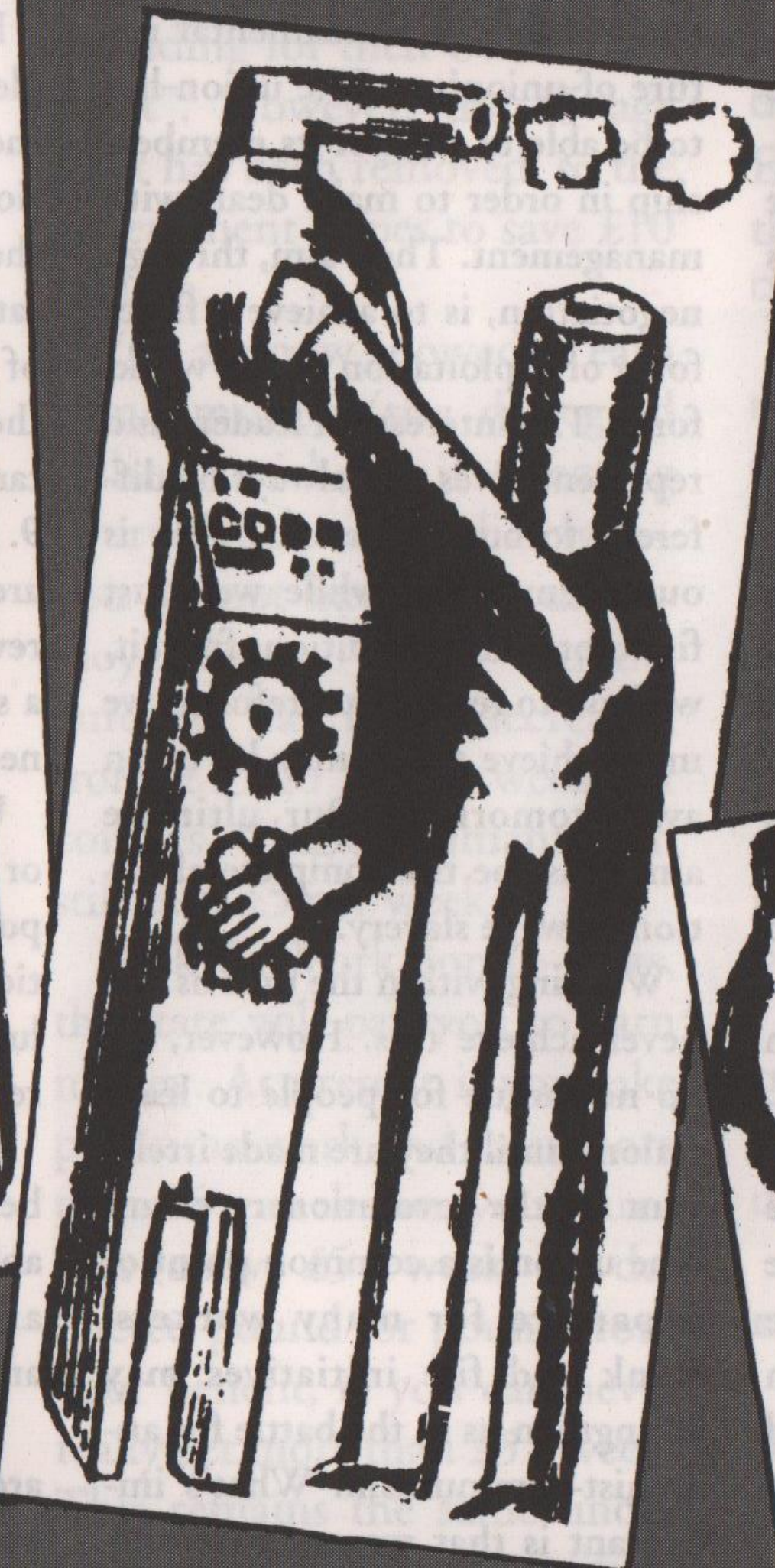
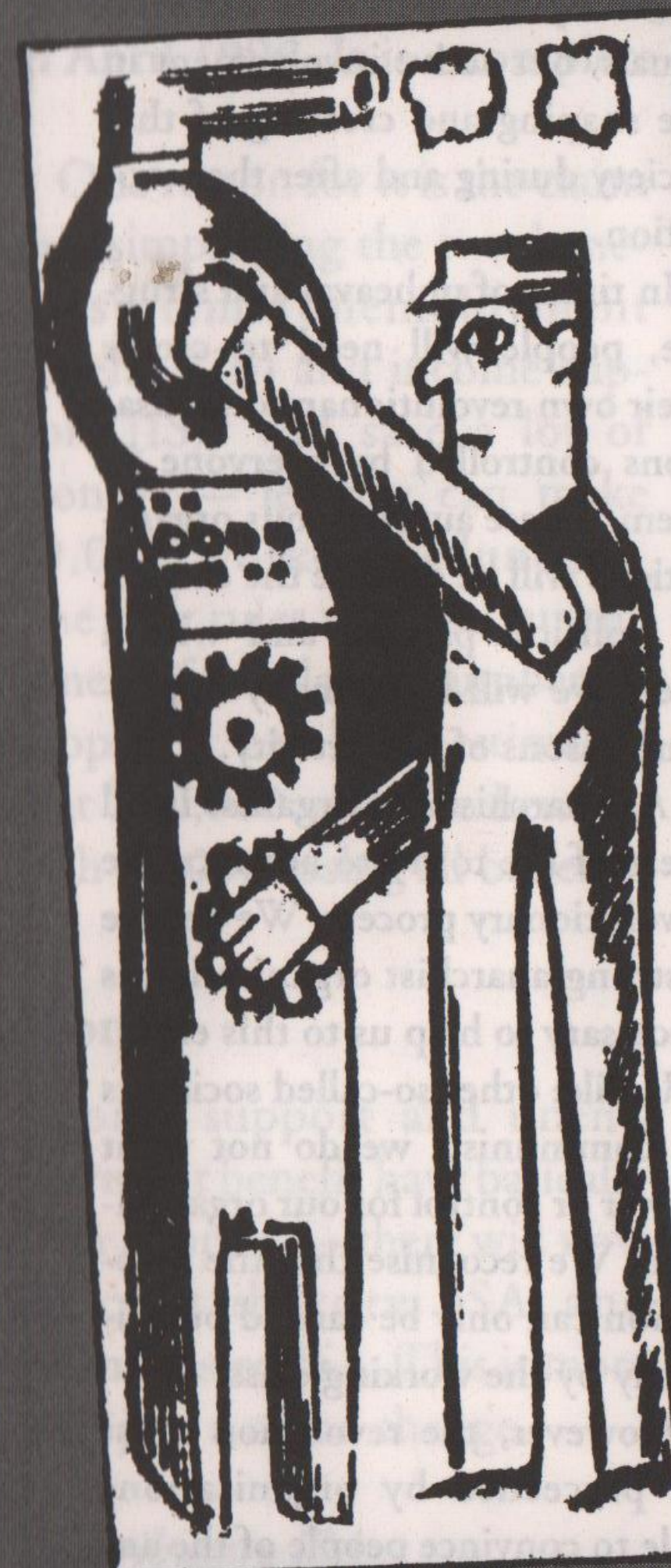
for class struggle anarchism

60p

Autumn
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Issue 40

(Free to prisoners)

WORK! WORK! WORK!



INSIDE:

Special issue on work
Millions trapped in 40-hour horror!

Dole queue blues; Fighting the JSA
Technology — can it be neutral?
Liberating libraries
plus

Art as a weapon; Report on Greece
And lots more!

Magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation

Aims & principles

1. The Anarchist Communist Federation is an organisation of revolutionary class struggle anarchists. We aim for the abolition of all hierarchy, and work for the creation of a world-wide classless society: anarchist communism.

2. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. But inequality and exploitation are also expressed in terms of race, gender, sexuality, health, ability and age, and in these ways one section of the working class oppresses another. This divides us, causing a lack of class unity in struggle that benefits the ruling class. Oppressed groups are strengthened by autonomous action which challenges social and economic power relationships. To achieve our goal we must relinquish power over each other on a personal as well as a political level.

3. We believe that fighting racism and sexism is as important as other aspects of the class struggle. Anarchist-communism cannot be achieved while sexism and racism still exist. In order to be effective in their struggle against their oppression both within society and within the working class, women and black people may at times need to organise independently. However, this should be as working class women and black people as cross-class movements hide real class differences and achieve little for them. Full emancipation can-

not be achieved without the abolition of capitalism.

4. We are opposed to the ideology of national liberation movements which claims that there is some common interest between native bosses and the working class in face of foreign domination. We do support working class struggles against racism, genocide, ethnocide and political and economic colonialism. We oppose the creation of any new ruling class. We reject all forms of nationalism, as this only serves to redefine divisions in the international working class. The working class has no country and national boundaries must be eliminated. We seek to build an anarchist international to work with other libertarian revolutionaries throughout the world.

5. As well as exploiting and oppressing the majority of people, Capitalism threatens the world through war and the destruction of the environment.

6. It is not possible to abolish Capitalism without a revolution, which will arise out of class conflict. The ruling class must be completely overthrown to achieve anarchist communism. Because the ruling class will not relinquish power without the use of armed force, this revolution will be a time of violence as well as liberation.

7. Unions by their very nature cannot become vehicles for the revolutionary transformation of

society. They have to be accepted by capitalism in order to function and so cannot play a part in its overthrow. Trades unions divide the working class (between employed and unemployed, trade and craft, skilled and unskilled, etc).

Even syndicalist unions are constrained by the fundamental nature of unionism. The union has to be able to control its membership in order to make deals with management. Their aim, through negotiation, is to achieve a fairer form of exploitation of the workforce. The interests of leaders and representatives will always be different to ours. The boss class is our enemy, and while we must fight for better conditions from it, we have to realise that reforms we may achieve today may be taken away tomorrow. Our ultimate aim must be the complete abolition of wage slavery.

Working within the unions can never achieve this. However, we do not argue for people to leave unions until they are made irrelevant by the revolutionary event. The union is a common point of departure for many workers. Rank and file initiatives may strengthen us in the battle for anarchist-communism. What's important is that we organise ourselves collectively, arguing for workers to control struggles themselves.

8. Genuine liberation can only

come about through the revolutionary self-activity of the working class on a mass scale. An anarchist communist society means not only co-operation between equals, but active involvement in the shaping and creating of that society during and after the revolution.

In times of upheaval and struggle, people will need to create their own revolutionary organisations controlled by everyone in them. These autonomous organisations will be outside the control of political parties, and within them we will learn many important lessons of self-activity.

9. As anarchists we organise in all areas of life to try to advance the revolutionary process. We believe a strong anarchist organisation is necessary to help us to this end.

Unlike other so-called socialists or communists we do not want power or control for our organisation. We recognise that the revolution can only be carried out directly by the working class.

However, the revolution must be preceded by organisations able to convince people of the anarchist communist alternative and method.

We participate in struggle as anarchist communists, and organise ourselves on a federative basis. We reject sectarianism and work for a united, revolutionary anarchist movement.

Job Seekers' Allowance

JOB SEEKERS' ALLOWANCE (JSA) was due to start in April '96 but the computer system and staff training problems have put it back to October 1996, although some measures will be enacted in April 1996. It is a complete overhaul of the benefit system.

One reason for it is the claim that simplifying the two-benefit system (unemployment benefit (UB) and income support (IS)) will save a lot of money — ie they can make 10,000 workers redundant. The new rules will also cut the benefit for a large number of people. It has been estimated that 250,000 will lose benefit, with 70,000 losing all benefit.

Money

Income support and unemployment benefit have basically been scrapped — there will now be contributory JSA and means-tested JSA. This is more than just a name change.

Contributory JSA

You are only entitled to six months'-worth rather than one year.

People under 25 who have paid enough National Insurance will still not be able to claim contributory JSA, but will get the reduced payment made to under 25s on income support at the moment.

Adult dependant allowance is abolished.

Means-tested JSA

Savings and redundancy over £3000 will be taken into account and benefit reduced accordingly — no benefit is paid over £8000 savings.

The waiting period will be increased from three days to two weeks, unless you have been recently claiming income support or incapacity benefit.

Occupational/personal pensions — the pension threshold before it is deducted from benefit is increased from £35 to

£50 "in recognition of the efforts of those who have been providing for their own retirement". However, the 55 age limit has been removed, so the government hopes to save £10 million.

You are now allowed to earn some money (the disregard ceiling) without it affecting your benefit immediately — you do not have to be unemployed for two years — but the amount has been decreased from £15 to £10 a week for couples. Single claimants can still earn £5 per week.

Back To Work Bonus — yes, the state will pay you to earn money. At present if you take part-time work and earn more than £5 a week then your earnings (above £5 a week) are deducted pound for pound from your benefit, ie you can never really get more than £5 a week. This remains the same under JSA, but if you move to full-time work, you get half of the money they took off your benefit given back to you as a Back to Work Bonus. For example, if you are doing part-time work for £25 a week, then £20 will be deducted from your JSA — £5 being disregarded. If after, say, 10 weeks, you get full-time work, then you will get a cash payment of £100, ie £10 (half the money they nicked off your JSA) for 10 weeks. There is a limit of £1000.

The heavy stuff

The JSA staff will be forced to become much more aggressive when you sign on. You will have to sign the *Jobseeker's Agreement* and complete a Job-

search Plan before they receive any money.

In a draft Jobseekers' Agreement you had to specify:

- what you will do to find work or increase your chances of finding work,
 - the hours you can work,
 - the type of job you will do.
- Each time you attend the office they can ask you:
- what have you done to find work,
 - how can we help,
 - or they can change your agreement — if you refuse "allowances may be affected".

Part of the agreement looks as if it will contain statements such as, 'to identify and apply for suitable jobs I will...':

- write to __ employers every week,
- telephone __ employers every week,
- visit __ employers every week,
- contact the Jobcentre __ times a week,
- ask family, friends and people I have worked with before,
- look in these newspapers and trade papers,
- register with the following employment agencies and contact them __ times a week.

If they think that you are not trying hard enough they can change your 'agreement'. If you do not like this new agreement they can call in the adjudication officer. As the full effects come into force, more decisions will have to be taken by 'front-line' staff. This will lead to even more than the 40% error rate, according to the chief adjudication officer, at present.

No benefit will be paid to you if you do not attend the meeting. If they then feel that you are not trying or you refuse



any work which you 'can reasonably be expected to do' then they can impose sanctions.

The Jobseekers' Direction which will "enable advisers to direct jobseekers to improve their employability through, for example, attending a course to improve jobseeking skills or motivation, or taking steps to present themselves acceptably to employers". If you refuse to do so your benefit will be sanctioned. At present, sanctioned people have their IS reduced, but "there will be no automatic payment of JSA to people who have been sanctioned". Hardship fund will not be given to most people in the first two weeks, so for many they will have to live two weeks without any income. Despite having no income you will have to prove

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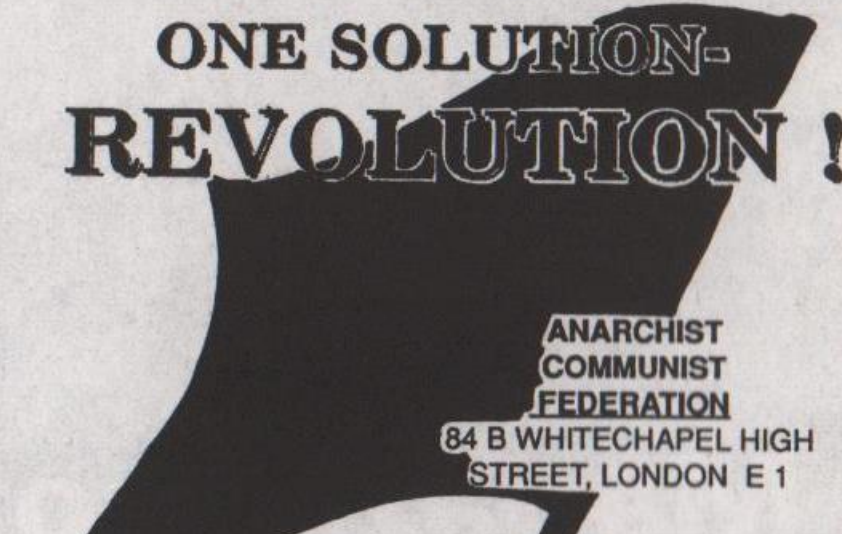
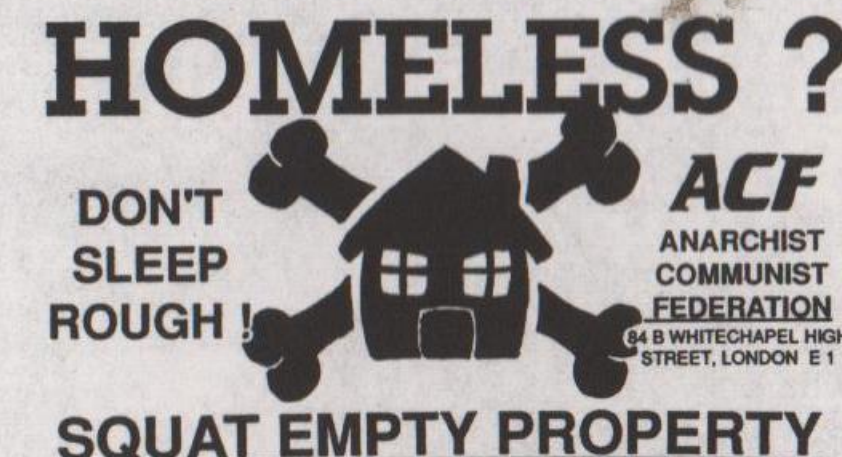
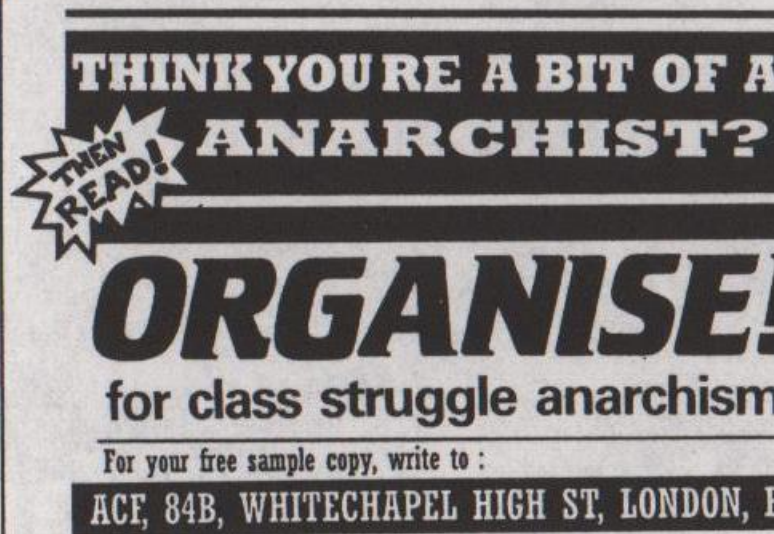
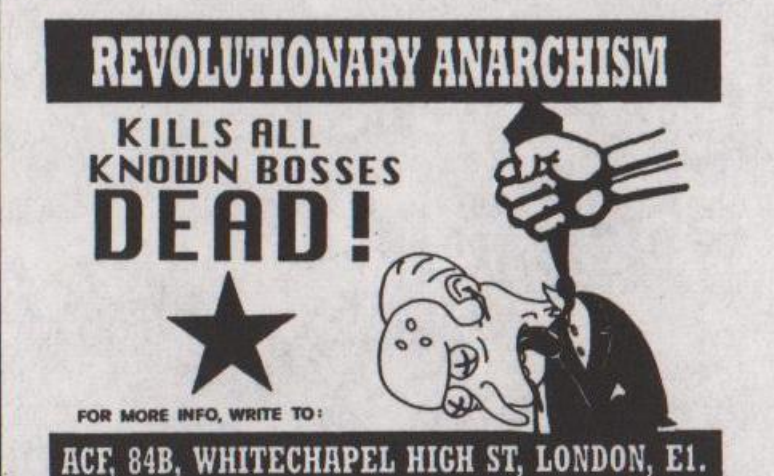
Posters and stickers

BUNDLES OF THIS poster (left) can be obtained from our London address.

London ACF have also produced a leaflet explaining the basic ideas of anarchist communism.

We have four new stickers — on homelessness, anti-capitalist, think you're a bit of an anarchist? and organise for revolution (see right).

For any of the above, please send in a donation to the London address.



Sheffield library workers' strike

SOME 350 LIBRARY WORKERS went out on strike on 5 June for eight weeks against their employer, the supposedly 'radical' City Council.

Most of those involved were low-paid women workers. The Labour Council had threatened to cut higher rates of pay for weekend work, in effect cutting pay by seven per cent or £60 a month. An average full-time worker earns about £10,000 a year and as most of the workers are on part-time contracts, this would have meant a drastic pay cut.

This was followed by proposals to close six libraries, which would result in redundancies. This second move clinched the walk-out. The closures would have meant only 27 libraries open in a city with a population of 500,000. It should be noted that this was part of a package of cuts in services planned by the Labour council, of £4.5 million.

The strike was firmly under control of the union UNISON and as such was an official strike with a 4-1 vote in favour of strike action. During the strike, the only library open was the Hillsborough site, where pregnant staff (who risked loss of maternity pay if they had come out) kept open the office of Labour MP Helen Jackson, housed on the site.

The Labour council had already shown how they had meant to go on, when they had evicted workers from the public gallery at a council meeting to okay the cuts.

UNISON made an all-out effort to limit the strike purely to pay, to isolate the strike from other council workers, and workers in general in Sheffield. They refused to call for solidarity action from other council workers. The unions represented amongst Sheffield council's workforce, including UNISON, had agreed to a 3.25% cut in pay in 1993.

This, they argued, was horse-traded in return for the maintenance of 1,400 jobs. Surprise! Surprise! Cuts have continued, with school closures, the end of kitchen facilities in some schools, cuts in the budget of the health authority, and a pay freeze.



Sheffield library workers lobby the council.

The action of local Labour councillors and MPs was to be expected. Helen Jackson organised a provocation at Hillsborough Library when she called for an open day 'for families', inviting pensioners and children. She then launched into an attack, reported in the press, where she said that balloons had been burst by pickets, strikers' children had eaten the sandwiches for the invited children, and the strikers in general were intimidating. For his part, David Blunkett insisted that the strike be ended, whilst various councillors wrote to the local paper, the *Sheffield Star*, continuing the intimidation allegations.

The strike was ended when the Council agreed to withdraw the pay-cuts. This was partly due to the threat of 80 workers from the leisure de-

partment coming out on strike. The council was particularly sensitive about the idea of six leisure centres being shut down, as it has actively pushed Sheffield as the 'UK city of sport' and the venue for the World Student Games. The strength of the strike, which closed all but one library in one of the largest public library services in Britain, was also a deterring factor.

of the Council as the local State, the link in the chain of command that delivers austerity packages, and everything else that international capital, the national state and the capitalists intend to inflict on us. Labour and the Liberal Democrats, in their role in the local State, the Councils, are as much implicated in this as the Conservatives.

These frantic efforts to defend Labour were repeated when one of these SWP members condemned Helen Jackson for her action by saying: "We would expect a Labour MP to be on the side of working people..."

As we have repeatedly pointed out, the SWP is an external faction of Labourism, and is deeply entangled in electoral support for it, and in keeping alive the decaying trade unions.

In fact, the strike was dominated by the bureaucrats, including the local ones (the SWP). For *Socialist Worker* the strike was a model for "rank and file involvement" because there were two strike meetings a week. At the daily strike committee meetings, workers were allowed to attend, but not to decide on how the strike went forward.

Keith Crawshaw, Sheffield's library boss, may well try to question the time and a half payment again, and to put pressure on staff to "work weekends as part of a regular shift" without paying extra. He tried to justify the Council's actions by claiming that library workers in Hereford and Worcester had accepted week-end work without overtime pay without striking. Two weeks later, on 15 August, libraries, social services and admin staff in Hereford and Worcester struck for a day and then again in September and October.

Leftists

At the local level it was the leftists in the UNISON branch who furthered the role of the union bureaucrats. The Socialist Workers Party has two members in leading positions. They welcomed the support of Bickerstaffe and Monks. They furthered the illusions in Labourism by criticising the Council only because it was 'spineless' in kow-towing to national Tory plans. They of course failed to explain the role

Welfare attacks

THE GOVERNMENT HAS renewed its attack on the welfare system. These attacks, in the form of the introduction of Incapacity Benefit in April this year, the phasing in of the Job Seekers' Allowance and a renewed 'debate' on such things as pensions, 'scroungers' and single parents.

These attacks are not isolated to the 'Evil Tories'. There has been hardly a bleat from the Labour Party, and Tony Blair supports similar attacks on the working class. Welfare reform has also been occurring in France, USA, Italy and even Sweden. So it is not just some mad idea dreamed up by a few right wingers in the Tory party; it is seen as part of the ongoing development of capitalism. The attack is not just confined to those who claim benefit — as we shall see, the amount of savings the new measures will bring do not greatly effect the overall welfare expenditure. These measures will affect those in work by decreasing job security, cutting wages and making people feel they cannot leave the job no matter how bad the conditions. We will be forced to make our own arrangements, if we have enough money to afford them, for unemployment, sickness and old age.

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Welfare

The welfare system is present to some extent or other in most 'developed' countries. There was no great flash one day with the bosses of industry and the State thinking, "wouldn't it be a nice idea to share out some of this wealth with the poor and needy". The idea of the state supporting the working class began surprisingly with Otto von Bismarck (the German Chancellor) who stated "give the workingman the right to work as long as he is healthy, assure him care when he is sick, and maintenance when is old...". In the 1880s Bismarck

introduced a series of reforms such as accident, health and old age insurance. Other countries followed suit, also seeing the introduction of such reforms as a way of counteracting the growth of the emerging workers' movement. Coupled with this was the need to maintain an army of healthy people to operate the machinery of war or the factories.

Scroungers

The state and its media lapdogs are proud of their attack on what they call 'scroungers'. Every day new cases of fraud are brought to the public attention and used as a justification for the new measures against claimants. It has been stated that they believe 10% of all claims are fraudulent.

The state also claims that they are making savings of nearly £100 million from in-



SO WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

more money could be raised by the scrapping of various forms of tax relief for companies and the rich.

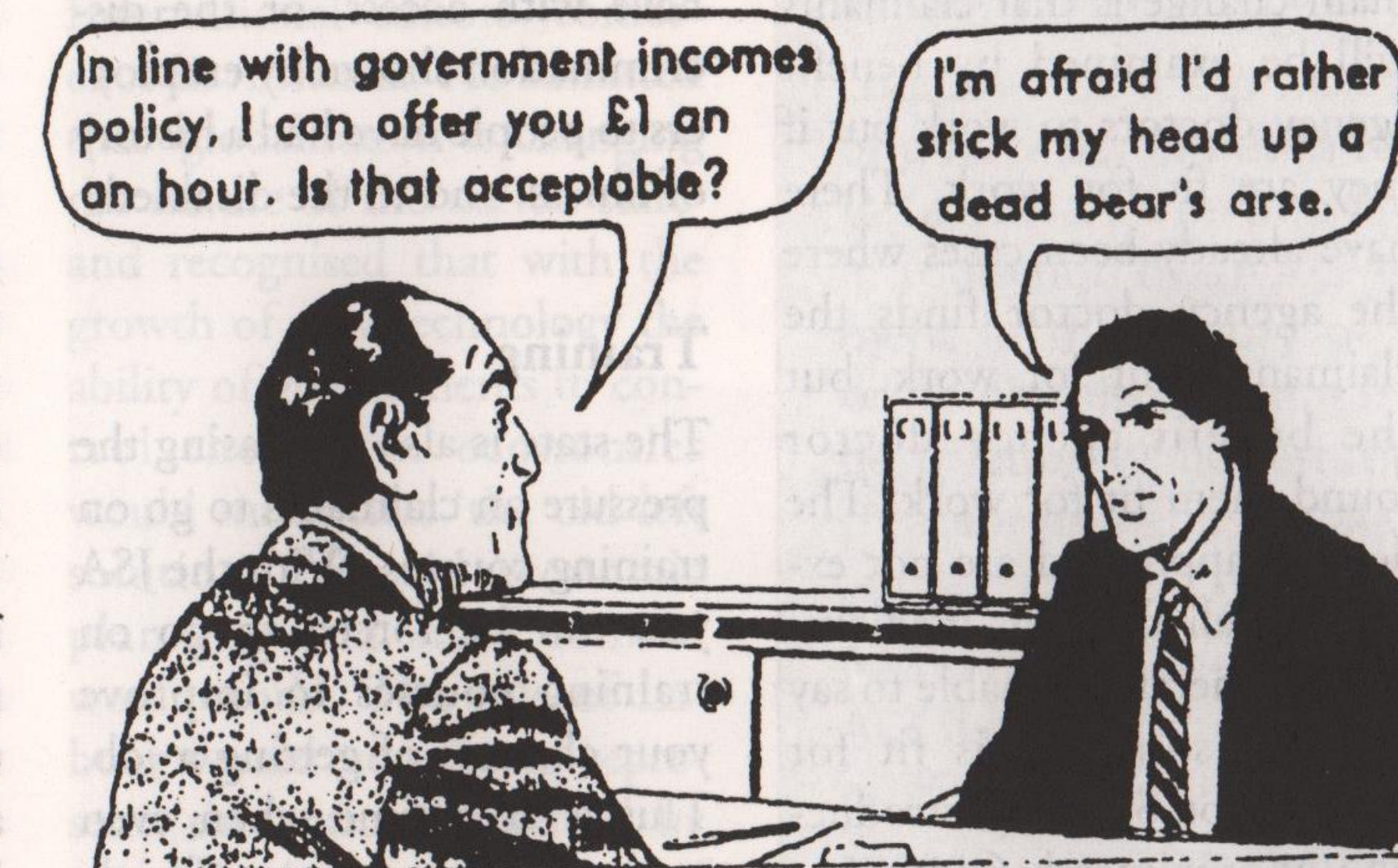
There are many jobs that pay so little it is expected that people will have to claim benefit. There are one million people who earn less than £2.50 an hour and 300,000 who earn less than £1.50. Benefit is paid out to people so that they can survive on the crap wages the bosses pay. Even the most devious fraudster would find it difficult to get the equivalent of some bosses who can earn a giro or two every hour. Housing benefit is another con as it goes straight into the bank accounts of rich landlords who charge extortionate rents for poor accommodation.

tion for the cuts in welfare spending, promising savings of £4 billion by the end of the century and £14 billion a year in the long term, which are hardly considerable when compared to the total amount. These cuts will mean that the £15 a day will go down to £14.65 and then £12.61. Since tax cuts always favour the rich, this will mean very little reward, if any, for those people on or below average wages.

Forcing people actively to seek work under any conditions also enforces social control. As we have recently seen with the Criminal Justice Bill there is also an attack on any possible counter culture that may upset the machinery of capital and the state. It is an attack on all those who do not wish to be part of the 'new order'. Forcing people to at least 'pretend' to be looking for non-existent jobs will force them to become part of the system.

Pricing ourselves out of the market

One argument we hear often is that people are pricing themselves out of the market by expecting too much money. How can someone on £2.40 an hour be pricing themselves out of the market while the likes of Cedric Brown (head of British Gas) gets £240 an hour plus other benefits? The question is not so much that of 'free market forces' but of greedy bosses



vestigating benefit fraud. This is the same amount as the taxes that the government does not bother collecting and much larger savings could be made by investigating tax fraud by companies and their bosses. Even

The state, on our behalf, pays out £88 billion in welfare benefits. Peter Lilley has recently stated that the welfare system costs every working person, on average, £15 every working day. He uses this as a justifica-

wanting to improve their level of exploitation. The bosses will play off one group of workers against each other so that we compete to give the bosses the best value for money, ie the smallest wage packet. The real reason top bosses get so much money is not due to their 'market value' but because they award the pay rises.

The whole idea of a 'Job Market' is fictitious since for any market to exist we must be able to be able to bargain with the employer.

The lowest bargaining position used to be that you either accept the job under those conditions or not. With no minimum wage, the decrease in workers' solidarity in many workplaces and the introduction of JSA, working class people will have no position in which to bargain from.

The elderly

Nearly half the welfare expenditure is spent on elderly people. The state finds them hard to attack since there is a feeling that you should be cared for when you are 'too old to work'. There is much talk about the problems of the increasing number of people on pensions supported by fewer and fewer people working. There has been pressure to get more people to take out private pension schemes and we are now being told that we will not be able to

rely on the state to provide for us when we reach retirement age. Affording a personal pension in many low-paid jobs, or while claiming, is impossible, so it will mean that many people who have worked in low-paid jobs will not get a sufficient pension. It has been suggested that the state will help. Things suggested have included abolition of tax relief on short-term saving schemes, increasing the inheritance tax threshold and changes in capital gains tax to leave more assets with families. This makes it clear what class of people they are intended to help. We are going to have to put our future survival into the hands of insurance sales people, those trusted people in the City, and the up and downs of the world market.

With the move towards private provision for unemployment, sickness and old age, pensioners can now be attacked as people who did not make their own provision for when they were older.

Incapacity Benefit came into effect in April 1995. It is an attempt to get as many people as possible off benefit for being sick and force them to seek work. The state hopes to get at 250,000 of the two million claiming this benefit. The main change is that claimants will be examined by benefit agency doctors to work out if they are fit for work. There have already been cases where the agency doctor finds the claimant unfit for work, but the benefit agency doctor found them fit for work. The doctors appointed are not experts in all fields of medicine and are therefore unable to say whether someone is fit for work or not. Since its introduction, approximately 6,000 people have already lost their right to this benefit.

An 'All Works Test' is used to work out if someone is capable of doing any work at all. The questions are designed to get people disqualified from

Friends and neighbours

IF YOU LIKE what you read in *Organise!* you might be interested in these publications:

Counter Information. Quarterly newsheet produced by independent collective. Information on struggle worldwide. Free copy with SAE from Pigeonhole CI, c/o 11 Forth St, Edinburgh EH1, Scotland.

Subversion. Quarterly magazine of group of same name, with politics close to ours. Free copy from Dept 10, 1 Newton St, Manchester M1 1HW.

benefit and each question is scored on a point system. Before filling in these forms seek advice.

You can also lose benefit if you are:

- Incapable of working due to your own 'misconduct'.
- If you do not accept medical treatment that could improve your condition. This will be medical treatment that they believe will improve your condition. This takes away the choice as to what medical treatment you receive.
- If you behave in a way calculated to slow down your recovery.
- If you are absent from home without leaving word where you can be found without having good cause.

There is no account taken of the difficulty many people have with access, or the discrimination shown by employers to people who have had a history of illness, and to the disabled.

Training

The state is also increasing the pressure on claimants to go on training courses. With the JSA you can be forced to go on training courses to improve your chances of getting a job. This is at a time when even senior government officials have called the new DEE training program "ludicrous and offensive", "having seriously failed to meet the commitment to unemployed people". They even described the new procedures for the disabled as dis-

criminatory, clumsy, error-prone and offensive. The training schemes are not designed to give claimants the skills they want, but those needed by the bosses, so that the claimant can be pushed into a job.

Flawed

We have no interest in trying to save the capitalist system from its own problems. We have no plans to make the welfare system work. We know that the capitalist system is fundamentally flawed and will never give us the life we want.

This does not mean that we do not oppose the attacks on the welfare system. They will mean more hardship for those claiming benefits and worse conditions for people in low paid jobs. The only way that the working class can get anything from the ruling class is when we act in solidarity to fight the day-to-day oppression of capitalism. The welfare system was only provided by the ruling class to stem the flow of revolt. When we can show our strength they will make concessions.

The opposition to the JSA and Incapacity Benefit has already started. Non-cooperation by staff in the benefit agencies and employment service has led to pilot trials being scrapped. Setting up of Claimants' Unions and groups actively opposed to the introduction of JSA and other welfare cuts is happening throughout the country and should be encouraged.

Hard Labour

THE 'CENTRIST TURN' that Labour is now making is being blamed by many traditional Labour Party members and by those outside like the SWP as being down to the actions of one man and his clique — the nasty Tony Blair. If only it were as simple as that.

The accelerated rotting of Labourism has taken place because, like similar parties throughout the world — the French Socialist Party, Greek PASOK, Spanish PSOE, for example — it cannot adapt to the end of Keynesian economic strategy which involved the development of a Welfare State and 'full employment'. It can no longer even make any promises that it can carry out a reformist programme to transform capitalism into something more 'humane' (but still exploitative). But even mild reforms cannot now be granted under capitalism because of the development of the global economy. If the boss class is to stay competitive on a world scale it cannot offer concessions. It has to press ahead with its austerity packages and redundancies, in order to streamline national economies and make them leaner and meaner, able to stand up in a bout in the global economic ring.

Now, many social-democratic parties are openly rejecting any reformist window-dressing altogether. This was already the case with Callaghan's monetarist policies in the '70s, and for the last decade has been the practice of the Socialist Party in France, PASOK in Greece (see article on Greece in this issue) and the Labor Party in Australia.

Alongside this shift in social-democracy away from being the defender of the welfare state, is the development of the trade unions. The Labour Party is historically the mouthpiece of the unions. The present period has shown a move away from them being the ne-

gotiators for better wages and conditions (and never an agent of revolution), for exactly the same economic reasons. The unions always sabotaged 'unofficial', wildcat, spontaneous strikes by workers, and any action that attempted to escape from their orbit. Now they fully act to police the workforce, and are integrated into the corporatist mechanism that controls the mass of the population.

This accounts for the push to break the power of the unions over Labour. The 'new Labour' factions think that they can go it alone without the unions if necessary, and will transform the Party into something more along the lines of an electoral machine like the US Democrat Party.

Blair necessities

This was recognised by Blair in the address he gave to the News International editors' conference in Australia. He admitted that 'globalisation is changing the nature of the nation state' and recognised that with the growth of new technology the ability of governments to control their own economies would mean that 'the old left solutions of rigid economic planning and state control won't work'. The role of Labour would now be to represent 'the national interest' by creating a 'competitive base' of renovated infrastructure and newly-skilled workers to attract investment. This would mean offering terms which would compete with the low wages and lousy conditions and hours of South-East Asia.

As we noted in *Organise!* no. 37, Blair is planning on more repressive police actions, more people sent to prison for longer, greater State surveillance. He confirmed this in his speech to Murdoch's hacks. As we said then: "Blair knows that if he is elected it will be in a situation of continuing mass unemployment and increasing poverty. He will need increasing police powers as he attempts to carry on the work already put into operation by the Conservatives, the attacks on living standards, wages, and benefits against which many may decide to act".

Whether Labour comes to power or not, the crisis in its ranks will bring about interesting developments. Whilst it has recruited tens of thousands of new members, these are from the same constituency as the SDP and the Liberal Democrats, managerial strata, professionals and skilled workers, whilst 38,000, mainly traditional Labourists, have left in disgust. The changing environment inside Labour will create havoc in the ranks of both the Trotskyist entrists still inside Labour, and those now outside, like Militant Labour and

the SWP, who continue to foster illusions in Labour. Plans to build an alternative Labour party are already being called for by various Trotskyist groups. In doing so, they calculate that sections of the Labour left and the unions would split from Labour to join this new party, in which their particular Trotskyist group would have an inordinate influence. But if such a move was made, it would only be to create another Labour Mark 2, which would continue to attempt to defend reformism, parliamentarism and trade unionism and to continue to fool the working class. It would attempt to capture any independent working class movement that developed.

Alternatives

However, these developments would open up the possibility for the expansion of the libertarian communist movement, and the spread of revolutionary ideas.

We urge our readers to think seriously about the construction of an anarchist communist alternative and to come forward to help us in this work.

New pamphlet!

London ACF are proud to announce the appearance of a new pamphlet in the Stormy Petrel series: Malatesta's *Anarchism and Violence*. Complete with a new introduction by an ACF member, this important document in the history of anarchist theory refutes the common misrepresentation of anarchism as mindless destruction while restating the need for revolution to create a free and equal society.

Copies of this pamphlet, and the previous Stormy Petrel — *The Friends of Durruti* — are available from ACF (London) c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 at 75p including postage.

The Friends of Durruti were a much misunderstood group who attempted to defend and extend the Spanish Revolution of 1936. Included are an historical introduction from an ACF member and two political statements from the Friends themselves.

Next from Stormy Petrel, pamphlets on Italian Factory Councils 1920-21 and the Hungarian Revolution 1956.

JSA

Continued from p3

that you are 'suffering hardship' even after the first two weeks before hardship payments are made.

Contacts:

Groundswell, c/o Oxford Unemployed Workers' and Claimants' Union, East Oxford Community Centre, Princess Street, Oxford OX4 1HU. *Incapacity Action*, Box 9, 136/138 Kingsland High Street, London E8.

Open season on scapegoats

WORLD-WIDE AS THE crisis in capitalism deepens, handy scapegoats are looked for. Nationalist and extreme right political currents, along with religious fundamentalists, are the instruments of this scapegoating and division of the working class. Anti-semitism, anti-gypsy and anti-immigrant views are peddled, and physical attacks up to and including murder are carried out by extreme right groups.

This climate of fear has the added effect in Western Europe of strengthening the walls of fortress Europe. In France this has been helped by the actions of Algerian Islamic fundamentalists, allowing the State to increase its measures of repression against not only the immigrant population, but against the working class as a whole.

In Britain, the largest scapegoating involves legislation currently going through Parliament, which would tell those working in education, health and social security to act as grasses for the home office in fingering illegal immigrants. This would mean that anyone suspected of being an 'alien' would have to produce a passport if they were applying for a course in education or for medical treatment. Bans on claims for child benefit and family credit would be imposed, to sit alongside those already in operation for income support, housing benefit and council tax benefit.

There would be training for social security workers to more readily spot illegal immigrants. In reality this means that anyone who appears non-white or who has a 'foreign' accent will be harassed.

Alongside these practical measures comes the ideological assault. Dr Tate, chief adviser on the school curriculum has called for a "British cultural identity" and attacked "watered-down multiculturalism". He supported the need for "common culture" and "national identity" to be pushed in education. Coupled with this were the allegations by Home

Secretary Michael Howard that illegal immigrants could be claiming £100 million a

year in benefits. These figures were plucked out of the air, with no concrete evidence to support such an allegation.

Social Security supremo Peter Lilley announced a clampdown on income support claimants. He announced cuts of £4 billion to rise to £14 billion with pension cuts. He then went on to claim that one

in 10 claims were or "could be" false claims, again another figure out of the air. He targeted single parents, and said that £450 million was claimed by those allegedly single whilst living as couples. Another nice little money-saver is the plan by Education Minister Gillian Shepherd to create extended work placements for 14-year-olds, ie two days a week would be spent by school students working for nothing.

Tahiti heats up

THE FRENCH STATE'S decision to continue with its underground nuclear tests at the Mururoa atoll ignited a huge powder-keg in throughout Oceania, the chains of small islands, many of which are still ruled by France.

In New Zealand and Australia, the actions were met by large 'mobilisations'. The establishment politicians were able to hi-jack these genuine expressions of anger for their own nationalist agendas, to strengthen their own regional interest in the Pacific against their rival France.

This was reflected in the nationalist rhetoric employed by the Campaign for Nuclear Dis-

armament and general opposition to the tests were made culpable.

The widespread rioting in Tahiti was not just anger against the tests. It was also the result of simmering resentment against the French colonialists, the 25% unemployment, the widespread alienation. The traditional way of life of Tahitians, involving a communal use of the land, was under-

global economy, through the medium of French imperialism. Of course the French military and economic pressure should be removed, but not for the benefit of national liberation politicians ready to establish a so-called 'independent' state.

Many of those involved in the confrontation were unemployed youth, who make up a large part of the population. They were forced to live in wretched conditions in shanty towns close to Palette airport. The bulk of the land is owned by colonists, forcing many families who farm the land to send some of their members to seek work in the towns, work which is scarce and badly paid. The uprising was spontaneous, involving the creative use of bulldozers to storm the airport and cut off reinforcements for the French police thugs. This was followed by looting of the duty-free shops in a welcome redistribution of wealth. The leader of the nationalists, Oscar Temaru, called for an end to the uprising saying that, "I would like to do something... We are trying to calm the people, but it's not easy". His class interests mean that he is opposed to the resistance, to the destruction and redistribution of property, and to protect

Continued on page 18



armament in Britain, which instead of seeing the culprit as the French State and militarists, launched a chauvinistic 'anti-frog' campaign. The French as a people, despite massive mobi-

lised when the French introduced wage labour, primarily through the nuclear industry which was established 29 years ago. The insurrection in Tahiti is a result of integration into the

Greece and the anarchist movement

IN 1993, WHILST Greece was celebrating 20 years of 'democracy' dating from the collapse of the colonels' regime, the international press was working itself into a frenzy over the risk of fascism there with the mobilisation of a million people at Thessaloniki around the slogan "Macedonia is Greek!"

This demonstration was the result of three years' incessant propaganda in all the media of an unprecedented intensity, involving both Right and Left and affecting all classes.

The trauma of the colonels' dictatorship and the process of its collapse, resulted in the polarisation of the political class into Left and Right — with their own respective functionaries employed by the administrations they controlled, two different camps of exiles, and even dynasties of both Left and Right with their own allies. In this context the political differences of the ruling élites take on the nature of a war between clans. The 'Macedonian problem' affects the interests of both Left and Right and threatens the precarious national unity. Each camp mobilised to 'assemble the Greeks'. Neo Democracy (ND), the party of the traditional right led by Mitsotakis, was relatively moderate in its approach, allowing Papandreou, head of PASOK, the Greek Socialist Party, to revive his party with nationalistic attacks on the Turks, Albanians and 'pseudo-Macedonians'.

The mass demonstration was considerably aided by schools being given a special holiday for that date, and shop-keepers being 'advised' to shut up shop. Added to this was the punishment dished out to students who had torn down posters for the demo, who were barred from all colleges in Epirus, the north-west region of Greece. The year before, a similar demo had only mobilised 100 people.

Greek nationalism undoubtedly has some life in it yet, but in a precise form — a hankering for the past and a strong anti-Europeanism. In 1992, the Communist Party (KKE) and PASOK campaigned during the elections under the slogan "No to Maastricht", which didn't stop any MP elected from these parties taking a pro-Europe position, and to forget the promise made by PASOK to get rid of American bases.

Despite this, it is still difficult to mobilise around anti-immigration and national purity, or the peril from the South, as Greeks have a history of immigration in France, Germany, the United States and Australia. The recent influx of impoverished Albanians has no precedents in Greece. As to emergent neo-fascism, what can be made of small numbers of mainly old people nostalgic for the days of the colonels voting for a fascist party, and the 100 skinheads in a population of six million in Athens? It would be rash to point to the emergence of a mass fascist movement.

Swift reaction

At the end of 1991, the ruling ND unveiled its plans for education: privatisations, compulsory uniforms, the singing of the national hymn and prayers at morning assemblies (Greek taxes still finance the Orthodox Church). The reaction was swift. November saw the first demonstrations with up to 20,000 taking part, and the first occupations of schools.

In a month, 95% of schools in Greece were occupied, with very strong support from parents. The holidays allowed the right and its extreme right allies to occupy the schools themselves on the first day of the new term. Fights broke out and

following day and night the confrontations continued, until the slow collapse of the movement with the suspension of the education reforms.

In summer 1992, 30 people from left and right were arrested for the murder of the



Anarchist during the riots in Athens.

one PASOK teacher had his head bashed in.

The following day, 100,000 demonstrated in Athens, without incidents. The day after, another demonstration took place, larger still, and Omonia Square, one of Athens' great squares was occupied. Anarchist groups attacked several police vehicles. The youth organisation of ND was tear-gassed by the police! The police attempted to disperse the crowd and one of their grenades set fire to a shop, where five people died.

As night fell, barricades were built. The University of Athens (Polytechnic) was occupied by 1,000 demonstrators who stayed there all night, turning the lecture halls into makeshift hospitals or molotov cocktail factories. The local population supplied them with food. The

teacher. Sentences were handed out to all, putting defenders and murderers on the same footing. In autumn, the same education law in disguise was introduced and the occupations began again on October 17th. The Polytechnic was again occupied. On the 24th a fire broke out in the Rector's office. The occupiers called the fire brigade, which did not turn up. The police accused anarchists of starting the fire, and anarchists replied by claiming the fire was a police provocation. The fire was used as a pretext for armed intervention which broke the habeas corpus (a clause banning the Army from intervention on university grounds) and a number of arrests took place. Only 20 years before, in 1973, Army tanks penetrated the great doors of the University,

resulting in many deaths — this was the beginning of the end of the colonels' regime. A poster was flyposted massively, comparing the incident to the Reichstag fire. The underground armed group 17th November carried out a bomb attack "against the repression". The following day, 33 fly-posters, all members of anarchist groups, were rounded up and tortured. The movement petered out.

On another level, also taking place during Summer 1992, was Mitsotakis' attempt to implement his plans for 'restructuring', starting off with privatising the Athens bus service, which he described as "worn-out and loss-making". After three months of strikes spilling over into street confrontations, the total paralysis of the capital, and the Army moving in to drive buses, the privatisation plan was abandoned.

The anarchist movement

The movement is strongest in Athens and Thessalonika. It is centred around a number of squatted buildings used as social centres (one in Thessalonika, Villa Varvara, and three in Athens).

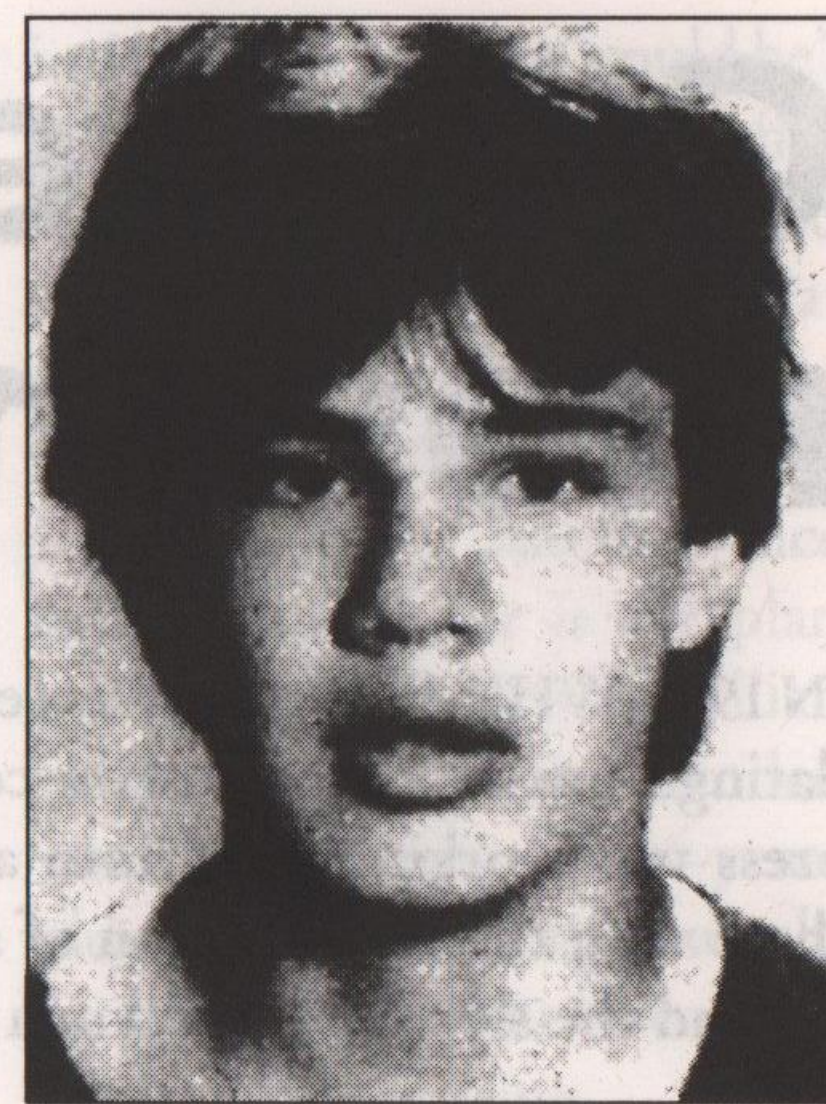
At these venues a regular and frequent number of music concerts take place, there are book-stalls selling anarchist literature, as well as cafes open from the afternoon. Anarchists of every tendency congregate there, though there are very few debates or discussions. In fact, there is very little discussion of theory within the movement, ways to move forward or to relate to the working class. Three alternative radio stations operate, apparently quite well. The movement and the centres attract considerable numbers of young people, to be numbered in the thousands, but there is very little real contact with the mass of the town population, let alone that of the countryside.

The movement that began

to develop in the '70s continuing up to the present day, was strongly influenced by both German and Italian autonomism, not to mention the armed struggle mystique of the Baader-Meinhof group and the Armed Cells of West Germany, and was shaped by the 1973 insurrection against the colonels. The Anarchist Attack Groups formed in Athens in the mid-80s, specialised in petrol-bombing police cars on a massive scale. On 17 November 1985, when riot police chased anarchists to the traditional anarchist stronghold around Exarchia Square, fierce fighting took place resulting in the shooting in the back of a 15-year old anarchist, Michalis Kaltazas, by the cops. This sparked off further fighting and the occupation of the University of Chemistry, and then that of the Polytechnic, as well as occupations of buildings, and riots and demonstrations in many other cities. Some 37 anarchists arrested at the Chemistry occupation were brutally beaten, receiving jail sentences and fines. Kaltazas was dead, and a new wave of repression began against the anarchists. Many anarchists were arrested, there were many house-searches, anybody that looked 'different' was beaten

up by the riot cops. Alongside this was the development of armed anarchist groups that carried out a number of bank-robberies and armed confrontations with the police. For example, the Anti-State Struggle group shot dead the Public Prosecutor of Athens. In a subsequent gun-battle with police in May 1985, in which three cops died, the anarchist Christos Tsoutsouvis was killed.

This method of operating has continued up to the present day. Alongside continued rioting and confrontations at demonstrations, where banks, government offices, car showrooms and luxury hotels are stoned and burned down, is the presence of 30 armed anarchist groups which carry out petrol-bombings and bombings in the Athens area. While not denying the heroism involved in attacks on the State, and the seething discontent among the urban youth, one notes the cult of violence that continues in the movement, and that leads to a massive turnover and the burning-out of many militants by the age of 25. As a result, there are few experienced militants in the movement, and the generation gap is noticeable. The Greek anarchist movement lives within a ghetto, a far larger one than the British an-



Michalis Kaltazas, Greek anarchist murdered by police.

archist movement, it must be admitted, and one that is welcoming and supportive, but it is a ghetto nevertheless. Balavas, a militant arrested in 1994, was 'supported' by a number of bomb explosions during his hunger strike in prison. He wrote an article recommending the "kids to stop amusing themselves with gas canisters that were only good for heating up coffee".

These tactics are self-destructive and must be replaced by a strategy that relates to the everyday struggle of the mass of the working-class in both towns and village, as well as the development of a mass united propaganda and education programme. The frenzied militancy, the fragmentation into small groups, must be replaced by a united, specific anarchist communist organisation with its foundations in a thoughtful activism and the development of theory and strategy. Already, some comrades are beginning to see the deficiencies of the movement and are working towards the development of a weekly, Greece-wide paper.

A Greek translation of our *As We See It* is available from our London address. If you know anyone in the Greek-speaking population in Britain or have contacts in Greece or Cyprus, why not send off for a copy to be sent to them, 50p plus postage.

(No) wage slavery — down the dole

ONCE TOO OFTEN we've been subjected to the accusation that being on the dole is an 'easy life'. This has even been translated into various MPs trading places for a week with someone who's unemployed, in a feeble attempt to show just how easy life on the dole is. The video diary of a MP's week on the dole, patronising in the least, fails to offer the opportunity to see exactly what a fortnightly visit to the dole office entails.

The experience of a fortnightly visit to your local dole office, generally humiliating and intimidating, can vary depending on local office policy. For example, the '16/21 hour rule', which relates to the

vary in degree depending on your class and colour. Those 'middle class' people signing on generally have a far easier time, the more articulate you are the less open you are to harassment. Likewise, black people signing on will be subject to the racism of the worker who deals with their claim. Further discrimination occurs with an extremely low tolerance level shown towards semi-illiterate, illiterate and dyslexic people signing on. Secondly, the salary of that worker is performance-related. This, however, does not mean that they have a vested interest in providing a quick, efficient service or in offering advice on how to muddle your way through the maze that constitutes

24 months unemployed). This has been translated into various patronising courses and schemes, to aid your procession into gainful employment, such as the 'Restart Interview' and 'The Back to Work Plan'.

Restart interviews

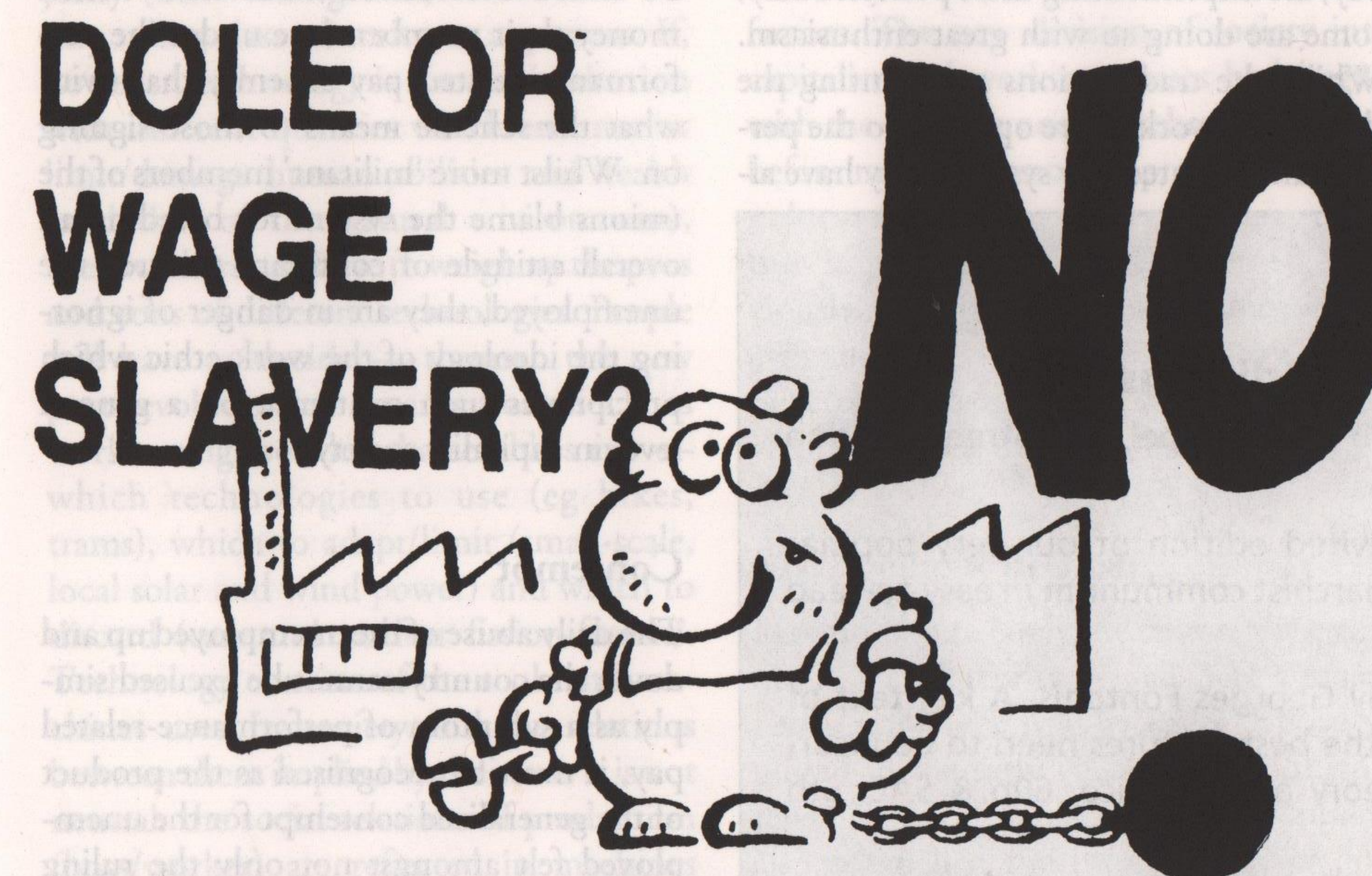
The 'Restart Interview' is sold as a 20-minute interview with your client advisor, who will be able to advise on how to succeed in the labour market, but in reality is no more than a 20-minute interrogation about what, where and how you are seeking work. The attitudes of many of these advisors can best be described as arrogant. Arriving five minutes late for your interview would appear to confirm the advisors' belief in their own superiority.

The 'Back to Work Plan' form, which is a detailed agreement between you and the dole office, outlining what you are doing and will do to find work, can result in the signing away of your benefit, if, for example, the hours that you are prepared to work or the wages sought are viewed by the client advisor as unreasonable. The unemployed are systematically being bullied and intimidated into signing declarations regarding their job searching which are unreasonable and impractical. Being told that your benefit will be reduced if you do not sign the declaration is generally enough to make you sign it. Remember, disqualification is the name of the game.

The 'Job Plan Workshop', a mandatory attempt to brainwash those unemployed for a year or more into believing that any job is better than no job, will, if you fail to attend, result in reduction of benefit for that period.

Active signing

In addition to the official 'priority groups' singled out, random 'active signing' is being implemented on a wide scale to preempt the JSA — the motivation being to meet office targets of disqualifying as many people as possible from receiving benefits. In some offices 'active signing', a 20-minute interrogation prior to every signing, can be even more distressing than



number of hours that you can study and still sign on, which under the Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) is to be reduced to 16 hours, has already been implemented in some offices. One certainty in the build up to the JSA, where on every signing a 20-minute interview will be carried out, is that 'stricter back to work regimes' are being enforced up and down the country.

So what does 'stricter back to work regimes' mean in real terms? Firstly, you'll be greeted by a worker who assumes that you are guilty and a 'scrounger', your guilt will

the benefit system. In fact, performance-related pay is dependent upon catching individuals out on the grounds that they are not 'available' and/or 'actively seeking' work. In reality, performance-related pay is based on an ideology that assumes all work is good and all unemployed people are 'scroungers', and is motivated by the desire to stop benefits from being paid.

The government has officially singled out 'stricter back to work regimes' for 'priority groups', those groups being identified as the long-term unemployed (ie, 12 and

the official 'Restart Interview'. After signing an agreement which is eventually to form the basis of the JSA agreement, often the over-enthusiastic worker will drag you down to the Job Centre and force you to apply there and then for jobs which they have deemed as suitable for you. Not simply satisfied with forcing you to apply for jobs and requiring that you report back to them the outcome of your application, telephone calls to the employer, made to check up on your performance at the interview, are becoming common practice.

The 'stricter back to work regimes' in the build up to the JSA have resulted in the tightening of the system and the intensification of bullying of claimants. Those people signing on at the present time who are not on the receiving end of these bullyboy tactics could be in the near future. And it could be a lot sooner than the introduction of the JSA.

Work ethic

Given the discriminatory treatment of individuals occurring in the dole office under the current system, the JSA will further enhance the ability of such workers to treat people like shit.

The workers responsible for carrying out the 'stricter back to work regimes' whilst

Handy hints for hassle free signing on

TURN UP IN plenty of time and make sure that you are seen to be early. This way they can't be pissed off and say that you didn't even bother to get there on time.

- Don't create a scene, always try to stay in control. The more aggressive you get, the more likely they are to try catching you out.
- If you have any problems filling in any of the forms they give you, get some help from friends, then they have no excuse for hassling you.
- Remember that your benefit is paid on the condition that you are actively seeking and available to work, so, if you turn up late to sign on, never say that you were sick or looking after your sister's kids. Simply say that you forgot to turn up. Then it's near impossible for them to prove that you weren't available or actively seeking work.
- When filling in the 'Going Away from Home' form, don't tell them that you are leaving the country as you won't be entitled to any benefit for that period.
- If you do work and sign on, try to not work in public places like market stalls, close to your dole office. Just remember that the majority of the workers in your dole office live in the area that you are signing in.
- And don't forget the fraud officers are dependent upon the hunches of those workers that sign you on every fortnight.
- If there is a Claimant's Union in your area join it.
- Get involved in your local campaign against the JSA.
- Don't let the bastards grind you down, get ACTIVE and ORGANISE.

tied up in the game of performance-related pay, are implementing these policies. Sadly, some are doing so with great enthusiasm. Whilst the trade unions representing the dole office workers are opposed to the performance-related pay system, they have al-

lowed it to be introduced. They appear to be more concerned with how much money their members lose under the performance-related pay scheme, than with what the scheme means to those signing on. Whilst more 'militant' members of the unions blame the system for breeding an overall attitude of contempt towards the unemployed, they are in danger of ignoring the ideology of the work ethic which precipitates such contempt on a general level in capitalist society.

Contempt

The daily abuse of the unemployed up and down the country cannot be excused simply as a symptom of performance-related pay, it must be recognised as the product of the generalised contempt for the unemployed felt amongst not only the ruling class but significant sections of the working class itself. For many people signing on at present, who have been unfortunate enough to have been randomly singled out under the 'stricter back to work regimes', the onslaught of the JSA will come as no great surprise. The only surprise will be how much more easily their benefit will be reduced.

However, the struggle which may develop against both the performance-related pay scheme and, more likely, the JSA, may begin to break down the rigid division which currently exists between dole office workers and the unemployed.



ACE

Anarchist Communist Editions

ACE pamphlets are available from c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

Anarchism — As We See It. A new, revised edition of our very popular pamphlet. Describes the basic ideas of anarchist communism in easy-to-read form. 60p & SAE.

Manifesto of Libertarian Communism by Georges Fontenis. A key text of anarchist communism. Though flawed, the best features need to be incorporated into modern revolutionary theory and practice. 60p & SAE. 6th printing now available.

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Aspects of Anarchism. Collected articles from the pages of *Organise!* on the fundamentals of anarchist communism. 30p & SAE.

Making Progress is out of print at the moment.

COMING SOON! Manifesto for the Millenium and a pamphlet on Ecology.

Is technology neutral?

THIS IS A vital question for revolutionaries: if technology is neutral, then a successful revolution will solve the problems caused by the operation of existing technologies, such as the oppressiveness of workplaces, the danger, pollution and social dislocation of traffic and the environmental destruction of industry and agriculture.

Damage to the environment as a result of social and economic development is not new. In pre-Christian times vast forests were reduced to plains by human agriculture, for example. What is new is the global scale of the routine, daily damage to air (pollution), land (poisoning & loss of soil), and water (pollution & drought).

Following the revolution, the working class worldwide, having seized control of workplaces, land and streets, would direct current technology to benefit the vast majority (the working class) rather than the tiny ruling class minority, as at present. If, however, technology is a social institution with inherent qualities which enhance or limit/damage human abilities and health (and that of the natural environment), then workers will have to weigh up the pros and cons of different technologies. People will have to decide — through the new post-revolutionary organisations such as worker-neighbourhood assemblies etc — which technologies to use (eg bikes, trams), which to adapt/limit (small-scale, local solar and wind power) and which to discard (cars and nuclear fission-fusion). Technology consists of the tools and machines used by society and the relations between them implied by their use. It is not neutral: the social relations of production (boss/worker) are reflected in machines and tools, which interact with, and reinforce, social patterns eg the 'transport poor' resulting from cars and class society. Similarly, the hierarchical regimentation of workers, although appearing to be a necessity resulting from production technology, is built into technology as a reflection of the social division of labour.

Control

Technological innovation has been used to increase efficiency and maximise profits, and to maintain and optimise the control of bosses over workers (both in and outside

the workplace). Where profit and control come into conflict, control is usually prioritised, as a loss of control puts profit, and ultimately the boss class itself, at risk.

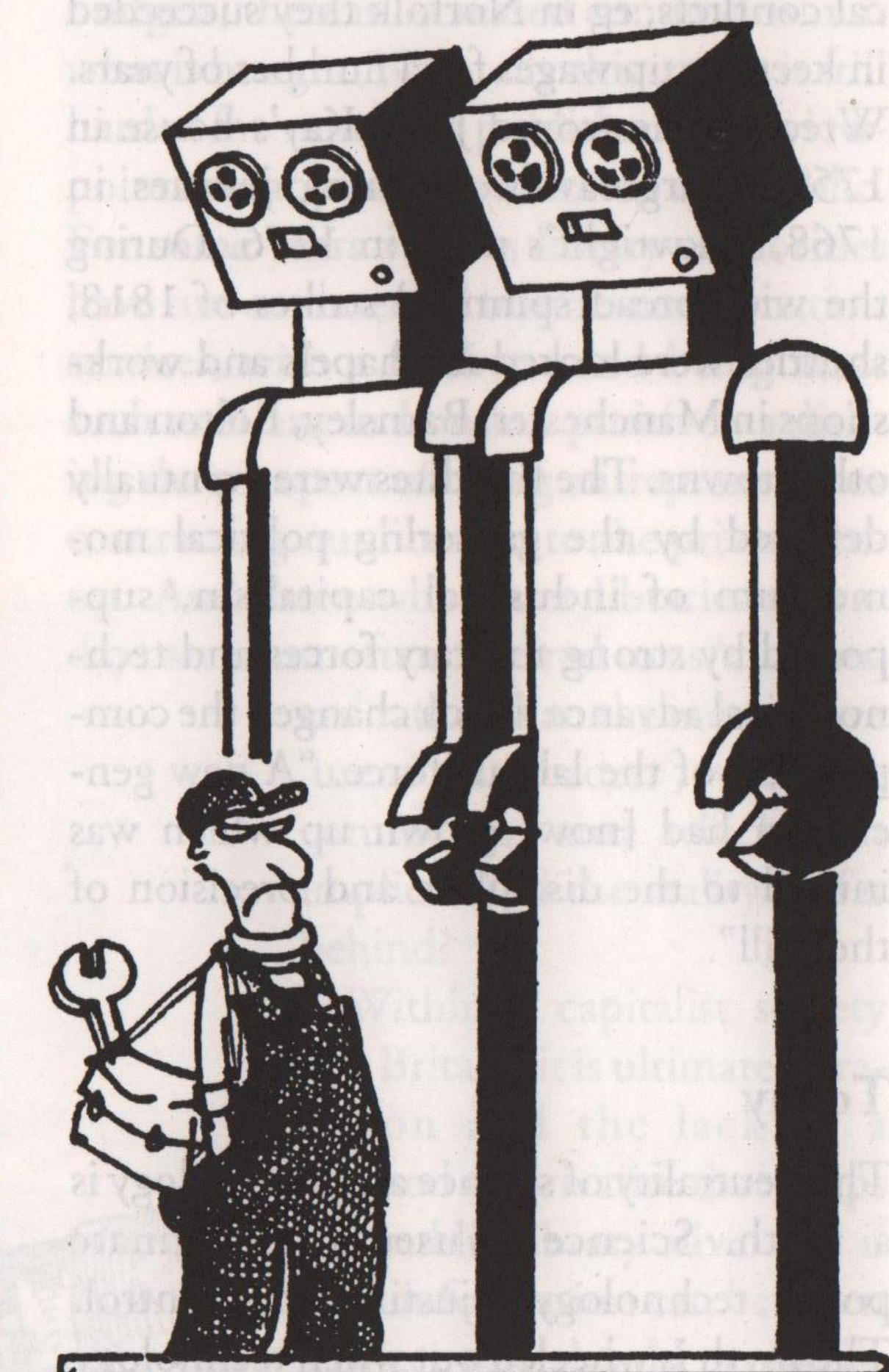
Present-day technological society dates from the industrial revolution and the new science of the 17th century. The old idea of the world as animistic (alive) and organic had broken down. It was replaced by a new abstract science and a new model for ruling class order: the machine. Order was the predictable behaviour of each part within a rationally-determined system of laws. Power came from active human intervention. Order and power came together to make up control — rational control over nature, society and self, ie the domination, exploitation and destruction of people and the natural environment.

The factory system and capitalist production were the result of the class relations of society as well as technical and economic factors. The new division of society into capitalist and working classes had begun with the rise of a new merchant class long before major advances in productive technology. At the same time, new ideas about the 'importance of work' emerged. Previously, poverty was seen as an unavoidable evil, and the poor as objects of pity. Now, poverty was a sin, and poor people were victims of their own actions.

Management necessity

Machines were rarely the reason for setting up the new factories, which were a managerial, not a technical necessity. Those required in the early years of the industrial revolution both replaced hand labour and also compelled the introduction of production into factories: Arkwright's Water Frame (1768), Crompton's Mule (1774), Cartwright's Power Loom (1784) and Watt's Steam Engine (1785). Samuel Smiles (author of 'Self Help', precursor of Thatcherism) stated that manufacturers did not adopt many of the 'most potent' self-acting tools and machines until they were forced to do so by strikes. In the early 18th century strikes in factories in Midlands towns led the owners to commission a firm of machinists to construct a self-acting mule at a cost of £13,000 to avoid conceding higher wages. The dreaded new machine, patented in 1830, was christened

"The Iron Man" by the machinists. The factory-based organisation of the weaving industry, for example, did not develop directly from a more efficient base. Many of the new machines were expensive, and were only developed and introduced after the weavers had been concentrated into the factories, following great resistance. New technology was used to suppress militant workers. For example, the length of spinning mules was increased to reduce the number of workers required, displacing adult spinners and increasing the number of their assistants. This weakened the factory apprentice system, and the strength and organisation of the spinners. These



changes were made despite being very costly — the factory layout often had to be replanned. There was huge resistance to the new technology, and consequently a very high failure rate amongst the early industrialists. The successful ones were usually the best managers, such as Arkwright, and often performed several of the capitalist roles: inventor, innovator, manager. Much of the worker resistance took the form of machine-breaking. For some workers it became part of the general class struggle — an established way of pressurising the bosses, direct action which stimulated worker solidarity. The wrecking of

coal mines during widespread rioting in Northumberland in 1740 and frame breaking in the East Midlands hosiery trade are examples. Other workers, particularly the Luddites, opposed both the new machines and the new social relations of production they created. Machines threatened employment and the relative freedom, dignity and kinship of the craft worker. There was also widespread support from other classes such as farmers who were threatened by the new agricultural machinery. Between 1811 and 1813 the government was forced to deploy over 12,000 troops to tackle the Luddites, a larger force than Wellington's army in Spain. The Lancashire machine wreckers of 1778 and 1780 spared spinning jennies of 24 spindles or less (which were suitable for domestic production) and destroyed larger ones which were only applicable in factories. Machine breakers won many local conflicts, eg in Norfolk they succeeded in keeping up wages for a number of years. Wrecking destroyed John Kay's house in 1753, Hargreave's spinning jennies in 1768, Arkwright's mills in 1776. During the widespread spinners' strikes of 1818, shuttles were locked in chapels and workshops in Manchester, Barnsley, Bolton and other towns. The Luddites were eventually defeated by the gathering political momentum of industrial capitalism, supported by strong military forces and technological advance which changed the composition of the labour force. "A new generation had [now] grown up which was inured to the discipline and precision of the mill".

Today

The neutrality of science and technology is a myth. Science is used to legitimate power, technology to justify social control. The myth is wheeled out when technology comes under fire, eg for causing industrial pollution/traffic congestion. Inadequate policies or under-developed technology are blamed rather than the technology itself, such as cars. The solution is the 'technical fix' — more of the same; the irony is that the problems which technology is best able to solve are those which have been isolated from their social environment. The ideology of industrialisation maintains that modernisation, and technological and social development, are the same. It is used to justify the pursuit of economic growth with the emphasis on wealth generation, rather than its distribution. Similarly, society is described in purely opera-

tional terms in order to mask the inequalities of wealth and power. This ideology is used to suppress the potentialities for individual-social emancipation offered by particular machines such as wind power technology (ie small scale, for local use and community-controlled), and to legitimate their use in ways which are socially and environmentally exploitative (large-scale wind farms under state/private control supplying the National Grid). Technological innovation is used politically, but presented in neutral technical/scientific terms such as 'increased efficiency' (eg the introduction of assembly line production techniques into the construction industry); as a 'technical solution' to social needs (eg the development of a new transport system); or as economic 'rationalisation' of out-of-date technologies (eg the introduction of new print technology by Rupert 'Digger' Murdoch at Wapping, which led to the printers' strike of 1986/7). 'Stability' is achieved by displacing militant workers, eg containerisation, which was brought in to break the power of dockworkers. 'Work improvement' schemes such as job enrichment allow workers a say in minor decisions to divert them from key areas such as pay and productivity. Innovation is also used as a threat to blackmail sections of the workforce into particular tasks, eg employers often threaten female workers that if their demands for equal pay with men are met, they will be replaced by machines.

Science is equally culpable in maintaining the status quo. In the 1880s Frederick Winslow Taylor invented 'scientific management' or Taylorism: the principles that machine designers applied to tools were applied to manual labour to increase 'efficiency', ie control, productivity, exploitation and profit. Taylor's research has since been shown to be wholly unscientific. His timed study tasks were made on an atypical Stakhanovite worker chosen for his large size, great strength and general stupidity. The approach was based on treating workers as unthinking and unfeeling machines. Lenin and the Bolsheviks enthusiastically took up Taylorism in post-revolutionary Russia, Lenin describing it as:

"a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing the mechanical motions of work... we must systematically try it out and adapt it to our own ends."

The Bolsheviks' evident belief in the neutrality of technology was one of the factors leading to the abortion of the Rus-

sian Revolution which is often overlooked. The job-enrichment ideas which superseded Taylorism are equally unscientific. They resulted from the recognition that capitalism could not afford to ignore the physical and mental needs of the worker.

Outside politics?

The objectivity of the scientific method is used to mask the problems created by advanced technology and to legitimise the policies of the ruling class. The Roskill Commission was set up in 1969 to look at the siting of a third London airport. The masses of 'expert evidence' showed that it was less socially-damaging to fly loud aircraft over working class rather than middle class areas because of the different effects on property values. Technological programmes are presented as outside the area of political debate, so only technical objections are allowed. Official inquiries into the siting of motorways and nuclear power stations can discuss where they will cause the least environmental and social disturbance, but not whether they are needed in the first place or whose interests they serve. Similarly, the trend is to present politics as a purely technical activity, assessing political programmes for their achievement in terms of economic performance. This approach goes hand-in-hand with the idea of 'the death of ideology/end of history'.

Alternative technology

In the 1960s and '70s, criticism of the dominant technological forms led to the idea and (necessarily) limited development of 'alternative technology'. Its characteristics are minimal use of non-renewable resources; minimal environmental interference, support for regional/local self reliance, and elimination of the alienation and exploitation of labour. Examples included energy production from 'soft', renewable resources such as solar, wave and wind power. A genuine alternative technology can only be developed on a significant scale after a revolution however, as vested interests (and the lack of power/money AT proponents) would not allow it. This is illustrated by the British State's deliberate sabotage of pioneering soft energy technologies over the last two decades, particularly wave power. A tiny amount of money has been allocated (a few million pounds in contrast to the billions allocated to nuclear power). This funding has then been arbitrarily cut or swapped between projects so they 'fail'.

Libraries and liberation

PUBLIC LIBRARIES MAY not sound like a site of class struggle, nor a model of anarchist communism. But in the conflict of values which they embody, and with the changing shape of the world (and more especially the Western) economy, they are certainly significant.

They began in Britain in the mid-19th century, paid for by a penny on the rates and gradually spread throughout the country. Though the educational side of libraries was one reason for their promotion by the middle class, another was their role in providing a literally sobering influence on the working class, by way of being an alternative to the gin palace and through their provision of 'improving' literature.

Yet through the years a certain outlook, albeit liberal, has developed among librarians and users. Implicitly it subverts both the belief of those who thought libraries would merely promote social peace, and the basic idea of capitalism. Firstly, there is the view of the library as a place to pursue self-education in whatever subject. This in turn has meant that libraries, as local, national and international systems — which incidentally demonstrate the federalism anarchists support — have an ideal which opposes censorship and encourages the collection of mainstream and non-mainstream ideas and information. There are many examples of people turning to the library for answers and intellectual ammunition when dissatisfaction with the established society has been felt.

Secondly, as the anarchist thinker Kropotkin observed in *The Conquest of Bread*: "When you go into a public library ... the librarian does not ask what services you have rendered to society before giving you the book ... which you require; he (sic) even comes to your assistance if you do not know how to manage the catalogue". As well as an affirmation of equality, this kind of non-cash transaction is a suggestion of anarchist communism: the individual decides on his/her need, and the only restriction is a common limit as a guarantee of general access to the product — libraries limit how many items a person may borrow, and for how long.

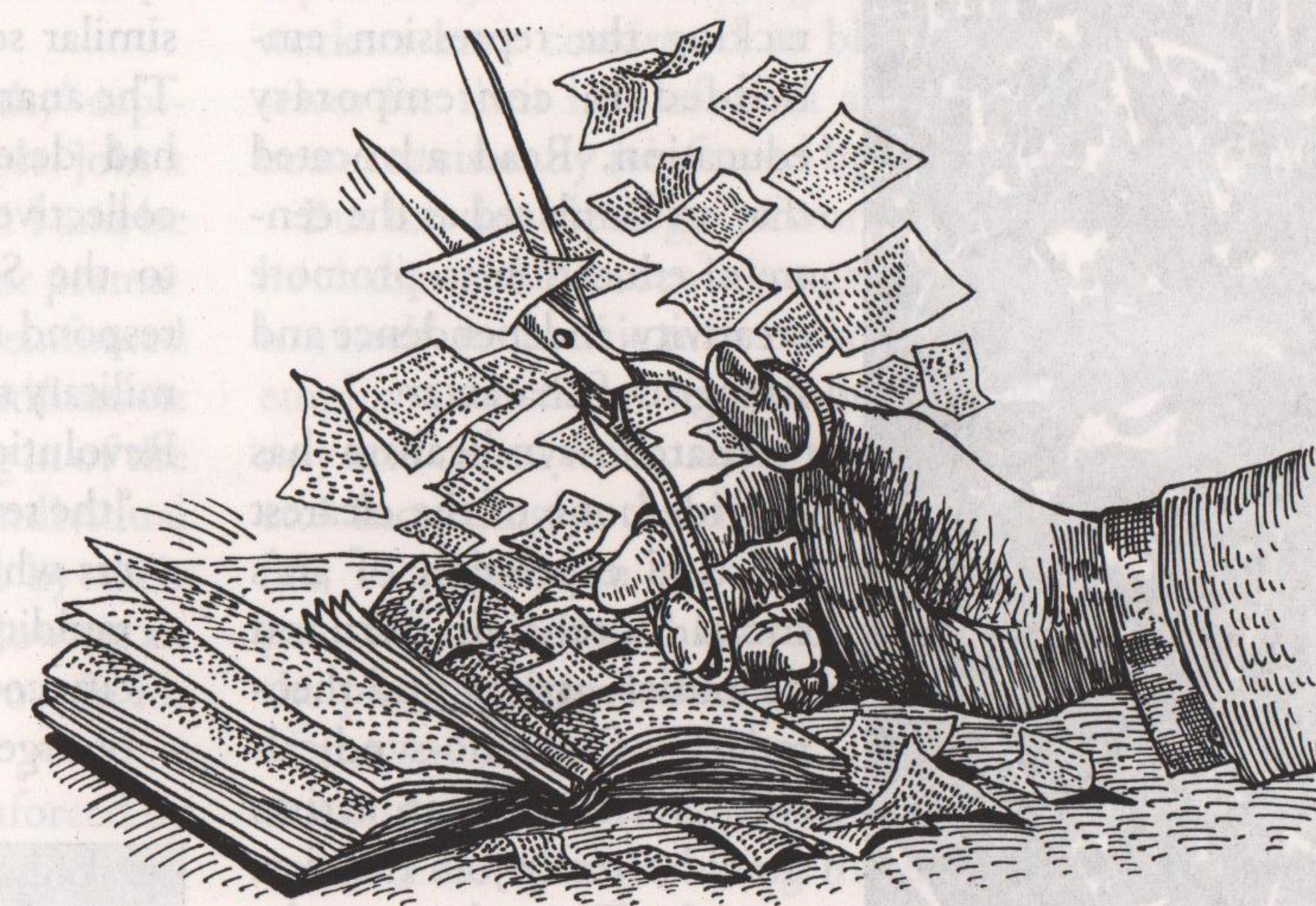
But there is another side to this picture. Precisely because they are a public service funded by taxes, the Tories have indirectly made cuts by rate-capping and consistent reductions in grant to councils. (Labour did the same in the mid-1970s). Their uncontroversial image has made them publicly-respected and yet, when cuts have come, often easy victims. And in a climate where performance figures are sacrosanct, so the issue figures for books, regardless of their quality or range, are increasingly focussed upon. This necessarily promotes the mainstream over the radical. But since issue figures have gradually been decreasing, this fact has been seized upon by the Right (in particular the Adam Smith Institute, the 'intellectual' vanguard of the market economy) as an argument against freely lending public libraries and for making money out of their stock wherever possible (eg from reference enquiries).

Parallel to the development of electric information forms in the 1980s and '90s (online databases and CD-ROMs) has come the concept of information as a commodity. It's no accident that many electronic sources are chiefly marketed to business. They are said to be a way of getting

Then there is the Internet, which started as a network of American defence computers (to be used in the event of a nuclear war!). This has to an extent been wrested away from that purpose by the impulse of some users to spread alternative news and ideas in an unregulated way. Some public libraries are starting to give access to it. But from a non-, even anti-, commercial start, it is increasingly being touted now as a global marketplace, while governments discuss how it might be policed (under the guise of concern over such issues as child pornography).

In this climate, librarians have succumbed to varying degrees. Because of the stress on issue figures and the decrease in budgets, there is increased conservatism in what is bought. Naturally this makes it still harder for minority publishers and viewpoints to achieve exposure to the public. For some years various library authorities have run commercial business information services, with a further trend being areas such as Brent in London positively relishing the prospect of being entrepreneurs or contracting out libraries to the private sector. And those who enter libraries nowadays are most often referred to as 'customers' rather than the more active 'users' or 'readers', with the commercial aura which that implies. Will the reality be far behind?

Within a capitalist society like Britain, it is ultimately tradition and the lack of a method to privatise that keeps the public library alive. For if even information can be given a price, why should people be better informed or educated beyond what they can afford or is useful to the ruling class? But it is the putting of a price on information which already denies it to many, not just in



ahead of competitors, because of their speed of use. Yet electronic sources are usually based on those self-same printed sources. So the form of use has changed, and a new way of making money has developed for capitalist publishers, but the overall control and filtering of information remains concentrated in familiar hands. Financial Times Information publishes two other nationals on CD-ROM as well.

this country but as a reflection of the global North-South divide as well, since the South has far less in the way of libraries and telecommunications. This denial has far more than financial consequences. It denies people a full sense of their history, of their potential and of what might be possible if the world were organised to serve the needs of all. But in the public library the seed of this possibility can still be seen.

Art as a weapon: artists and anarchism

THE CONCEPT OF counter-culture is essential to any understanding of anarchism as a movement of total opposition to authoritarian society. Not simply because anarchists reject the cruder forms of economic determinism, but also because anarchists want to extend the social struggle into all those areas of life in which capital is dominant. By 'counter-culture' anarchists do not just mean an 'alternative' culture, but one which challenges and confronts capitalism and authoritarianism in a way in which purely political and economic movements are unable to do.

Art is one of the many cultural forms in which it is possible to identify a distinctly anarchist approach. The way in which people see society, the way in which we express ideas and generate new modes of expression are essential to the development of critical opposition. Art, through its re-interpretation of reality, helps to focus that opposition.



Frans Masereel

Many prominent artists have been closely involved with the anarchist movement, contributing leaflets, writing articles for the anarchist press, illustrating pamphlets, books and posters, and their art has

been merely one aspect of their involvement. Many anarchists have (the reverse side of the coin) been artists, producing illustrations, cartoons, montages and posters which have often been anonymous, but no less a part of anarchist artistic creation for that. Anarchist contribution to art theory has also been important, ranging from Kropotkin's ideal version of socially integrated art, and his exhortation of the artists:

"Narrate for us in your vivid style or in your fervent pictures the titanic struggle of the masses against their oppressors; inflame young hearts with the beautiful breath of revolution."

(Peter Kropotkin: *Paroles d'un Révolté*)

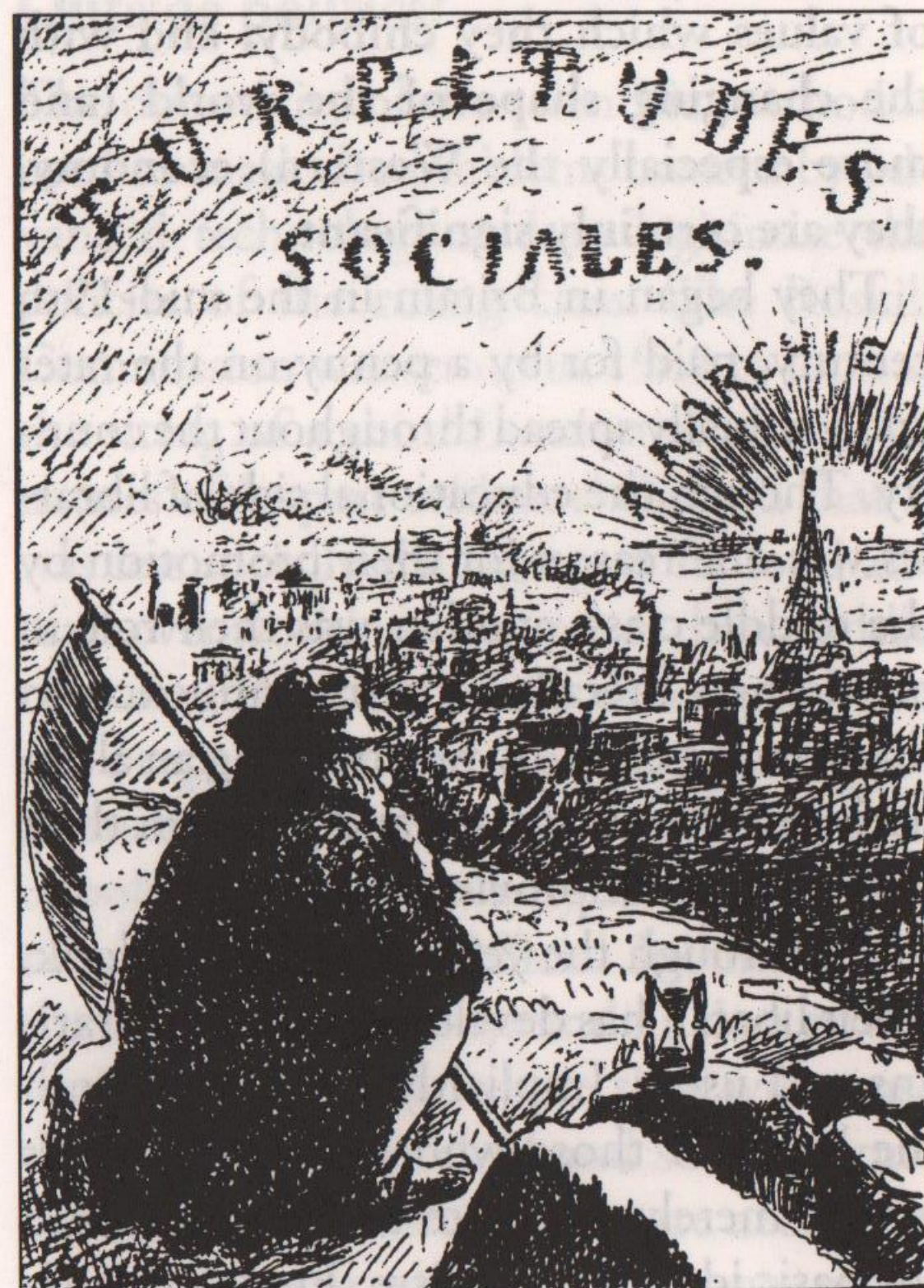
to Herbert Read's development of a theory of art as an agent for social change.

Read originally saw a need for an artistic élite, but soon dropped the idea in favour of the concept of "every person a special kind of artist", elaborating his views in *Education Through Art*, that everybody's artistic abilities should be matured to contribute to the richness of collective life. Attacking the repression embedded in contemporary education, Read advocated that art be placed at the centre of education to promote creativity, independence and strength of character.

Anarcho-syndicalism has provided one of the clearest practical expression of art's social potential. Fernand Pelloutier, activist and theoretician of anarcho-syndicalism, believed that artists should directly join the class struggle. To art he gave the task of destroying the myths on which capitalism rested, and inspiring revolt instead of submission:

"That which, better than all the instinctive explosions of wrath, can lead to a social revolution, is the awakening of the mind to scorn and prejudices and laws and this awakening art alone can accomplish."

(Fernand Pelloutier: *L'Art et la Révolte*, 1895)



Camille Pissarro

Pelloutier placed considerable emphasis on the cultural role of the Bourse du Travail that was the pivotal organisational form of French anarcho-syndicalism. In Spain the anarchist 'ateneo' provided a similar social focus for revolutionary art. The anarchist poster artist Carles Fontserè had described how the autonomy of a collectively-organised artists' studio linked to the Spanish CNT enabled artists to respond rapidly and spontaneously to the military revolt which triggered the Spanish Revolution, so that:

"the revolution iconography of the posters which were plastered with amazing rapidity over the walls of the troubled city could be seen by all, panicking the bourgeois and revolutionary combatant

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alike, as an unmistakable symbol of a popular desire to crush fascism."

(Carles Fontserè: 'Catalan posters of the Spanish Civil War' in *Non Pasaran!*, 1986)

Fontserè goes on to point out that these posters were the:

"work of painters for whom the poster was an avant-garde art form, with social value as a means of mass communication in tune with the spirit of the age".

For art to retain its critical edge there is a need to continually re-interpret the world, invent new concepts and ways of seeing, and to challenge the existing boundaries of establishment art. Without this capacity, art and culture fall apart. A continuing struggle exists between change and tradition in art, and it is in this area that new ideas and values are generated. Here also the anarchist artists are usually to be found, their social radicalism and their artistic radicalism reinforcing each other. Artists identified with anarchism have usually been in the forefront of rebellious tendencies within art. This includes artists such as the French anarchist, Paul Signac, who wrote:

"The anarchist painter is not he who does anarchist paintings, but he who

without caring for money, without desire for recompense, struggles with all his individuality against bourgeois conventions."

Courbet, the founder of realism, Seurat and his revolutionary theory of pointillism, Kupka, the pioneer of abstract art, Munch who synthesised symbolism and expressionism, Kandinsky, Camille Pissarro and even for a period Picasso, Frans Masereel, the Belgium Expressionist, are just a few of the many artists who have been involved with the anarchist movement, and who have utilised anarchist concepts in their art, their revolutionary politics informing and underpinning their artistic radicalism.

Indeed some writers such as Renato Poggioli have suggested a basic identity between the artistic avant-garde and anarchism:

"The only omnipresent or recurring political ideology within the avant-garde is the least political or the most anti-political of all: libertarianism and anarchism" (Renato Poggioli: *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 1968)

[Article to be continued in subsequent issues]

WORK

Continued from back page

and could be offered by a 'healthy' capitalism. Workers could, for example, join a company upon leaving school at 14 and be in the same job until retirement or premature death. The work ethic was reinforced by encouraging workers' self-identification with their work, and the bringing in of the dubious notion of status to individual workers. People were identified by their occupation, the first question following an introduction became "what do you do for a living?"

This job identification was reinforced by craft and, later, trade unionism, which encouraged 'skilled' workers to regard themselves as a special case, and a practice of mutual aid and solidarity that only extended to their own trade or even grade within that trade.

All of this was happening as wage labour was becoming generalised and assisted in its legitimisation in the eyes of the new working class and in society as a whole. Unemployment became a moral problem, whilst those without work were seen as 'victims' by 'progressive' opinion and pari-

ahs by everybody else. This ideology dominated despite the attempts of socialists of various types to put the blame for unemployment, and therefore poverty, on the capitalist system itself. Large numbers of workers have continued to blame themselves for their lack of work and this has been consistently reinforced by the State.

But has this ideology (of work) begun to be challenged by recent changes in capitalism itself, ie chronic mass or un- or under-employment, the phenomenon of temporary and casual work, short-term contracts etc? Increasingly, the notion of a job for life, so popular in the 'boom' period of post-war capitalism, has become a thing of the past for most working people outside of the so-called professions. The apprenticeships which created skilled manual workers for manufacturing industries are almost non-existent. Increasingly, work is transitory, fragmented and periods of unemployment are regarded as a natural condition from time to time. Many young working class people have never experienced the 'dignity' which labour is supposed to bestow and those who have never known the 'world of work' feel little guilt in not being part of it.

It is obvious that work as a basis for capitalism's desired smooth social integration of the working class is being under-

Come and meet us

The ACF will be taking its usual stalls at:

▫ **The Anarchist Bookfair** on Saturday 21 October 1995 from 10am-8pm

and at:

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Come over and chat, or join us at our two meetings at the Anarchist Bookfair on:

▫ The failure of anarchism

and:

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Both bookfairs take place at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London EC1. Nearest tube Holborn.

mined both by the economic crisis, which is requiring some rapid and radical restructuring, and by the new technologies, which are increasingly making unsuitably-skilled or unskilled workers superfluous.

So where does this leave libertarian revolutionaries and our vision of social change? Will our arguments for a society without 'employment', ie without bosses and without wage labour, make more sense to working class people for whom work has already become a despicable means to an end, and for whom work has little meaning. Is there the possibility that a weakening of workers' identification with their 'occupation' will engender a weakening of their identification with the status quo? Or perhaps the atomisation of large sections of the working class caused by the recent changes in capitalism mentioned above will actually bring a further dissipation of class consciousness?

Whatever the consequences of the decline of the work ethic/ideology, one thing is for certain and that is that wage labour will remain an alienated and alienating experience for those who are forced to take part in it at whatever level, and that the exploitation inherent in work under capitalism will not go away.

The emancipation from work is the task of the workers alone!

How can the working class transform the 'economy' in its own interests? Donation to cover postage and printing. Archive Publishing. 16pp.

This thought-provoking pamphlet emanates from the Liverpool Discussion Group, which appears since to have disbanded. This group was made up of people from a left communist, Bordigist, and autonomist background. In a lot of ways they appear to have reached the same conclusions as us on key questions like the Left, nationalisation, changes within the structure of capitalism, etc. (See our forthcoming *Manifesto for the Millennium*). Like us they see that, contrary to Mrs Thatcher's cry that: "There is no alternative", in fact there is! As they themselves say:

"Everyone today who is 'oppositional' — from 'new age' travellers to anti-roads protestors, to those taking part in the miners' strike and the anti-poll tax campaign, to those who oppose the new changes in 'Public Order' legislation, is expressing, in a fragmentary way, our need to create a picture of the world, different from and in opposition to the one we get fed every day. Since 'economics' is no more than the ideology of our rulers, we need to construct an 'economics' of our own."

The pamphlet argues that changes in capitalism in the '80s, not just under 'Thatcherism' but worldwide, were the direct result of our (working class) resistance to exploitation, culminating in the '70s with some factories having a labour turnover of 20% per month, shortage of labour, lack of 'skilled labour', poor motivation, absenteeism, sabotage and a widespread alienation, as well as go-slows, strikes, work-to-rule. This ability to use 'full employment' for our own ends meant workforces became difficult to govern and the boss class had to retaliate.

The pamphlet quite correctly notes that the 'old movement' of the Left and the unions, nationalisation and state control of the economy, need to be left behind. Indeed in the post-World War II period, capitalism used the programme of the 'old movement' to restructure and restabilise — the Labour Party introduced this in Britain, elsewhere it was managed by De Gaulle, for example, hardly a 'socialist' even in the Labourist concept. Again, the pamphlet ar-

gues against a lengthy transition period to a new society, pointing out that capitalism is developed enough for a short change-over.

It is admitted that the break in the old movement provoked by the Russian Revolution between social democracy and the 'Left' was not as great or as deep as might be supposed. However, they fail to break with the Bolshevik concepts that because of 'war communism' no real advance to a new form of social organisation was possible. They say that to their credit anarchists had the merit of advancing the slogan 'Abolish the Wages System' but that a slogan was all it was. On the contrary, we argue that advance to real communism was possible, and that a Third Revolution was developing that was physically crushed by the Bolsheviks. (More on this Third Revolution in future issues.)

It is argued that it is not important who manages capital, what is important is the ending of the relations of capitalism themselves, not as an ultimate goal but as immediate politics. An immense productive capacity has been created by capitalism, and it is now perfectly possible to modify/destroy the wage labour relationship.

The defeat of State power is discussed and in those areas where it has been achieved, the abolition of wage labour, all forms of trading, hiring and firing etc. Unfortunately, again, Leninist notions of State power — to describe the power of workers' councils — are raised and in the next section the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is specifically referred to, as being a good description of the workers' councils! Now we would argue that not only is this concept tied to Stalinism, but to Leninism in general, but that it is a dangerous and ambiguous concept. The dictatorship of the proletariat may mean the suppression of the boss class to the pamphlet writers, but, historically, it is identified with the dictatorship not of the mass of the population — which, when you think about it, is an impossible idea! — but of a party, and then the central leadership of that party, and the suppression of the working class and of revolutionary groupings, as well as mass terror, secret police, prison camps, and the militarisation of labour.

On the positive side, what a revolutionary society could

achieve in the first stage is looked into. There are suggestions of what could be possible, such as a census to find out what resources are available and what needs cannot be satisfied from its 'own' resources, the immediate cutting of work hours by at least 50%. This could be achieved through the ending of 'socially unproductive' tasks, resulting in the increase of 'free time' allowing greater participation in the extension of the revolution, especially in those 'social' areas as yet untouched by the new economy — such as education, health, 'domestic' life, consumption, etc.

What the pamphlet sketches out is thought-provoking, and the Liverpool Discussion Group in its short life was one of the areas where revolutionary theory was beginning to be renewed. This renewal is continuing — and we

include our own organisation as one of those areas for theoretical renewal. The pamphlet should be read by all those genuinely concerned with a vision of a new society. Unfortunately, one of the headings in the pamphlet — 'Abandon the old conceptions' still applies to some of the ways of thinking of the Liverpool Discussion Group. The dead weight of nearly 80 years of Bolshevik practice still bear down on many of those frantically looking for a way forward. A great effort is needed to acquire new ways of thinking. For many this may be impossible, while others like the authors of this pamphlet, may have enough flexibility to go beyond old formulas.

(We understand that before the collapse of the Group that there was a modification of some of the problem areas discussed above.)

TAHITI HEATS UP

Continued from page 8

himself against allegations from the French state that he was the ringleader of the uprising (which, of course, he wasn't).

The way forward is though a healthy cross-pollination between the best features of traditional society, the communal land, decentralised decision-making and the concept of libertarian communism. We know that all the repressive techniques of the French militarists, including murder and torture, tried and tested in Indo-China and Algeria, will be used to crush the Tahitian resistance. But we also know that the revolt is now widely supported by the Tahitian masses. *Organise!* salutes the heroic Tahitians, workers and unemployed, who took part on the might of the French state.

Greenpeace was keen to keep the protest against the test within 'non-violent' limits. They reaffirmed that the way to stop the test was only through a devotion to non-violence just a day before the Papeete insurrection! This was because of a number of attacks on French embassies and businesses. No support for the actions of the

masses in Tahiti was forthcoming from Greenpeace. To do this would mean upsetting the wealthy benefactors of Greenpeace which gets more than \$100 million dollars in donations a year. Greenpeace is a highly-hierarchical structure, which relies on its supporters' passivity. Actions are carried out by small groups of Greenpeace activists on behalf of its supporters. Little effort is made to involve these on an active basis. If the activists fall out of line, as happened recently with the capture of several key Greenpeace naval craft by French military, they are disciplined in typical command-structure style.

No attempt was made by Greenpeace to form links with environmental action groups in Polynesia. As one local activist remarked "Greenpeace come with their own agenda. They were not particularly interested in us". But then, Greenpeace is not particularly interested in developing environmental action on a local and regional level, still less in linking destruction of the planet and its species with the roots of capitalism.

Organise!

ORGANISE! IS THE national magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation (ACF). *Organise!* is a quarterly theoretical journal published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debates on areas not normally covered by agitational journals. All articles in the magazine are by ACF members unless signed. Some reflect ACF policy and others open up debate in undiscussed areas, helping us to develop our ideas further.

Please feel welcome to contribute articles to *Organise!* — as long as they don't conflict with our Aims and Principles we will publish them. (Letters, of course, need not agree with our A&Ps at all.) Deadlines for next issue are 2nd December for features and reviews, and 9th December for letters and news. All contributions for the next issue should be sent to:

ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

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ALTHOUGH OUR SALES are rising, we need to keep boosting circulation, so try and take a bundle to sell to friends and workmates.

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Organise! will improve through a two-way process of criticism and feedback, and will better reflect the reality of struggle through readers communicating with us. Please write in with your ideas.

Please send all feedback, contributions for *Organise!*, requests for papers and Press Fund money (payable to ACF) to the London address.

IMPORTANT! The new national address for the ACF is: ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX. This is the same address as correspondence for *Organise!* and for ACF (London).

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AN ENCOURAGING RESPONSE to our last Press Appeal. £20 from Sheffield; £10 from London; £10 from Liverpool; £15 E. London; £10 S. London; £75 E. London; £1 London; £10 Nottingham; £20 Sheffield.

It is vital that *Organise!* keeps appearing. As the Labour Party and the unions continue to adapt to new capitalist realities, and as the various brands of Leninism continue to peddle their confusion, it is more and more necessary that a clear, coherent anarchist communist

voice is raised loud and clear above the hollow noise of the Left. You can send cheques, POs, IMOs (made out to ACF) stamps etc. You can even send us a standing order to our account (write to London address for details). ALL donations to London address.

Organise! back issues

BACK ISSUES OF *Organise!* (from issues 19-39) are still available from the London address. They cost 20p each plus SAE. Issues 25, 30, 32, 33 and 36 are sold out.

Issue 26: Women and revolution; Direct action. Issue 27: LA Riots; Yugoslavia; Malcolm X. Issue 28: Recession; Detective fiction. Issue 29: Debate on the unions; Italian workers organise. Issue 31: Somalia; Travellers; Natural laws. Issue 35: Rwanda; Italy; Carmageddon; Poetry and revolution. Issue

37: Pornography debate; Booze, cigs and dope; Moral panics. Issue 38: Militarism; Over-population myth; Cuba; Sport. Issue 39: Prisons; Algeria; Heritage. Alternatively send us a fiver and we'll send you one of everything plus whatever else we can find lying around.

Anarchist Communist Federation

THE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST FEDERATION is an organisation of class struggle anarchists.

We have members and groups throughout Scotland, England and Wales. Please write to the national address if you want to be put in contact. If you want contact directly with Scotland ACF, for contacts in Elgin, Glasgow and Aberdeen write to PO Box 5754 (no other mention) Elgin, Scotland IV 30 2ZD. A PO box number will be announced for Wales ACF in the next issue. If you want contact with a group close to the ACF in New Zealand, write to PO Box 298 Whangataroa, New Zealand.