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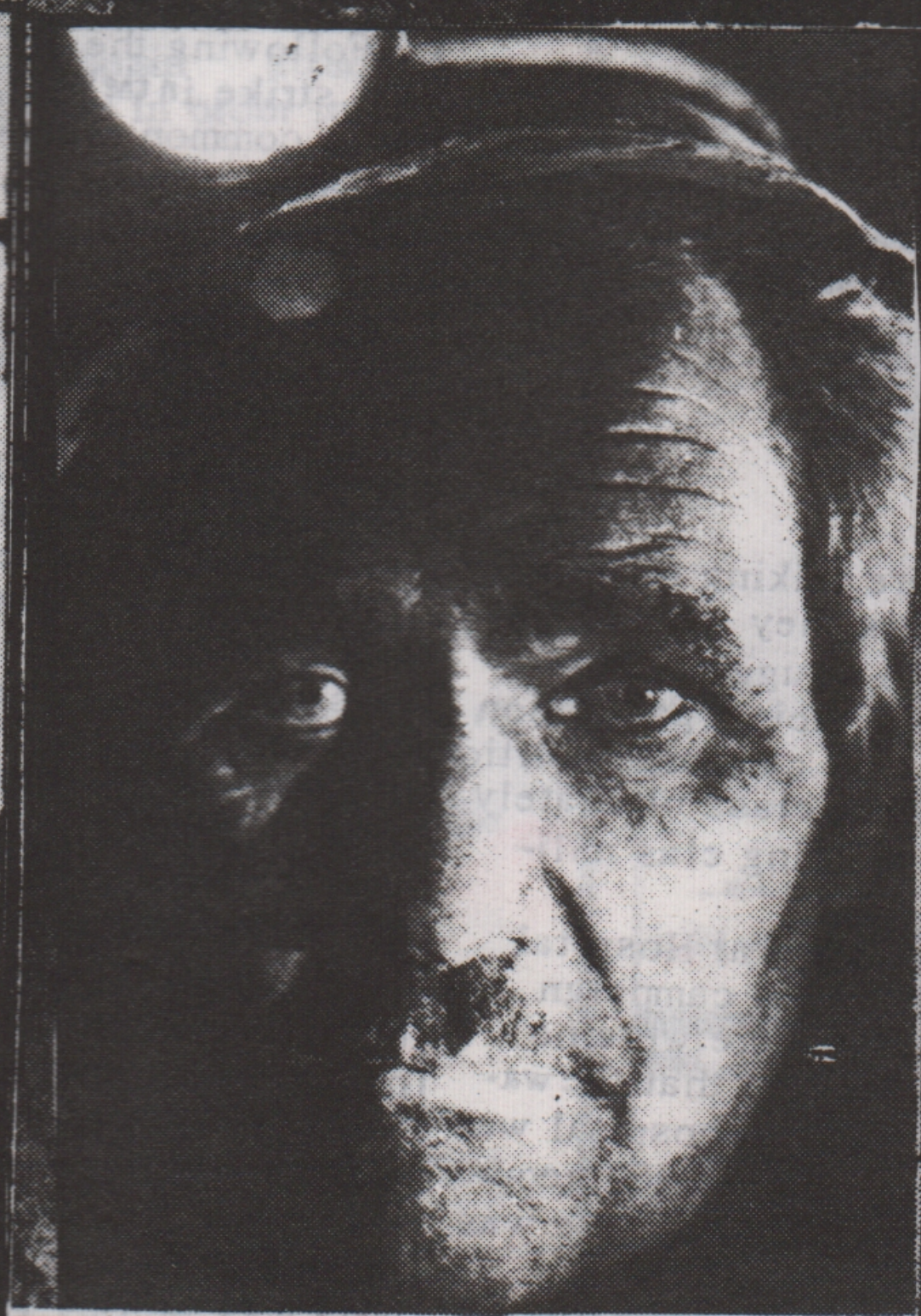
FEBRUARY 1974

5p

# libertarian struggle



FOR WORKERS POWER



paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



# REDS BESIDE THE BEDS

'Hospital Worker' was formed just after last year's ancillary workers' strike and has mainly revolved around the paper of that name. The money for the publication was originally lent by the International Socialist print shop—it has now been paid back. It would be true to say that IS had quite a part in setting the grouping up — although not completely.

It's development up to now and in the future will depend on the way IS decide to behave, (see their heavy-handed attempt to monopolise NUT Rank and File and make it into the IS teachers branch.). So far, they have allowed other groupings to have a voice in the organisation and Hospital Worker remains a genuine rank and file group.

The 'Hospital Worker' Conference on January 12th was attended by 50 trade unionists. It started off with a discussion on the lessons of the last year. The left-wing inside NUPE had demanded a rise to raise hospital workers' wages to £30 and the right had demanded a rise to bring the wage up to £25. The executive had accepted the right's proposals.

Many workers remained ignorant on the in's and out's of the pay claim; no copies on the pay award being circulated in the areas by the Head Office. Alan Fisher, General Secretary, of NUPE, will say that the offer has been democratically accepted by the membership, something with which union militants would not agree.

A steward from Portsmouth spoke on the private patient ban in his hospital. He said that the tactics against the private patient system was to remove staff from the private patient wards to handle NHS wards—there was a 50 per cent staff shortage. He also mentioned the food problems at Portsmouth.

A speaker from the floor told the conference of the private patients ban operating at St. Georges. There was also the problem of agency staff at this

hospital — the union branch had presented an ultimatum over this to the administration and they had backed down. As from now there will be no agency staff at St. Georges.

At this point a member of NALGO ACTION addressed the meeting about the need to build links between public sector workers. A ballot had been taken of NALGO members, of whom 50% had voted, the majority of whom were against industrial action, but for an overtime ban over their pay claim.

The conference continued in this fashion, with many speakers from the floor talking of their experiences in their local hospitals. The necessity to break through Phase 3 was underlined. The NUPE leadership has manoeuvred to get the membership to accept the pay claim and 'Hospital Worker' must increase its influence in order to stop Fisher and his cronies getting away with this again.

It was also to be noticed that the hospital workers there who happened to be members of the International Marxist Group or Workers Fight, two Trotskyist groups, were pushing for liaisons with other workers in struggles. Whilst these links must certainly be encouraged, we feel that these militants were spending all their time on these issues rather than militancy in the place of work. This is vitally necessary if 'Hospital Worker' is going to grow as a rank and file group.

One speaker pushed for the setting up of Shrewsbury 24 defence committees in each hospital. We feel that this is extremely impractical — solidarity for the 24 must be based on union branches, and the defence committees would become isolated, as well as the fact that militants are very thin on the ground and this would take up all of their time.

While IMG talked of support action for the miners — joint action, demos, etc — the IS line was much more related to the situation — ie the necessity of building a mass struggle by the ancillary workers against NHS reorganisation, with the increased attempts at hospital closures, — against Phase 3 — against the employment of agency staff — against canteen prices (which will worsen!) — against bonus schemes (which will lead to more and more attempts to make work methods more productive, with a subsequent rationalisation of the NHS).

It was the duty of militants to take the fight against hospital closures to the rest of the organised working class, to build up effective shop steward organisation, with the long term programme of democratising the unions. In a sector not capable of mass struggle, it was necessary to make this possible.

The growing police-army collaboration was talked about, while one speaker pointed out that hospital workers were productive workers, the finished product being the fit patient.

## CAMPAGNING NOT

## WORKING IN THE CLASS

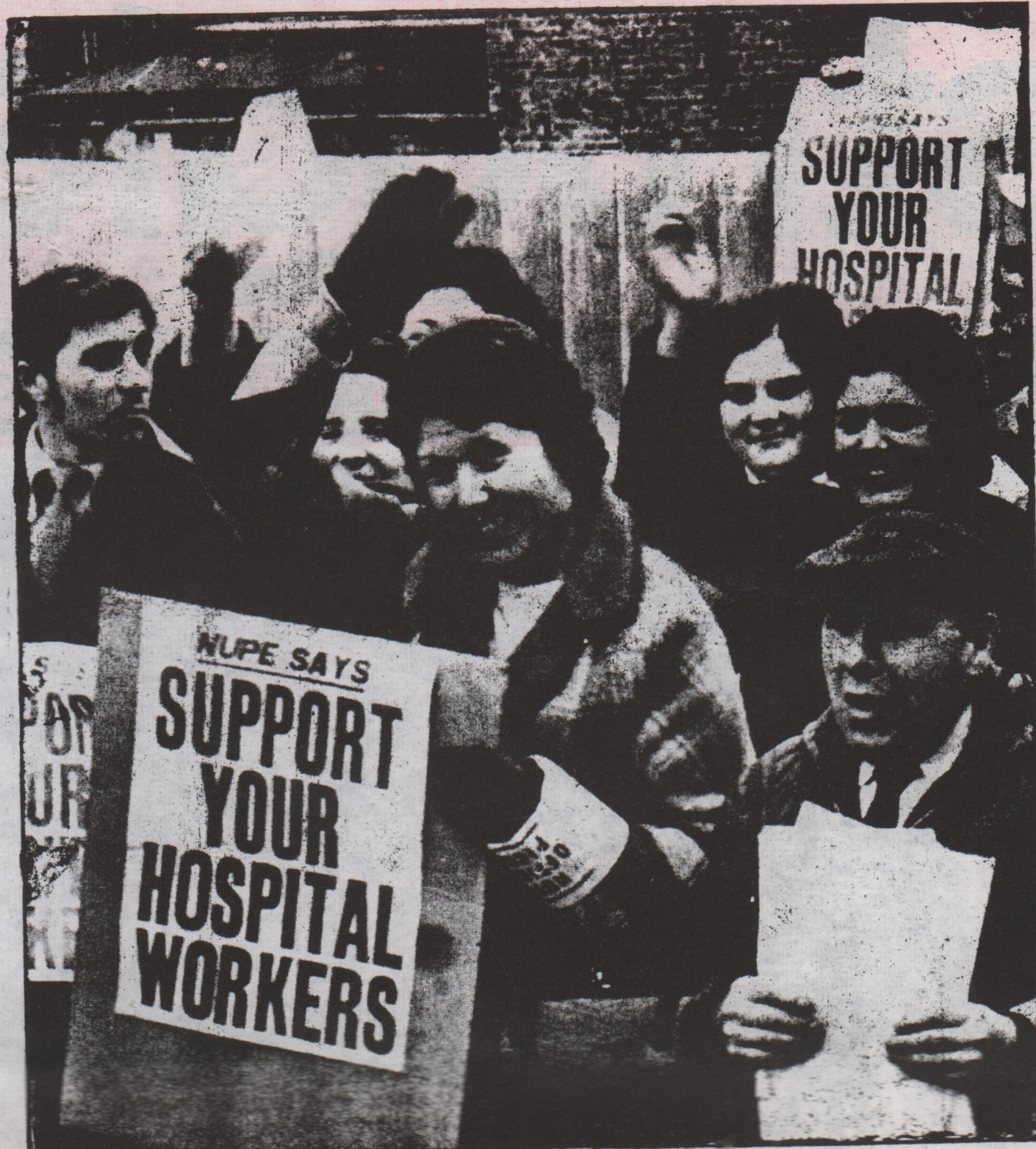
Again and again, the IMG were talking about militancy outside the job, and in this they were misunderstanding the real nature of the struggle. This developed from the class basis of their organisation, predominantly student, emphasis on campaign politics rather than work inside the working class ultimately influencing the outlook of their working class militants.

A speaker from the threatened Poplar Hospital in London's East End talked about the campaign there. She pointed out the fact that there were no NHS buildings in the East End, the fact that the wards were packed, and that the casualty hospital was closed down; this despite the fact that 25,000 people would be moving into the East End and there was a building programme under way.

A miner from the 'Collier' rank and file paper also addressed the conference and talked on the need for a mass rank and file conference. A conference on this question was being held on March 30th in Birmingham. The IS is backing the conference all the way. It is being initiated by the various rank and file papers in which the IS has a foothold.

Undoubtedly there is a need for a mass rank and file movement, but as several speakers pointed out the movement must not be under the control of any one political group. IS will be asking that SOCIALIST WORKER be a paper adopted by the movement. This attempt to turn a rank and file into the backyard of a political organisation must be fought at the conference tooth and nail by all those who believe in the self-activity of the working class. The editorial board of 'Hospital Worker' was then elected by the conference — including an ambulanceman and a nurse — thus hopefully increasing the likelihood of articles about these sectors, rather than material predominately on ancillary workers.

At this stage we, feel that all militants in health work should support 'Hospital Worker' and help it become an active force in working class struggle — that is while it remains a genuine rank and file group with full democracy where no one political group has dominance.



LAST HOSPITAL WORKERS STRIKE - FIGHTING TO THE END

Text of the Leaflet Prepared for the Hospital Worker Conference by Hospital Workers in ORA.

"Following the defeat of the ancillary workers' last strike in the Spring, militants realised the need for a common organisation and means of communication across the unions in the NHS. Out of this grew the Hospital Worker. The first Conference attracted over 50 Trade Unionists. Since then it has attracted more hospital workers. Sales have increased. And it has improved as a means of communication.

It has still a long way to go before it becomes significant as a force in the Health Service. It failed in its attempt to mobilise people in the fight for the £25 basic claim. As it grows, it will be able to do so more successfully. To do so, it is going to extend its campaign to democratising the unions. It must also move from support of rank and file actions to taking part in their initiation. This involves it becoming an active, rank and file organisation instead of mainly a newspaper-selling network.

The main battle of 1974 is evidently going to be over so-called NHS reorganisation. Its main purpose is to turn the Service into a safety net for those who can't afford private patient schemes. They are rapidly expanding, helped by us as taxpayers. They are advertised specifically as 'bringing workers and management together'. The NHS was won by years and years of bitter working class struggle. Like every other gain, this one is getting hammered by the bosses offensive. In practice, this attack means no building programme, hospital closures, bonus schemes, reduction in staff levels and the rest of it. Low pay will be further reduced by canteen price rises.

Inevitably, an organisation of militant workers is predominantly socialist, but there are different versions of socialism. The only solution to the chronic economic crises is socialism fully controlled by the working class.

This does not mean it should be a united front of left groups. Nor should it be dominated by a particular left group. If one group is in control, that group will use it for its own policies. We can't rely on any political groups to be right, or to act in our interests, all the time. The only way we get correct policies is by full control by the whole membership. Only this kind of organisation can provide a vehicle for struggles in the coming months."

Published by the hospital workers in the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists.

## TEND LEFT

Since its founding in November 1971, the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists (ORA) has developed from being a number of anarchists who believed in organisation and away from the morass of the traditional anarchist movement with its 'anti-theoretical anti-organisational and anti collectivist bias. It is in the process of moving toward a cohesive practice of libertarian communism, the theory of which was already existing but was swamped by individualism.

In this process a tendency appeared within the ORA which took on the trappings of quasi-Trotskyism. This was because they were divorced from the class struggle, not basing their practice within the working class. This tendency wanted to see the direction of the ORA by its 'most competent and advanced militants', rather than by the full involvement of the membership.

This tendency is now outside the ORA. No doubt the various Trotskyist groups among whom they scatter will crow over this. The Trotskyists and other 'vanguard leaderships' see the death of another left group as more chance of their gaining power. This exposes their commitment to the working class as only a matter of tactics. They are welcome to these people as we may have lost some members but we have preserved our essential commitment to libertarian politics.

We intend from this point to step up our efforts to expand as an effective libertarian revolutionary organisation, as without such organisation the dissemination and triumph of libertarian communist ideas within the working class movement is greatly hindered.

As rank and file militants and a part of the working class, we intend to help in the creation of non-bureaucratic, democratically controlled rank and file organisations from which must spring the realisation that the working class must organise as a class. This will be expressed in the formation of factory and neighbourhood councils that will challenge the power of the ruling class and its State.

We appeal to all those militants outside of the ORA who believe in the self activity of the working class and the creation of a free classless society to join us in a movement that will aid in the achievement of such a society. North London ORA.

## ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

This paper is written and produced by militants all over the country, who are active in their trade unions, tenants' associations, claimants' unions, women's liberation groups, schools, colleges and universities.

We are united by our membership of the ORA a democratically organised group, which fights for a libertarian communist revolution. This means a revolution brought about, and firmly controlled by, the working class. This is the only foundation for a society in which production is for need, not profit, free from exploitation and oppression.

The only way working class power can express itself, is through workers' councils in the factories and through neighbourhood councils in the communities. Demands for improvement in workers' living standards, whether wages, better housing, etc, are not purely economic demands. The working class must make each demand a move towards the control of production and the control of their own lives. Therefore every organisation and struggle of the working class must be directly and democratically controlled by the workers involved. Consequently we oppose all groups and parties who take the initiative and control from the working class.

As part of our attempt to put this kind of politics into practice, we have rotating editorship of each issue of this paper. We produce the paper (none of us are professional journalists) to provide one means of spreading some hidden facts, of publicising what workers are thinking and doing, to workers in other industries, and other parts of the country, to talk about what claimants, women, immigrants, pensioners and school-kids are doing, and to show how these battles can be united.

We won't give you the familiar shit about, 'this is your paper'. What we do say is: —USE this paper, —pass on what you've learnt, —contact others in a similar situation.

We know that lots of people have no practice at writing articles — but who needs literary genius? An essential factor in the development of the working class movement is the communication of details and the lessons of its various struggles.

The editorial group producing this paper wish to state that signed articles do not necessarily represent national ORA policy.

WORKERS' POWER — NO SUBSTITUTE!



# TENANTS GO DOWN

With the collapse of the partial rent-strike in Oldham, and the rumoured collapse of Kirby's total strike, the militant tenants' actions against the housing finance act have almost ended in the North West.

Ended in more or less total defeat; the Unfair Rents are still here. The second round of increases last October provoked only a brief spasm of renewed militancy. None of the local Labour councils — not even those with rock-solid majorities like Wigan or Kirkby — have shown any fight. (not that they are likely to!).

There are lessons that can be learnt, which might prove useful next time around. (Although it is unlikely at the present that another major confrontation will blow up on the question of council rents, now that the principle of 'fair rents' has been forced through.

Firstly the media — daily press, radio and TV — played down news of the rent-strikes. They over-emphasised the council's estimates of the numbers on strike, at the same time ignoring or briefly mentioning as claims the counter-estimates of the tenants. Even when a rent-strike in one area was given prominent or sympathetic coverage, eg by the 'Jefferies' of Granada TV in the N.West, its impact was reduced by its local nature. This meant that there was a disastrous lack of knowledge about similar struggles elsewhere. This makes it unlikely that a national Tenants association, set up and controlled by the tenants themselves, will materialise.

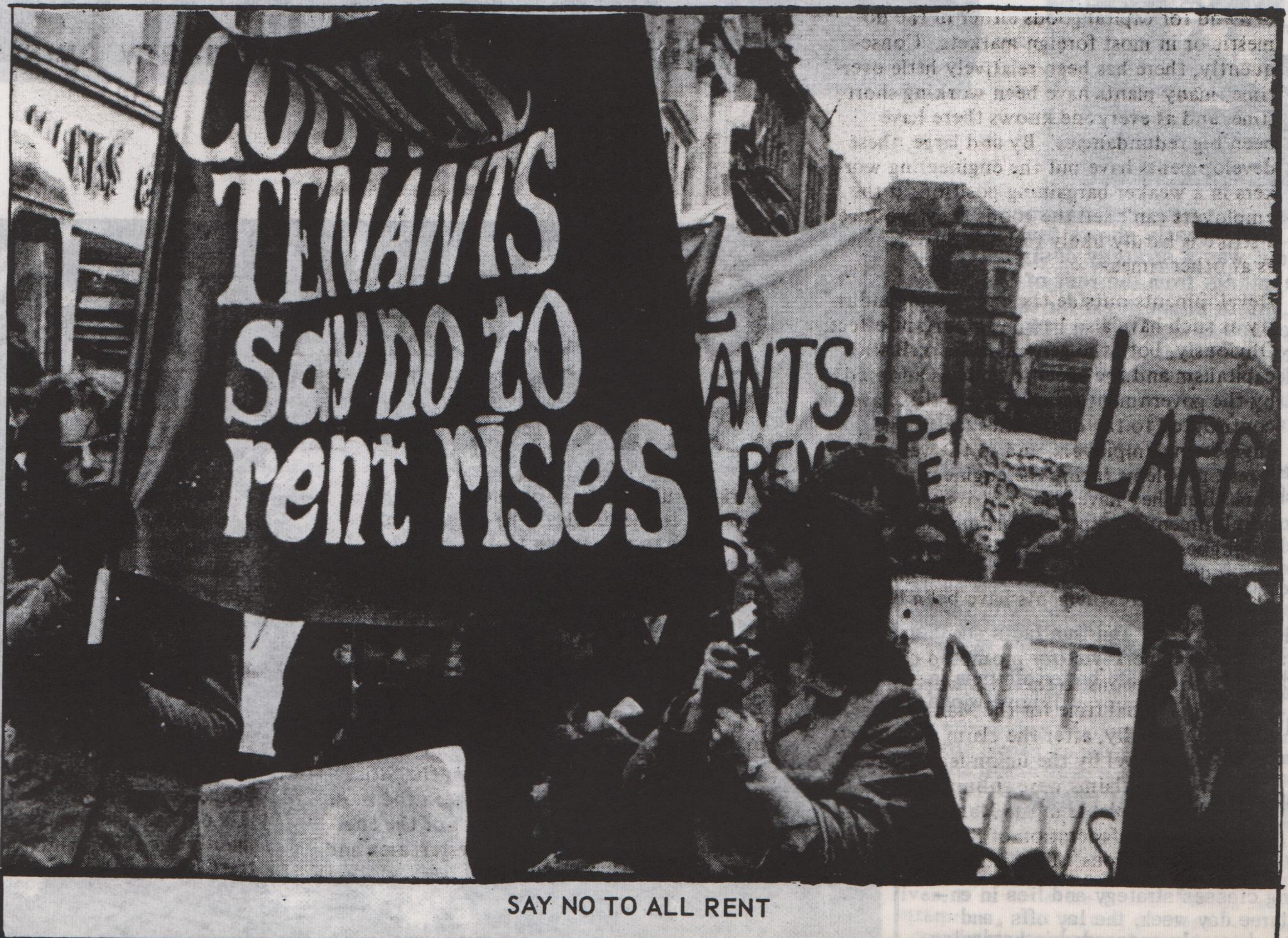
Secondly the tactic of partial rent strike — refusing to pay the increase, — has both practical and political disadvantages.

Practically, solidarity is at once lessened because the rents are still paid and therefore nobody except the tenant and the town hall knows who is in arrears, and who is paying up. Each tenant is isolated and is often subjected to intense pressure to give up the strike. They are told that they are the last person on the street or estate not to pay; they are sent official looking threatening letters which in reality have no legal force.

Politically a partial rent strike has the disadvantage of implying that the principle of rent-paying is not in question, merely the amount. Resistance merely to rent increases is the same thing as agitation merely for wage increases, with or without ritual denunciation of the Tories.

Partial rent strike is better than total apathy. A total strike not only forces a showdown factor as the collective debt mounts up, and increases the tenants' chance to win, but also starts people thinking about the whole system of paying rent — who profits? where does the rent go? Why are we subsidising the fat slob in the city? And so on.

Thirdly, the carrot of Rent Rebate schemes (as opposed to the stick of eviction) has been very effective in splitting up the unity of tenants and ending strikes. A weapon even more effective in the inner-city so-called problem areas (eg Manchester's Hume and Beswick) where a large proportion of tenants are on Social Security.



SAY NO TO ALL RENT

If the S.S. pays your rent anyway, the S.S. will also apply the rebate scheme, and there's not a damn thing you can do about it. If you're getting your rebate-deducted rent paid, you cannot withhold your rent.

Finally there was the old bogey of various sectarian groups, each convinced that it was the only correct way forward, who saw the struggle in practical terms of recruiting the 'best elements' among the tenants to their own sect.

For them no objective analysis is possible, as each group is the true workers' vanguard, therefore the workers' (and tenants') interests must coincide with its own. If they don't, it is the workers who are wrong. Bolshevik group regard themselves as being as infallible as the Pope.

Manchester's experience was perhaps typical; during the summer of 1972 tenants came in growing numbers to the Greater Manchester Federation of Tenants and Residents as the only available grouping. The GMFTRA, a

relic from the last round of tenants' struggles, was Communist Party controlled, and their idea of militant action was lobbying Labour M.P.'s.

Frustrated by the endless meetings which were getting the struggle nowhere, and by the GMFTRA's refusal even to consider rent strikes, a number of tenants tried to change the organisation.

The CP however were irremovable. All their Party tricks were employed to remain in control. Non-CP tenants never seemed to be called on to speak, or had their voting credentials challenged. Eventually after two massive votes of no confidence which the chairman ignored, most of the tenants left to form an Action Committee. Its first priority was to organise a rent strike. The Federation continued to meet. Perhaps it still does.

Unfortunately the Action Committee in its reaction against the bureaucratic structure of the GMFTRA took as its secretary the first person to volunteer for the job. She happened to be a

supporter of the SLL (although nobody knew it at the time.) Inevitably she started to use her position in the tenants movement to plug the Workers Press. Not to be left out other groups such as Workers Fight joined in the Fray.

## BORING HACKS

And while the tenants were able to prevent the secretary from appearing on SLL rallies as the official spokesperson of the Manchester Tenants Action Group, they were unable to do anything about the endless sectarian bickering which now racked every meeting, with boring harangues from SLL hacks. This as much as anything else put off unsuspecting tenants who came along from poorly organised estates to take part in their first rent strike, and was certainly a contributory factor in the defeat of the strike.

It now seems that the rent strikes against the Housing Finance Act (the Unfair Rents Bill) are over, having collapsed one by one.

ALAN HUGHES

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## ORA

### groups & contact addresses

If you think that the direct control by working people over all aspects of their lives is worth fighting for..

If you think that what's needed now is independent rank and file organisation linking all aspects of working class struggle - in housing, schools, womens' rights, in work, and all others.

If you think that the independence of these organisations must be defended from takeover by the Labour traitors, union bureaucracies, and the 'NEW leaderships'..

If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself..

THEN, JOIN THE ORA!

#### LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 32 Queen Elisabeth Square, Glasgow C3.

Hull: Marion McCartney, 13 Colman Street, Hull.

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

Leeds: Rodger Walker, 98, Shakespeare Court, Leeds 9

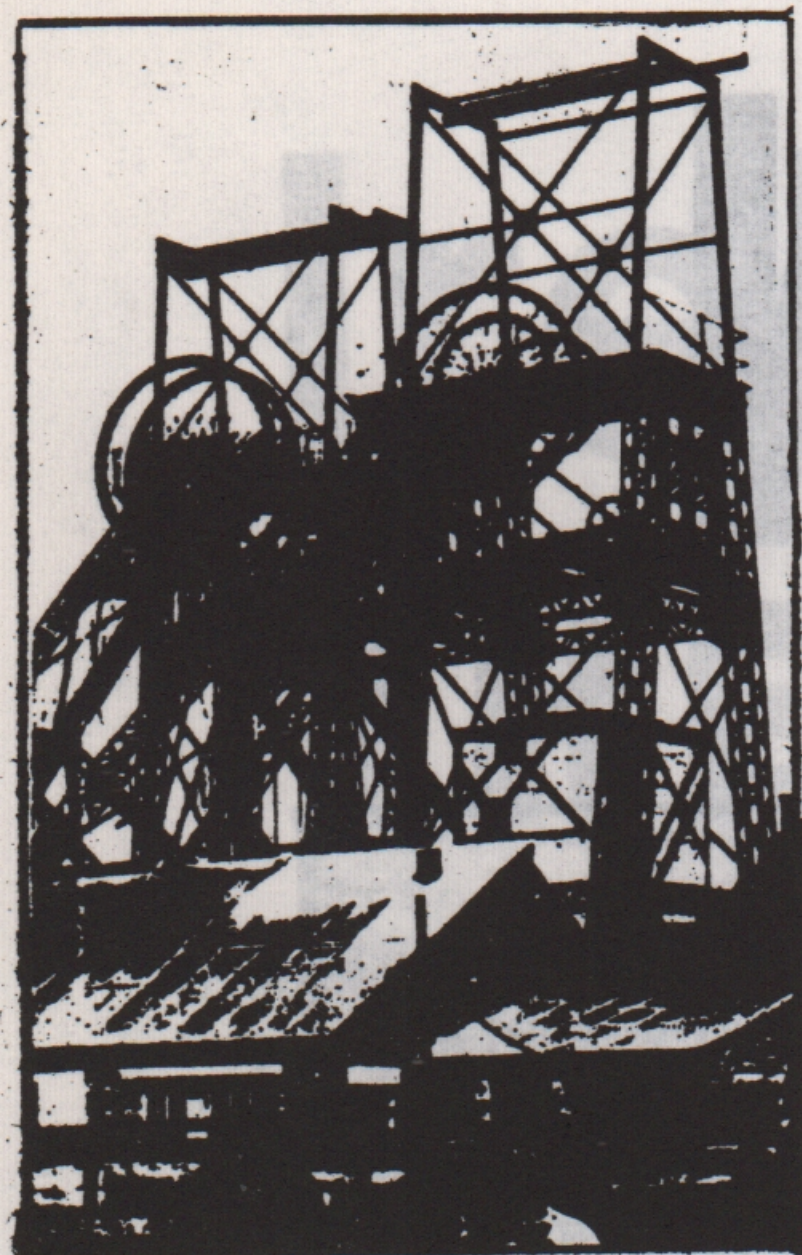
Manchester: Alan Hughes, c/o 100 Oxford Road, Manchester

North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E. 17.

There are also contacts in: Andover, Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech, Liverpool, West, East and South London, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading and Swansea. If you want to be out in touch, write to Terry Green, at the York Group address.



# VICTORY TO



The Tory Government's announcement of a four day week clearly shows that their 2 day lockout was a strategy designed to isolate the miners from the rest of the working class, and to blame them for the present economic crises in capitalism. The ruling class hopes to save itself by inflicting a severe defeat on the miners and by wide-spread cuts in the living standards of the working class. If the Tories are allowed to implement Phase 3 and the miners are defeated the working class movement will be set back years.

As part of their strategy to isolate the miners the ruling class have used all the means at their disposal to brainwash us into believing that their policies are 'fair and just'. They tell us the miners will receive a 16% increase, with £6-£7 more in their pay packets. The true facts are that if the miners accept the Tories offer they will in March 1974 be just 61p better off than in April 1973. In 3 mths. inflation will have wiped this out and more.

## HARDENING MILITANCY

The ruling classes' strategy and lies in enforcing the three day week, the lay offs, and redundancies, has only succeeded in hardening the militancy of the miners at local rank and file level. Calls for strike action have been made in Scotland. Miners in the Leicester area (traditionally the least militant area of the miners movement) struck in protest against Frank Smith's (their N.U.M. area Sec.) call for an end to industrial action. At Cannock there was a strike in protest against 11 men being sent home for refusing to work in a reduced team. Miners in other parts of the area came out in sympathy, despite a call by Jack Lally, the Midland area N.U.M. President, not to support.

The N.U.M. Executive has been forced into a militant position by the rank and file. The overtime ban was called as a result of repeated calls for industrial action at branch and regional level. Past strikes in all industries have shown Trade Union leaders willing to sell out its members for reasons ranging from bribery to fear of prosecution or fear of an undermining of their position in full time jobs, often as lackies of the bosses. Workers in all industries are increasingly realising their power and the cumbersome union



ITS EITHER A LIVING WAGE OR ITS PHASE THREE

machinery is inadequate to meet their needs. This is borne out in the fact that 95% of all strikes are unofficial.

The 'special case' backdown proposed by the

T.U.C. and the Labour Party panders to the Tory strategy. It is used by the ruling classes to divide sections of the working class and to keep some workers at low rates of pay. If the miners

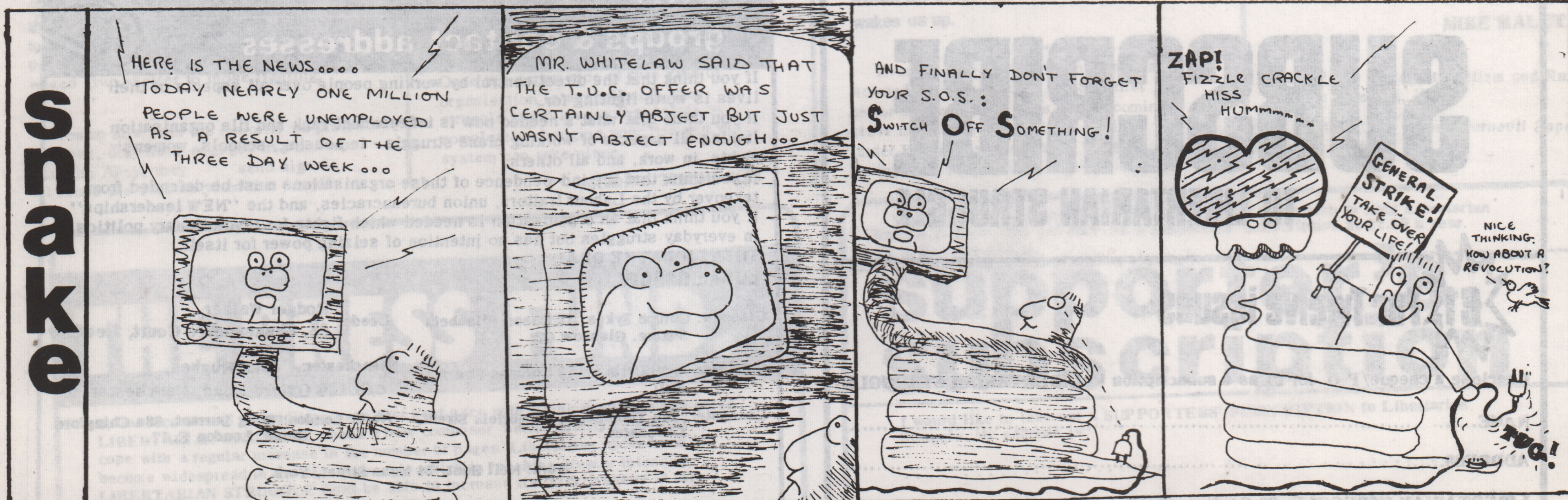
win, because they are a 'special case' who need to preserve their differential, it will have little benefit to the working class as a whole. The T.U.C. leaders have betrayed the working class, like they did in 1926. It has committed its members to unemployment, a lower standard of living and further Tory repression. In 1926 the traitors were Bevan, Clynes and Thomas, today they are Murray, Scanlon and Jones. Scanlon has betrayed the A.U.E.W's £10 a week claim. By saying his aim is to 'Get an offer to the limit of Phase Three, not to break it.' This statement clearly shows Scanlon's role as a scab in directly contravening his own union's declared policy of opposition to the Tory wage control. Jones is also 'anxious to see a settlement or else the nation will be bankrupt.' The capitalist system that produces a state of permanent crisis, that cannot meet our wage demands for fear of declining profits, does not deserve to exist

## FORCE THE TORIES

Laurence Daly, National Secretary of the NUM, talking about the strength shown by the miners in their overtime ban, said that 'such unity would force the Tories to resign and win the return of a Labour Government.' A Labour Government that would be pledged to a reformist programme. After all the controversy about nationalising the 25 largest companies, all that appears in the Manifesto is a meaningless promise to socialise nationalised industries. As far as the miners are concerned, Wilson has given full support to the TUC sell-out, and has said that he has been trying to help the Prime Minister open a door to slam in the faces of the working class of this country for the laws of the ruling class, Wilson says, 'the law must be obeyed'. Laws that keep down living standards of the working class (Phase 3), laws that suppress rank and file organisations, by fines and threats of prison and laws that ban workers from organisation (Shrewsbury 4 - Conspiracy Law).

All struggles to defend living standards are political struggles. This is clearly shown by the fact that the 3 day week costs £40, 000, 000 a week and to pay the miners is an attack on the living standards of all the working class. If the miners are defeated the defeat will be worse than in 1926 when working class organisation was suppressed and strikes were virtually unknown for 20 years. Workers threatened with redundancies or cuts in pay must demand full pay, overtime on Saturdays and no layoffs. If these demands are not met, workers must strike and occupy the factories.

BERNIE NELSON





# THE MINERS



So once again the miners are set for an all out confrontation with the Tory government. This time (as opposed to 1972) the Tories anti-miner propaganda has had some success. The miners have been called 'unpatriotic' and 'in league with Arab oil sheiks', for their actions and the cry of the press is that they should all be good patriotic citizens and go back to work.

The situation is quite clear—what other group of workers can cause a national 'state of emergency', two days after an overtime ban? What other group of workers have to put up with dark, dirty and dangerous conditions? and with the highest rate of fatal accidents for only £30 a week? A reasonable wage can only be got by working extensive overtime and weekend working. Now the Tories, the very people who have benefited from the recent vast profits, their expense accounts and tax free incomes in the Cayman Islands have the nerve to tell the miners that they can't have more than £2.30.

## NINETEENTH CENTURY

To see the importance of the miners' struggle, you have to look at their history. The coal mining industry was the material base on which the whole capitalist industrial machine was built. The miners suffered intense exploitation during the industrial revolution, with child labour, inhuman conditions and low wages. Child labour affected the middle class conscience, but bad conditions and low wages did not. Attempts to organise strikes and similar actions to improve their living standards were ruthlessly put down, as in the 1844 Durham miners lockout and many others.

Throughout the nineteenth century there were frequent mine accidents and disasters where the dead were often counted in hundreds although more often the number of dead was not sufficiently dramatic to rate a mention. This was regarded in a complacent way as part of the natural order, in much the same way as people today regard people starving to death in Ethiopia. There was a mining disaster at Senghenydd in South Wales in October 1913 where 439 miners lost their lives, in spite of the fact that it was known to be a dangerous colliery. It was this disaster which caused the Daily Herald to run the headline,

'Miners lives at 1sch. 1½d each.'; at the low fine imposed for criminal negligence on the owners. The fine also covered breaches of the Coal Mines Act. The fine was £24 for 439 lives. In 1910 Winston Churchill had ordered troops in to suppress a long and bitter strike in the Rhonda, ending in the Tonypandy tragedy.

Throughout this time the miners were the hard core of the working class movement. The Miners Federation was the first modern union. Without the miners the Labour party could not have been created. In spite of this the party has repeatedly betrayed those who put their faith in it. To this day the miners provide the most solid block of labour voters, for the very conditions of the industry where you have to trust the next man create a feeling of solidarity and comradeship which leads to a socialist view of life.

The crunch for the miners came in the 1920s. Firstly the mines were old, inefficient, fragmented and run in the interests of short term profits for selfish coal-owners. Thus British coal was 'uncompetitive' compared with German and American coal. Secondly, the dominant Conservative Party was committed to restoring British nineteenth century supremacy, with the Empire intact and the pound sterling on the pre 1914 gold standard and all the rest of that crap. So something had to give, and the ruling class decided it was to be the miners. A policy of systematic pay cuts and longer hours was brought in, and a national lockout was threatened if the miners did not give in. Naturally they refused to give in and the miners leaders A.J. Cook and Herbert Smith coined the phrase, 'Not a penny off the pay, not a minute on the day'. The miners got the support of other workers throughout Britain, and the government and employers were forced to give way, for a while. The employers withdrew the lockout notices and the government granted a subsidy. (Red Friday 1925).

What happened in the next few years is a tragedy of betrayal and defeat. The Tories were clever and ruthless; they bought off the miners for a time and prepared for the kill. A national scab outfit, 'the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies' was created. The armed forces and the police were posted for the coming class war against the 'enemy within' the working class. The capitalist press and the newly formed B.B.C. were then (as now) mobilized for a hysterical campaign against the selfish miners for holding the country to ransom, and the old 'reds under the bed' theme was flogged for all it was worth. The whole capitalist state machine was made ready to fight the miners.

When the subsidy ran out, the employers posted notices again, either accept wage cuts and longer hours or 'It's a lockout'. 'Nowt Doing' was Herbert Smith's reply, and the miners were out. The T.U.C. were committed to the principle of solidarity action and were forced by workers' militancy to call other sections out. This 'General Strike' as it has become known was far more effective than 'its' leaders had imagined. The workers response was very solid and British industry came grinding to a halt.

The middle-class and student scabs were treated as a joke, (a sick joke at that). It was only when troops were brought in as strike breakers and the police began beating up and arresting strikers that the atmosphere got more serious.

## TREACHERY

The point to remember is that the 'general strike' was a success and was only defeated by the treachery of the T.U.C. General council who called off the strike unconditionally after 10 days without even consulting the miners in whose support it was called.



The hated Trades Disputes Act of 1927 would be repealed. The commanding heights of the economy would be taken into public ownership. 'We are the masters now' said William Shawcross and the workers for once could feel a bit more hopeful. The highpoint of post-war Labour Government policy was the nationalisation of the mines in 1947.

## NATIONALISATION

But from a socialist point of view the nationalization of the mines was incorrect for at least three reasons. Firstly, the parasitic class of mine-owners received £3,000 in compensation when they should not have got a single penny. Secondly, the old system of management was kept intact under a new name. It was the same old bloody gaffer under a new hat, still trying to squeeze as much work for as little money as possible. Socialism must be built from below, based on workers control of all levels of production. It is for the workers to decide what is produced, why, how much and who for. The aim of socialism is not just equality of conditions, though that is crucial, but people taking full control of their lives. It is not state control versus private enterprise, but neither of these — it means a completely new way of organising social life. Thirdly, the N.C.B. was used as a means to a cheap energy policy and as an indirect

# FIGHT BACK

It was obvious that it would not be long before workers began to organise resistance to attempted wage cuts as the result of the three day week. British Leyland shop stewards are preparing a campaign likely to stimulate other groups of workers into similar action.

An unofficial shop stewards committee has been formed from shopfloor representatives of the 56 B.L. plants throughout the country. They make it clear that the fight is not with British Leyland but with the government whose action has created the 3-day week. The shop stewards attack the government for using a 'political weapon' to defeat the miners. They aim to exert maximum pressure on the government to concede the miners pay claim and end the 3-day week.

At British Leyland layoff agreements are limited to a maximum each quarter under separate plant agreements. Although the ceiling varies from plant to plant, most B.L. factories have only a few layoff days left for this quarter. The shop stewards are looking ahead to the point when these agreements are exhausted and wage cuts are made. The campaign will concentrate on demanding five days pay and includes the threat to occupy the factories if the wages are cut.

Since the introduction of the 3-day week, some

workers have used up 6 of their layoff days - of which they get 80% of normal pay rates. So far the B.L. line is that it is sticking as closely as possible to union agreements during the crisis but once it really begins to bite they are not going to continue to uphold agreements. B.L. workers will be forced on to unemployment pay for the days not worked. If the 3-day week continues for another fortnight it will be necessary to take action to defend wage packets. B.L. have made no comment about the shop stewards action because it is not recognised as an 'official' negotiating body.

It is to be hoped that other groups of workers will have a similarly active response to attempts to reduce wages under the 3-day week. This must be seen in its true light - a political weapon used by a Tory government to isolate the miners and prevent any crack in Phase Three. Trade union bureaucrats are already attempting to 'find a way out' - witness the TUC negotiating with the government on the basis that they will not use a settlement with the miners as a precedent for other claims. Note also Scanlon's statement, in contradiction to his union's policy, that the AUEW will settle inside Phase Three. The only effective and reliable forms of organisation are those of the shopfloor, both to defeat Phase Three and eventually capitalism.

The dismay and confusion the calling off of the strike caused, just when it looked like winning, is not hard to imagine. Thousands of workers never got their jobs back and the demoralisation of defeat was such that it took the trade union movement 20 years to recover.

## STARVATION

The miners fought on alone for six months in a heroic and bitter struggle isolated and bombarded with calls to give in. It was starvation rather than the Tory Government propaganda which eventually forced a return to work in November 1926.

During the long years of the Depression and then the Second World War the labour movement rebuilt its strength. In 1945 a majority Labour Government was returned and the New Jerusalem appeared round the corner. There would be no return to the bad old days of the dole queue and low wages.

means of subsidizing private enterprise. In fact the coal industry became a donkey which got a lot of stick and precious little carrot.

The results of these mistakes can now be clearly seen. The N.C.B. was laden with interest payments of over £50 million p.a. which meant that it always had a loss, which proved nationalization to be inefficient, much to the Tories satisfaction.

## AFFLUENCE

Throughout the fifties and sixties, coal was run down, pits were closed and thousands of miners were laid off. Oil and nuclear power were thought to be the energy of the future — with a modern technological image and a certain novelty appeal. Cars, lorries and a proliferation of motorway networks gave a false impression of affluence. Then North Sea gas was seen as the great solution which didn't quite work out. This was a policy of great waste and extravagance and the coal industry was a casualty.

JOHN BRAYBROOK



# Ireland: THE WOMEN ORGANISE

Irish working class women have always been doubly oppressed by the alliance of Church and State. In the Republic until just recently this alliance was written in to the Constitution.

In return for the Church's consistent hostility or outright banning of militant political activity, the State supports the Catholic Church's dominant position. The special power accorded to the Church in the Constitution was recently voted out in a referendum with government backing. This was not in any way designed to lessen the hold the Church has, but was part of the deal between London, Belfast and Dublin to try and con the Northern Protestants that a united bourgeois Ireland was to their advantage.

In the North, the Church has played the same 'moderate' supporting role. Only when it feared a total loss of credibility by its followers has it criticised fifty years of Orangeism.

As in most Catholic countries, women in Ireland have been the cornerstone of the Church. The Church's traditional dogmas on the family, the subservient role of women, and on contraception has meant a total lack of political activity or concern since at least the end of the Civil War.

## FROM CIVIL RIGHTS TO INTERNMENT

All this began to change in the late sixties when the Civil Rights movement gained momentum. Political ideas were circulating amongst all sections of the community and not even those previously excluded could help but take part. The hierarchy of the Church tried to hold back the movement by appealing for 'moderation', but appeals by priests for moderation fell on somewhat deaf ears when not only the menfolk, but women too were being beaten and clubbed by either the goon squads of the Orange Order or the B. Specials.

Women have taken an active part in the fight against the British Army ever since. Since internment and house-to-house searching, the importance of women in the struggle has become more crucial. The Catholic housing estates have become even more like ghettos than they were... a natural breeding ground for self-organisation and the backbone of resistance. They give as much protection to the armed struggle as it gives to them. Even those unsympathetic to the terms in which the struggle is waged give shelter to those fighting.

Women now form the majority on protest marches, they have engaged in punch-ups with the Army, they send signals all round the estates when the Army is

raiding and they play some kind of role in the armed struggle itself - there are over 60 female political prisoners in Armagh jail.

Encroachment on the power of the State has taken place on a large scale. Rents, rates, payments for gas and electricity have all been withheld. The State cuts off the supply and the people turn it back on again.

Of course the fact that this is so, should not blind us to the fact that the IRA are no great believers in the liberation of women. Their perspectives on any social issues apart from national liberation are practically non-existent and their chauvinism is male as well as national. The importance of the women coming out politically in Ireland lies not in the fact that it is for national liberation or social democracy instead of social revolution, but in the fact that it shows the ability of working people, however previously unpolitical their background, to organise effectively in times of need or crisis. Once the experience of this kind of organisation is assimilated, then struggle round issues that relate to completely changing your life and the system can take place.

MADDY THOMPSON



# REVIEW..

publication, of Solzhenitsyn's 'One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich' in 1962 the Brezhnev regime has gradually tightened up on intellectual dissent, culminating in the suppression of the underground publication 'A Chronicle of Current Events' and its Ukrainian equivalent, the 'Ukrainian Herald', in 1972.

One interesting aspect of the contents of these two publications has been the documentation of dissent by working people as well as intellectuals. This forms part of the pamphlet under review, but the ground has been largely covered in 'Soviet Workers Fight Back' (L.S. Oct. 1972 p.5)

The author also spells out the answer to the question why the Ukraine? After a brief flowering in the 1920s Stalin crushed the Ukrainian cultural revolution. Under Khrushchov, there was a minor revival of this flowering. The Ukrainians are the second largest nationality in the Soviet Union, yet the author details evidence of discrimination against them both within the Ukrainian SSR and in the rest of the Soviet Union. There have been protests, and significantly not only from a nationalist standpoint.

Two Ukrainians in particular, Ivan Dzyuba and Vyacheslav Chornovil, have written critiques of the current Soviet regime with particular emphasis on the policy of Russification and on civil rights issues, respectively - from a Marxist-Leninist viewpoint. The authors go back to Lenin's time and pose the questions: how has Soviet society changed since Lenin's death and how far does official theory currently concur with practice? Their answers\* are skilful and devastatingly critical: an official reply for distribution abroad only - was printed in answer to Dzyuba's main work. This was necessary because both authors were attacking the fundamental Soviet thesis that, apart from a few excesses by Stalin, the present government and party leadership are the ideological heirs of Lenin.

Dzyuba, who has TB, has been released following a recantation in print after KGB pressure. Chornovil has served almost a year of seven in prison then five in exile. They are our comrades and deserve all the support we can give them. The first task is to publicise their conditions and that of others, like them, languishing in the prisons and labour camps of the Soviet Union. As a first step I would urge all readers to read the pamphlet and distribute it as widely as possible.

MIKE MALET

\* I. DZYUBA: 'Internationalism and Russification'. London 1970

\* V. CHORNOVIL: 'The Chornovil Papers' London 1968

# REVIEW

ANDREA MARTIN: 'Ukraine, Unrest and Repression'. Published by the Committee to Defend Ivan Dzyuba and Vyacheslav Chornovil, 83 Gregory Crescent, London S.E. 9. 15p.

Anarchists have in the past often exposed the Soviet regime for what it is - a country ruled by a self-perpetuating authoritarian bureaucracy in the name of a long-decayed revolution. At times however, we must feel rather dejected by the seeming lack of response from within the Soviet bloc - until a Hungary wakes us up.

Even so the Soviet Union itself has seemed quiet, cowed by the Stalinist terror of the 1930s. It is now becoming clear that, after some liberalization under Khrushchov, evidenced by for example, the decision to allow the

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# SPAIN

## RELEASE SALVADOR

On January 9th a Spanish court martial in Barcelona sentenced a young Anarchist to death, for killing one of Spain's fascist police. Salvador Puig Andich, aged 26, was found guilty of 'terrorism', resulting in the death of the policeman. He was sentenced to an additional thirty years! - for a bank robbery. This would be served if the death sentence were, perchance, to be commuted.

Comrade Salvador's two codefendants also received vicious sentences. Jose Luis Pons Lovet, aged 17, was sentenced to thirty years imprisonment for his part in the robbery. Like Salvador, he was an Anarchist member of the banned Iberian Liberation Front. Maria Angustias Mateos Fernandez, aged 16, and who denied being an I.L.F. member, was sentenced to five years in prison for her alleged part in the robbery.

The one chance for these victims of savage fascist repression is that the sentences have to be reviewed by higher military authorities.

The last official executions took place in the early sixties with the garroting of anarchist workers Delgado and Granados.

## FRANCO'S JAILS

Of course these sentences are nothing new for those comrades in Spain who fight back against the dictatorship. Salvador and the other two's sentences came just a few days after the trial of the ten men charged with organising the 'Comisiones Obreras' (the communist party front). Hundreds of anti-fascists are in Franco's jails at the moment, many Anarchists among them. We must show our solidarity with those in the Spanish resistance movement, especially those in jail and facing death. They are there for us, we are out here for them.\*\*\*

## SOLIDARITY WITH THE SPANISH RESISTANCE!

\*\*\*Send donations to the Spanish Resistance Fund, c/o 84b, Whitechapel High St. E. 1.

## WIPE OUT BLANCO

The assassination of Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco, Spain's Prime minister, is to be greeted with approval. While the capitalist press will undoubtedly whimper about this 'terrorist' act we fail to see them doing the same over the systematic terrorism practised on the Spanish workers for the last 35 years.

The execution of thousands of anarchists, socialists, workers and peasants; the death of thousands of others in prison from hunger, beatings and disease marked the triumph of Franco at the end of the Civil War. The labour movement was crushed.

Since then militants have fought back, organising the illegal unions and fighting in a guerilla war against the fascists. Many were killed and others sentenced for up to 30 years.

Blanco was said by many to out-Franco Franco in his slavish devotion to the Caudillo: -

'I am a man totally identified with the work of the Caudillo, doctrinally formed in the principles of his national movement and in the fundamental laws of the kingdom'

The assassination was met by the Communist Party in Spain and in Britain with disapproval. In Spain they have always kept within 'legal boundaries' and in their politics they represent little more than the left of the liberal opposition. An interview with their General Secretary made out that the assassination was somehow engineered by the regime to justify more repressive policies.

The repression at present taking place in Spain is shown by the trial of the Carabanchel 10, the leaders of the Workers Commissions - the Basque freedom fighters who so efficiently disposed of Blanco have strong links with the illegal and semi-illegal workers movements.

The struggle of the Spanish and Basque workers is increasing. This is all the more important at a time when Spain attempts to present a 'liberal' image in order to enter the EEC.

# no place to go

On April 1st (All Fools Day), the 1972 Local Government Act comes into force. This is supposed to make local government more efficient and richer. It represents the same trend to centralisation of capital as do takeovers in the private sector - add one big company to some little ones and it adds up to more of everything (except jobs.)

As in takeovers, the electors, like the workers, have no say at all. Sometimes sporadic protests at one area being taken under the wing of a city force the council or government to take notice. This hasn't happened much, despite the claims made by the Redcliffe-Maud report on local government reorganisation that the new super-Corporations would give more opportunities for 'grassroots participation', mainly on such vital community issues as the siting of bus shelters. Even this hasn't happened.

## CREATE A LUMPEN

An interesting point about the new Local Government Act, which goes well with the Tories appalling housing record, is the removal of responsibility on local authorities to provide accommodation for any homeless person. From the creation of the Welfare State, the Council had to provide you with a roof over your head.

Naturally, some Councils have always ignored this and put homeless people on the nearest big city. Single homeless people have hardly ever been helped, even in big cities. Shortage of money was the usual reason for not providing houses for the homeless.

## CAMDEN BACKDOWN

Recently Camden Borough Council after union-backed pressure from social workers found 50 extra units of accommodation for homeless families, after first claiming that they had neither enough money or accommodation.

After April 1st, Councils can provide housing for the homeless if they want to. There has been a campaign against this led mostly by groups like Shelter. It looks as though they may have some success in reversing the provisions of the Act to make it a duty for councils once more.

However this temporary victory if it comes about will not be the end of the fight that all sections of the working class are going to be in over housing. Tory attacks aren't just straightforward ones on the wage packet. The Housing Finance Act was passed to stop councils underselling private landlords, as well as to ensure that all services return a profit. This combined with the cost of buying houses, the fact that less houses were built in 1973 than any postwar year, the 20% cut ordered in local government expenditure, all mean that the number of homeless families looks sure to increase.

## THE CLAIMING CLASS

The system is creating a whole new 'claiming class' dependent on FIS etc, and caught in what is termed the 'poverty trap.' The creation of this class takes away the need for wage increases and ensures a ready pool of lower-paid workers that can be used if necessary to undercut the organised working class.

In this situation it is vital that traditional attitudes that only feckless families have face the threat of this happening, especially in the current economic and political attack by the bosses. There are not enough houses to go round in Britain. There were 16,000 homeless in 1968 and 28,000 in 1972.

The ruling class hopes to take away all the gains won by the working class in the last fifty years. As a class we must fight for our right to housing, as much as we fight for our rights to strike, free medical care, to organise, to picket. To pass from defence of our rights to attacks on their privileges will need the strength of all sections of the working class.

## NATIONAL FRONT

☸ = NAZI FRONT ☸

As has been previously pointed out in this paper, the National Front has been attempting to improve its image. It wants to appear respectable and denies that it is a Fascist or Nazi party.

Quite recently, its National Chairman, John N. Tyndall (sample quote 'Mein Kampf is my doctrine' and 'The Jew is like a poisonous maggot feeding on a body in an advanced state of decay') wrote to the Sunday Telegraph complaining of an editorial (18.11.73) in which was written '...authoritarian Right-wing organisations like the National Front...'. Tyndall objected to being called 'authoritarian'.



His comments in the January 1974 issue of Spearhead on the miners struggle (What We Think - Leaderless Britain) shows him and the organisation he purports to lead, in his and their true colours.

After expressing, just like the Tory and Labour leaders, his 'sympathy with the miners as a whole', he writes: 'The first task of national leadership when the crisis began

was to move emergency legislation through the Commons which would have given the Government special powers to act against the disrupters of industry. This legislation should have enabled the Government:-

- To impose on industry a system of compulsory arbitration for a specified period
- To assume powers of detention of any union leader who sought actively to sabotage the effort to get industry moving in the crisis.
- At such time as the need for compulsory arbitration may be considered to have passed, to impose the law of secret ballot among all union members in the decision whether or not to work.
- To compel the instant dismissal from all posts in the trade union movement of individuals with a record of past or present membership of Communist organisations.

So Tyndall removes the mask of 'respectability' to reveal the ugly face of not just the authoritarian Right, but the vicious anti-working class face of avowed Fascism.

The National Front must be exposed for what it is - authoritarian, Fascist, and anti-working class and pro-capitalist.

## WE HAVE BEEN WARNED



Under the guise that they are protecting us from Arab terrorists, the army has moved Scorpion tanks and Saracen personnel carriers into Heathrow airport.

We have seen what happened when the tanks moved in on civilian populations in Greece, Czechoslovakia and Chile but we still believed it would never happen in Britain, even though the effects of the army moving into Ulster are plain for all to see.

Scotland Yard assures that this is part of contingency plans that have been prepared to

deal with emergencies'. However it is they who decide what constitutes an emergency. How long will it be before a strike becomes defined as such an emergency and the military is called in to deal with workers on picket lines?

Ulster is at present the battle field of the British army; they are now trying to widen their activities to the rest of the British Isles. This is an attempt by the ruling class to condition the minds of the working class to accept military intervention in their daily lives.

We must fight for the removal of military forces from all parts of Britain before it is too late.



# EUROPE — 1 YEAR AFTER

Britain has been in the Common Market for just over one year, but the depth of the continuing crisis in the capitalist system has made commentators wonder if the market will survive.

West Germany insists on a common policy on oil and Britain on the full payment on the regional fund - 5 times as much as Germany wants to accept. Conflicts of national interests are inevitable when the whole framework is developing away from the nation state. The current crisis makes these conflicts more acute and is slowing down structural integration.

The plan to start pooling gold and foreign exchange reserves has collapsed because the major reserve holders are terrified that they'll need reserves themselves. The newly floating franc joins the floating pound and lira in their sabotage of the mark. Thus progress towards economic integration has been minimal.

The EEC has not had the effects on the British economy that the bosses hoped for. British shipbuilding is the industry that has obviously been sacrificed. Output remains stagnant at 1.2 million tons a year, when potential capacity is 1.75 - 2 million. Realisation of this potential capacity would have to be through the ruthless productivity agreements that happen in W. Germany, Scandinavia and Japan. It is these that give them the edge over their British competitors.

The steel industry is gaining from entry though. Common Market rules have allowed price increases of 21% in the last nine months. The EEC is also subsidising rationalisation of British steel. It is contributing £7 million to handouts which are intended to make at least 50,000 steelworkers redundant in 10 years.

The motor industry was supposed to benefit from entry into a slack Continental market. However European firms are selling 42% more cars in Britain than a year ago and 10% more than they were in Sept-

ember. And British firms are not having the same impact in Europe.

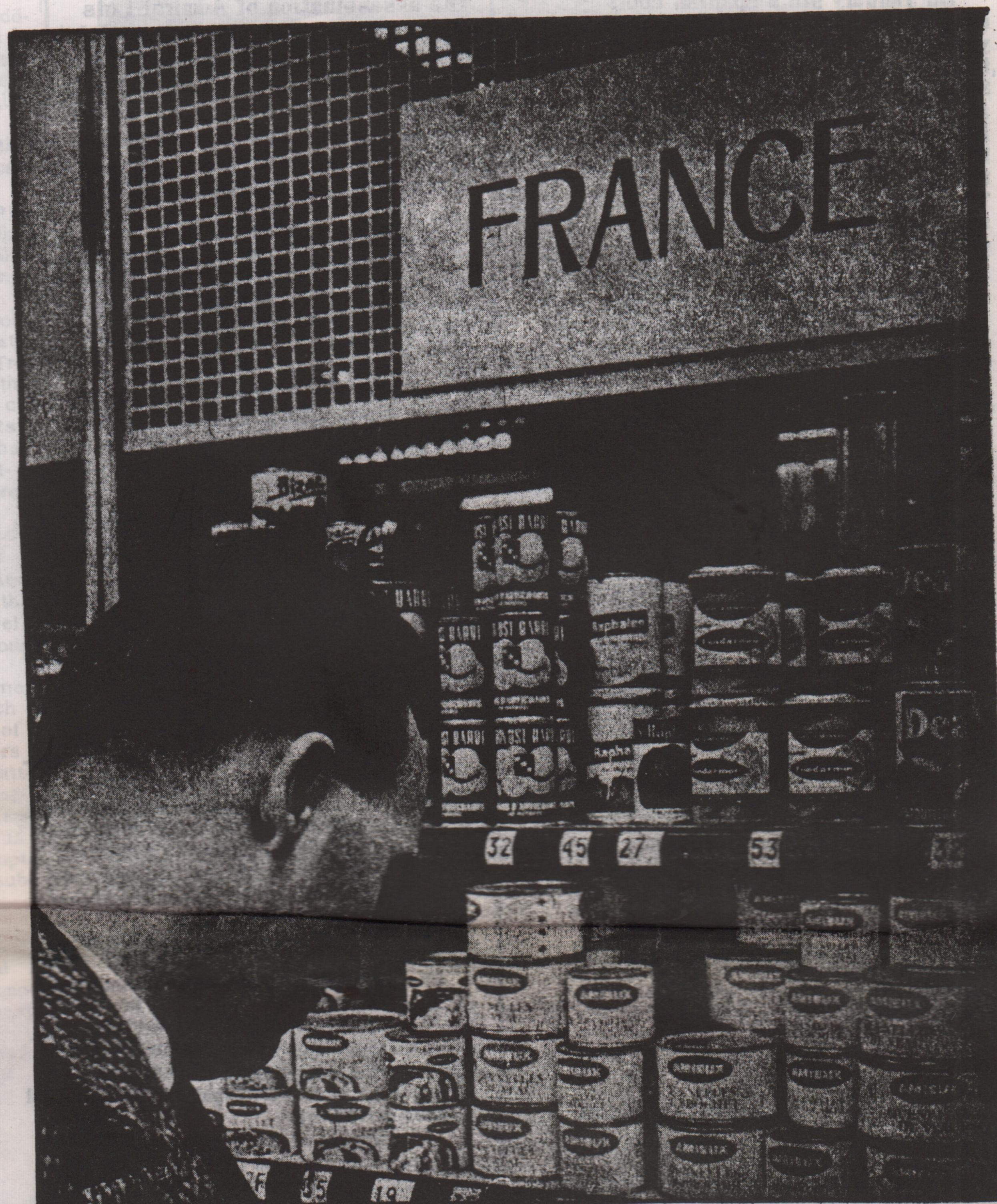
The best hope for the motor bosses seems to be in following Lucas' example and building components for European firms. They are attempting to solve the crisis by building new plants in areas of cheap labour. British Leyland is expanding production in Milan, Belgium and Spain, while Dunlop is starting to lose its national characteristics by its link up with Pirelli and plants in France and Germany.

Electrical engineering is getting closer to the wall, due to its inability to expand into Continental markets while European firms were attacking the British market. The Thorn-Ericson merger showed how a British firm had to join up with a foreign one in order to sell tele-communications goods in Britain.

Relaxation of rules for bank takeovers has meant that this area has become a mass of international co-operations. The dangers for British banking with the link-ups taking place, e.g. between Paribas and S.G. Warburg, is that this increasing centralisation will change its role as one of the leaders in the rest of the world.

The EEC has had more success with agreements in the basic legal framework on industrial, social and environmental policies. These are the least damaging to national interests, the least threatened in its transition to a new phase of capital. This makes development in this area even more crucial. There has to be a common legal framework for the EEC: a common apparatus underpinning the operations of capital within Europe, making for maximum profit and security of investment. It is at this level that the EEC is taking over the function of the nation state.

The oil crisis has placed a fresh strain on the relations within Europe, as well as between Europe and USA. But the protracted crisis in the world economy means an Atlantic character truce between the



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Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists. (ORA pamphlet) advance orders to D. Young, 91, Burghhead Drive, Linthouse, Glasgow.

Mole Express Manchester voice of revolutionary struggle. News/reviews/exposes/graphics/features. 10p monthly from 7, Summer Terrace, Manchester M14 5WD.

Portugal Libertario. 1e e divulga PORTUGAL (Organisacao Revolucionaria Anarquista) 15 pence. Para todas informacoes escreve a 68 Chingford Rd, London E. 17. Nonda tambem as tuas artigos, sugestoes ou informacoes.

Front Libertaire fortnightly paper of O.R.A. France. Sample copy from North London group, subscription details from 33, rue des Vignoles, 75020 Paris, France.

De Vrije Socialist paper of the Dutch Libertarian Socialist Federation. For copies write to, Jan Bervoets, Willem de Zwijgerlaan 104, Den Haag, Netherlands.

Inside Story the radical magazine which specialises in the stories Fleet St. won't print. For sample copy send 25p to Dept. AP 20, 3, Belmont Road, London S.W. 4

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two looks like emerging that will include Japan and Canada

This emergence of blocs means that the Mediterranean policy of buildings-free trade area has fallen behind. However trade pacts with EFTA have been regularised and pacts completed with India and Brazil.

## LOUSY STANDARD OF LIVING

British capitalism has not gained from entry the way it expected to. What has mostly been seen is the collapse of old industries and the growth of some new ones. However it remains true that British bosses still need Europe in order to be able to survive as a class. Their survival will be paid for out of our pockets. Phase Three and the four-day week etc can no longer be taken in the context of Britain alone. It is no longer just a question of getting the money to invest. Bosses now have to become competitive with countries with more docile work forces. We are being offered a straight choice: Accept a lousy standard of living or see our jobs given to the oppressed Spanish workers or the starving Italians.

The only way forward for workers is an international one. Our futures are tied together. We can't break that. Nor, so long as we accept the bosses right to decide our futures can we reject the choice between slashed incomes and unemployment. By building links through Europe, across international combines at first, we can pose an alternative to capitalism - as long as the power remains on the shopfloor. 1973 was the year when British bosses made record profits and our living standards fell more drastically than any year since the war. Without conscious attempts to combat this, 1974 will be worse.

NUPE MEMBER

## 5 DAYS PAY

Moves by employers to suspend overtime agreements for Saturday working during the 3-day week are being strongly resisted by groups of workers all over the country. Attempts by Midlands bosses to 'mutually' suspend overtime payments are receiving a hostile reception from workers at their factories.

Pleading that the need to pay overtime will bankrupt them, some firms have ignored the mutual aspect and are already refusing to pay overtime. Workers must not be deceived into accepting these excuses. When firms plead poverty, it means that it might affect profits. At the present time it is a direct fight between a cut in profits or a cut in wages. The margin of affluence exists no longer. In this situation the response of the Lancashire millworkers to ban Saturday working is the right step forward. Action has to be stronger than merely lodging protests with the local employers association which was the response of the Coventry Shipbuilding & Engineering unions.

Employers, mainly in the engineering industry, have had to give way to demands for overtime pay for emergency Saturday work. In the textile industry, however, - an industry not previously noted for militancy of late - the workers in the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile workers have refused to do emergency work until they are assured of full overtime pay for Saturday shifts. Until this happens, the millworkers will ban all overtime, shift systems and work study schemes when the industry returns to normal working.

In this situation demands should be made for 5 days work or 5 days pay. The working class can only hope to avoid wagecutting on a mass scale by making the bosses pay for the crisis.

Published by ORA, from 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. Printed by Anyway Litho, 252 Bristow Rd., London S.W.9. 6AQ Tel 01-274 2432.