

AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AS LATE AS NECESSARY

March sees the final reading of Liberal MP David Alton's anti-abortion Bill in the Commons. It is the 7th attempt to reduce women's access to abortion since the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act, which legalised some abortions up to 28 weeks.

Alton and his supporters want to reduce the time limit for abortions to 18 weeks. They have no consideration for the physical, emotional and economic circumstances of a woman that would be left to bring up an unwanted child. This is complete hypocrisy. The type of people who support Alton want women in the home, under the thumb of her husband or family, without a chance to make the vital choices in her life that only she is in a position to make.

The real effect of outlawing late terminations will be to force women into back street abortions by unscrupulous doctors, who care little about the

would be the same as it is now. People with enough money can always buy a safe abortion, however late, however illegal. (50% of operations currently performed for money are terminations).

No woman wants a late abortion and very few are currently performed. Menopausal women and young girls, who may not know they are pregnant, are the ones who will suffer most under Alton's Bill. Women carrying abnormal fetuses will face even more problems (the test for this only takes place after 18 weeks).

No Compromise.

Defeating Alton's Bill completely, (not compromising by settling for 24 weeks as many MPs want) is vital. People all over the country are organising in campaigns to oppose such legislation - passed by rich male MPs to further attack the freedom of working class women. But supporting existing legislation simply isn't enough. Whilst it is vital that as many people as possible work to oppose Alton, in the long term we need to demand more freedom for women than the '67 Act allows.

Under current legislation it is still very difficult for a woman to get an abortion. They are certainly not available 'on demand' as the anti-abortionists would have us believe. A woman currently has to prove to two doctors that she would suffer as a result of a pregnancy. By the time she has coped with unsympathetic doctors and NHS delays, she may well be over the 28 week time limit. The '67 Act does not even apply to women in Northern Ireland. To get an abortion they often have to come to Liverpool or London, causing financial hardship and increasing the

likelihood of a late termination.

Moral Values.

With the repressive climate of opinion about 'moral values' and the sanctity of



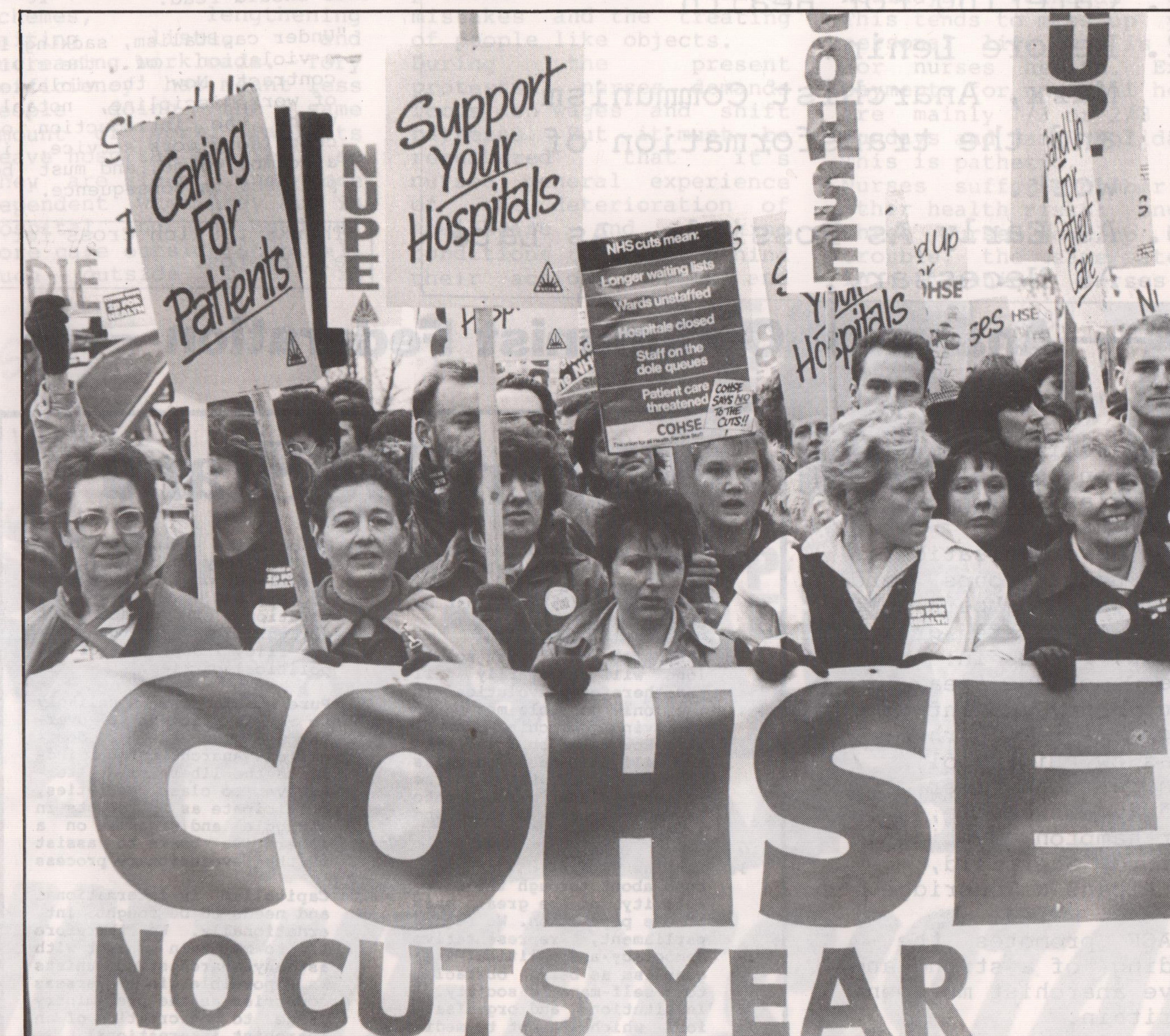
the family, and the rich, white, male parliament that prevents any change in how society is structured, we are constantly on the defensive. All that can be done through parliament at present is to try to halt repressive legislation. Laws made by politicians are an attempt to control us. Politicians have totally different interests to the vast majority of people and seek to protect their privileges.

Action Outside Parliament.

In the long-run, the action that counts is the action that we take positively for ourselves, outside of Parliament. Politicians will not give us what we need for our health and happiness, we must take it, if we are ever to be rid of men legislating over our bodies and lives. We must aim to smash parliament and organise in our communities, where we live and work, to run our lives ourselves and to make the choices that are best for us. We need abortions when we demand them, not when doctors or politicians want us to have them.

VIRUS

30p



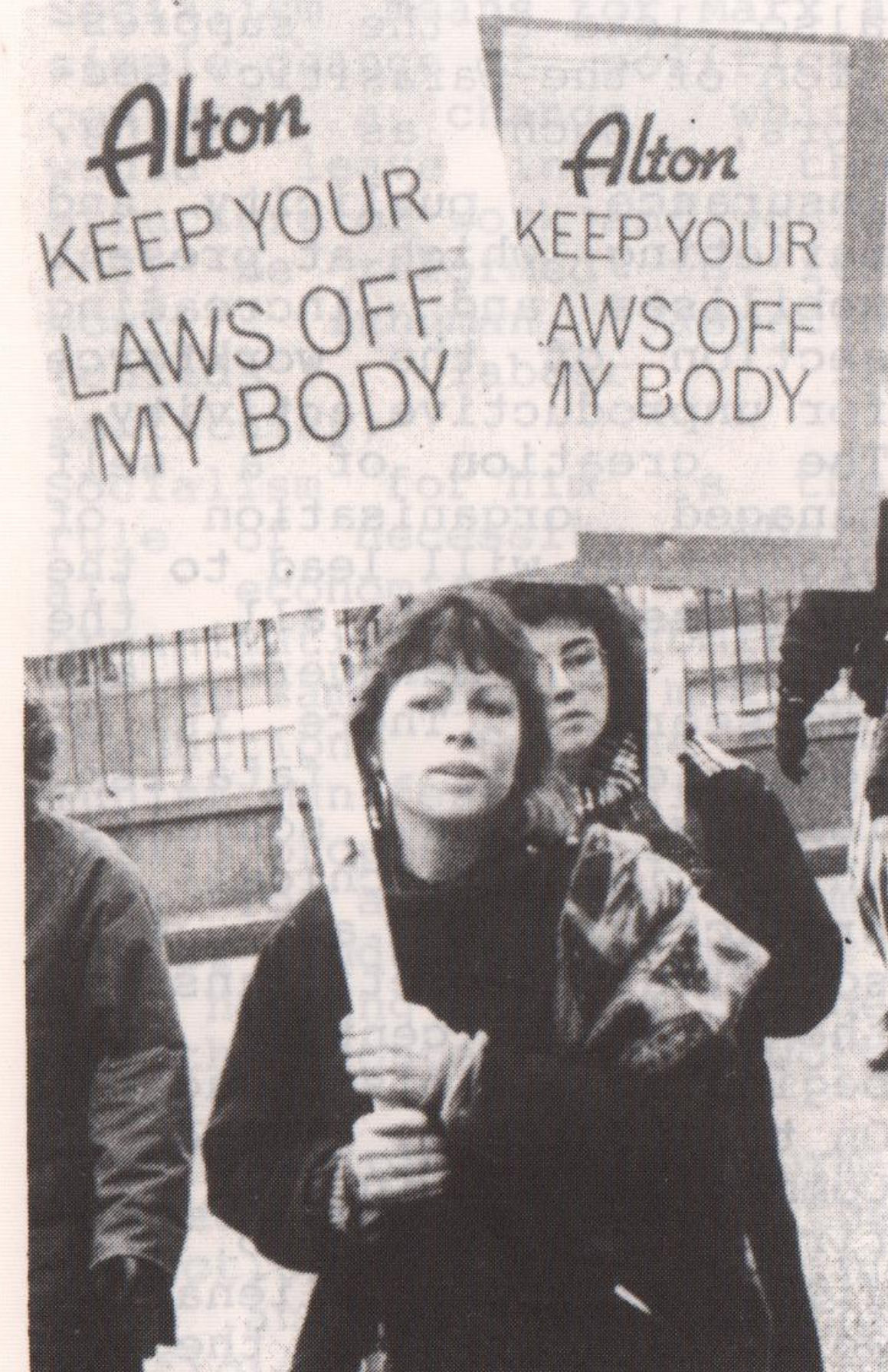
— THE HEALTH ISSUE —

• The State of Health •

• Maternity Care? • Catering for Health •

• and more •

Magazine of the A.C.F.



safety of the women they are treating. However the situation for rich women

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As Necessary.

CORRECTION

CORRECTION TO "MARX, LENIN AND
TAYLORISM", Virus 11, page 11,
foot of column 2.

"Under capitalism, sacking is
a violation of work
discipline, notably with the
introduction of compulsory
work service, is a common
crime, and must be punished
in consequence."

This should read:

"Under capitalism, sacking is
a violation of the civil
contract. Now the violation
of work discipline, notably
with the introduction of
compulsory work service, is
a common crime, and must be
punished in consequence."

Thanks to Rich Cross for
all photos.

Anarchist Communist Federation

The Anarchist Communist
Federation is a network
of class struggle
anarchists.

The organisation is
based upon groups and
individual members. At
present there are groups
and individuals in:

the Cambridge area,
Canterbury, Coventry,
Chesterfield, Durham,
Glasgow, Liverpool,
London, Manchester,
Medway, Newcastle,
Northampton, Nottingham
Oxford, Sheffield,
St. Albans & Tonbridge.

The ACF promotes the
building of a strong and
active anarchist movement
in Britain.

The ACF can be contacted
at: National Secretary,
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Subscriptions (#1.50 per
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to Virus should be sent
to: ACF,

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

The deadline for letters
etc. for the next issue
is: June 17th 1988.

Where We Stand

1. Capitalism and other social systems in which wealth and power are the property of a ruling class/elite, must be destroyed.
2. Reformist and statist solutions will necessarily fail and therefore revolution is the only possible means of achieving anarchist-communism. How far such a revolution will be peaceful depends upon the degree to which the ruling class clings onto power through violence and state repression.
3. Genuine liberation can only come about through the self-activity of the great mass of the population. We regard parliament, representative democracy and political vanguardism as being obstacles to a self-managed society. Institutions and organisations which attempt to mediate in the fight against domination cannot succeed. Trade unionism as it is presently constituted, plays an important part in maintaining class exploitation, insofar as it regulates and justifies it through collective bargaining and bureaucratic structures. Nevertheless it is important to work within the trade union movement in order to build up a rank and file workers' movement which encourages workers' control of struggle and cuts across sectional boundaries.
4. Workers and other oppressed sections of society will, in times of revolutionary upheaval, create their own

democratic institutions, whether they be based on the workplace or the community. To this end we encourage the creation of organs of struggle based on the rank and file, independent of the political parties.

5. Pure spontaneity is unlikely to be sufficient to overthrow entrenched class domination. Anarchists must indicate the libertarian alternative to class societies, participate as anarchists in struggle and organise on a federative basis to assist in the revolutionary process
6. Capitalism is international and needs to be fought internationally. We therefore try to maintain contact with as many anarchist-communists as possible in overseas countries as the preliminary stage to the creation of an anarchist international.
7. We do not simply seek the abolition of class differences, for inequality and exploitation are also expressed in terms of race, age, sexuality and gender. Personal relationships are now often based on domination and submission. We seek not only an economic revolution but a social and cultural revolution as well, involving a thorough-going change in attitudes and organisation of everyday lives to free us in our social and personal interactions.
8. We reject sectarianism and work for a united, revolutionary anarchist movement.

STATE OF HEALTH

It has been six years since the last nursing dispute. In that time we have seen hospital and ward closures, dodgy community care schemes, lengthening waiting lists, and increasing workloads. Tory 'efficiency' has meant less people doing the same amount of work. Patients leave hospital earlier, so they are sicker and more dependent when they are in hospital and in need of more care outside hospital. Such outside care is

dealing with the distress of being in hospital, fears about illness or the treatments available. The present workload causes mistakes and the treating of people like objects. During the present protests, nurses demands focus on wages and shift patterns. But it must be remembered that it's nurses' general experience of the deterioration of healthcare and working conditions that lies behind their action; wages and

Nurses provide 24-hour cover. This means working shift systems, nights, Christmas and Bank Holidays, weekends etc. This tends to mess up your personal life and is bad for nurses health. Extra payments for unsocial hours are mainly 1/3 or 2/3 for Sundays and Bank Holidays. This is pathetic. Nurses suffer a number of other health risks: one in three nurses develop back trouble, the same rate as in coal mining; nurses are



provided by unpaid women in the main. The fiddled statistics that the Tories throw at us are in the marked contrast to the experiences of healthworkers. In nursing, we know we can't care for our patients as we would like to and as patients deserve. This makes what can be a distressing and difficult job anyway into a soul-destroying daily grind. On many wards we can barely provide proper physical care, let alone

shifts are only an important part of this. A State Enrolled Nurse who has worked for the NHS for 20 years could get a job packing at Rowntrees and earn more in the first week. The real value of nurses' wages is continually going down. The last nursing pay award was supposed to give us a 9% increase. This was an average figure: lower grades received 3 or 4%, whereas senior nurses received 13%.

a high-risk group for mental breakdown and stress related illnesses; nurses catch a wide range of infectious illnesses from patients, bouts of vomiting and diarrhea regularly recurring.

The Fightback.

Up until recently, the mood amongst nurses was one of depression and fatalism. Discontent has shown itself by nurses leaving the profession or moving into

the private sector. However, this mood has changed rapidly over the past few weeks. Nurses have become enthusiastic about strike and protest.

The first success was by healthworkers in Manchester. Their action stopped the introduction of cuts in unsocial hours payments. Since this, actions have occurred in Leeds and London, finally culminating in the national day of action on 3rd February.

This day of action was a success. Five thousand nurses went on strike, many more went on protests and demonstrations. Emergency cover was maintained: on some wards nurses took turns to join the pickets, while many used lunch-breaks or days off to join the protests.

Many more nurses would have come out if it weren't for providing emergency cover, and for their commitment to patient care. On many wards, what the management had designated as sufficient emergency cover was more than the number of nurses usually on the ward. At the City Hospital in

York, the emergency cover designated for the night shift was 26. The usual number of nurses working that shift is 18. Similar discrepancies were found throughout the country. It is the government which fails to provide proper cover through understaffing, not nurses.

The Tory Response.

The Tories have responded to healthworkers' actions with threats of privatisation, along with the usual hypocritical talk about 'uncaring nurses'. This talk is important. The Tories are raising the stakes, turning the nursing dispute into a struggle over the whole future of the NHS. If the nurses fail, the Tories will step up their privatisation plans.

The Tories talk of privatisation in terms of better services, better wages, better conditions and greater efficiency. Over one million people are already on private healthcare schemes, and this is rising. Many people are seduced by Tory

arguments. After all, don't nurses in the private sector get more wages? The reality is different. Privatisation of cleaning and laundry services has been followed by job cuts and drops in wages. The final aim, for the privatisation of the NHS, is horrific.

Tory plans are quite clearly leading towards a three-tier healthcare system, based upon 'demand'. When the Tories talk of demand, they mean how much money people have got, not how ill people are. There will be a state-run one for the chronically sick, the elderly, and those on benefits. These people have no 'economic demand', and the Tories want to give them what they can afford, not what they need. These 'poor hospitals' could well be staffed by YTS-type labour, managed by a skeleton cover of trained nurses and medical staff.

Ordinary working people who can afford medical insurance will have a good acute service for themselves and their families. This service may



only consist of treatments which can be provided at a profit. The small print in contracts will make sure cover is not provided for illnesses that might require long-term hospital care. This service will ensure workers are well enough to go to work, which is all the bosses want us for. Going on strike will probably mean that your health cover is taken away. Finally, a wonderful full-cover service will exist for the rich. If you earn tens of thousands of pounds a year, you will be able to afford this service. Tax fiddles for the rich will allow them to claim some of this back. The service for the rich will be supported by tax concessions for private hospitals, state-educated and trained staff, cheap sales from the NHS and cheap hire of remaining NHS facilities. Women will suffer particularly as a result of privatisation. Women will become more economically dependent on men's wages and health insurance payments. Women will be forced to manipulate men for their own health and that of their children. Men will have more power to coerce women into relationships

and lifestyles they might not want. More care will have to be provided by unpaid women workers in the home. The Tories are on the road to such a healthcare system. Running down the NHS has pushed more people into private healthcare. Previously free services already have to be paid for. YTS labour is already being proposed in the health service.

Which Way Forward?

The healthworkers' struggle is everyone's struggle. Support for this struggle by working class men and all women is important to protect their own health service. Nurses cannot win without such support. The campaign so far has been initiated by rank and file healthworkers. The Union leaders have done little to assist this, and have hindered it at times. At a national level COHSE, NUPE and the RCN are presently bickering over the timing of the next Day of Action. Healthworkers need to keep decisions in our own hands, to prevent our anger and demands from becoming distorted and misrepresented in a mire of

bureaucratic Union committees and procedures. This hierarchy is as alien to most nurses as the management bureaucracy is. We can't afford to rely on the TUC or Labour Party. Labour began the health cuts, closing 272 hospitals when they last managed the state. The TUC itself will not organise real solidarity from women and working class men. We will have to get this for ourselves. The reorganisation of Workers Support Groups, as we saw in the miners' strike, could be invaluable. Similarly, the Womens Movement will be an important source of support.

Healthworkers will have to consider carefully our plan of action. Here are some ideas worth looking at -

■ On-going industrial action could take various forms: more one-day strikes and demonstrations; working to rule (particularly relevant to student nurses); an overtime ban, withdrawal of goodwill, or refusing to do non-essential paperwork. We must decide our own course of action collectively.



JULIAN STAPLETON

■ To keep the action in our hands we need a Joint Action Committee open to all healthworkers, whatever their union. Other trade unionists and supporters should be encouraged to participate.

■ Whatever our immediate grievances, all of us surely recognise that they are part and parcel of the running down of public health services and the rotten deal handed out to NHS workers across the board. So it's essential to win ancillary staff, technicians, administrative staff, etc. to fight alongside nurses.

■ To do this we need a Joint Action Committee open to all healthworkers, whatever their trade union or job. Other trade unionists and supporters should be encouraged to participate in this, while keeping decisions up to health service workers themselves.

■ Imagine how effectively we might stop cutbacks and worse working conditions if we hit directly at the top of the health service hierarchy. Some District and Regional Health Authorities underspend their budgets, enthusiastically organising extra cuts. Hospital Managers get bonuses for closing hospitals. York School of Nursing underspent by #30,000 last year... So let's see if NALGO members would consider boycotting administrative work in such cases.

■ In 1982/3, and again today, many RCN members have been prepared to take action alongside their fellow nurses. But the RCN will continue to be used by the Tories to divide nurses, so RCN members need to consider whether they'd be better off joining COHSE or NUPE.

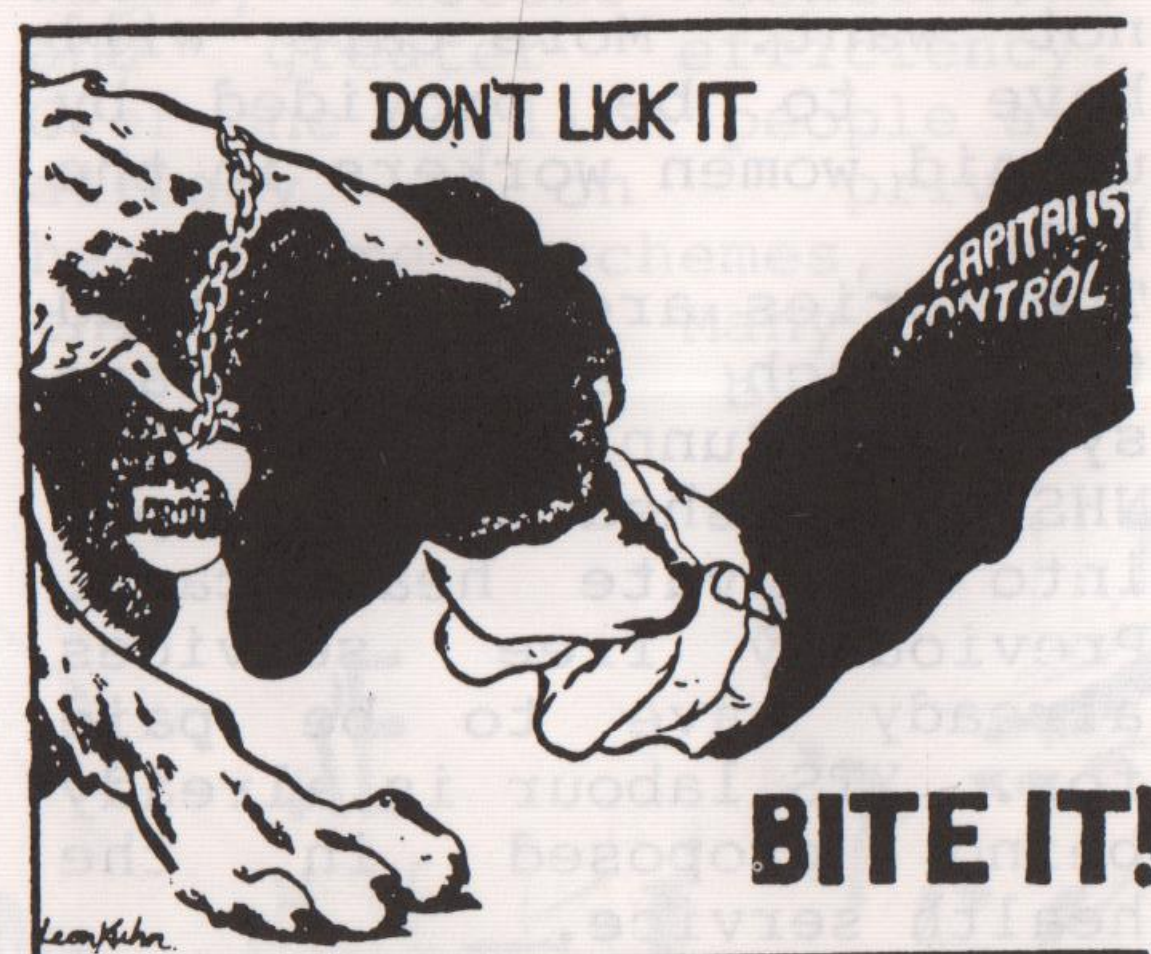
(by a COHSE member)

THIRD WORLD DEBT

In 1987 the debt of Third World countries went up by only 2.5%. But that's not good news for the working people of these countries. It reflects the drop in "aid" for development from the West, and an increase in the number of 'negative transfers'. Between 1982 and 1987, the Third World paid \$85 million more than it received in new capital. Among other things, this resulted in a drop of 14% in income for every inhabitant of Africa.

SALES UP

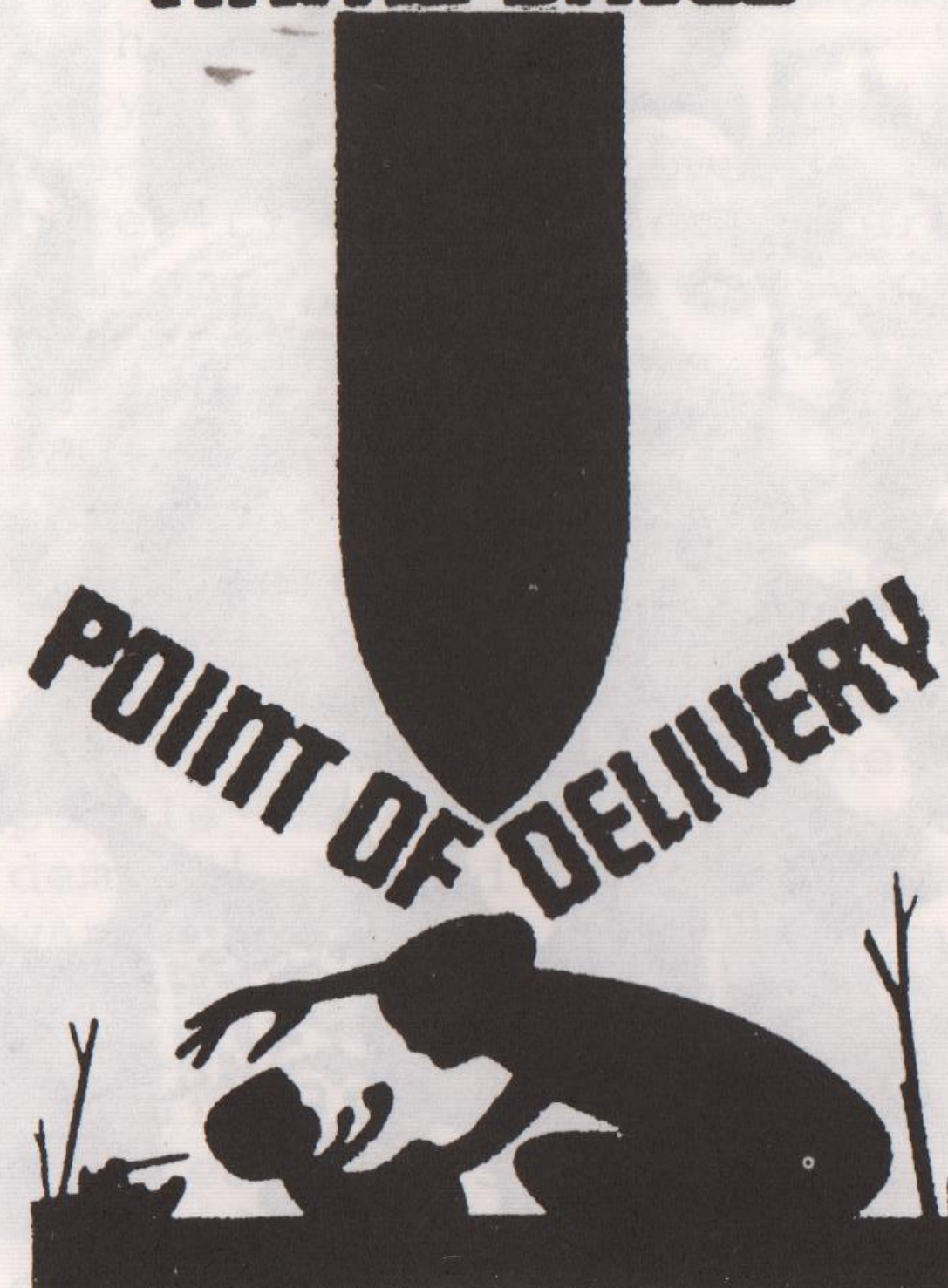
Despite the crisis, the sale of arms to the Third World went up 38% in 10 years - \$35m in 1986,



external debts. This rise is underestimated if we take into account the recent exposures of secret arms sales.

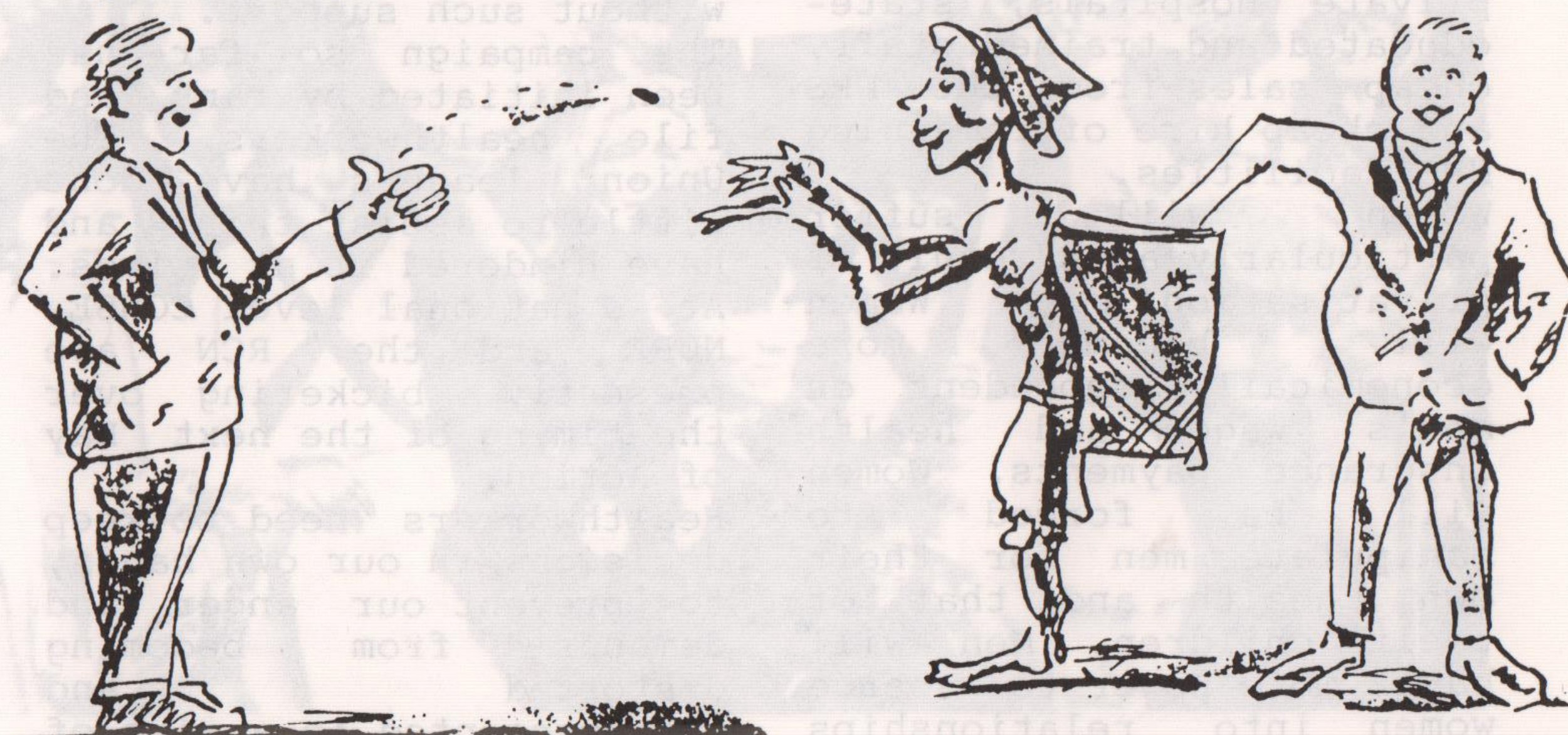
The sale of arms constitutes the single most important cause for the

ARMS SALES



debt of the Third World. The International Monetary Fund imposes on many Third World countries stoppages of price freezes, job programmes, and cuts in investment. In these circumstances the powers in place must maintain their domination by strengthening the armed forces and the police to control socially explosive situations.

These military expenses contribute to the reduction of the level of life of the people, and to investment. Repression leads to recession which aggravates the situation and leads to a further development of the forces of repression.



RAPE - THE MYTHOLOGY

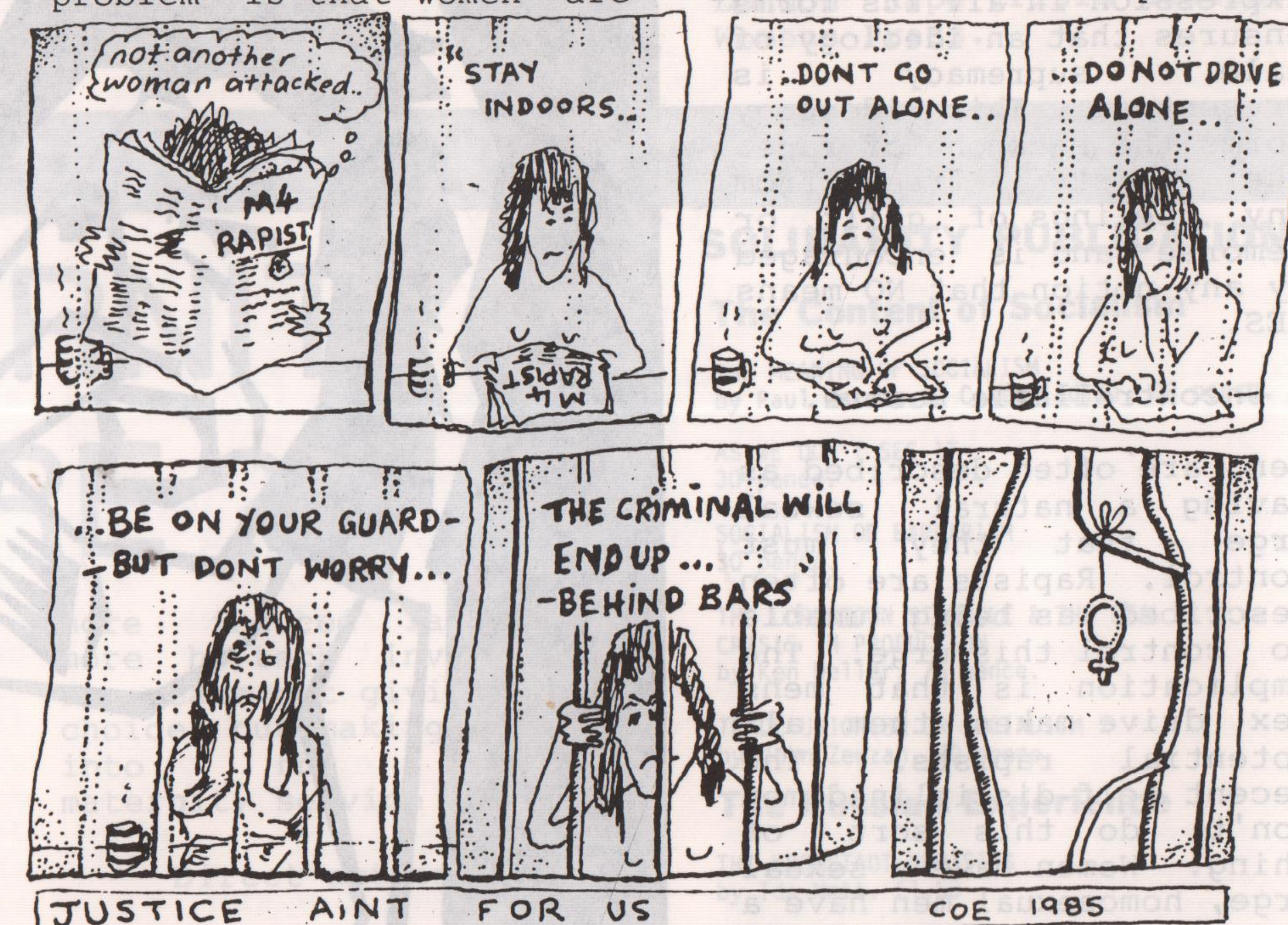
Rape is a crime against women which is surrounded and obscured by a powerful set of myths which encourage and perpetuate it. These myths have a number of effects. They shift the blame from men to women, dispel women's anger and hinder attempts to deal with rapists. Positive efforts to prevent rape are confused by these myths and support for rape survivors is undermined. So what are these myths?

The Rapist.

The popular stereotype of a rapist is that of a maniac, a dirty old man, monster or lunatic. The rapist ought to be obvious to everyone, but isn't. Few rapists are referred for psychiatric treatment because psychiatrists have had problems trying to find something to treat. Most rapists have 'normal' attitudes to women and 'normal' aggressiveness as measured by psychologists. Friends and relatives of rapists are often shocked to find that the ordinary man they have known is a rapist. The simple fact is that all sorts of ordinary men rape, regardless of social class or employment. Doctors, labourers, police, judges, factory workers, soldiers can all be rapists. The only thing about rapists which influences their behaviour towards women is how accessible vulnerable women are to successful attacks. At present, there does not appear to be any way of deciding which men are and which men are not rapists. The portrayal of rapists as madmen allows men to feel that they are not capable of rape and gives 'normal' men a secure feeling that they are not responsible. It also helps men who have raped to deny the reality of what they have done. If you are a normal man you cannot be a rapist.

There is also a disastrous effect on women. This encourages women to seek protection from normal men rather than solidarity from other women. This protection is given by men at the price of women's own control of their lives. It is not an effective protection for women to depend on men. This protection leads to the sort of social environments that rape can occur in. Over fifty percent of adult rape survivors are raped by male relatives or close friends of the family. An added dimension to this problem is that women are

women, men's role and sexuality provide an ideology upon which men choose to rape. Women are presented as physical objects for the pleasure of men, mere lumps of meat. From pornography to advertisements the ideal woman is "any time, any place, anywhere" as long as it suits the man. Women are passive, malleable and obedient; rubber dolls that say what men want to hear. The images of sexuality we encounter are not centred around consent. They do not present any real image of women's sexuality. What is described is what pleases



encouraged to support the state and strengthening of its security services. This merely puts more power and more control into men's hands, where it can be abused. Instead of being angry about men's power and supporting each other and organising against this power, women are encouraged by their fear of rape and abuse, to support this power.

'Normal' Attitudes to Women, Our Invitation to Rape.

Normal attitudes about

men, always from a man's perspective. The role that women play in these images on TV, films and in literature is to verify that what the man enjoys she also enjoys. Sex is defined and revolves around penetration. Sex begins when a man is hard, and it ends when it loses his erection. Any protest a woman may voice during sex or before it, is presented merely as "playing hard to get". Men are often totally oblivious to subtle signs of refusal. There are countless media examples of the pushy man

being successful and the woman rapturous that she has given in. These images are little different from the lie that women enjoy rape. The man who fails to get a woman to give in either didn't have the right technique or didn't push hard enough. There are no examples in our culture of men accepting a woman's decision. Men are encouraged to use bribery, emotional blackmail, and force to have sex with women. There is no image of a man giving what a woman wants, unless what women want is corrupted into a caricature of men's desires. Men are encouraged to believe that they know better than women do themselves about what women really want. Male domination of cultural expression in all its forms ensures that an ideology of male supremacy is presented. This ideology forms the backbone of rape. The rapist is freed from any feelings of guilt or remorse and is encouraged by any notion that NO means YES.

Uncontrollable Desire.

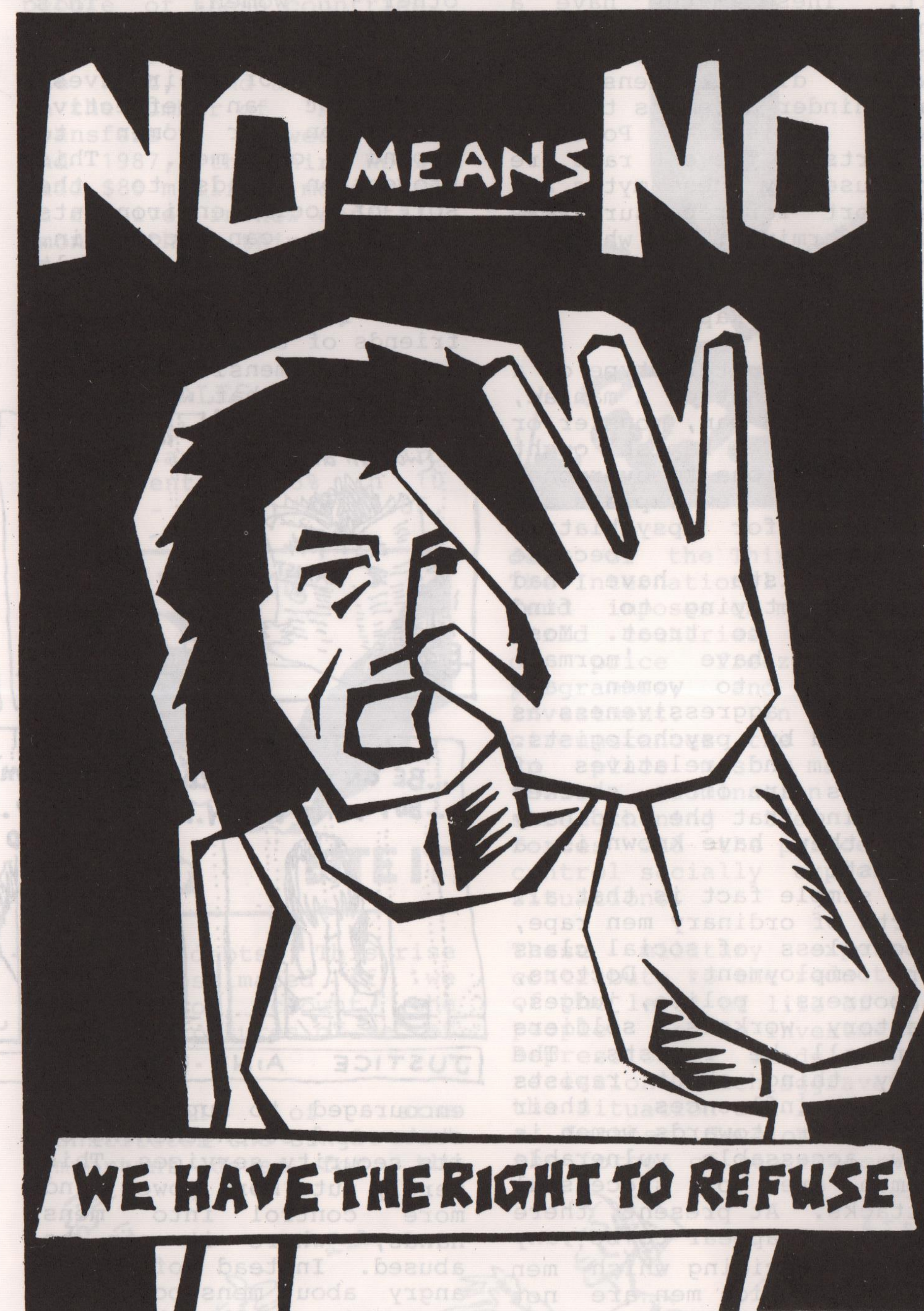
Men are often described as having a natural sexual urge that they must control. Rapists are often described as being unable to control this urge. The implication is that men's sex drive makes them all potential rapists. The decent self-disciplined men don't do this sort of thing. Women have a sexual urge, homosexual men have a sexual urge, but 97% of all rapists are heterosexual men. Clearly this is not a 'natural' sexual urge. A desire to rape is not a desire for sexual satisfaction. It is much simpler to masturbate if you're sexually excited. Rape is not impulsive. Eighty percent of all rapes are planned. Rape is not connected to level of sex drive but the way in which this sex drive is orientated. This orientation is socially created by the power relationships encouraged between men and women. Rape involves the deliberate

humiliation and degradation of women, it is completely ignoring the validity of women's desires. It is not sex.

Who Is Responsible For Rape?

We are led to believe that a woman brings rape upon herself by her own actions.

breaking them, and the rules may be contradictory. A woman may be inviting rape if she is passive, or she may invite rape as a punishment for being assertive. A woman cannot win, close examination of her behaviour before being raped, or behaviour in general, will reveal some way in which she had led



A woman out on her own late, wearing sexually attractive clothing or hitch-hiking alone is, apparently, asking for it. The things which a woman may do to bring rape upon herself form a long set of rules for women to conform to. The list of rules is so long a woman can't avoid

him on or encouraged him. These contradictory rules run throughout our culture. The rules are not based upon any of the facts about rape. For instance, a woman is as likely to be raped in the home as in the street, yet one of the rules is not to leave home. The rules conform to men's desires to

control the lifestyle, activities and sexuality of women, such as keeping a woman in the home. The "innocent" survivors of rape are faithful wives, virgins and elderly women (assumed to have no sexuality). The 'guilty' survivors of rape are prostitutes, unfaithful wives and women who sleep around. When it is admitted that lesbians exist, rape is seen as useful for making them become heterosexual by giving them a 'good fuck'. The so-called 'guilty' women have one thing in common, they are not owned and controlled by a man. It makes no difference what a woman does or what she is. All sorts of women, any age, any colour, or any class can be raped. Rapists make no distinctions. Women do not cause rape, men

cause rape. In the same way that an elderly lady does not cause mugging, women do not cause rape, EVER.

Whose Malicious Lies?

Women are often accused of malicious lies when they say a man has raped. This is unlike any other crime. When someone reports a theft, no-one immediately considers an insurance fiddle. Yet the police, medical profession and social workers who come into contact with rape survivors immediately consider a woman may be lying. The report of a rape is usually followed by thoughts of "is it true?", rather than "who is guilty?" The misreporting of rape may provoke more moral outcry than rape itself. Women rarely lie about

rape. When it is assumed by police that a report of rape is a true report of a crime, like any other report, the rate of false allegations is 2%, like any other crime. The fear of not being believed keeps women from reporting rape. It keeps the real level of men's violence against women hidden. The real malicious lies can be found on TV, in the papers and in men's talk. This is the mythology of rape, all around us and in our heads. The exposure of these lies forms one of the key means for abolishing rape.

For Further Information: 'Father Daughter Rape', by Elizabeth Ward, Womens Press. 'Sexual Violence, the Reality for Women', by the London Rape Crisis Centre, Womens Press.

MATERNITY CARE ?

Maternity care in London, already bad, is getting worse. According to the Greater London Association of Community Health Councils 16% of beds have been cut since 1980. Since 1974, twenty-eight units have been closed or incorporated into larger units. Increased efficiency is supposed to overcome this.

Reduced access

Centralised less local services reduce access to those most in need. Single mothers or women with large commitments at home can't travel as easily, poorer women can't afford to. Increased efficiency means making maternity services much more like production lines. It means relying on health workers to work harder at something which can't be rushed. It means

more induced labour and more hi-tech involvement. It means not giving women choices but making them fit into the efficient maternity service machine.

Direct action

In 1985 and 1986 the direct action of women on the streets of Tower Hamlets were the decisive element in the success of Wendy Savage against persecution by male obstetricians. She offered women the right to choose in their pregnancy. Maternity service cuts threaten this. A woman's pregnancy can be one of her most significant life experiences, it's not like having your tonsils out. However, if we want things to change, it is on the streets and in the workplace that we are listened to.

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LETTERS



Dear Virus,
In issue 11 of your paper you have used and altered a photograph taken from one of the postcards produced by "Just Books" in aid of our prisoner's book scheme. The photograph of the International Women's Day Picket outside Armagh Prison in 1984, has been distorted to make it appear that women are carrying a banner saying "Virus 11" instead of "Stop the Strip Searches". As the person who took the original photograph and a member of the cooperative which produces the card, I feel I cannot allow this distortion to pass unchallenged. The banner for the 1984 picket, as in subsequent years was made to highlight the use of strip searching as a repressive tactic against women prisoners, intended particularly to break the morale of women political prisoners. Since 1979 women from all over the world have gathered at Armagh prison on International Women's Day and have continued the picket at the new prison at Maghaberry to demonstrate solidarity with the women prisoners and to protest at

the harsh treatment meted out by the prison authorities. Women do not travel long distances to picket in spite of harassment or spend hours making banners to have their struggle misrepresented and trivialised in such a fashion. I hope you will print an apology in the next issue of your paper. In the meantime, we will not be putting Virus 11 on the shelves as it is an insult to women taking part in the International Women's Day picket.

Yours E.T. Just Books

Dear ET

In reply to your letter about the use of "Virus 11" with one of your photographs, we are sorry that it caused any distress or anger. We realise how serious the demonstration was and certainly didn't mean to trivialise it in any way, rather it was meant as a humorous self parody, the idea of any people gathering with the banner "VIRUS", let alone hundreds, being unlikely to say the least.

NOTICE TO READER

Due to financial circumstances there will be no further issues of Liberation for the foreseeable future, subscribers to Liberation will receive Virus instead. If you already subscribe to Virus then your subscription will be extended. We apologise for any inconvenience and disappointment caused.

Finally we do regret any upset caused as it was certainly not intended.

Yours, Virus editorial Collective.

Dear Virus,
I just wanted to write a quick letter of appreciation after reading Virus 11. I particularly enjoyed 'Marx, Lenin and Taylorism' which seems especially pertinent to some of the concerns expressed in the Technology article in Virus 10. This is a very interesting and important debate I think. Anyone who takes the relationship between means and ends seriously, as Anarchists do, has to question whether technological means can be employed for socialist ends. Whether technology can be neutral or whether it isn't inherently tied up with capitalism and the state. Jacques Ellal has tried to show that the modern state is a technical state and that the two are reliant on each other. In fact, that the state is itself a technique. If this is true, then an Anarchist acceptance of technology should be a very critical one. There can be no going back to a pre-technical age but this leaves us with some difficult practical problems to deal with. Few papers seem to be thinking about this but it looks like Virus is coming up with something very useful. Thanks again, Andy Parkinson.

CATERING FOR HEALTH

Cook-chill, a New System, a New Danger.
Cook-chill is the name that has been given to a new catering system under consideration by a number of hospital catering managers. The system involves cooking meals throughout the day and freezing them very rapidly. The meals can then be stored and reheated when required. This system could be very useful, as there would be no rush to produce large amounts of food in a small time and meals could be served on hospital wards when it was suitable for patients rather than the institution. Split shifts and unsociable hours for catering workers could be reduced, although catering managers may use the system to cut staff and wages.

Poisoning risk

The system does have a serious problem. If food is not kept at the correct temperature and is not cooled and re-heated correctly, there is a big risk of poisoning patients. This means that the system must be run correctly, and carefully monitored. Environmental Health Officers looked at 2,000 hospitals in England and Wales before Crown Immunity was lifted from them. Seventy-one of these hospitals would have been liable for prosecution if it weren't for Crown Immunity. The NHS does not have as good a record as it should have. In 1984, at Stanly Royds hospital, nineteen people died from salmonella poisoning. After frantic attempts by management to blame staff, Wakefield Health Authority have now spent #1 million on a new kitchen using the new cook-chill system. A well staffed, well organised kitchen poses no threat to patients. It is no accident that Stanly Royds privatised their kitchens

before the poisoning, cutting hours, staff and wages. Their bright-new scheme using the cook-chill process has been described by the London Food Commission as "a hotch

money out of their workers as possible.

Who's to blame?

The Wakefield Health Authority have asked the unions to accept #250,000



potch. It's cheap and nasty, like building a plane without wings and expecting it to fly."

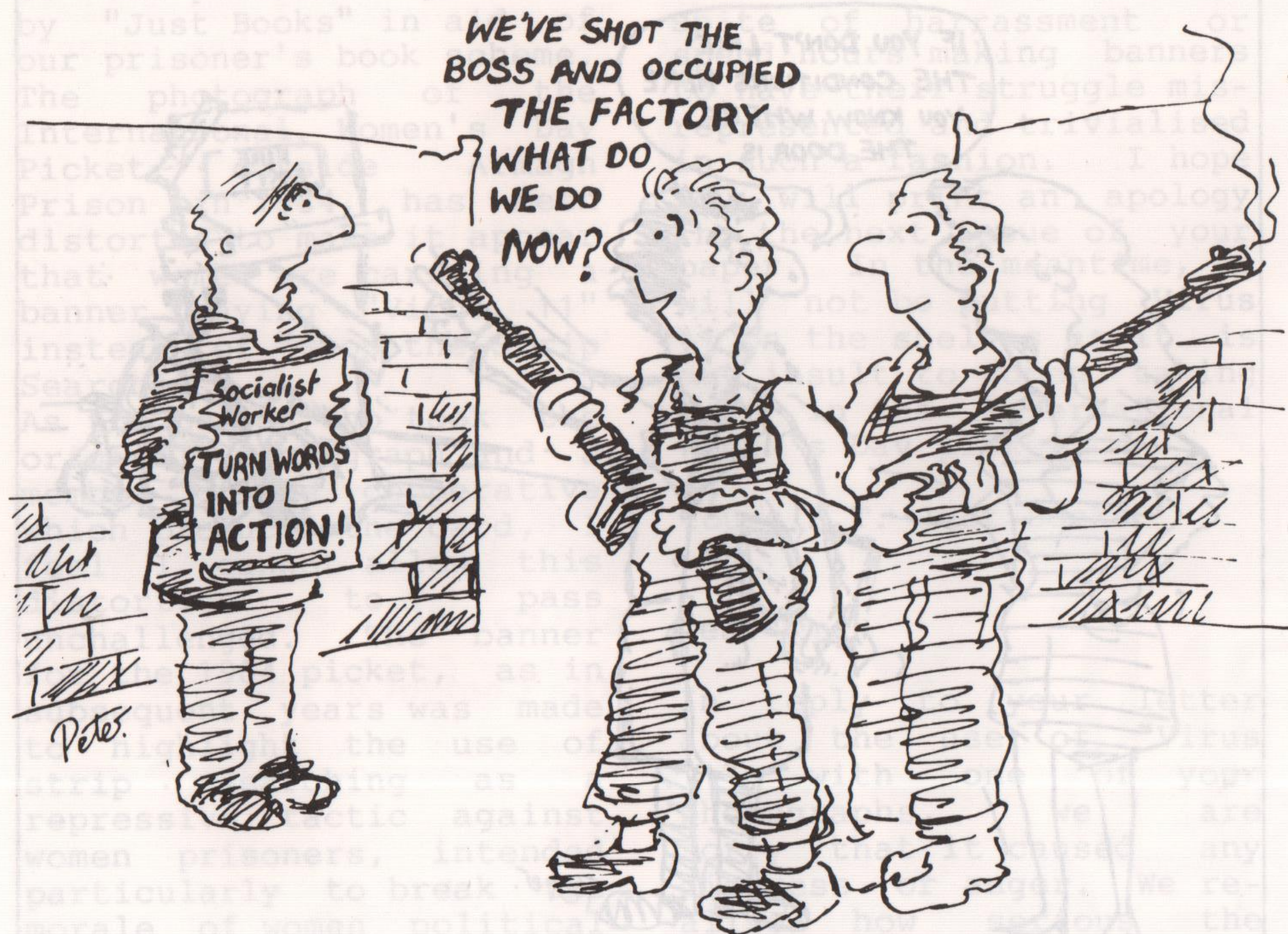
Nasty plans

We don't want to see any more deaths at Stanly Royds, however the Wakefield Health Authority have even nastier plans. They have threatened to extend this system throughout the district, and to have the system run by private companies. It's bad enough having a health service run by a bunch of remote bureaucrats who aren't experiencing the conditions they make such influential decisions about, but in addition to this, the bureaucrats in private companies have one major aim, to screw as much

worth of cuts in return for not privatising the new system. No doubt the Wakefield Health Authority thinks this is a reasonable offer, but the offer is essentially the same as a mugger offering you violence or having your money stolen. For a change the union negotiators have refused this blackmail attempt. Now it is up to the workers in Wakefield Hospitals and the communities of Wakefield to complain and act against these proposals. We want cook-chill but with adequate training, staff, hours and wages. We want a safe cook-chill system.

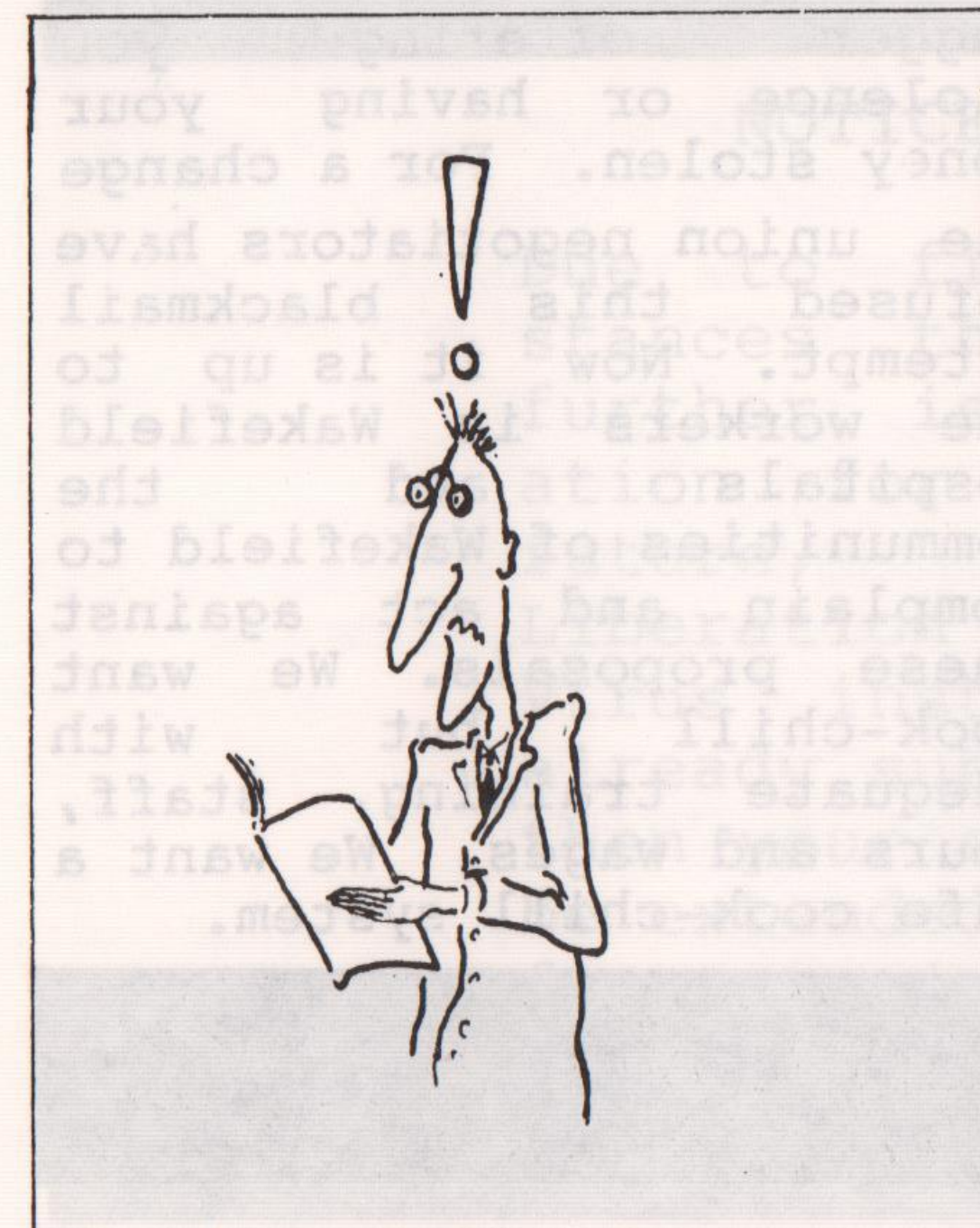
BEFORE LENIN:

This is a follow up to an article in the last issue (no11) which dealt with Lenin and his attitude to work and industry.



False Blame

Just as it is false to put all the blame on Stalin in order to exonerate Lenin, it would be naive to see in the latter's positions on the organisation of work a



simple Machiavellian plan for domination. The origin of Lenin's ideas on these subjects are at the heart of Marxism, in the pages of "Capital" itself.

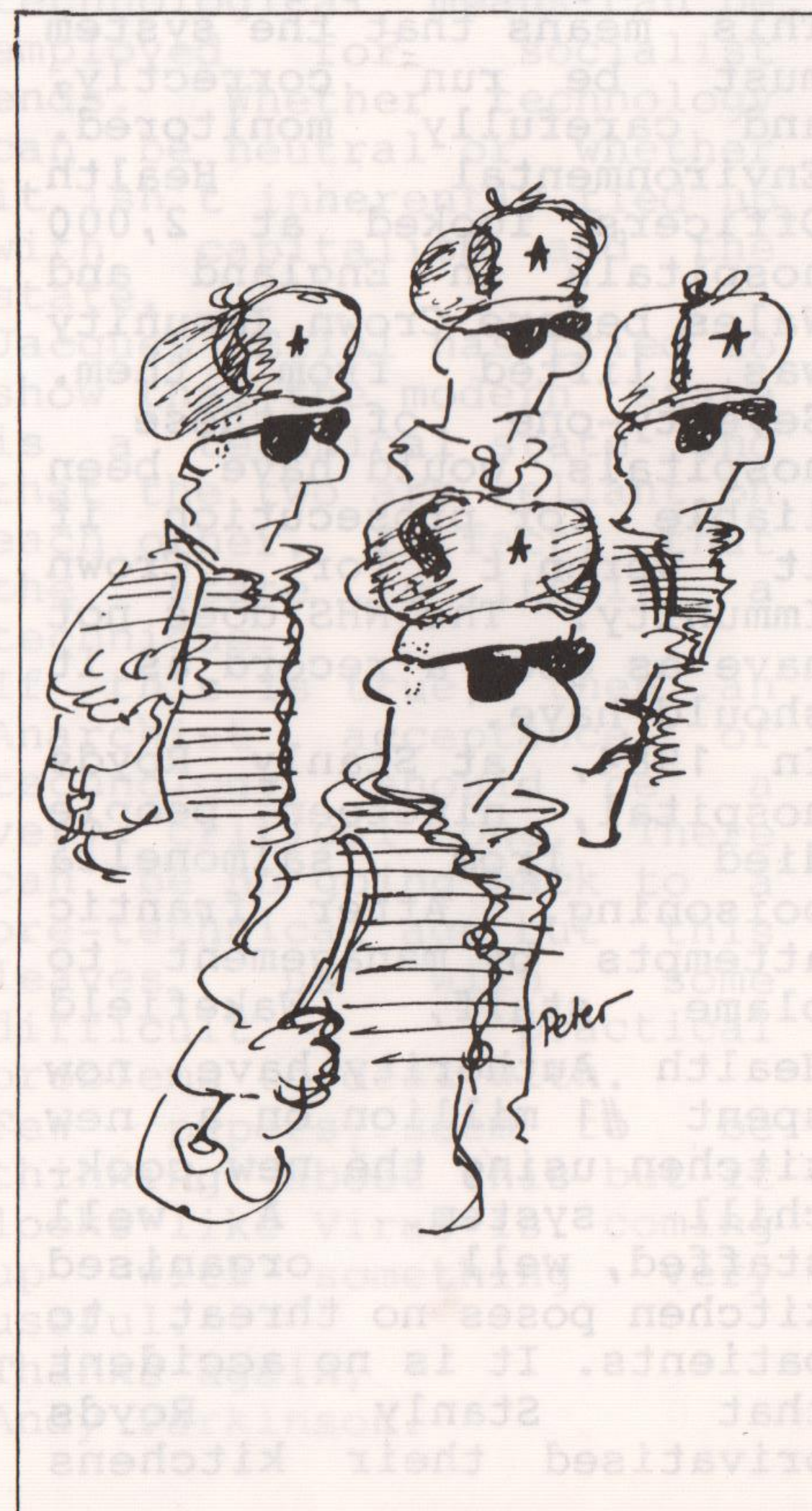
Marx's Position

Marx's position was in fact ambiguous. On one hand, he was the first to denounce the iniquities of the division of labour, and the pages of 'Capital' are full of them. For Marx, there is no doubt that humanity cannot have liberty and autonomy without smashing the old system of work organisation. But...this transformation is impossible in the "transitional period" of socialism! Marx denounced the iniquities of the parcelisation and specialisation of tasks (Taylorism had not yet been born) but at the same time praised their productive efficiency and

even their progressive character.

A Necessary Stage

Against 'anarchy' in society, he opposed 'despotism' in industry. And this despotism, while condemned as a tyranny, he regarded as a rational organisation opposed to the disorder and wastage of the capitalist market. Yet Marx, technology and capitalist organisation of work, if they are responsible for the mutilation of the worker, are nevertheless a necessary stage in the development of the productive forces. "It [the division of labour under its capitalist form]



MARX, ANARCHIST COMMUNISM AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF WORK

progressive character, in the Marxist sense of the term, favouring the emergence of the objective conditions for society?

The Organisation of Work

To avoid confusion, it should be pointed out that Marx is talking about the division of labour in the workplace, of the organisation of work, and not the division of labour in society, which can effectively be considered as partly progressive, in that it gathers workers together in one workplace. Marx is talking about "analysis and the decomposition of manual skills, specialisation of instruments, of the formation of specialised workers by grouping and combining the latter into a single mechanism," and he adds, "This particular organisation of work augments the productive forces - at the expense of the worker. It produces new conditions for the domination of capital and labour...it appears historically as an advance." If the organisation of work marks a step forward for socialism it is because it boosts the productivity of labour ("It augments the

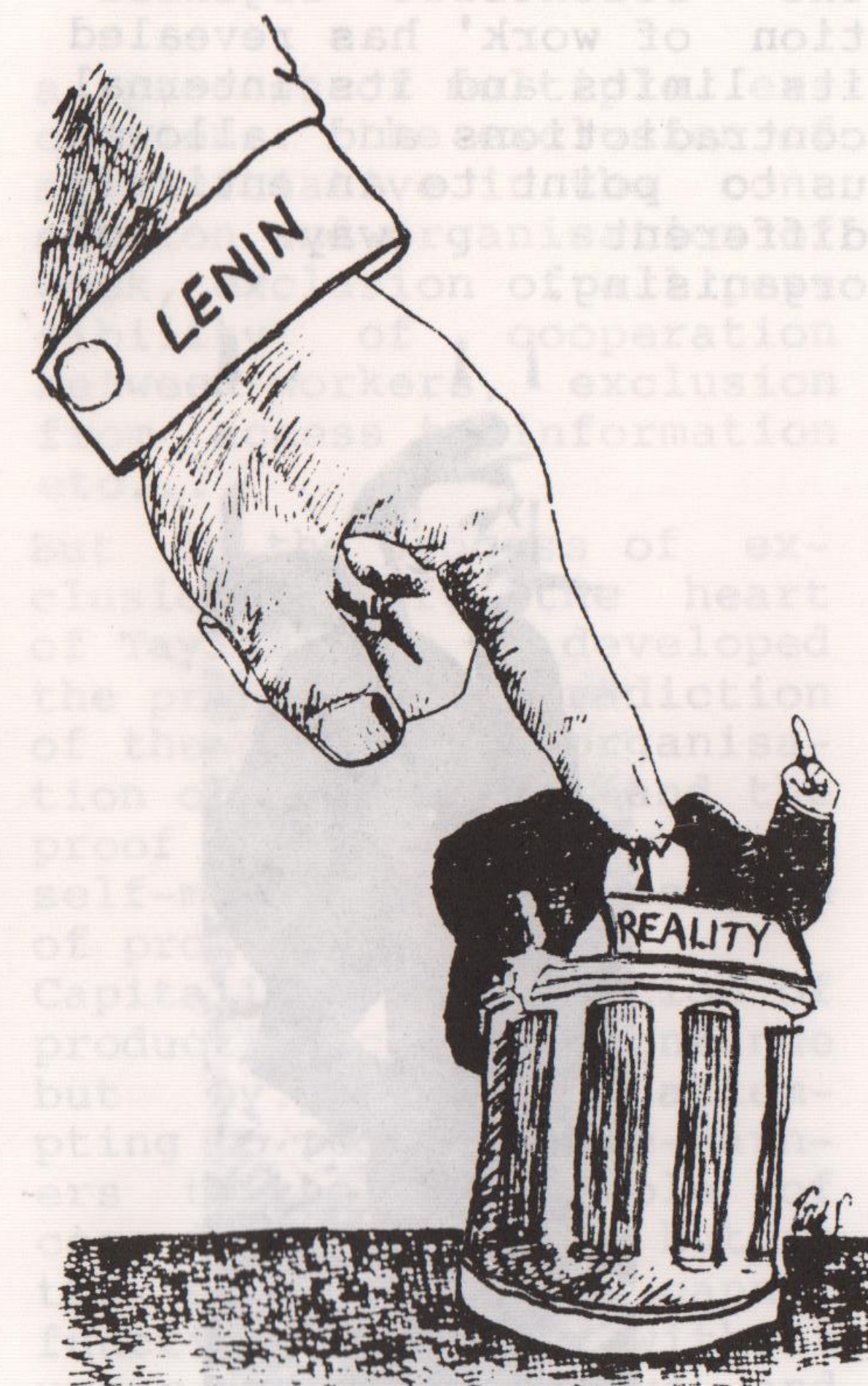
productive forces"). For Marx, from a strictly technical point of view, it is the most efficient, by far. So it is not realistic to attempt to destroy it after the revolution. The specialisation of tasks, the assembly belts and stop-clocks, are a necessary evil, an inevitable stage in the construction of socialism.

Reorganisation of Work

The reorganisation of work in a different way will only be possible "in a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the



division of labour, and with it also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but itself life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly - only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!" (p.17. Critique of the Gotha Programme, Peking edition.)



appears historically as an advance and a necessary aspect of the economic process of the formation of society, on the other hand, it appears as a more refined and civilised means of exploitation." (Capital, Part I, Ch.14). But in what does the capitalist division of labour present a



A communist plot.

To the question initially asked; are economic prosperity, the development of productive forces and of the level of life, compatible with a radical transformation of the content of work, Marx replies NO! An alienating, (mutilating to use his own expression) organisation of work is the



price to pay for entry into the promised land of communism.

The Rule of Necessity

Socialism means for Marx a simple change of political control a change which would leave intact the structure of work and would only be reformed in its most inhuman aspects (child labour in particular)

Socialism for him is the rule of necessity, where all economic and social organisation is submitted to the same goal: maximum production. So the Communist Manifesto, edited by Marx, proposed compulsory work for all and the forming of 'industrial armies' but nothing about a change in the content of work itself.

The only proposition formulated by Marx is for the reduction of the working day, and that requires the sufficient development of the productive forces. Certainly the reduction of work and a considerable one, will be necessary not

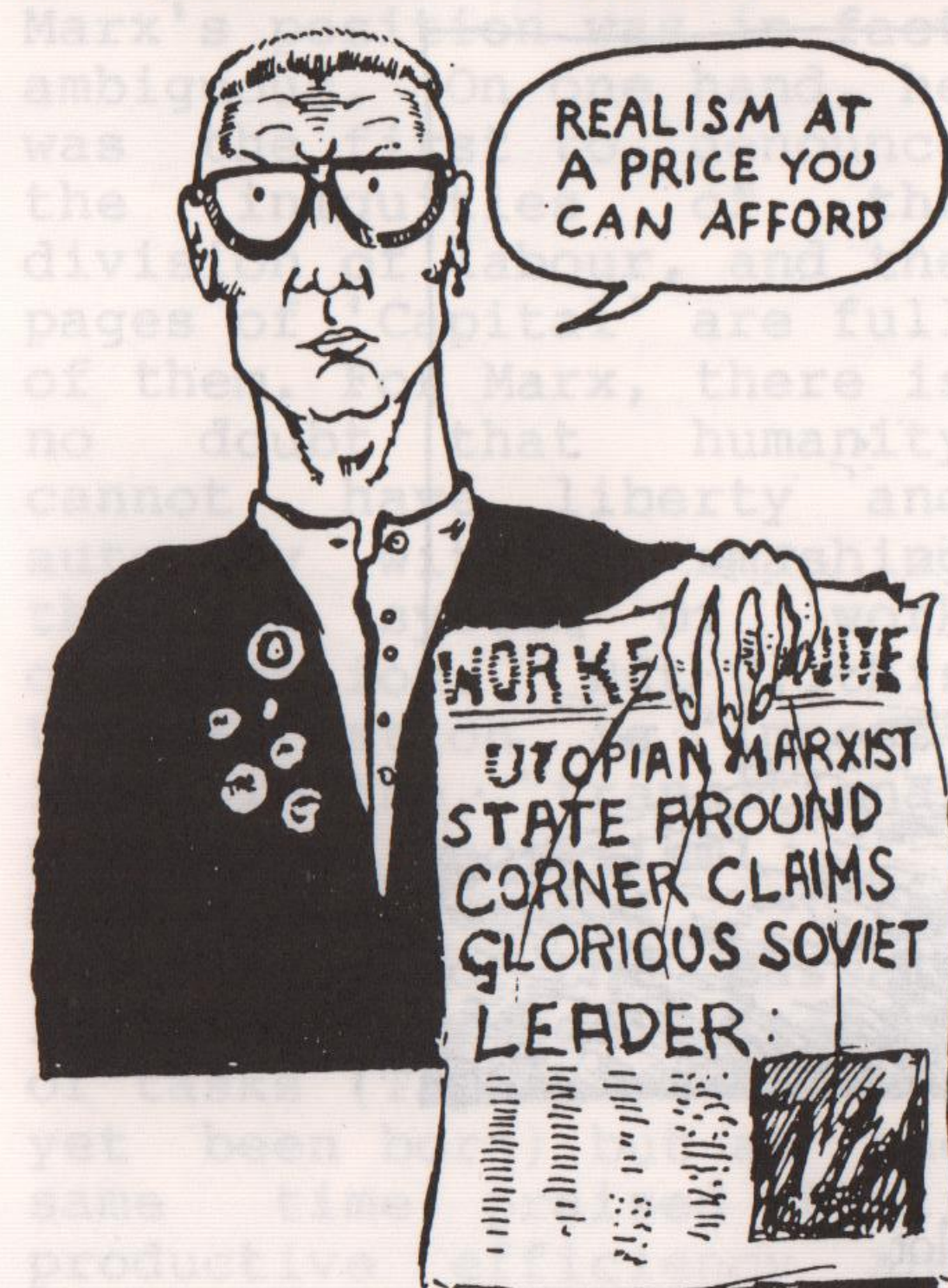
only for leisure, but to allow everyone time necessary for the running of society and the realisation of anarchist-communism will be impossible without the reduction of work time. But to be limited to this single measure, without touching work itself, would be to forget that, work determines all social relations, class relations in particular. A change in the organisation of work is not just or even principally, humanitarian, it is above all a political necessity, the necessary condition for the real takeover of the means of production by the producers themselves.

ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF WORK

A revolution which ignores economic goals is doomed to failure the fundamental question is of the two forms of work organisation, that imposed by capitalism, based on specialisation of task and division between manual and intellectual work or the direct management by the producers themselves of the means of production, with the re-composition of work, of the specialised tasks, reappropriation of tasks of conception and organisation by workers which is the most efficient?

Marx and Lenin were of the opinion that the capitalist form of production was the most rational and spoke in

FULL MARX



the language, thought with the logic of the bourgeois economists. In the name of "necessity" Marx renounced an immediate transformation of work. In the name of "realism" Lenin imposed the scientific organisation of work in the Soviet factories, The 'scientific organisation of work' has revealed its limits and its internal contradictions and allowed us to point to an entirely different way of organising.



Lenin with a hard task ahead

Taylorism planned on cutting to the maximum the loss of time in production. In fact specialisation of tasks has increased the number of workshops in the factories, increasing distances and time of transport within them, at the same time assembly-line work has shown the impossibility of occupying every worker without interruption, because of the difference in time between each task. In seeking to reduce to the maximum the amount of 'wasted time', Taylorism has added to it. Why do the bosses still employ the Taylor system. The capitalist division of work above all seeks to assure the domination of capital over the workers by



a process of multiple exclusions: the exclusion of all initiative in the conception and organisation of work, exclusion of all possibility of cooperation between workers, exclusion from access to information etc...

But in the process of exclusion itself, the heart of Taylorism, is developed the principal contradiction of the capitalist organisation of production, and the proof of superiority of a self-managed organisation of production.

Capitalist organisation of production cannot continue but by permanently attempting to reduce wage-earners to the simple role of cogs in the machine, but at the same time, it cannot function normally without using the initiative and know how of the workers. Many studies have shown that in the case of extreme parcellisation of tasks, the good functioning of the shop and all the factory can be upset by the independent action of workers. The case of work-to-rule actions are particularly

important, where workers interpret the to the letter the commands given to them by the bosses.

The capitalist division of work leads to:-

- 1) The wastage of the capacities of the workers.
- 2) The control over decision making by technocrats, 'specialists', cut off from the real problems of production, where the experience and know how of the workers are ignored, leading to many malfunctions.

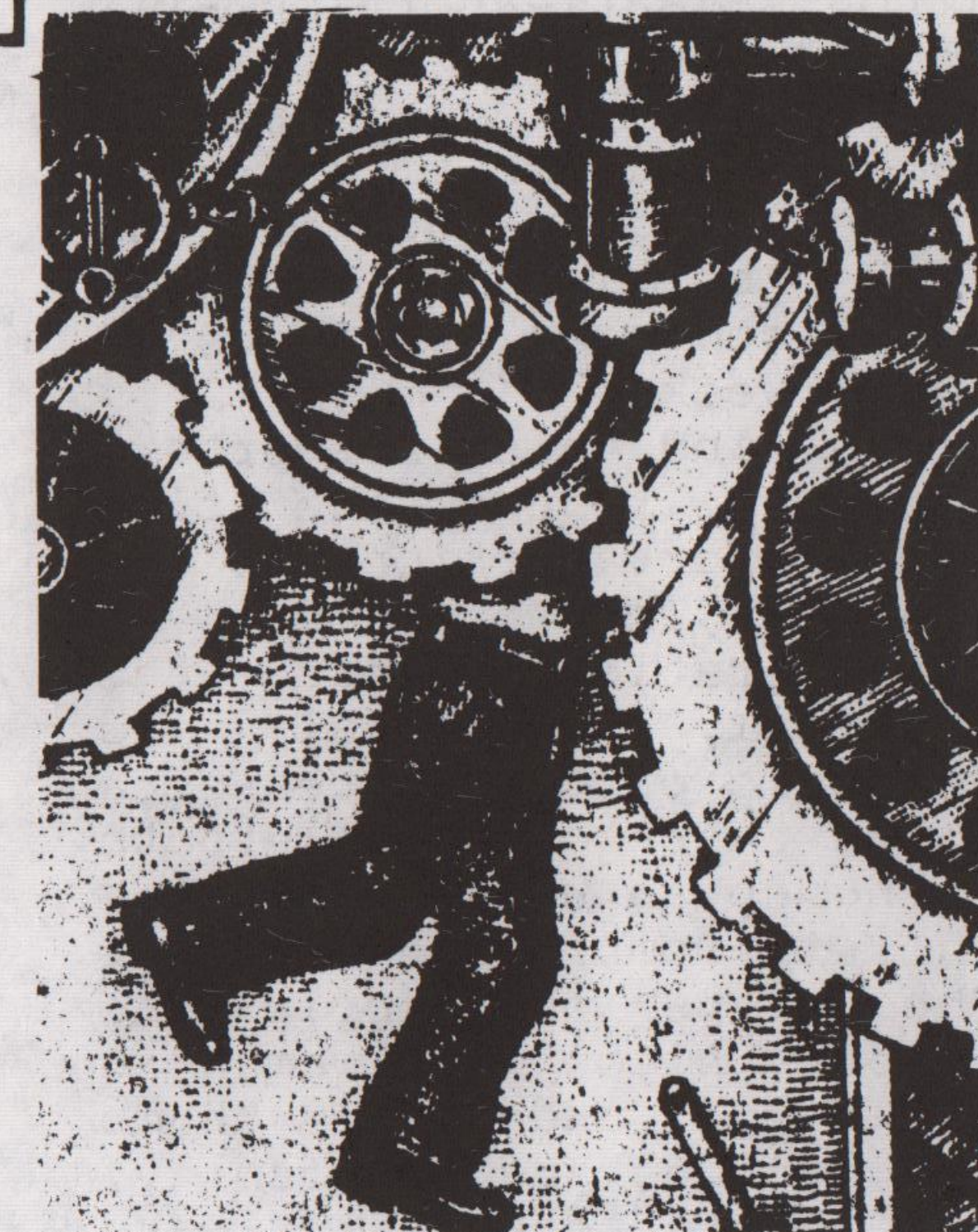
People over Work

The direct management by the producers themselves, suppressing all division between manager and managed, permits the maximum contribution of the know-how and initiative of the producers. The domination of work over people is replaced by the domination of people over work. But anarchist-communism doesn't stop with the organisation of work it extends to production and distribution, in fact the whole economy.

By replacing the present chaos of the capitalist



market by production that is democratically planned and coordinated, anarchist communism puts an end to such practises as the destruction of thousands of tons of fruit and vegetables when millions of people are dying of starvation.



Reduction of Wastage

Anarchist Communism will lead to a considerable reduction of wastage, by the increased life of products, in opposition to the built-in obsolescence of many of today's products, forcing consumers to regularly repurchase items.

Anarchist Communism will also lead to the suppression of the parasitic sectors, such as banking,

insurance, publicity and marketing, which at present mobilises and increasing section of the workforce for unproductive activity. The creation of a self managed organisation of production will lead to the suppression of all the posts of managers and overseers. There is no technological fatalism, leading to a socialism which is hierarchical and productivist, as many socialist theoreticians of the last century and beginning of this thought. On the contrary, anarchist Communism in its first stage leads to the disappearance of alienating work, and prepares the way for the disappearance of the artificial divisions between 'work' and leisure'.