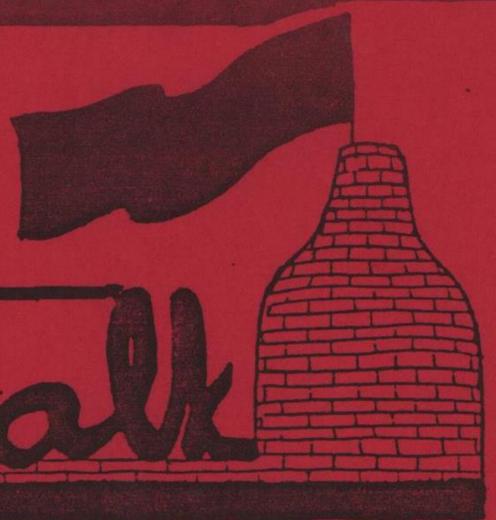


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Careless Talk



VOL 2
 No 1
 WINTER
 SPRING
 '85



INSIDE:

MICHELIN

ETHIOPIA

THE MINERS STRIKE

RELIGION IS POLITICS

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WHO ARE THEY KIDDING?

PLUS
 LOTS
 MORE!

"... WHEN I SEE AN ACTUAL FLESH-AND-BLOOD WORKER IN CONFLICT WITH HIS NATURAL ENEMY THE POLICEMAN I DO NOT HAVE TO ASK MYSELF WHICH SIDE I AM ON." **GEORGE ORWELL**

EDITORIAL

The paper is here again, hopefully stirring up trouble after an absence of over six months. It has changed drastically both in quality of production and in content. To mark this great event, we have relaunched it as Vol. 2 No. 1!

We have not been idle in the meantime and have produced leaflets on a fairly regular basis for distribution around Newcastle and the Potteries. These include three directly on the Miners Strike and one attacking the Trotskyite parasites of the left with their pretentious assumption that they can provide the revolutionary leadership they claim the strike needs. These people often have the gall to condemn the Hit Squads as terroristic whilst at the same time offering 'critical' or un-critical support to nationalist terrorist organisations such as the PLO or the IRA! We have also done leaflets about Ghandi's assassination and the Ethiopian famine, about the counter-revolutionary role of the Militant Tendency and a leaflet which was handed out to new students at Keele University critical of the role and life style of the student milieu.

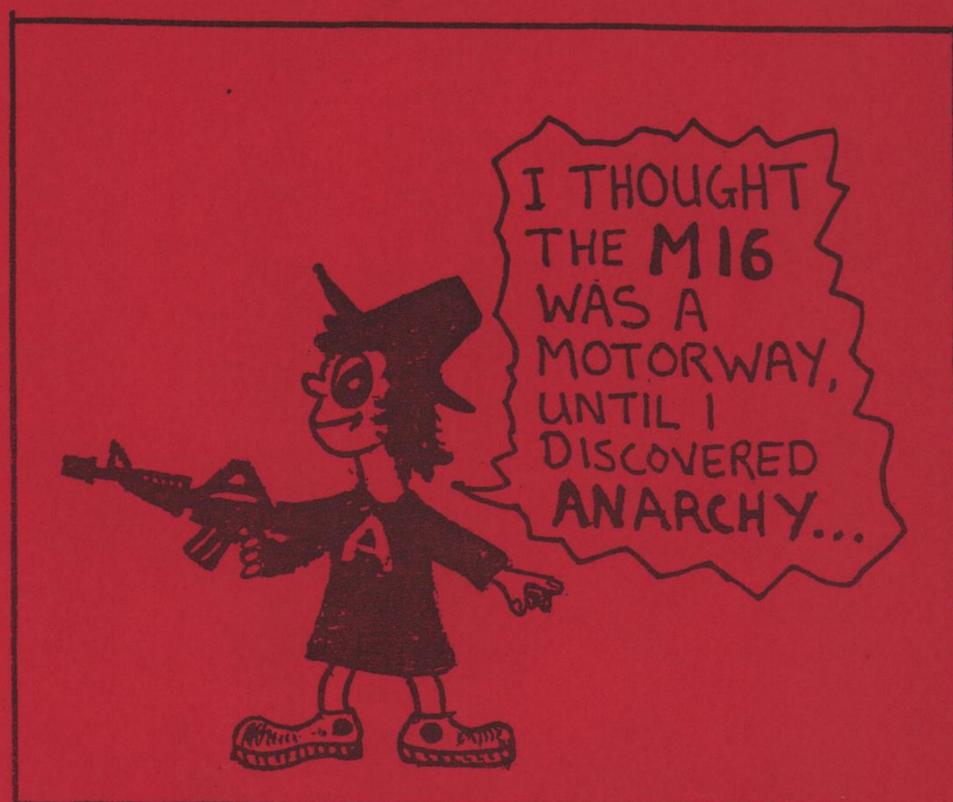
We have not been limited to producing written propaganda....we have also been active in collecting for the striking miners and building up our connections with the rest of the revolutionary movement (anarchist/communist)....not to mention contributing to the 'scabs welcome' given to Kinnoek when he came to Stoke. Samples of the leaflets mentioned above are available on request.

If you agree or are sympathetic with the views expressed in this paper or just want to cheer us up with a little bit of written abuse please write to our contact address and we will forward a suitable reply. We welcome contributions from anyone, particularly those involved in struggles of their own. However we must stress at this point that this paper is not a forum for political debate but a platform to express the collective views of the Careless Talk group. Articles which do not conform to the Aims and Principles will only be included if we as a group consider it to be valid or if space allows for a reply. We charge no fixed price for the paper as we do not think it correct that people shouldn't have access to our ideas for want of a few pence. However, it does cost us around 10p per issue to produce and any financial contributions will make financing the next issue easier.

ABOUT US

Careless Talk is a collective of revolutionary anarchists; libertarian and council communists living, working and claiming in the Potteries. We originally formed around three years ago to promote and spread revolutionary anarchist and communist ideas in the area in which we live. The paper grew out of this to further fulfill this aim, hopefully helping to make our intervention more comprehensive and widespread...if not quite international then at least covering other parts

of Britain. We do not claim to be the voice, representatives or leaders of the working class, but as part of that class we have a vested interest in developing and communicating ideas that try to explain the situation we are in and the only viable answer to that situation...Social Revolution. Having come together from different political backgrounds (some from trotskyite parties, the Labour Party, feminists and others) we have tried to develop coherent revolutionary positions whilst hopefully escaping the dead weight of fossilised dogma. We meet together regularly for the purpose of political discussion, planning actions and for the production of the paper. We do not underestimate the enormity of the task that lies before us and the rest of the working class, nor, as revolutionaries, are we deterred by it. If you wish to cooperate with us then write to the contact address. (For further information about the political positions of the group see the aims and principles elsewhere in this issue).



IDLE CHATTER

- * In Bolton Labour councillors unanimously elected a SCAB miner as Mayor.
 - * At Wolstanton a Labour councillor, not content with scabbing, insists on giving the pickets a 'fuck off' sign.
 - * Almost 12 months into the strike a local Labour 'activist' when asked why this was the first time they had appeared on a picket line replied "we waited till we were invited" !!
 - * According to another Labour activist the £10 notes and £20 notes which Labour MP's were seen to be donating on the stage at the imitation Miners rally in Stoke was money which had been raised earlier that week by street collectors!
 - * "I control public spending in this country, and as long as I control it you cannot win. In short gentlemen, the situation is this, I must destroy you."
- This quote isn't Thatcher to the Miners but was Labour Prime Minister Callaghan in '77 to a meeting of striking Firemen. Labour went on to break the strike using the Army.

MICHELIN...

ANOTHER SHELTON BAR?

"The area's staple industries - pottery manufacture, mining, steelmaking, textiles and agriculture - have all gone through periods of rationalisation in terms of labour demand... Only ...tyre manufacture (at Stoke) offers possibilities of continuing employment."

(Editorial of the N.Staffs. Labour Studies Group Bulletin 1973-4)

The above quote was written at the time of the Shelton Bar closures. The tyre manufacture that it refers to is the Michelin factory whose turn it is now to undergo massive redundancies. What is going to take its place this time?

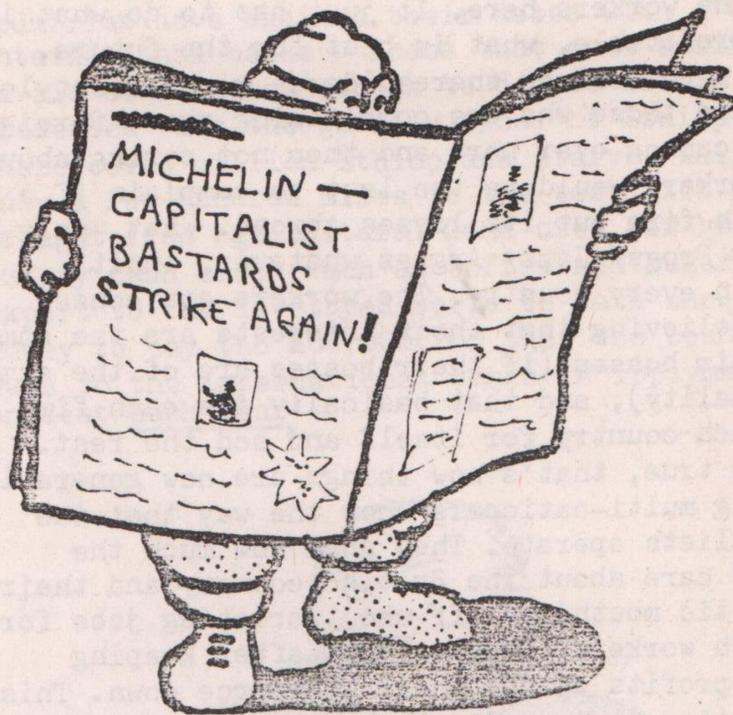
Like Shelton, the Mich at the time of the cutbacks is one of the biggest employers in the Potteries region. Like Shelton, it has recently been modernised to make it more efficient. Like Shelton, all four local MPs and the press are making a fuss about its closures.

THE BACKGROUND

Michelin is the largest single factory in the area. It employs about 5700 people, of which over 3000 are production workers. The company is French, and has four factories in the UK. The others are at Ballymena in Northern Ireland, at Dundee and at Burnley. The Stoke plant is the biggest by far, and is also the HQ. 1000 job losses were announced here in Stoke in December 1982, and in 1983 there was a month-long strike over the introduction of "new work patterns". Recently there has been large-scale investment in modernisation and restructuring.

But on January 8th this year Michelin suddenly disclosed that 2600 jobs were to go in the UK, of which 200 at Burnley and 2400 here. 100 new jobs will be created at Ballymena. It will be the biggest single redundancy in N.Staffs. since the war. (WW2 that is). Over a third of the workforce will lose their jobs, the majority going before May, and the remainder before the end of the year. By the end of April the production of tubes and of truck- and cycle-tyres will have finished, car-tyre production having been cut by about half. The ratio of jobs to go will be two production workers to one white-collar, which is biased against the production workers, who make up only just over half of the Stoke workforce. Michelin intends Stoke to remain as its British HQ and main production plant, but the work will be going to the other UK factories, which are "more modern".

Michelin management say competition from Eastern Europe and Japan has forced them to cut back. First Firestone then Dunlop closed their factories, and now it's Michelin's turn. They have recently been losing £1m a week at their factory here, they say, because of the recession in the motor industry, and the redundancies are "long overdue".



The government figure for unemployment in the area is 12.4%. This redundancy will bring the figure up to 13.6%. Also, another 1600 jobs are expected to "disappear" over the next two years as a result of reduced purchasing power and reduced demand for products allied to tyre manufacture.

PASSING THE BUCK

So what are the unions doing about it? You may well ask! Gordon Howle, the TGWU representative, came out with the usual patriotic nationalist crap. He complained about Michelin's "shipping jobs to factories on the continent". The local (capitalist) papers carried stories of the French management "slinking back over the Channel", leaving the redundancies to be announced by the Stoke managers. (By the way, how many job-losses in the management sector? You bet there'll be no hardship there...) In this way the English managers and media are putting the blame on the French, and so well out of their own capability to do anything about it. A shame the bosses couldn't do that trick with the pit closure plans too. "Sorry lads but it's out of our hands." (ha-ha).

A MICHELIN MAN
CONSULTS THE
"MICHELIN GUIDE
TO THE DOLE
QUEUE"



DIVIDE AND RULE

People are blaming it on Mich for being French and backing out on the Stoke workers because they're just English. Well try telling that to Michelin workers in France - 5000 of them got laid off last year and the year before. And that was by their own managers. Michelin isn't doing well anywhere, and it doesn't care whether it lays off its fellow-countrymen or foreigners like the workers here. It just has to do what is most profitable, what is best for the future, and its bosses' and shareholders' rich lifestyles. I'm sure those who are complaining about foreign firms coming over here and then not caring about its workers would be the last to complain if a British firm cut its losses abroad. What, only bloody Frogs/ Japs/ Argies whatever, innit? Same in every country. The workers are coned into believing that their interests are the same as their bosses (if their bosses are of the same nationality), and that basically its each firm and each country for itself and sod the rest. That's true, that's how things are now generally. But big multi-nationals show the way that the capitalists operate. They show how much the bosses care about the British economy and their patriotic mouthings-off about creating jobs for British workers. They're just after keeping their profits up and their workforce down. This patriotism, this nationalism, that all politicians, all businessmen, all trade-union bureaucrats come out with - its just the same old story... DIVIDE AND RULE !

And if it's not between countries, it's between areas. People say "why should the jobs have to go here when we've got all this unemployment?" The chances of getting another job are pretty bad here. But the places where Michelin are not laying off - Northern Ireland for example. They've got the highest rate of unemployment in the whole UK. So according to that "logic", the jobs should go here in Stoke, if they have to go. If you accept the capitalist logic of profits, then you must accept that those Michelin workers must lose their jobs, and that's that.

HYPOCRISY

Just to make sure that no-one can make any effective fightback against losing their job, Michelin came out with an immediate threat- anyone who goes out on strike gets sacked straight away, without redundancy money. The union response? Gordon Howle again: "These redundancies have been accepted to safeguard the rest." Well what can you expect from a union bureaucrat?

The interest of the boss-class is international against the workers of whatever country, their own particularly. To try to break the miners' strike the British government imports coal from East Germany, one of our "enemies" in the Warsaw Pact. It has its business interests in Libya and Argentina, though you'd never hear them mentioned at the moment, since its a little inconvenient. The British ruling class instead deliberately helps to uphold the myths of greasy and lazy, or inhumanly efficient and hard-hearted foreigners who are supposed to be the competitors and enemies of the British worker.

But it is obvious that the real enemy is the ruling class of every country. The working class must recognise that it itself is international - its friends and allies are the working-classes of each nation.

A present-day example of international working class solidarity comes, surprise surprise, from France, where those Michelin bosses came from and scuttled back to. French miners tipped coal onto the railway lines near Calais, stopping it from being loaded to bring over here and help break the strike. Examples like this occur all the time and all around the world.

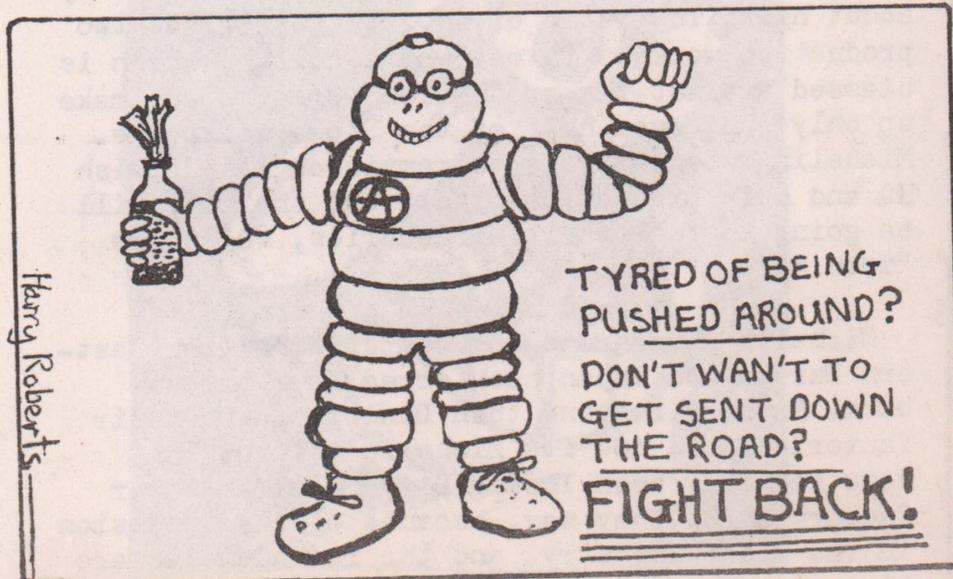
The Michelin workers could do it, together. To at least soften the blow. What's to lose? Half the workers will soon be on the dole anyway. And what's to say there'll be no more redundancies in the future? Everybody just going to accept it?

FIGHTING BACK

Or, one possibility.....
All out on strike. They can't afford to sack everybody. Occupy the factory - hold it to ransom and force the management to let those jobs stay. Imagine it - they can't just let their profits go down the drain. All their beautiful machines just sitting there, quietly doing nothing. It'd be a popular thing to do, too. Thanks in part to the media and the support of the local MPs, people are angry about the Michelin closures and would back some kind of positive move to fight back. Michelin workers would have a lot of support from the community. And from other workers in struggle. The miners know what its like to have no future, to be attacked by the ruling class of capitalists whose only "caring, sharing" attitude to the workers is to "care" about how much they can get us to do without pushing us too far, and making sure we each get a token little "share" of the profits that they screw out of us all. So link up with the miners, link up with the other Michelin workers here and elsewhere in the world. Outside of the unions, because they won't be any help. Find out who your real friends are.

NO CLOSURES. NO REDUNDANCIES.

But this is still not enough. Defensive action is essential if we are not going to go under, but we are fed up with running as fast as we can just to stay where we are....IT IS TIME TO GO ON THE OFFENSIVE.



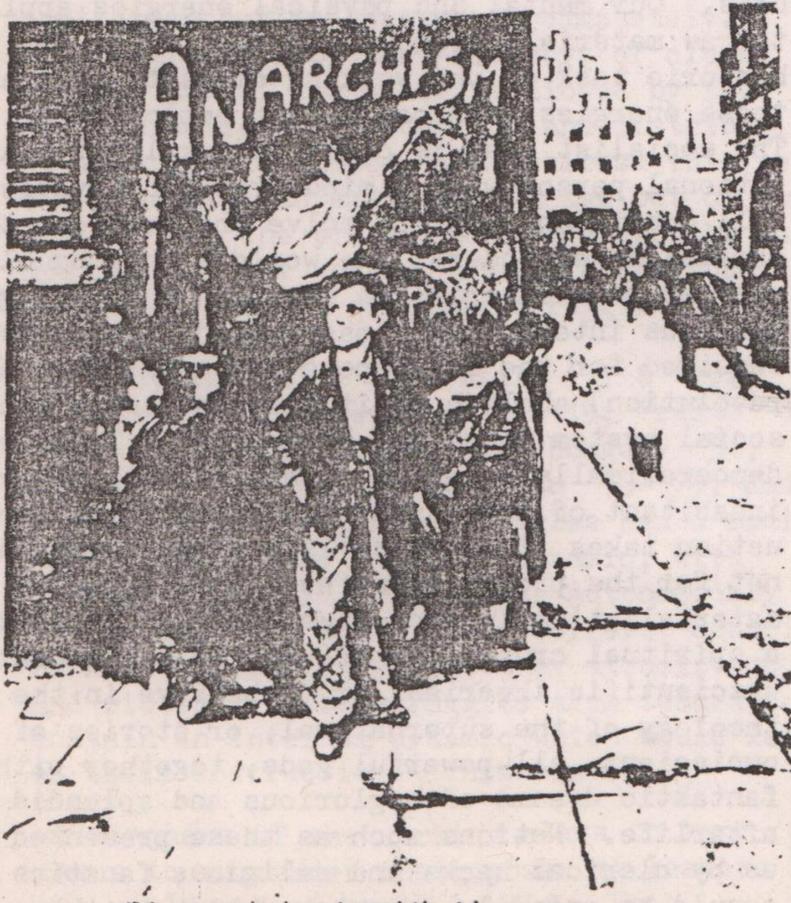


FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

Shortly before christmas, the Russians announced that they were banning all fuel exports to Britain in support of the miners' strike. Far from being a gesture of international working class solidarity, this is nothing more than a joke for the festive season, and a rather sick one at that.

Russian fuel exports to Britain are so small as to be virtually non-existent anyway, unlike those of Poland, Russia's ally and satellite. Poland is now exporting thousands of tonnes of coal to Britain, using the miners' strike as an opportunity to earn lots of foreign currency to help pay off its huge foreign debt (owed mainly to western banks).

This action, by a so-called 'socialist' country, has the full backing of Russia, because a return to solvency by Poland would take a considerable burden from soviet finances.



"You watch the pigs while I keep an eye on the Trots"

MORE BULL FROM THE CHINA SHOP

At the beginning of December '84 the chinese government announced that it was giving up its "strict" adherence to marxism-leninism, in the light of China's need for modernisation.

The western media have presented this as 'proof' that communism can never work. Certainly, if you look at China or Russia now, this does appear to be true: both have extremes of wealth and poverty; both have a capitalist class (in the form of state-capitalist bureaucrats) whose interests are directly opposed to those of the working class; both have labour (concentration) camps; and both have systems based on wage slavery, in which workers are given tokens (money) which are worth less than the value of the goods they have produced.

Rather than proving that communism can never exist, this simply proves that communism does not exist in these countries. Marxism-leninism is neither revolutionary nor communist. It is simply a rival system to run capitalism. It is authoritarian, hierarchical and statist and offers the working class nothing more than the replacement of private faceless capitalists with public faceless bureaucrats. The official dropping of marxism-leninism will make as little real difference to the ordinary chinese worker as its introduction did!

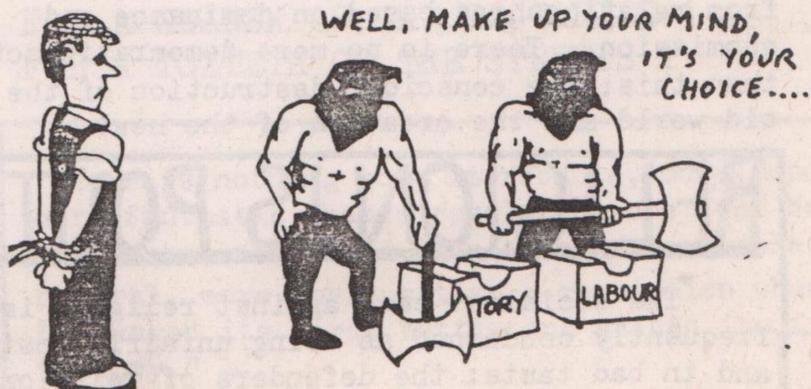
CALL THIS DEMOCRACY?

We are often told that we are lucky to live in a democracy, that we have the freedom to choose our own government. But what exactly is it that we are free to do?

Think about it. Once every five years we get a chance to put an 'X' on a ballot card next to the name of someone we have probably never met, never heard of and know nothing about. And that's our part over with.

For their part, they can decide what sort of education will be available, whether children will pass or fail, how long we have to wait for medical treatment, whether we will live or die for the lack of a kidney machine, whether to build a road through your house, whether to build a nuclear power station next to your home, whether

to shut down your factory, coal mine or college, whether you will lose your job, and ultimately whether the world we live in has five minutes or five years left before it is blown to pieces! AND THEY CALL THIS DEMOCRACY!



CALL THIS DEMOCRACY.... CONTINUED

We live in a society of carefully constructed illusions -- illusions created by those in power and conditioned into us by schooling, advertising, television, newspapers, religion and other propaganda. The purpose is for us to see things the way our rulers want us to, and not to recognise the reality -- the reality of poverty, misery, despair, frustration and anger.



Perhaps the greatest of these illusions is the illusion of 'democracy': a system which offers you any choice which keeps their power intact. If you don't like the government you can vote for an 'alternative' government.... but you can't vote for an alternative to government. Whichever one we choose, we get the same upholders of the three basic rules: work long and hard; accept decisions made for you by others; and consume. This is not democracy, it is a prison of mind and spirit which we reinforce every time we sit back and say, "That's life, that's the way it goes. These things are sent to try us. I wish I could do something about it, but I can't."

But we can do something about it!

The apparent invincibility of our rulers is yet another illusion: THEY ONLY GET AWAY WITH IT BECAUSE WE LET THEM! Individually we are weak and isolated, but together we are strong! No army or police force can keep down even one-tenth of its population by force alone.

Only when the majority of ordinary people (that is, the working class) consciously challenge these illusions and seize control of our own lives, only then can we rid ourselves of capitalism and of the parasites who now rule us. For the first time in history we will be able to create our own reality -- a reality that is free from the chains of money and exchange, where production is to meet the needs and desires of everybody and not to line the pockets of the rich, and where all people can relate to each other as social equals, freed from relationships based on dominance and submission. There is no more democratic act than this: the conscious destruction of the old world and the creation of the new!

BELIGION IS POLITICS

The socialist case against religion is frequently condemned as being unfairly hostile and in bad taste: the defenders of religion apparently adopting the stance that religion

should remain a 'no go area', some how neutral and above criticism. Socialists are unequivocal in their reply: Religion is Politics. Religion is bloodily political when it is seen blessing the people and the machines (on all sides) which in wartime threaten and plan to murder, maim and terrorise millions of workers in the defence of the economic interests of the Capitalist class. Religion is despicably political when it sanctifies such spectacles as the weddings, coronations, inaugurations and investitures of our rulers, all of which are sickening demonstrations of class dominance and privilege.

Religious ideas serve as a barrier, an obstacle which inhibits the working class from concentrating on the material world and, consequently, from gaining the essential understanding and political consciousness imperative for the overthrow of capitalism. Humans are born into a material world, their ideas are fashioned on that world and those ideas will modify and re-design it.

Religion does not understand why the problems of capitalist society exist, therefore, religious theories cannot answer any questions regarding that society. Capitalism's crises cannot be solved by each of us imposing on ourselves some moral adjustments. How can any moral adjustment be at all possible, let alone effective, in dealing with the problems of capitalism when capitalism continually forces us into behaving in a competitive, antagonistic, anti-social and sometimes anti-human fashion, in response to a social system of an insecure, exploitative, degrading, repressive and humiliating nature? A social system that starves to death or kills by disease, or poisons to death with its industrial and chemical filth, millions of workers every year. A social system that has seen fit to harness and utilise the intelligence and ingenuity of people to produce the most indescribable, horrific and devastating prospect ever to face the human race: nuclear holocaust and extinction.

Religious force does not produce any of the wealth in modern society - the power of Labour does. Our mental and physical energies applied to raw materials produce wealth. It is the historic task of the working class to liberate those energies from capitalist exploitation. The socialist case is clear and explicit. Any rational person with a mind free from mysticism will understand that to solve the problems that capitalism engenders, the world's working class must adopt a materialist approach and through conscious international mass action (which is required for the so desperately needed social revolution) abolish capitalism and establish a social system where all the means of life are democratically owned and controlled by every inhabitant of the earth. A system where production takes place to satisfy human needs, and not for the profit of a few. A scientific, materialistically conscious mind has no need for a spiritual crutch, it refuses to accommodate unscientific theories, or to believe in the theology of the supernatural, or stories of omniscient, all-powerful gods, together with fantastic dreams of a glorious and splendid afterlife. Notions such as these presented to us by clerical hacks and religious fanatics should be speedily despatched back to the age where they were born - an age of superstition and ignorance.

J. A.

JUSTICE: THEIR WORD FOR THEIR SYSTEM

One of the key examples of the supposedly 'free' society that we live in, is the 'great' british system of justice. You can do what you like and say what you like, so long as it is within the law. A person is safeguarded from abuse of the law under the old principle that they will be tried by their peers and are innocent until proven guilty. This is another lie that the system perpetuates!

Even if their were 'fair' trials by jury all the time, they would only be the 'fair' application of laws which are made by the ruling class, largely to protect their own interests; and the decision as to what sentence a defendant receives would still be made by judges, who are a part of that class. But, in fact, there is not even the 'fair' application of unfairness!

For a start, in Northern Ireland, many people accused of serious offences under the Prevention of Terrorism Act are not entitled to a trial by jury. Instead they are sent before special courts -founded by Lord Diplock- where they are tried and convicted solely by judges. "Northern Ireland is a special case," is the defence usually argued by governments (Tory and, in their time, Labour as well). But even in the case of trials on the mainland, the supposed principle of a 'fair' and 'free' trial by one's peers was effectively abolished by the introduction of positive jury vetting in 1975. This is where, to "ensure the proper administration of justice" (a nicely vague turn of phrase) each juror is examined by any, or all, of the criminal records office, special branch and even the local C.I.D.s, so that those considered "unsuitable" (which really means, "unsympathetic to the prosecution") can be excluded.

Still beyond this is the state's ability to lock people up for a considerable period of time without any trial whatsoever. Every year around 45,000 are arrested and refused bail (in most cases at the request of the police -so if they don't like you, you've had it!). There is no maximum time limit to how long you have to stay inside, before they either bring you to trial or release you. Three months is not uncommon, and there are examples of people being remanded for nine months or even longer. (in the 'Persons Unknown' case in 1979, Ronan Bennet, arrested with five other anarchists for conspiring with 'persons unknown' to create 'explosions unknown', was kept in prison for over a year without trial -before the case against them was finally dropped because of a complete lack of evidence!)

The 8,000 people who are on remand at any given time have to endure conditions that one house of commons report condemned as an 'affront to human dignity'. In some cases remand prisoners are kept three to a cell (12' by 7') without any sanitary facilities, for instance Cardiff Prison which was built in 1839. 50% of these prisoners will be acquitted, while another 25%, though found guilty will not receive prison sentences from the courts. This system is widely used by the state to break the spirit of its opponents that

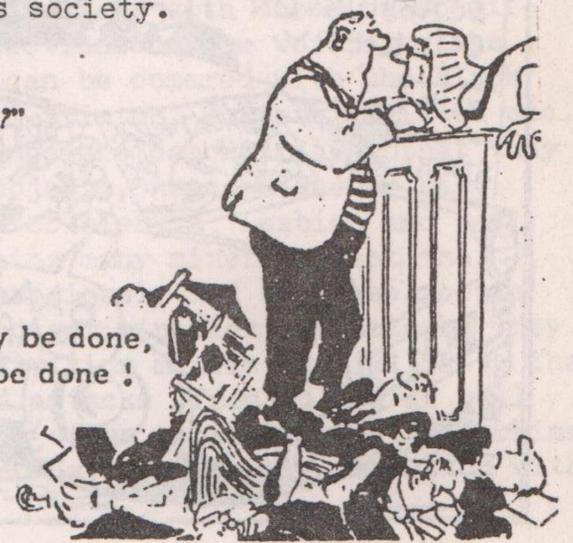
it cannot successfully get rid of through the courts - its use throughout the miners strike is a prime example. (over 10,000 people have been arrested during this strike, not including those arrested for collecting. Of these less than 7,470 had been charged by the 8th of February and only 4,352 had been in court. Those that are not in remand centres are being held on 8pm whilst 8am curfews, restricted to certain areas, banned from picket lines or forced to sign on at a Police station every day.)

Their system of justice is not there to protect the innocent, or to guard the weak from the strong... it is just another instrument used by the state to control the working class. The law ensures only subordination, not order. It is legal for the capitalist class to steal our wealth - as profit extracted from our labour - and it is legal to murder in the name of the state during war (Northern Ireland and the Falklands are two British examples, all states are the same in this respect). It is illegal however, for us to take back any of our own wealth or to strike back at our oppressors in any effective way: their law forces us to exist on the fringes of legality, struggling to survive in a world controlled by and for capitalism.

We do not seek to reform the law, because any reform within the framework of the class society would necessarily have to accept the basic injustices of that society. Instead we seek the abolition of law in a world wide social revolution. Social harmony cannot be enforced by the violence of state retribution, but must arise freely from communities which are liberated from poverty, inequality and the shackles of capitalist ideology and based upon the mutual aid and solidarity which will arise during the collective struggle against class society.

"Have you anything to say before I smash your face in?"

Justices must not only be done, they must be seen to be done!



*If you were wondering whether you might be considered as 'unsuitable' or 'subversive', read what Harold Salisbury, former chief constable for York, and the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire, has to say about the work of special branch:-

INTERVIEWER: Which groups would be in the files here?

SALISBURY: Obviously anyone who shows an affinity towards communism - that's common sense - the I.R.A., the F.L.O., and I would say anyone who's decrying marriage, family life, trying to break that up, pushing drugs or advocating homosexuality, indiscipline in schools, weak penalties for anti-social crimes, pushing that sort of thing. Oh, a whole gamut of things like that could be pecking away at the foundations of our society and weakening it.

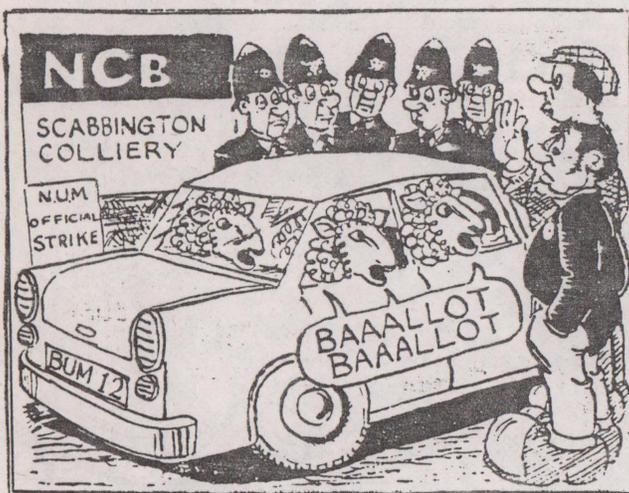
INTERVIEWER: And do you regard these people as subversives?

SALISBURY: Well, in a word, yes.

MORE THAN JUST THE MINERS

After General Strikes in the public sectors of Belgium and Iceland, Steelworkers striking in France, car workers striking in solidarity with Metal workers in Germany, mass strikes and barricade building in Spain against pit closures and also in the shipyards and more recently against 'layoffs' in the shipyards, as well as large strikes in Holland and Italy. After massive riots in Tunisia and Morocco, in Brazil and South Africa...plus countless mini-riots in inner city areas and pit villages in Britain.... after all this, and more, can anyone still believe that it is only a question of the miners sector - or even that it is just a British problem?

In going out on strike against wage cuts or closures in order to increase or maintain their standard of living, individual sections of the working class can be isolated and defeated. "The Miners United Can Never Be Defeated" is a very misleading slogan. Only by several if not all the sectors of the working class linking up their struggles and their demands can the international attacks on the working class be stopped. The job losses and wage cuts currently being implemented are not due to nastiness or mismanagement on the part of the Tories but are due to the world crisis which is currently hitting an outdated and insane method of production and distribution i.e....world capitalism.



Having gone out on strike to refuse tens of thousands of job losses that the management is trying to impose, the unions are trying to make the struggle a struggle for the "British Economy"! Against Pit closures is translated by the unions into "Coal for Great Britain"! As if we have more interest in being exploited for coal than for petrol or porridge. The NUM loudly calls for a stoppage of imports, a raising of exports of coal and a raising of investments in the coal industry. But where are the interests and needs of the miners in all this? The management problems of those who exploit us should not be our problems. The ruling class does not hesitate to attack the working class in order to maintain our (more vital!) living standards.

THE MINERS STRIKE—"FIRST SHOTS IN A BATTLE WHICH IS YET TO COME."

POSITIVE ASPECTS

The most positive aspects of the struggle so far have been those outside of the control of the unions. 1) The actions of the Hit Squads in effectively organising the destruction of coal board property. 2) The riots which have occurred in many pit villages where the inhabitants have organised themselves in order to fight back against the physical occupation of their streets by the police. 3) The Womens Support groups which are active in supporting the strike, not just through the food centres, but by organising their own picket lines and demanding some say in the running of the strike. In Fitzwilliam a scab was given an anxiety attack as a mass picket of women chased his minibus showering it with stones. Women have also picketed NUM offices when bureaucrats have tried to make their organisations more accountable to, (i.e. more under the control of) the NUM. 4) Wildcat strikes in support, by Steelworkers in Scotland and by school kids in Yorkshire.

RADICALISATION

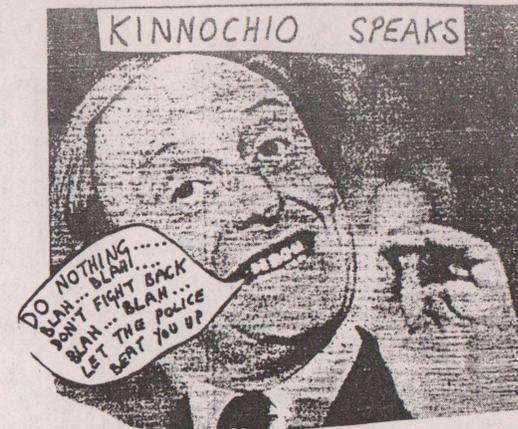
Many of those involved in the dispute have become radicalised by it. They have come to reject the role of the police, the law and the media by seeing how they are used against them. Many have seen through the charade of the Labour Party by noticing how frightened the Labour Party is of an escalation of the strike....of a real class victory. No doubt many miners recall Labours long record of sending troops in against strikes



when they are in power (the Fire Brigade strike in 1977 for instance), or perhaps they remember Labours willingness to support imperialist wars, wars where workers are killed to protect the interests of the capitalists. The riot police, the atomic bomb, Polaris missiles are all here courtesy of previous Labour governments. Even if Labours anti-working class history is not remembered, the savage Tory cuts have obscured the equally savage Labour cuts (Labour has closed down more pits than are now in existence), in this case one has only to observe the behaviour of 'Her Majesties Loyal Opposition' during the current dispute. It took five months to get Kinnock on a picket line and nine months for him to appear at a rally. When a rally was organised, it was not a Miners rally but a tame Labour Party rally, only 150 miners were invited! Even so he got the heckling he deserved despite the over zealous POLICING of the event by the stewards. Their repeated hypocritical condemnations of miners violence, coupled with an examination of Labours record of strike breaking reveal that the Labour Party is and always has been a fundamental part of the ruling class and seeks only to govern British capitalism. As such they are not as some would have it, class traitors...they have served their class well by diverting any real opposition to this society.

THE UNIONS

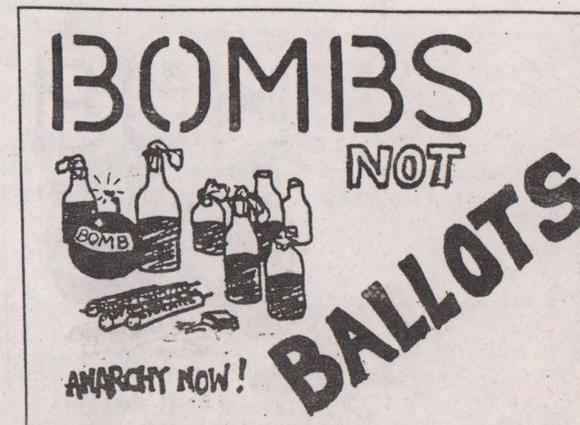
Less of those involved in the dispute have realised the limitations of trade unionism, mainly because of Scargills militant image. Those that can see the reactionary nature of the TUC are still prepared to leave the struggle under control of the NUM. Leaving aside for a moment the fact that unions divide the struggle keeping it on the terrain of competition (e.g. Britain against France, Coal against Oil etc.), here are a few examples of the NUM's conduct before and during the dispute:-
JAN '83 In Scotland, as pickets from the Kinneil Pit gain support for their sit-in, McGahey calls off the strike. Kinneil Pit is shut. In Wales, the NUM ignores an 80% vote for strike action against job losses. The threatened pits are shut. In Kent, the NUM opposes strike action against redundancies at Snowdown pit.
OCT/NOV '83 Seven week strike at Monkton hall pit in Scotland. The NUM negotiates what they call a "victory". None of the strikers demands are met.
JAN/FEB '84 Action taken by Scottish miners at Bogside and Polmaise pits against closures. Spontaneous walk outs throughout Scotland in response to new shifts and productivity deals. Scottish NUM Executive meeting refuses to call an all out strike, saying there is no support. Polmaise miners storm the meeting and attack McGahey. In all more than 23,000 miners lost their jobs in '82/'83 all of them under the conditions of the 'Plan for Coal' which the NUM is so keen to defend.



During the dispute the NUM has condemned sabotage and violence off the picket lines, in Lancashire and Yorkshire Officials have tried to sabotage effective picketing, it has threatened to fine pickets throwing bricks at the police (doing the police's job for them!) and has tried to ensure that Womens involvement is restricted to collecting and providing food rather than picketting.

It should be clear from the above outline of NUM actions that if a struggle is to progress and change from a struggle within capitalism to a struggle against capitalism then a break with trade unionism is essential. This does not mean rejecting organisation since the formation of strike committees controlled directly by those involved in struggle whilst aiming to link up with others in struggle is the next step. The way to gain meaningful support is not to rely on verbal or financial trade union solidarity but to go directly to other sectors of the working class.

Reactionary attitudes such as sexism and racism have been overcome by many when they compare their own struggle with those of specifically oppressed sections of the working class. The miners' riots can be compared with the Black and unaged riot in Brixton, Toxteth, Bristol etc. Women on picket lines are demonstrating that they are not just sex objects, house wives or baby machines. At Bold colliery a 'Lesbian and Gay' mass picket is making many miners reject the stereotypes they previously had of these people and recognise the discrimination and attacks they are suffering as striking miners is similar to the discrimination and attacks (from Police as well as from fucked up ((often repressed gay!)) working class people) which Gay people have to put up with all their lives.



WAYS FORWARD

Besides spreading the strike to other sectors which is vital here are a few way in which we feel the strike might advance. Obviously we are not being stupid enough to say how the strike should be run, merely putting together what WE think are the best suggestions we have heard so far.

1) Sabotage of working pits... conveyer belts have been cut at several pits including Silverdale. Apparantley the Breathing equipment is one of the easiest and most effective targets.

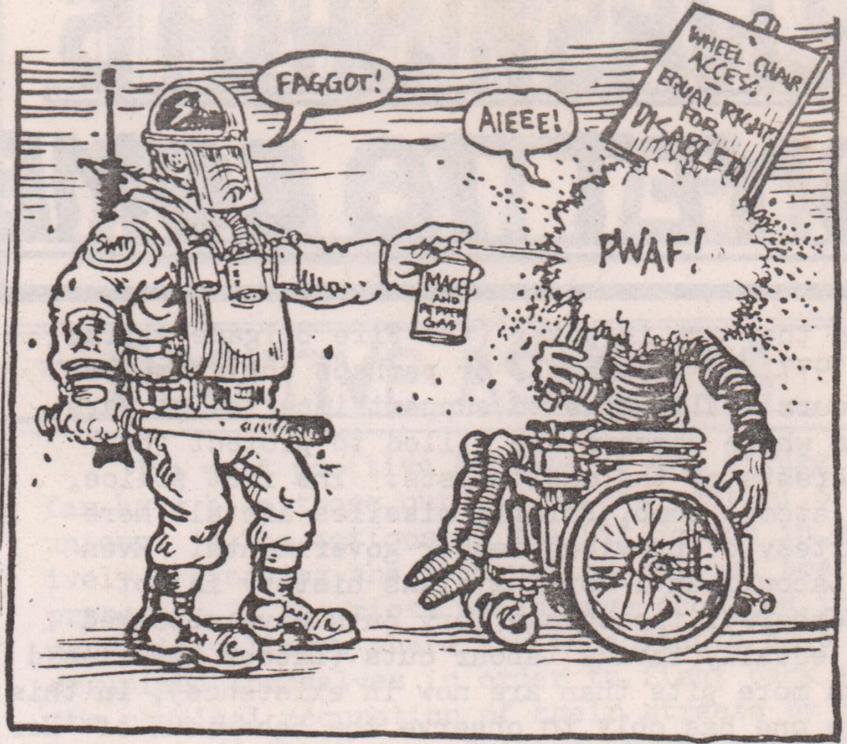
2) The destruction of coal stockpiles, it is the existence of these which has dragged the strike on for so long. COAL IS FOR BURNING!!

3) More riots. The riots so far have tended to be a direct response to police provocation, there is no reason why Police stations and other enemy stong holds should not be attacked first. Attack is the best form of defence.

4) More wealth redistribution. This tends occur naturally during riots etc. and is quite important when calculated starvation is a tactic of the ruling class. In Italy a few years ago thousands of women worked on the principle of 'Can't Pay, Won't Pay!'. They would enter a shop together in a large group, do their shopping and then walk out (rather quickly!) without paying.

5) A similar approach might be applied to transport, it would be safer though if transport workers were approached to arrange free transport for pickets. This is particularly relevant in some militant areas where the NUM has taken away the transport of pickets supposedly because of the sequestrations. They have the foresight to move seven million pounds to America but cannot manage to hold onto enough petrol money to finance pickets!

6) Autonomous Workers or Unwaged groups.... i.e. Groups of people brought together during the course of the struggle who organise themselves outside of the union to initiate actions, put out propaganda and discuss politics....not party politics but the politics of liberation, the politics of class war.



7) Solidarity with all those arrested, imprisoned or made redundant during the dispute...these people, often the most militant, cannot just be abandoned. Financial and verbal support is important, it would be even better if their release or reinstatement along with the destruction of all police records on strikers could be included in the demands of the struggle, a struggle which will continue no matter what Scargill and McGregor do. In 1972 five dockers were released from Pentonville Jail due to mass protests and the threat of a mass strike. This shows how much the law is DIRECTLY manipulated to suit the interests of the ruling classes and how working class solidarity can overturn the supposedly politically neutral judgements of the dodderly old rich bastards who run the judicial system.

8) Even something as straightforward as refusing coal at your place of work can have devastating results. In Scotland two janitors who refused to accept coal at their school were suspended to accept coal which had recently been blacked at their School were suspended. This led to sympathy strikes by teachers and many of the schools in Ayreshire were closed down during the early winter months. The NUM does not usually black coal to schools....if it did then the effects of the strike, and therefore the likelihood of victory would be greatly increased.



WHO YOU GONNA CALL?
NOT HIM! PIG BUSTERS!!
A HARRY ROBERTS PRODUCTION.

'PIG BUSTERS'®

THE STORY OF AN ALIEN FORCE WHICH TERRORISES A WHOLE PLANET. EVERYTHING IS MADE TO SERVE IT AND ITS INSANE LOGIC. VAST SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION BECOME ITS SLAVES - THEIR LIVES ARE REDUCED TO A MEANINGLESS DRUDGERY. THE FORCE IS CALLED CAPITAL.

THE STREETS ARE PATROLLED BY ITS ZOMBIE SERVANTS: THE PIGS! THEY PROTECT THE PROPERTY OF THE CAPITALISTS AND STAMP OUT ANY RESISTANCE.

THIS STORY TELLS OF THE INCREASING ORGANISATION OF THE OPPRESSED, WHO ARE ABLE, THROUGH THE CONCIUS ESCALATION OF THE CLASS WAR TO FINALLY LIBERATE THE EARTH.

An event not to be missed, lots of fun for people of all ages.

A PERSPECTIVE FOR THE STRUGGLE

We must realise that a change in the managers of capital will not reduce our exploitation. Replacing Thatcher by the Labour Party or even by Scargill will change nothing. The "socialist" Mitterand government of France or the "communist" (really only State Capitalist) governments of the East (which Scargill, McGahey and Taylor all support) all carry out the same anti-working class policies, and all are shit-scared of any real mass working class movement. Even a demand for nationalisation and/or workers control would not be the answer. This would only lead to state- or self-managed exploitation..... i.e. wage slavery, competing enterprises and a central state to protect property would still exist.

It is the very idea of EXCHANGE which should be attacked, for it is this which shackles the immense means of production which are now at our disposal. We have the potential to meet all our needs and desires.... instead, in order to maintain prices and a quick turnover, there is planned scarcity, built-in obsolescence and, as a result, work for the sake of work. Even when we have enough money to buy all the goods we want, they become a poor compensation for the boredom and isolation of our everyday existence....for the complete lack of real control we have over our lives.

The crisis into which the world has fallen is not a crisis of scarcity but of OVERPRODUCTION. The western means of production are working at a mere 60% of their potential. This century has been marked by a cycle of crisis - war - reconstruction - crisis: if we are to escape the drive towards global war and the destruction of humanity, then we must aim not to reform the worst excesses of capitalism but to destroy it completely. The destruction of wage-slavery, of class society and of the state, followed by the reorganisation of production and distribution to meet people's needs and desires: this is not some utopian daydream plucked out of thin air, but is the project embarked upon by large sections of the working class in the most advanced examples of class struggle this century.

Russia 1905 & '17; Italy '17 & '20; Ukraine '17-'20; Germany '18-'19; France '36; Spain '36; East Germany '53; Hungary '56; Paris '68; Portugal '74; Spain '75-'79; and Poland '80. All these struggles had a radical and revolutionary internal dynamic, with workers organising themselves autonomously through Factory Committees, Workers' Councils or Mass Assemblies whilst they struck, occupied and rioted. These struggles also tended to contain an internal dynamic which would lead to their destruction. This was the

willingness of the working class in many cases to surrender their power to leaders who would act on their behalf. Even revolutionary leaders acted against the interests of the working class, and the

acts of these past leaders have demonstrated conclusively that "the emancipation of the working class is the task of the working class itself, OR IT IS NOTHING!"

It is time to escalate the struggle towards the destruction of the old world.



**A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION:
PROLETARIAN SHOPPING FOR
BEGINNERS.**

GENERALISE THE STRUGGLE TO ALL SECTORS.
ABOLISH WAGE SLAVERY.
ORGANISE AUTONOMOUSLY OUTSIDE THE UNIONS.
SABOTAGE THE NATIONAL ECONOMY.
DESTROY THE STOCKPILES.
FOR A GDANSK OF THE FACTORIES !
FOR A TOXTETH OF THE STREETS !

"There is nothing more improbable, more impossible, more fantastic than a revolution one hour before it breaks out; there is nothing more simple, more natural, more obvious than a revolution when it has waged its first battle and gained its first victory."

ROSA LUXEMBURG

ETHIOPIA ~

HYPOCRISY FOR THE HUNGRY

The famine in Ethiopia has highlighted many things about the world that we live in such as the inability of capitalism as an international system based on profit and exploitation to meet even the basic needs of a large proportion of the world's population, but above all, it highlights the indifference and callousness of governments - ALL governments! Not because they are 'bad' or 'wrong', but because they are the public faces of a system which through the barbarity of its own logic has created this famine, and which unable to find a solution, seeks to exploit it as best it can.

LET THEM EAT INSULTS

The British government has ignored the famine for two years, only acting when the media, unable to ignore this 'genocide' any longer, stimulated public opinion into forcing the government's hand. Even then, the government refused to take the famine seriously.

Cecil Parkinson, former Tory party chairperson speaking to a public meeting at Keele in October, described aid as an insult to those countries that received it! Perhaps this is their reason for their pathetic response of only sending three Hercules transport aircraft when it was acknowledged that another fifty such planes could be made available - perhaps they did not want to insult the starving Ethiopians too much! It could also explain why the government tried to reduce 'Band Aids' attempt to 'insult' the Ethiopians by clawing back 15% of the proceeds in V.A.T. They are not just being tight because they are Tories, but are following a fine tradition of consciously using the suffering of others to achieve political objectives. As Ethiopia is a satellite of the USSR, the holocaust there is a headache for Russia since it must be seen to be looking after its own. As such, the longer the famine continues, the more political capital the West can make. Before you condemn this as too cynical, it is worth remembering that when the Marxist-Leninist government of Ethiopia nationalised British business interests in late 1974, the British government (then Labour!) stopped all aid despite a famine, condemning 200,000 Ethiopians to death!

RED STAR DELIVERY

As for the Russians, they have clearly failed to look after their own. The aid they have given is as negligible as that of the west. (Partly because their own economy is in such a state.). Their only significant visible contribution has been to supply and fly the aircraft necessary to transport tens of thousands of famine victims from Mekele camp to the agricultural areas not hit by the famine several hundreds

of miles to the south-west. This seems a fine gesture on the surface, but again the reality is sickening. Mekele is in the province of Tigre, where a guerilla war against the government has been raging for a couple of decades. These Tigrean famine victims - long standing victims of oppression by the central government in Addis Ababa - are being transported too weak to resist and too desperate to refuse, to what are effectively labour camps in the south west to work on state farms in return for food. This is a calculated attempt to depopulate Tigre in order to undermine the base of support of the Tigrean (nationalist) guerillas, so bringing the victory of the Soviet backed central government nearer. The famine is not just a godsend to the West!

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN, INTO THE FIRING LINE!

Speaking of godsend, the Israelis were not slow to cash in on the confusion the famine has created in Ethiopia to complete a project of their own. The airlifting of 25,000 black Ethiopian Jews was not the sentimental and emotional act of reunification portrayed by Israel and the western media. These survivors of the famine are to be cynically used to complete Israel's colonisation



of the West Bank and Gaza (occupied in 1967). Recognised 'officially' as Jews in 1975, the Israeli secret service has since been trying to think of ways of bringing them 'home'. It is no doubt presumed that these hardy peasants, used to a life of poverty and persecution, will, when given decent housing, land, jobs and regular food, be the most stalwart defenders of Israel's new frontiers. The public feeling of sympathy for the famine in Israel has prevented any major outcry at the arrival of these immigrants, allowing the whole project to run smoothly. Without the famine things would have been quite different - racism is rife in Israel, not just against the Arabs, but against the Asiatic non-European Jews.

ENEMY WITHIN

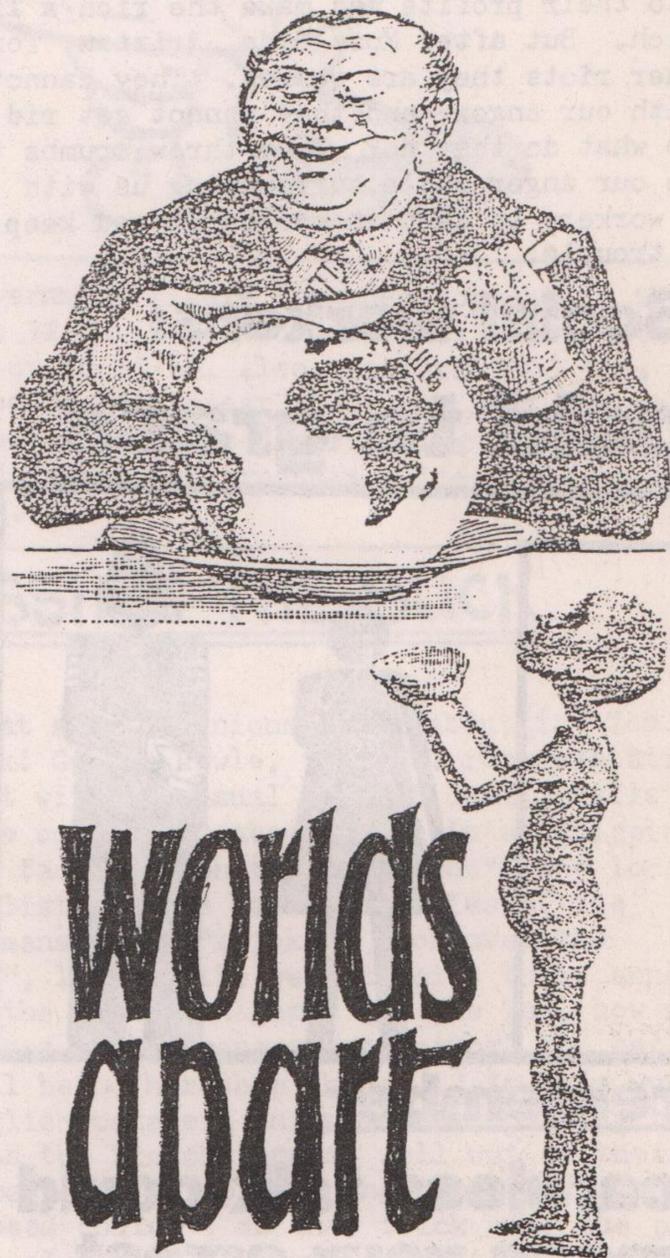
The Ethiopian government has failed to alleviate the suffering for perhaps more obvious reasons. As one of the world's poorest countries it is materially unable to solve this crisis (caused by the failure of the harvest for yet another year - down nearly 40%) but it bears a substantial proportion of the blame for the famine. Over 30% of government income is spent on fighting the various Eritrean national liberation movements in the north-east (as is a huge proportion of Soviet aid). This has led to a failure, to provide the resources necessary to maintain agriculture in the face of continued failed harvests, and to a destruction of much good agricultural land in the fighting along with the consequent displacement of thousands of peasants to areas outside the battle-zones, where the land is not capable of supporting them with or without crop failures. Add to this the government's indifference to the plight of these Eritrean and Tigrean refugees on racial and political grounds, and we can see how this crisis was allowed to reach its current catastrophic proportions. But although the famine has highlighted the hypocrisy and opportunism of those governments that have so far become involved, they are not its root cause. Contrary to the outpourings of the media and the charitable organisations, the starving of Ethiopia (and the millions of others throughout the world) are not merely unfortunates needing our charity, but are the victims of the logic of capitalism, an international system where property comes before people and profit before need, a system in which famine forms an integral part.

CAPITALISM & FAMINE

It is true that there have always been famines throughout history, but the era that we live in is unique in that, whereas climate used to dictate the fortunes of food, it is now the international system of trade, prices, production and profit that determines who goes without and starves. Throughout the third world, governments, to attract foreign aid and investment, have 'sold' their land to the multinational corporations, displacing millions of peasants for whom the land was once their source of subsistence. Deprived of their means of life, they pour into the overcrowded shanty towns of the cities to live off charity or crime. Others are simply relocated on land unable to support them. When once, stockpiles were gathered to see through

the winters and guard against crop failure, the multinationals (now controlling 75% of all food production) destroy millions of tonnes of 'surplus' food to ensure scarcity, maintaining high prices and thus securing high profits. While in order to preserve their investments and expand their markets, they prompt their sponsors to fight their wars by proxy in the third world - destroying all but the creation of misery.

The land not owned by the multinationals is the only real collateral many third world countries have against their debts with the international banks - loans that once arrived as aid now condemn others to die as we are presented with the ghastly irony of Ethiopia where seven million Ethiopians starve, while only a few hundred miles to the west lies rich, drought free agricultural land used for growing luxury cash crops such as coffee and sugar to export to the developed world to earn enough money to pay the £68,000,000 that the country owes to the international banks in repayments on debt each year!

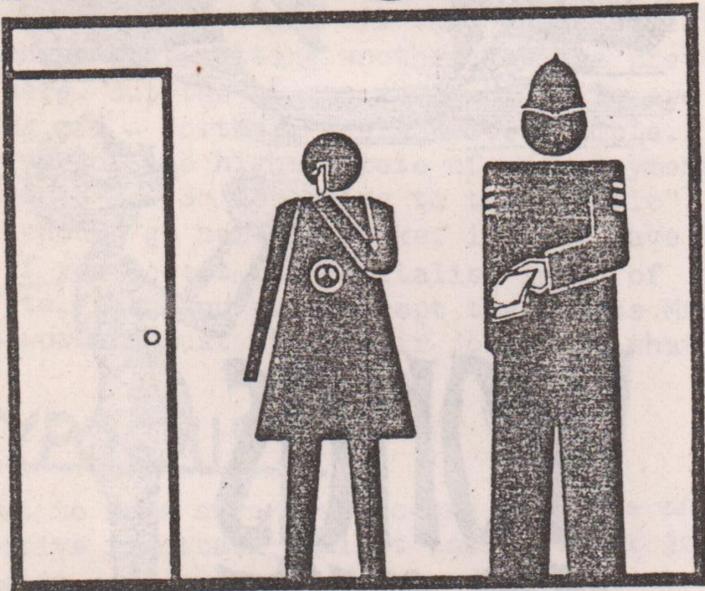


This is the logic of a barbaric system where the obscene spectacle of perpetual famine exists in a world of plenty; where despite the fact that there is enough grain produced each year alone to feed the entire world, two thirds of its population suffer the effects of hunger and malnutrition. And it is getting worse - while the world's attention is focused on Ethiopia the famine is spreading to the Sudan and Chad through to central and western Africa. It is a crisis created by capitalism, it is no accident, it is genocide.

WHO ARE THEY KIDDING?

Millions of people - including hundreds of thousands of young people - are existing on the £25 a week that the government dish out to us on the dole. Most of us can't afford to do regularly the things that those in work take for granted, i.e. going to the cinema, theatre, swimming, restaurants, night clubs and holidays. Instead, we are expected to search for jobs that are not there, argue with the DHSS, sign on and get bored. To them, we are no longer people, we are a problem. They can't solve this problem, because they have machines to do our jobs that are a lot less trouble than we are (they don't demand decent working conditions, more wages and less hours) and they can't afford to give us a decent living if we are not producing anything because it would eat into their profits and make the rich a little less rich. But after Moss Side, Brixton, Toxteth and other riots they are scared. They cannot cope with our anger, and they cannot get rid of us. So what do they do? They throw crumbs to appease our anger while surrounding us with social workers to keep an eye on us and keep us out of trouble.

Social workers: paid to grass



remember

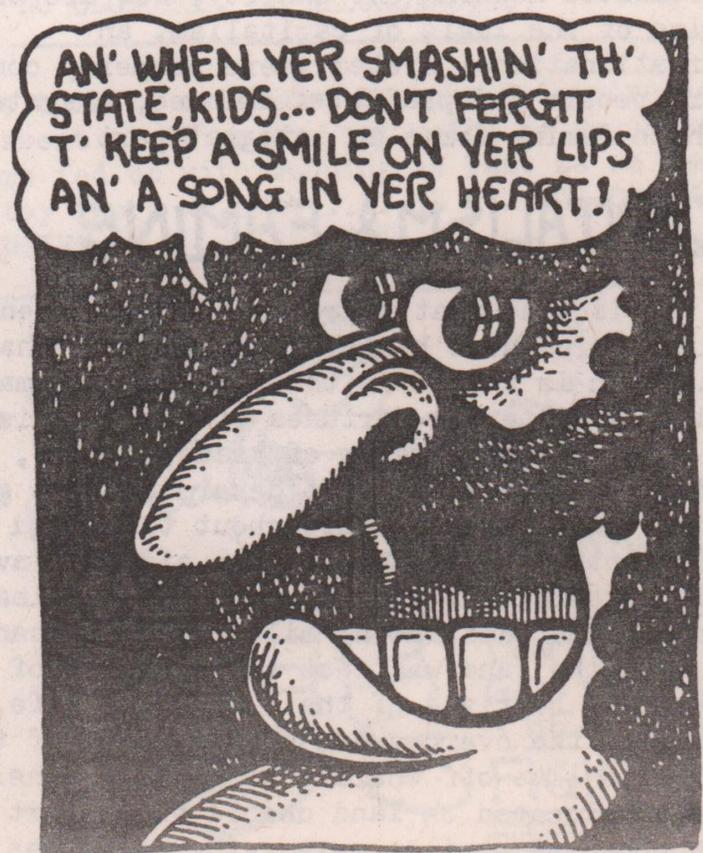
**careless talk could
mean your arrest**

The new coffee bar, 'Youth Line' is a good example. Selling subsidised hot drinks at prices the unemployed can afford it has become very popular - not surprising since there is fuck all else to do that doesn't cost the earth! But far from being a new facility aimed at providing a service for the unemployed, it is paid for by the government and sponsored by NACRO (The National Association For the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders) as part of a scheme to reduce 'petty crime' (ie shoplifting, vandalism and Social Security fraud), the actions of the

powerless and penniless. The police were even invited onto the committee that set it up in the first place! Its job is to keep us off the streets and give them a chance to get to know us so that they are in a better position to prevent us from displaying our anger. Its almost like they want us to place ourselves on voluntary probation! Well it wont work! Cups of tea at 8p a time are all well and good, but you can only drink so much and all the tea in the world won't solve a thing.



Nor will building garden centres for the delight of tourists like the one they are building on the old Shelton Bar site. Do they think that the smell of exotic flowers can hide the stench of decay in this rotting society? They cannot buy our anger, nor can they hide it, grow flowers on it or ultimately prevent it from being let loose again. They cannot and will not do anything for us, we must do it ourselves - the spirit of Toxteth is not dead, FIGHT BACK!



CLASS WAR PRISONERS AID

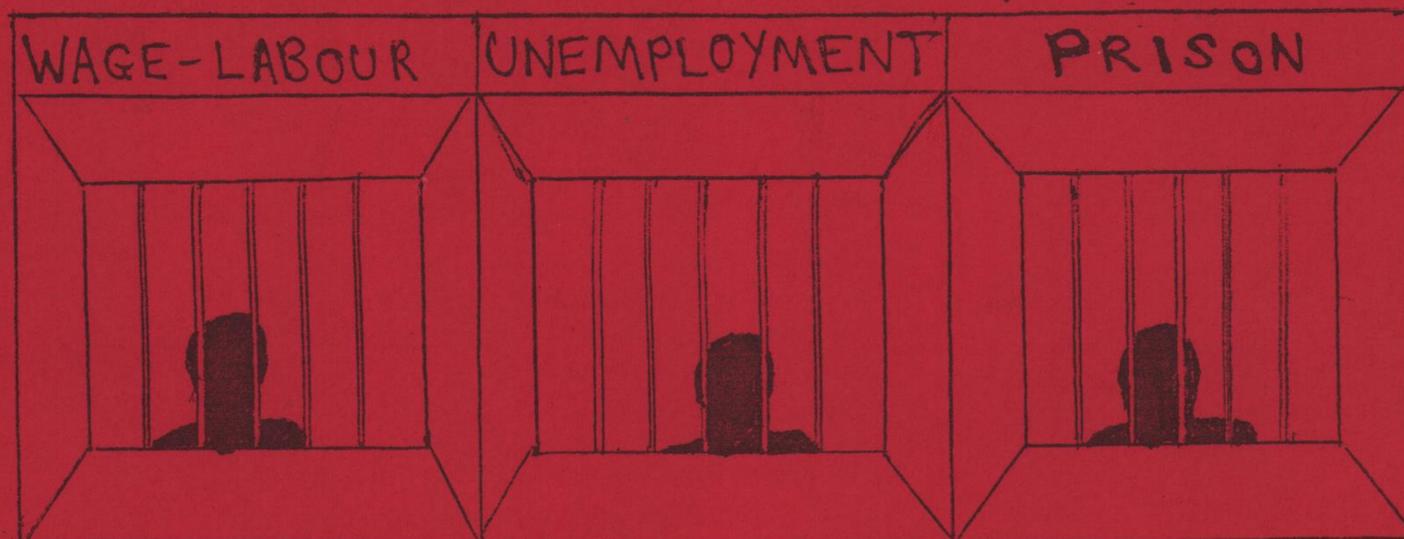
A campaign has been set up to support those miners and others who have been arrested for the part they have played in the miners struggle. It also hopes to offer practical support for the families of those currently detained.

We want to send parcels, books etc. and communicate with the prisoners; collect money for their families and organise any other possible forms of solidarity.

The basic principles of the campaign are as follows:

- 1). Unconditional defence of all working class prisoners arrested in connection with any offences in support of the miners struggle. Support for their relatives, and for those who have lost their jobs as a result of the strike.
- 2). OPPOSITION TO ALL ATTEMPTS BY UNION BUREAUCRATS TO RESTRICT SOLIDARITY WITH PRISONERS as has happened in Yorkshire where the NUM has actively prevented miners from supporting those arrested during the riot at Fitzwilliam.
- 3). Opposition to any separation being made between 'political' class war prisoners and imprisoned 'common criminals'. Most working class prisoners are inside for petty crimes against capitalist property. We seek maximum solidarity between prisoners, workers and the unemployed.
- 4). Only working class solidarity can free the prisoners. The liberation of the working class is the task of the working class itself!

Class War Prisoners Aid
Box CWPA
355 Holloway Road
N7



CARELESS TALK: AIMS & PRINCIPLES

- 1). We are for the abolition of capitalism which is a system of exploitation and oppression existing throughout the world. This task can only be carried out by the working class themselves for themselves. The working class is the vast majority of the world population and includes housewives, the unemployed and all those who sell their ability to work in order to survive.
- 2). We urge that struggles be directly controlled by those involved in them, not by unions, political parties or organisations which seek to lead or claim to represent the working class
- 3). We are against all divisions within the class (such as between men/women, blacks/whites, gays/straights...) where one section of the class oppresses another. These divisions prevent unity in struggle and can only serve the interests of the ruling class.
- 4). We are against all forms of nationalism and for international class struggle.
- 5). We want an end to wage slavery and the beginning of production for need not profit where everyone has an equal say in the running of society and in determining their own lives.
- 6). WE ARE FOR INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL REVOLUTION - FOR WORKERS' POWER !