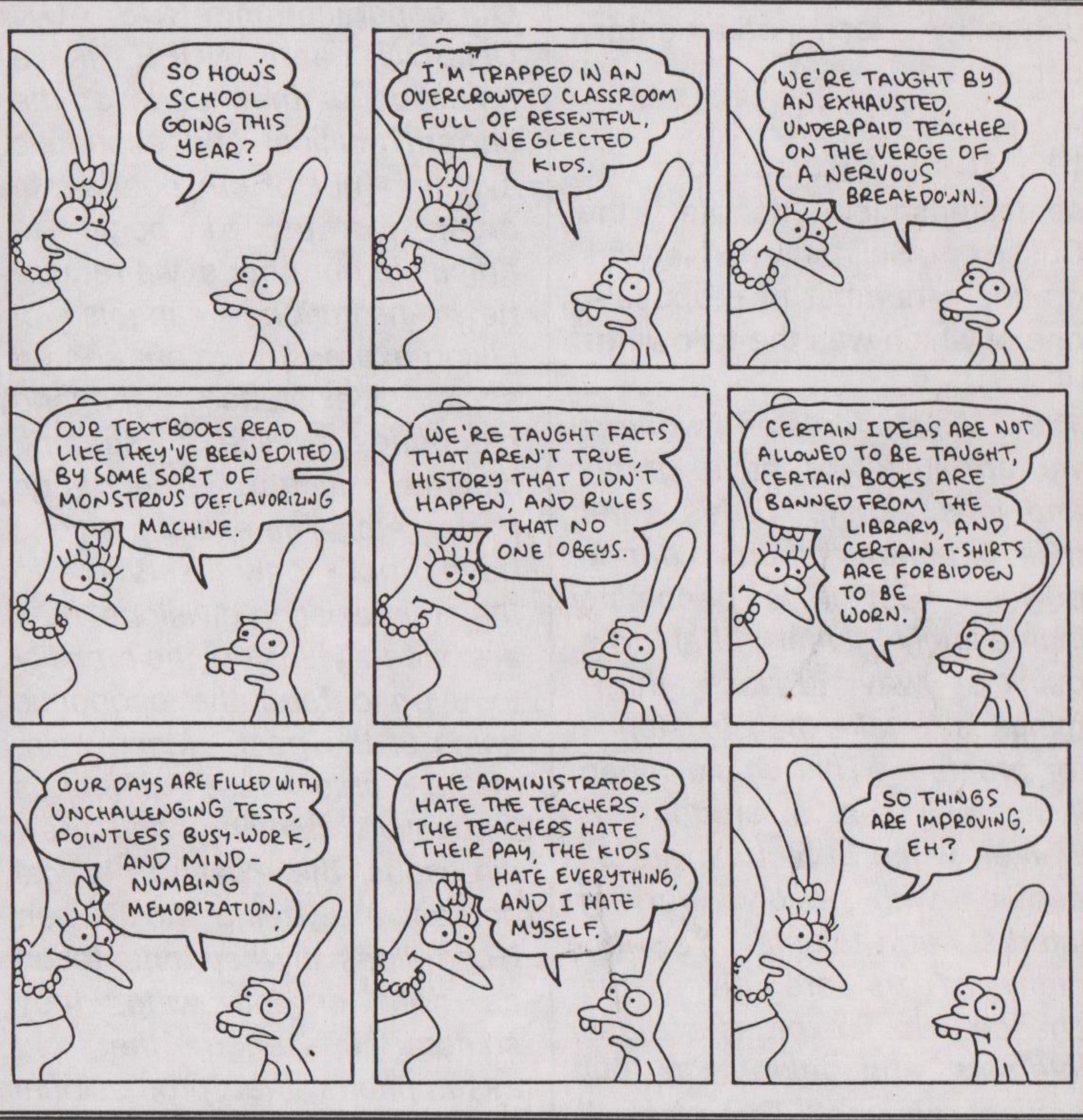


A lot of aggravation, hidden behind the pretext of seeing the National Curriculum is being dished up. Two schools notably got a real drubbing and nobody in the county needed to know what OFSTED was all about.

**One was in Thetford.** This is our "new" town grown fourfold or more since WW2. The estates built for mainly London "overspill" are variable and by general consensus the "sump" estate is Abbey Farm. Abbey Farm Middle School used to have the area special class until Norfolk CC saved the expense. It's not an easy place to teach in. With two staff rooms - one smoking, one non-smoking, the non-smoking one was nearly always empty. A headmaster had been in harness there for donkeys and had two types of teacher - those who would do anything for him and those who hated him. As for the pupils, there was such a problem of things being nicked that when the classrooms emptied into an assembly, the corridors were locked to control the building. It is farcical to see the place as anything but a special school with a few average classes in it.

Fred Nicholson's in Dereham (Fred Nick's) is a special school catering for the "behavioural" and "not very clever" categories. It makes the job of the average teacher in other schools tolerable. It was far from surprising, I suppose, that OFSTED were not pleased. News has just come of the re-inspection. They have been pleased to note some progress (yet staff can tell you that nothing has changed). In one instance during the reinspection, a confrontation arose between two large youths, the teacher went to defuse the crisis and the inspector promptly left the room.

**So another inspection over,** with the expense in materials, resources and school morale, and no use served. We know what the score is. While these inspections are carried on at immense costs, school funding is cut, redundancies occur, schools cannot afford supply cover and staff "have to cope". OFSTED needs to be stopped, a more robust resistance from teaching staff, ancillaries, governors, parents and pupils is long overdue. For further info. contact EWN, PO Box 73, Norwich, NR3 1QD.



Life in Hell...

- EWN REGIONS:**
- EWN, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE
  - EWN, PO Box 1008, Glasgow G42
  - EWN, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY
  - EWN, PO Box 73, Norwich NR3 1QD

- CONTACTS**
- SOLIDARITY FEDERATION, PO Box 1980, Radstock BA3 3LF
  - PUBLIC SERVICE WORKER NETWORK (PSWN), PO Box 1681, London, N8 7LE
  - TRANSPORT WORKER NETWORK (TWN), PO Box 73, Norwich NR3 1QD.

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If you want to know more about the Education Workers' Network write to:

**Education Workers' Network**  
PO Box 29 SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW

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# EDUCATION WORKER

Formerly General Assembly, the Bulletin of the Education Workers' Network

New Series - Issue 4 Spring 1996 FREE/DONATION

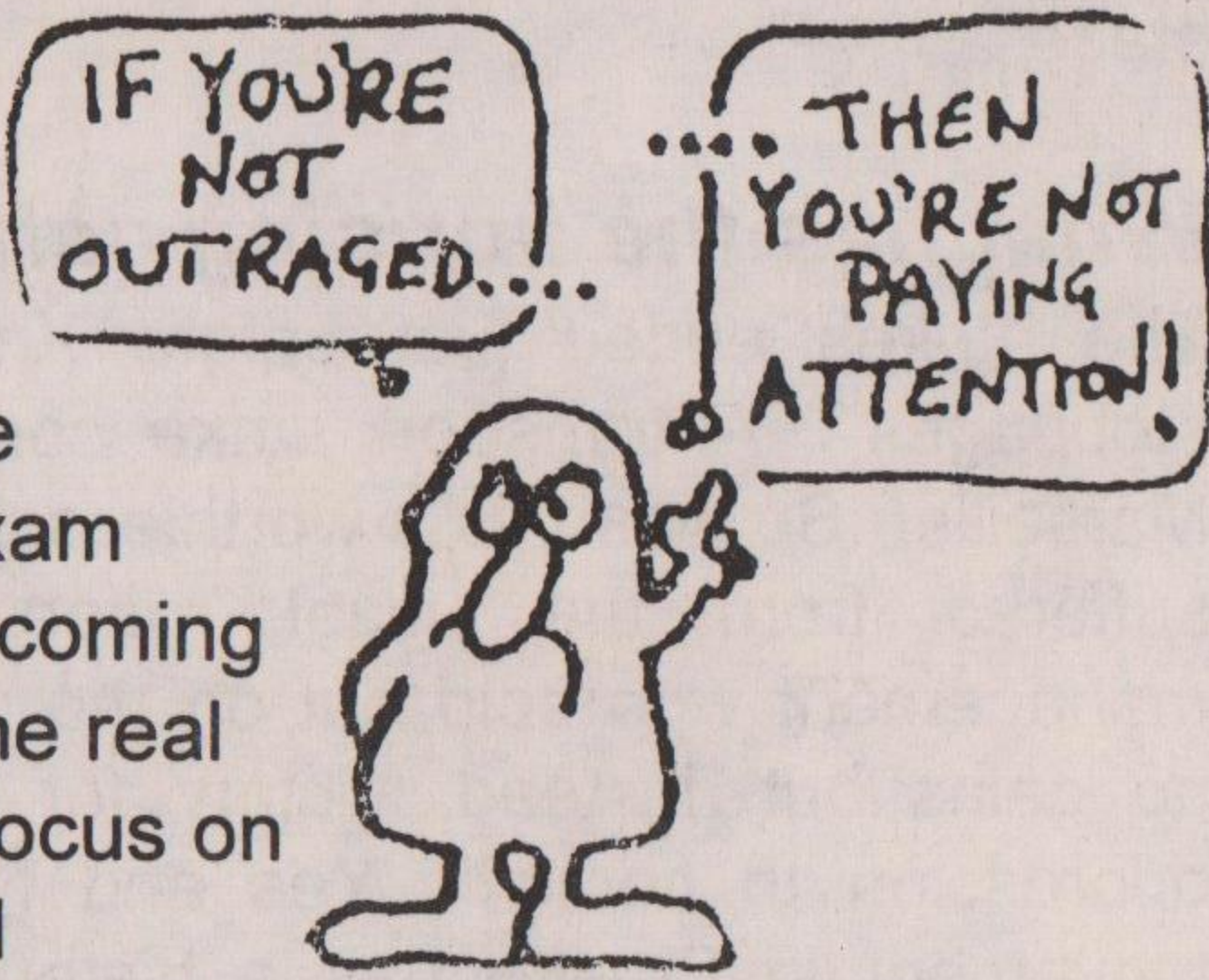
## QUALITY WHITEWASH

*An EWN PGCE student assesses the OFSTED assessors and gives a snapshot of what its like to get a visit from the education thought police...*

**Recently** I was lucky enough to meet along with other training teachers, one of the OFSTED teams who were inspecting our PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate in Education) course.

**Now don't misunderstand me, I was more than happy to be "volunteered" to meet this man from OFSTED, who despite his successful charisma bypass operation, and permanently smug expression, really was a laugh a minute.**

The whole remit of OFSTED is apparently to assess standards in education. As I write this league tables of exam results for schools are coming in thick and fast, and the real motivation of the new focus on "delivering the National Curriculum" and of the increased significance of assessment at every stage in the education process becomes apparent.



**The bottom line** is it's simply consistent with the right-wing, privatisation led, free market economy that the Tories embrace and Labour are increasingly snuggling up to (don't expect much to happen if they get in). Schools are being increasingly presented as education "shops" where you look around before snapping up a bargain, or not. Of course having a

choice of schools is not the problem. It's the criteria used to enable parents to make a choice. Schools are already selecting pupils who are likely to contribute to a better school performance in terms of placing in the league tables. This means schools already "disadvantaged" within the narrow definitions of the league tables get less and less attractive.

**SCHOOLS ARE BEING INCREASINGLY PRESENTED AS EDUCATION "SHOPS" WHERE YOU LOOK AROUND BEFORE SNAPPING UP A BARGAIN - OR NOT**

**No matter** that they may have for example an excellent record on special educational needs. One such school makes the point that being able to work with and sympathise with children with special needs is a fundamentally important part of the education process. This is just one small example of how the commodification of education is missing the whole picture.

Despite the supposedly neutral stance of OFSTED and the whole assessment procedure its ideological framework is pretty clear. Recognising this at least makes it easier to organise against and fight it, however long it might take. **If you don't like the ideology, don't take the medicine - organise!**

**Inside ...its a bit late - but its a bumper issue!**

Students in Greece and France	The crisis in British Universities
Boycott at Sheffield Hallam	3rd Semesters - or not
Letters - do we need educating?	Life in Hell



# STUDENT DIRECT ACTIONS

## GREECE: PRISON SENTENCES FOR ANARCHIST STUDENTS

**Greek courts** have been busy sentencing 120 self-described anarchists to jail terms of 4-40 months, on charges of invading the Polytechnic, causing extensive damage and destroying a national symbol by burning Greek flags.

### What happened...

Almost 2000 people (most of them anarchists) entered Athens' Polytechnic after clashes with police on the 17th of November in a demonstration to commemorate the anniversary of the massacre of Athens' Polytechnic students during the uprising of 1973. Greek Law has long protected "academic ground" against police, which means that police are not allowed to enter unless a serious crime is proved to have taken place. This law was quietly and quickly changed and the Board of Directors gave permission for the police to enter the building, after two days of throwing chemicals into the Polytechnic while anarchists replied with fires and molotov-bombs. They also taunted police by throwing furniture and books out of the building and burning several Greek flags. The result: hundreds of anarchist students arrested and £1.5m estimated damage.

The youths said they would appeal against their sentences.

## FRENCH STRIKES

The last months of 1995 saw the biggest demonstrations since 1968 and a spate of strikes across the public and private sectors, affecting traffic and trains, postal services, education, banks, manufacturing industry such as Renault and Peugeot, and miners. Education workers played their part; the teacher's union, one of the main unions in the Communist CGT, was participating totally in the strike, while it was students in Rouen who started the events.

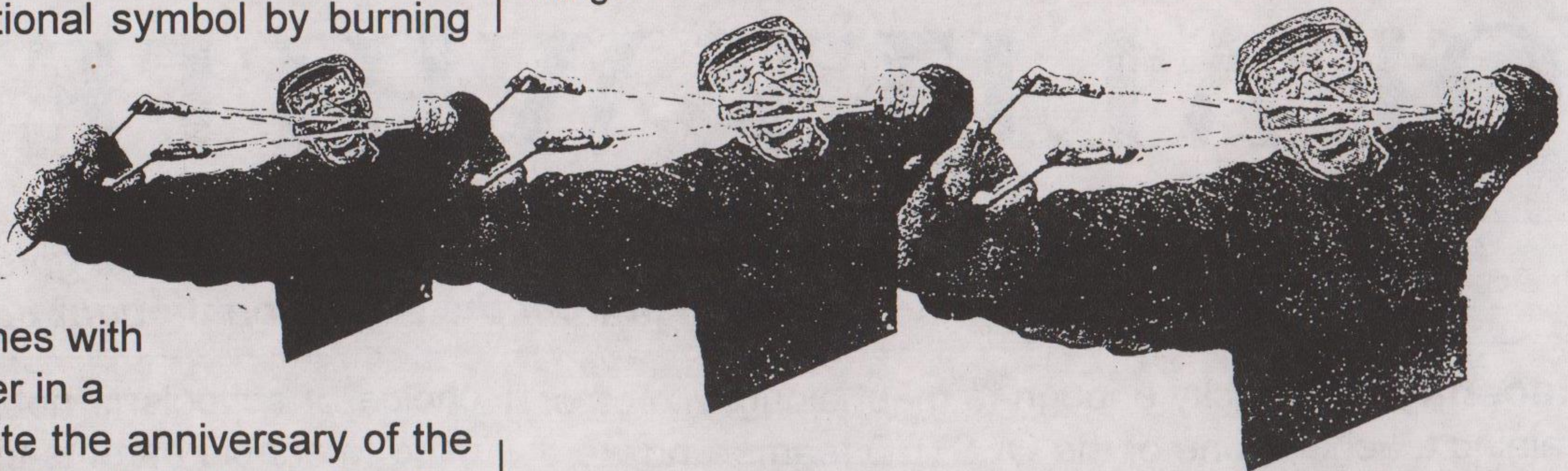
### Why did the strikes start?

The right wing Chirac government, elected in spring last year, introduced austerity measures, cutting public services, employment and pay, ostensibly to reduce the budget deficit enough to qualify for a single European currency in 1999.

Student funding cuts precipitated the student demonstrations which started the uprising.

### Why haven't they continued?

Unofficial strikes are plagued by fear, particularly in smaller unions, what with anti-union legislation and typical modern day employment contracts which allow blatant hiring and firing.



In France, the official strikes were led by the communist-controlled CGT and the social-democratic CFDT, both with their own agendas and with union management which clearly do not reflect the same opinions, feelings and interests of the grass roots. The CFDT sold out early on which led to a split within it and the formation of a new trade union, the FUD. The rank and file spontaneity and will to act was so great that union leaders were led into the strike, afraid of being bypassed, and so were looking for a way out from an early stage.

### What has the uprising achieved?

The strikes ended just before Xmas except for isolated stoppages. A transport strike continues (mid-January) in Marseille. So was this a worthless effort, which undoubtedly suffered from the usual rotten institutionalised union management who sold out on the workers, and resulted in no gains but, instead, victory for the bosses and further oppression to come? Yes and No. The working class movement in France has a history of street-based direct action, and this latest episode can only have resulted in further politicisation of the masses and acceptance of the idea of opposing authority - particularly as the strikes seem to have had general popular support.

**The key is that real organisation - by and for workers - needs to be at the top of the agenda in any successful action - and that organisation must be by and for the workers themselves. EWN is working towards such an organisation in the education sector in Britain - other anarchosyndicalist networks are doing the same in other sectors, all as part of the same organisation, the Solidarity Federation. If you like the sound of this or have any questions about how the organisation works, contact EWN, PO Box 29, SWPDO, Manchester M15 5HW.**

## SHEFFIELD BOYCOTT

**Education workers in Sheffield continue to boycott Sheffield Hallam's Sport's facilities** following the unilateral introduction of charges for all users including staff and students. There was no proper consultation with the unions or users, only with management consultants Gardner Merchant who were hired at great expense to come up with the idea. Regular flyposting of the central campus and city combined with leafletting of the union, residences and

### NO PROPER CONSULTATION WITH THE UNIONS OR USERS

workplaces has ensured low take-up of the charging scheme. Out of over 20,000 students and 2,000 staff, it is estimated that only 2,000 in total have succumbed and coughed up. More direct action is planned.

## BOYCOTT

### Sheffield Hallam -The Unsporting University

Last year all students paid nothing for the use of the University's sports facilities run by Recreation Services - the normal situation for all colleges and universities in Britain in living memory. This year Toomey and other people who run the university supposedly in the interests of students decided unilaterally to charge £18 just to get in to the facilities and more to use them. Contrary to University propaganda, there was no satisfactory consultation with any unions or students.

Next year's prospectus says that the University has a 'sport for all' philosophy and that stuff for 'most of the recreation services activities is provided free'. This is lies. Even the Tories' own Higher Education Charter doesn't think misleading information in a prospectus is a good idea.

So who gave the university bosses the idea of charging ludicrous prices for facilities paid for already and promised free? Well they had this great idea of paying loads of cash to management consultants Gardner Merchant so they could be told this gem of information. They couldn't come up with it themselves. So now they have paid loads more cash to set up electronic entry systems to stop non-payers getting into any of the university facilities. The bosses have tried to sell this whole exercise as raising money to improve services. Well, we know where the money is going -they've already spent it on consultants and on stopping us getting into our sports facilities.

### "The more we are governed the less we are free"

Obviously Sheffield Hallam top management has decided to turn away students -their 'customers'- by reducing sports opportunities and charging ridiculous prices for them. So don't go.

By introducing the scheme through the back door over the summer, they have already turned away students who have decided they would rather have decent and accessible sports facilities while they are studying. Quite right too. For every student this rip-off scheme turns away, the University loses £5000 in lost fees from the LEA. That's really profitable! Then there are excuses to sack decent teachers because they have under-recruited. The bosses themselves have got to be made to pay for this.

For more information contact:  
**Sheffield Education Workers' Network**  
PO Box 446  
Sheffield S1 1NY

**Sports charges have been implemented in a few other institutions, and others are planned. What about your workplace? Write to Sheffield EWN for more info., or with your experiences.**

## NEWS FROM THE US

### YALE STRIKE

**Teaching Assistants (TAs)** at Yale have been trying to organise as a union for the last several years. Despite their efforts, including two brief demonstration strikes, the University has stonewalled, refusing to negotiate in any way, shape or form with their union, the Graduate Students and Employees Organisation (GESO). In December, GESO voted to initiate a grade strike, refusing to grade final exams until the University recognised them.

**Just now** the University is greeting the strike with strong arm tactics. Central administration is quiet, except for asking others to grade in place of their teaching assistants. But individual faculty heads in many departments are threatening their TA's with

### TAs AT YALE ARE BEING FORCED TO FEAR FOR THEIR CAREERS AS THEY STAND UP FOR THEIR RIGHTS

expulsion, academic probation, and refusal to write letters of recommendation or intention to write fraudulent ones that blackball students. In short, TAs at Yale are being forced to fear for their careers as they stand up for their rights. Our only recourse against such naked coercion and blacklisting is solidarity; we won't stand for it.

**UPDATE:** Yale has recently singled out 3 union reps of the over 200 TA's participating in the strike since December 7th, and brought trumped-up disciplinary changes against them. Plus, all strikers have been told they will be **LOCKED OUT** if they don't cave in immediately. Though illegal, it could take years for them to get their jobs back if this happens. A huge rally of around 1000 union members took place outside the disciplinary hearings of the 3 women on 10th of January. **Give your support; let Yale University know their reputation as a bastion of "truth and light" (its motto) is in tatters (email richard.levin@yale.edn, fax 203-432-7105), send copies to comrades (email eve.weinbaum@yale.edn, fax 203-776-6438).**

### AGSE RECOGNITION

Other, better, news recently from the US; a state judge in California has ruled that the University of California at Berkeley must bargain with the Association of Graduate Student Employees (AGSE). This is likely to be good news for student worker organising nationwide.



## 3RD SEMESTERS - Whatever will they think of next?

First we had 3 terms a year, then we had 2 semesters. Why? Well, it's less teaching and more examining, and basically teachers get paid for how much teaching they do, not examining. So, more admin., more testing, and at lower cost. What more could admin. bosses want? Well, now costs are being cut again (e.g. 5% per year for the next 3 years), and the pressure is on to save on other costs - like 1st semester exams. So now the rhetoric is, we are over

examining. Hey presto, 2 terms (called semesters). Next, it's 3 semesters and 2 year degrees - a bargain for students now they have to pay their way. But what use is 2 years of an old 3 year degree? And what about the effect on jobs in Education generally? Less teachers, no summers to catch up, plan courses and do research.

**Fortunately**, the first battle in the war seemed to go our way. Last April HEFCE invited over 100 HE

institutions to submit bids to run 3rd semester pilots. Only 10 did so, and 3 were accepted. The bidders did it for the funding, not educational reasons (£6m was earmarked for running the pilots). After overwhelming opposition from within the institution, Liverpool John Moores, the biggest bid-winner, and that with the most controversial type of pilot (the only one recognisable as a 3rd semester) withdrew its bid at the start of this academic year.



## -- LETTERS TO EW --

Dear EW,  
The letter writer in the last issue accurately identifies some of the latest crop of problems faced by teachers; class sizes, the national curriculum, lack of cash... these are issues of concern to all teachers whether or not they "profess anarchist views". But does the fact that these problems exist in education mean that anarchists or anarcho-syndicalists should look elsewhere for employment? Look at any other industry, we'd be looking for a job for a long time if we avoid working anywhere where we might have to compromise some of our beliefs! None of us are immune to the negative effects of capitalism, either at work or elsewhere in our lives, the real question is what are we going to do about it? I'm about half-way through my primary teacher training, and I've actually been pleasantly surprised at how progressive some

(not all) of the teaching is in a modern primary school, both in methods and curriculum material.

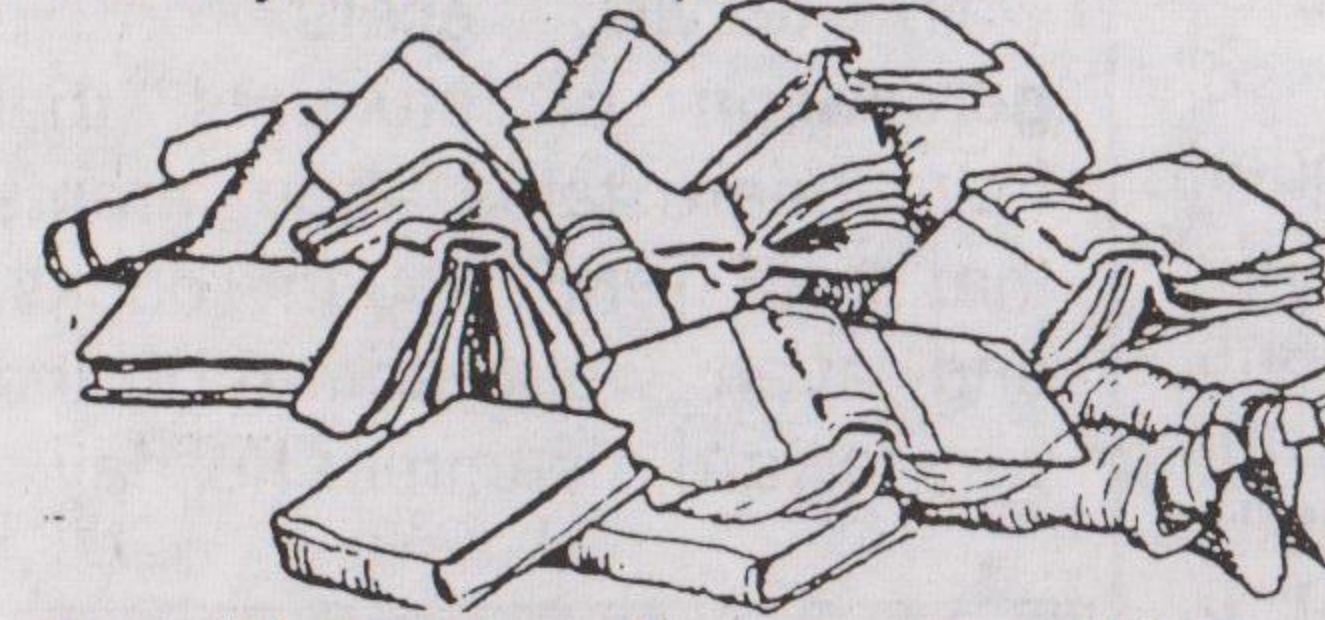
Yes, of course the national curriculum is a huge restriction when compared to pre-national curriculum days but the slimmed down version at least allows 20% of time for teaching outside the national curriculum and thus allows the imaginative primary teacher a certain amount of scope. This includes both teaching methods and how you can facilitate the way relationships build up within the group. To my mind if we can give children some practice in critical thinking, independent thought and a degree of self-confidence (especially working-class children) then we're really doing something subversive. This is what the government really fears with its scare stories of millions of trendy lefty teachers (I wish!) corrupting

young minds - something the government and capitalism in general would never do, now would it? I recently found an interesting quote made by a Dep. of Education and Science official shortly after the 81 riots:

**"We are in a period of considerable social change. There may be social unrest, but we can cope with the Toxteths. But if we have a lightly educated and idle population we may possibly anticipate more serious social conflict. People must be educated once more to know their place".** Scary, eh?

Dear EW,

In the last issue of the Education Worker you published a letter asking how anyone who called themselves an anarchist could work as a teacher. I would like to take this opportunity to answer your correspondent.



I consider myself an anarchist and whilst I am not a teacher, I work in education as an administrator. Without teachers and the education system would not have my job. I feel, as someone who is a participant in the existing education system, qualified to answer the question. As an anarchist, or more accurately, an anarcho-syndicalist, I would accept much of the criticism about the education system, but then so do a lot of others including teachers, support staff, students etc. The current education system, despite the best efforts of many involved in it, does process rather than nurture. The end result is all too often fodder for one branch or other of capitalism. The education system binds, bullies and quashes free spirit. But in recognising this and rejecting this I don't feel it is acceptable just to reject education and the current system out of hand.

Education is vital. Not just to the individual, but also to a wider society. Off the top of my head I can think of no major radical working class movement which hasn't had education as one of its major tenets. As an anarcho-syndicalist I am interested in promoting my ideas and organising and agitating in both the work place and the wider community, in breaking down the artificial barriers between the economic

Staff rooms all over the country are full of teachers with excellent critiques of the direction the government is taking education. But of course this won't change anything on its own, I hope initiatives like the Education Workers Network with its common-sense approach to what needs to be done can start to turn things around. Good luck.

In solidarity

and the political. But as your correspondent's rejection was of state education in this country I will address myself to that.

Education in this country is controlled, and more often than not, provided by the state. It reflects the interests of the state and the perceived interests of the society around it. As I've said this leads to schools and colleges being a processing plant for an appropriate and

alternative to kneeling down and begging for crumbs; standing up and demanding more. By rejecting the idea

**..THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO KNEELING DOWN AND BEGGING FOR CRUMBS; STANDING UP AND DEMANDING MORE**

of anarchists being teachers, and labelling all teachers as 'soft cops' or agents of repression or whatever too many people take bad experiences and bad parts of education today and reject the whole. I want to build a better society from within. I don't want to wait for some glorious revolution and start again, I don't want to 'drop out' as I feel that would lead to isolating myself from the people I like, the people I work and live with; the people I need to win over by argument and by example if anything is ever going to change. You don't win arguments by lobbing ideologically pure brickbats from outside. You win arguments by being there with people sharing in their struggles, giving them chance to recognise that you are a not a loony anarcho with a black cape and a bomb, or that you are not trying to pave the way for some oppressive left dictatorship.

To steal and paraphrase something from the gay rights movement (apologies); we need to show people we are human, we are their neighbours, we are people they pass in the street, their work colleagues, their children, and, yes, their teachers!





## Political illiteracy and the writing on the wall: the crisis of British universities in the 1990s

### COMMENTARY

Slugging off indiscriminately has got to be a waste of time, and slugging off other so-called anarchist groups can't be very high on the list of activities for positive change either. But anyway..

Some eye-openers recently appeared in the general anarchist and left press...

As far as Class War are concerned teachers and other education workers are as bad as coppers, it would seem. Phrases like "fuck off and die scumbags" and "the vast majority are total wankers" describing teachers trying to scrape together a wage is a great way to forge class unity amongst the working class. Apparently, we teachers "try and tell kids who live in places with up to 20% unemployment that if they work hard enough then they can get to the top just like Maggie used to tell us.." Utter BOLLOCKS. We are bound to get the class unity we need to organise for real, revolutionary change with that ranting garbage. Class war, keep your individual members' psychological problems out of the class struggle in education.

In contrast, Red Pepper slag off NUT leadership for spending on dodgy image advisors instead of supporting rank and file activity. The approach and reporting is sensible in comparison. Shame about the political direction; we at EWN look forward to more anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists joining us from the left than from CWI! At least they support working class people.

An EWN member from Sussex contrasts the British and US experiences in University education. The failure of social democracy and its unions is apparent; we need organisations like the Sussex Solidarity Network and EWN to organise for now and for the future.

In the immediate post-World War II period, the Welfare State seemed to establish itself as an unshakeable pillar of Western European democracy. Contrary to American barbarism, which demanded a high price for every public service apart from primary school education, European society seemed to be looking toward a progressive future. This future was framed in terms of rights: for the most part, citizenship now meant unconditional health care, housing benefit, and a number of other important reforms, including the right to a university education regardless of a person's class background. Where the North American model linked the privilege of education (and thereby effective citizenship) with the ability to pay, in Europe university education became a right.

In Britain in particular, education was exemplary: where other countries in Europe reduced fees to almost nothing but required students to come up with their own maintenance (requiring almost all to stay local), British students received grants that allowed them to travel to any corner of the Isles and receive a first rate education which included small classes and excellent library facilities. Despite the continued elitist shadow of Oxbridge, the British university system shone above all others. With its National Health system seemingly well

entrenched, Britain's Welfare State seemed to redefine the rights of worker and citizen on terms that rivalled Dutch and Scandinavian standards.

### What has happened?

Britain emerged from the War as a vanquished victor. Although on the winning side, the American Marshall Aid Program poured millions of dollars into rebuilding the capitalist capacity of the former fascist enemies Germany and Italy. These devastated countries needed immediate relief from the poverty that was making Communism a real threat - especially in Italy. So as the "miracolo economico" and "Wirtschaftswunder" produced the cultural conditions for the consumerist populism of the 1960s and 1970s in Germany and Italy, former "Great" Britain had to struggle in a new world system it no longer dominated.

Throughout this period Britain remained committed to defending tenets of Social Democracy and welfare economics: this entailed a considerable degree of State ownership and planning, some income redistribution, and continued support for national health and education. Though Britain's growth did not match that of its wartime enemies, living standards did rise, which legitimised the mediating role of the unions in securing all workers a decent standard of living.

Catastrophically for socialism, however, the unions failed to consider what would happen if capitalism could no longer secure the profits that the unions would then be in charge of redistributing. Unions could claim to get workers a fair stake under capitalism, but they had no alternative to it. This did not present too many problems as long as the conditions of the prosperous sixties were projected to continue into the seventies and eighties, as most

mainstream economists claimed.

When growth rates slowed and manufacturing competitiveness

**UNIONS COULD CLAIM TO GET WORKERS A FAIR STAKE UNDER CAPITALISM, BUT THEY HAD NO ALTERNATIVE TO IT**

declined drastically in the late 1970s, the political bomb that was Thatcherism exploded, emitting radioactive monetarism in all directions. Slowly but surely, the fall-out of comprehensive spending cuts has devastated education as well, leaving scars on a generation of students that have heard tales about grants that paid rent, bought books, and even went some of the way toward a summer holiday.

**..IN THE LATE 1970s, THE POLITICAL BOMB THAT WAS THATCHERISM EXPLODED, EMITTING RADIOACTIVE MONETARISM IN ALL DIRECTIONS.**

Today, more than half of British students have at least one job. Books are a luxury and the holiday postponed. Yet the grant is continually being slashed, and will eventually be eliminated, with the prospect of a North American loan system looming. The political lesson - which touches education crucially - is inescapable: when capitalism fails to secure the material basis for the Welfare State, it is the Welfare State that is attacked - not capitalism. As Thatcher explained with the penetration worthy of Marx or Keynes, you can't spend what you don't have, right?

**WHEN CAPITALISM FAILS TO SECURE THE MATERIAL BASIS FOR THE WELFARE STATE, IT IS THE WELFARE STATE THAT IS ATTACKED - NOT CAPITALISM**

So the lesson is that we have to produce differently so that we can spend differently.

To all of us involved in the educational process this means challenging existing institutions and creating a united force capable of challenging the decisional power of the State. In matters where educators, students and office workers have local knowledge and relevant daily experience, why should they not also have power to collectively decide how to organise their lives? It seems too much democracy is unhealthy for parliamentary democracy.

In the midst of the semesterisation debate, the Sussex Solidarity Network drafted a number of proposals, one of which was the following:

1994...As students and workers we are lucky to have grants and jobs as the Tories enter their fifteenth glorious year in power. But it is becoming increasingly clear that the quickest way to lose these things is to take their existence for granted. This would mean living only as a student or worker, when in fact we are all people with wildly varying interests and talents. Yet how many of us are given the chance to express these interests and talents in our present routines? Does this all really come down to paying the

rent now, with the hopes of a "career" or better prospects in the future? Or maybe its simply paying the rent...But no, we all realise there is a lot more. The question is, how do we go about striving for it?

**TOO MUCH DEMOCRACY IS UNHEALTHY FOR PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY**

Our separation into NUS, AUT, UNISON, and NUPE is a reflection of the needs of the current political and economic system - not of our needs. In order for us to begin to articulate our needs, we require new institutions capable of giving expression to our shared social existence beyond categories like student, cleaner, lecturer, secretary, porter, etc. The existing unions have not only served to maintain existing divisions, they are steadily losing their ability to even defend the economic gains of the past. Meanwhile, at a time that demands innovative thinking and new directions, the existing political parties are doing no better. Regardless of their orientation as right or left wing, they seldom challenge the old assumptions that professional politicians should defend us as

individual students, cleaners, lecturers, secretaries, porters, etc. We are calling those very divisions into question.

To start this process, the Sussex Solidarity Network sees dialogue between all people in any way connected with the university as vital. To begin with, this means coming along to share your views and to have a chat and a laugh. This is really important...We don't think much of existing hierarchies and bureaucracies, so you don't have to worry about being lectured by careerists or managers!

What a number of us had in mind was an organisation that united currently dispersed educational workers. However, we also insisted that the organisation move beyond questions of salaries and grants to address questions like: what in fact is education? What kind of wider scale social changes will be necessary so that all people can really control their lives collectively, and what role does education play in this process? Should we be absorbing "facts" or developing our critical faculties? If so, in what direction?

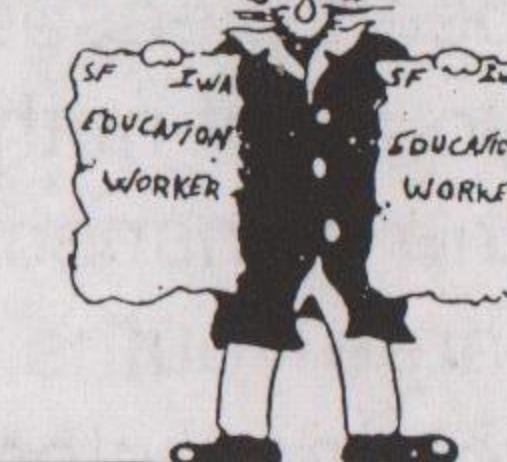
Thus we were aiming at something that combined both

**THE EXISTING UNIONS HAVE NOT ONLY SERVED TO MAINTAIN EXISTING DIVISIONS, THEY ARE STEADILY LOSING THEIR ABILITY TO EVEN DEFEND THE ECONOMIC GAINS OF THE PAST**

trade union with New Social Movement demands, realising that the latter were bound to fail without some solid material foundation. Though the Network eventually lost momentum, it did so for very positive reasons: it attracted people with such a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds, that it became impossible to follow a coherent set of goals. But we preferred to let this be the case rather than lose the utopian dimension of the project.

Why not relaunch it with all the creative energy that it needs to push theory and practice further?

**This is what EWN is trying to achieve..**



## SUPPLY AND DEMAND

**EWN supply teacher from Norfolk reports the facts of life in the schools OFSTED doesn't like.**

Norwich City College is an adventure playground for administrators. It took on a new principle recently who 'had to leave' a previous position - the local Eastern Daily Press is still reporting on the Lowestoft story. It's also time to economise on lecturers (no, not in the academic sense of economy, just pay them less). When you get into the battered rooms at the college to meet the students, who are mostly there because they can't get benefit, you can depend on being part-time. Part-time, temporary contracts are the new rule. And you can't get enough hours to make a living wage. Established senior teaching staff get eased into early retirement because they're more expensive and then return to take a share of the part-time work. Nice

system, perhaps they'll be a penny off income tax if we ever earn enough to pay it.

**In short, contracts get worse, working conditions get worse, resources get cut and staff, students and teaching quality necessarily suffer. On the other hand, OFSTED has seemingly endless resources - which of course come from all the fat of those slashed school budgets. And what is OFSTED for? Measuring QUALITY, of course!**

OFSTED have made the rounds in Norfolk. The pattern is typical: months of charging around generating piles of duplicated policy and piles of schedules to satisfy the Curriculum. The visit by the inspectors, every bit as intimidating as it's intended to be. In due course the report, never glowing, rarely too scathing, always something singled out for a slugging off. All the piles of documents disappear never to be seen again.