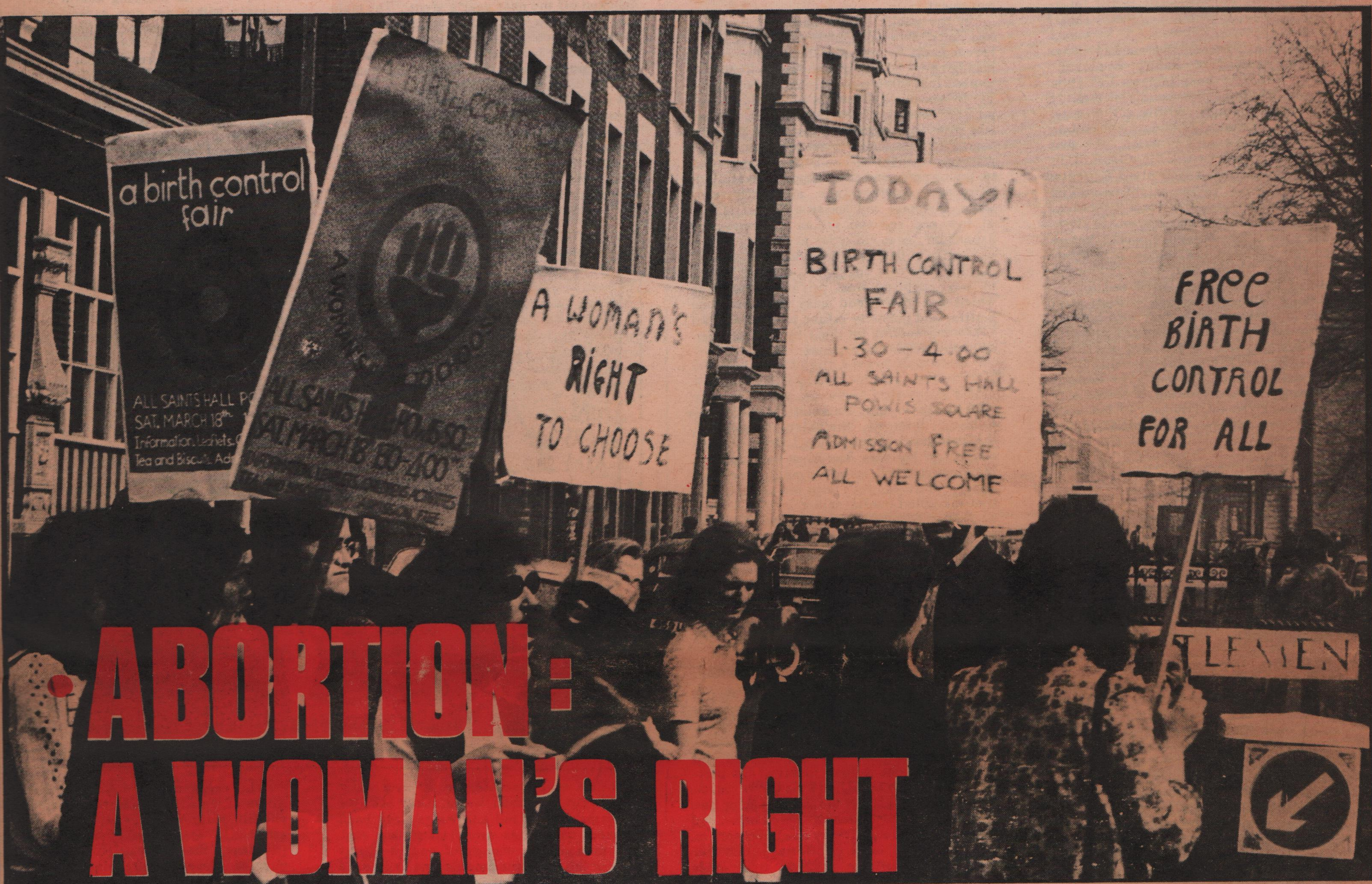


# libertarian struggle



- **ABORTION:**
- **A WOMAN'S RIGHT**
- **SPUC EXPOSED**
- **FIGHTING THE FREEZE**

Walthamstow Fascists • NATSOPA • Hospital Workers • Fair Rents • Sergio ARDAU • Bradford Sellout



# Hospital Workers

## MUST NOT FIGHT ALONE

'Over the past few years the State capitalist, in its widest sense, has become more integrated and coherent as an employer. We have all heard how the Government 'leaned' on British Rail, the Post Office, and local authorities during wage negotiations, and adopted a policy of holding down wages generally by imposing restrictions on those it could influence directly. In 1971 public sector wages were all fixed at similar percentages (until, that is, the miners kicked over the traces last year). Many trade unionists were surprised and dismayed at this hidden incomes policy. It is important that it has taken the State so long to emerge as a single employer. State workers as a whole are now bearing the brunt of the Government's freeze because 'restraint' has been operating on their wages for longer than everyone else's.'

(from an article by Tom Snow in the latest Public Employee, NUPE's national paper)

A fine delivery, but the timing was rather ironic, the copies of Public Employee began to arrive in hospitals on Feb. 16th. The same day that, after months of stalling and restraining rank and file action, after receiving clear mandates in national ballots to initiate all-out strike action, the four Health Service Unions (NUPE, COSE, TGWU, GMWU) announced their plans for united action to beat the freeze: selective strikes to close some hospitals, a general overtime ban coupled with 'non-cooperation' to start on March 1st. This is just 4 weeks before phase two becomes law, strike action becomes illegal, claims will be settled by the decree of the State Pay Board and for 3 years there will be no control by Parliament.

With this recipe for 'defeat with honour' the hospital unions have emerged themselves, although backed by militant and determined rank and file for the first time ever, as a single restraint on the wage demands of Britain's super-exploited hospital ancillary workers, an integral part of the State offensive on working class standards of living.

### ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

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

We are united by our membership of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists - a democratically organised group which believes in a socialist revolution, but a revolution brought about, and firmly controlled, by the majority of the working people. We work to encourage contacts and understanding between the different aspects of working class struggle.

We oppose all groups and parties who take the initiative and control of their struggle from ordinary people. We think that the way forward to a better society is not through any kind of 'new' leadership, but through working people discovering their own history, their own ability to organise themselves, their confidence in themselves and their mates.

We are producing this 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 schoolkids are doing, and how these battles can't be separated.

We won't give you the familiar crap of 'this is your paper', 'without this paper the working class is leaderless' etc. What we do say is that if you want to USE this paper - to pass on things you've learnt, to ask for help from other people, or just to make contact with others in a similar situation, then please do so. We know that lots of people have no practice at writing articles - but who needs literary genius? We promise to improve its appearance as we get more practised. The contents are up to you.

Part of the reason for this militancy has been a growing understanding by hospital workers of the causes of their traditional position as the most low-paid, overworked group of public servants in the country, and it is important to clarify this background before tracing the development of the recent upsurge in more detail.

In general public sector workers have always fared worse than workers in the private sector. In private industry there is a long history of successful trade union action. This is due largely to their ability to threaten profits directly throughout the 'long boom' when order books were full and companies could not afford to sustain long disruptions in production. This also made local bargaining possible, and was in fact made effective by the growth of a strong, militant, and well-organised shop stewards movement.

In the public sector however the State has been able to pioneer general cuts in labour costs by claiming through the various managing boards of the nationalised industries that there is simply not enough money to go round because productivity and profits were too low. The truth is, the profits were low because the role of the public sector has been to rescue unprofitable private companies, pay huge compensation to the owners, and then supply private industry with services (gas, electricity, railways, airlines) and materials (coal, steel) at low and reduced prices 'to encourage expansion'. Also, in order to preserve 'free enterprise', they are forbidden to manufacture their own equipment, and are forced to buy supplies from private monopolies, which are guaranteed easy and enormous profits, and normally refuse to do their own research, working on sight by trial and error at the taxpayers expense.

Appeals to the 'National Interest', 'the Public Interest', 'the safety of patients', the continued belief in the Labour Party's concept of building Socialism by 'socialising' industry and bringing public services under 'public control', with the parallel fear that disrupted public sector industries will be lost to private enterprise, have combined to weaken the unions and used them to reduce the wage bills by restraint on pay through productivity deals, (which have caused massive redundancies and heavier work loads.) This has of course reduced safety margins for the workers themselves and the public they serve (eg. gas explosions caused by private companies carrying out conversion work with non-union labour at break-neck piece rates).

So the Unions in the public sector do not have a tradition of concerted militancy, and more crucially they have not developed an organised shop stewards movement, which of course has been actively opposed and prevented by the unions involved (in particular the scab GMWU and the UPW). Success of the struggle in the public sector has depended on the extent to which organised rank and file militancy has been able to break down the limits of official action and the isolation of the struggle from other groups of workers. (The miners are a successful example, they took charge of their own struggle, seriously disrupted production and won, the dustmen are another - they ignored the official NUPE, call for selective strikes, fought all out, and won; the postmen failed, they remained faithful to Jackson and at the time when they most needed support they were refused even strike pay money by the TUC).

Hospital workers have trailed along in the rump of this general picture of mystification and sellouts. Their only bargaining weapon is to desert their patients altogether, and naturally management and unions alike have succeeded in terrifying their workforce with the fatal consequences of such acts if they should happen. The unions involved are divided and placid. The TGWU only represents about 15,000 of the total, the GMWU is the GMWU; COSE is registered under the Industrial Relations Act (and they have to pay for their own tea and biscuits at conferences), and NUPE is highly bureaucratised, geared to expanding its membership, (its the fastest growing trade union in the country), rather than fighting for the members it already has. Until the present struggle began, there had never been a

stoppage in the hospitals. Almost non-existent trade union organisation inside many hospitals has meant that hundreds of workers have been downgraded during rationalisation without any change in work actually done, hundreds are not being paid the full rate they are entitled to, and in many hospitals overtime rates are not paid at all. Many individual militants who have opposed such treatment have been refused assistance by their union officials and sacked.

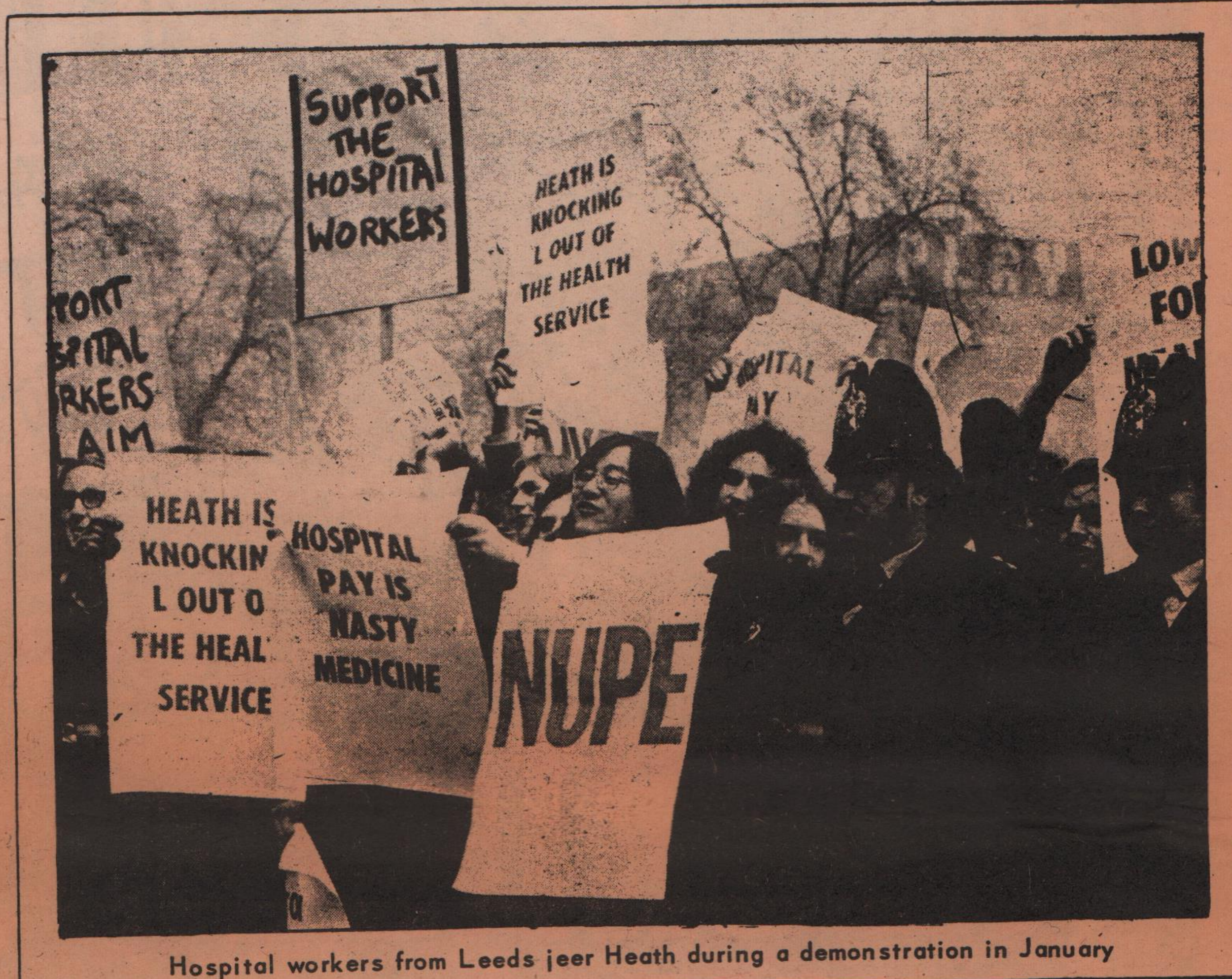
The body which controls pay and conditions is the Whitley Council, an arm of the Treasury. On the staff side sit four representatives of the four unions, sixteen in all; on the management side sit sixteen appointees of the various hospital boards, plus three representatives of the Dept. of Health and Social Security. Which gives the Government a direct three-man majority to impose its income policies. This however is rarely called for as the real arbiter at the Whitley Council meetings is the non-voting advisor from the Treasury, who scotches any meaningful deals by supplying 'objective' information about shortage of cash. (Union negotiators may know about but they rarely react to vast sums of public money being squandered on all manner of luxury commodities at the end of every hospital's budget year - because any surplus will be knocked off the next year's grant). The main function of the Whitley Council has been to formulate such brave conditions of service that in some hospitals porters are used as bodyguards when cashiers go to the Bank.

The failure of the Whitley Council, inherent in its purpose and power structure, ever to produce a living wage, has resulted twice in the problem going before the Prices and Incomes Board. In 1967 the PIB (report 29) proposed, surprise, surprise, a productivity deal to be worked out by work-study bonus schemes. Hospital work is by definition of an emergency nature, making so-called

Add to this the growing disillusion among hospital workers with the nature of the 'public service' they provide, and comparison between the substandard facilities for the old and mentally ill who have no labour to trade, the overcrowded conditions of the National Health wards, and the privileges and extra comforts which are granted to private patients who are rich enough to jump the health queue for NHS facilities, and it is easy to understand why this hitherto passive front in the class war suddenly exploded when Phase One of the Tory freeze and Heath's decree 'no negotiations' came into effect. Easy too for revolutionaries to predict the role of the Unions in the months since Bristol hospital workers first walked out in October, demanding not the official £4 but '£8 NOW'. Not so easy for the many workers for whom this is the first experience of industrial action or the many who joined the union specifically to help fight the freeze.

After the Bristol walkout militant stewards in London formed LASH (London Alliance of Stewards for Healthworkers), with these aims:-

- (1) 100% membership of any appropriate trade union in all NHS establishments.
- (2) Unifying health service unionists within our own areas, and encouraging those elsewhere to unite in similar alliances.
- (3) Increasing our knowledge of the NHS and NHS unions and working to improve them both.
- (4) Coordinating rank and file action on relevant issues.
- (5) Increasing the level of awareness of our membership by acting as a forum for discussion, organising public talks and film shows, producing literature, etc.
- (6) The abolition of private practice within the NHS.



Hospital workers from Leeds jeer Heath during a demonstration in January

scientific work measurement an even more transparent con than usual. Only 12% of hospitals in England and Wales have been covered, and it has rarely meant any real rise in earnings, though of course it has always led to redundancies and increased workloads for the remaining staff, and more often than not forced nurses to add domestic duties to their already overloaded routine. 12% was not exactly rationalisation, so in 1971 Prices and Incomes Board Report no. 166 introduced a new bonus scheme without the labour-costs cutting work-study. This now operates in a grand total of 5 hospitals.

Hardly surprising then that the basic rates for ancillary workers ever since Dec. 1971 have been £15.28 for women and £17.48 for men. Of a total of 130,400 full-time workers, over 80% (90% of women) earn less than £20 a week before deductions. 29,300 women are on the rock bottom £15.28. The consequences have been either supporting a family on £15 a week or less plus whatever Means Tested benefits can be found, or else working massive overtime. In some hospitals rotating shift porters are 3-week cycles without a rest day including 60 hours on nights. Shift workers are very prone to mental and physical ill-health, upset stomachs and bowels being very common. Domestic workers often work from 9am to 9pm with a couple of hours for lunch six days a week, the same applies to canteen staff, often living in, only they start about 6.30am. Staff working under these conditions are normally reluctant to complain for fear of losing all overtime and going back on £15 a week basic.

The emergence of LASH, which in the words of its founder, has not created rank-and-file militancy but vice versa' - the alliance has grown out of the militancy - frightened the trade union leadership and puzzled some of the revolutionary left who wanted to know who was leading it, and it wasn't any of them.

Several thousand health workers in London responded to LASH's call for a one day strike when the Whitley Council met in early November. At the November London Area Conference of NUPE stewards, a LASH resolution to call an emergency conference of stewards with the Executive Council to discuss any offer by management rejecting the situation under the freeze, was passed unanimously. There was a feeling that the EC, which is mainly composed of local government representatives, who had settled for £2.40 in the period before the freeze, might not push too hard, and that the factors influencing the militancy of General Secretary Alan Fisher (white Rover 200, mini for the wife, ex-porter making frequent appearances on TV and radio, leader of the 6th largest, fastest-growing trade union etc etc.) might differ from those motivating £14 a week cooks. The conference was eventually arranged, for February 17th, three months later, and the day after the EC met the management for the last time and announced their strategy of selective strikes.

So much for consulting shop floor representatives, 'listening to the movement' as the Swedish Social Democrats call it.

cont. p.7, col. 2



# UNDERDOGS

The three-stage freeze has ensured that prices keep rising, that rising profits are guaranteed in fact, if not on paper; that dividends accumulate for investors so that at some stage they can get the extra bonus; while worker's incomes are fixed and their living standards plunge.

All this is designed to cut labour costs, increase profits and thus encourage higher investment so that industrial capital will be expanded.

The drawback is that nobody wants to invest with the market in its present shape - which is why the Stock Exchange plunged when Heath announced Phase Two.

As always, it is the workers in the public sector that the government hits first. Because they are government employees, public sector workers face state coercion at its most direct. The union leaders have taken hesitant steps to oppose this. 32 union leaders met on Feb. 8th, supposedly to work out moves to coordinate opposition to the freeze of their separate wage claims. A coordinating committee was formed, but what its supposed to coordinate was unclear. The statements of the leaders of the Postal Workers Union (UPW) and of local government workers (NALGO) should be fairly reassuring to the government. Jackson of the UPW is accusing the TUC of sulking because it won't negotiate with the government while the freeze is on. NALGO is also talking to the government, though anxious to avoid suspension or expulsion from the TUC, in spite of the fact that TUC Conference after TUC Conference has passed resolutions opposing any co-operation with the government.

Anderson of NALGO specifically opposed calls by some union leaders to bring down the Tory government.

A national ballot of ancillary workers by their Union, NUPE (National Union of Public Employees), which has a membership of 80,000 out of a total work force of 150,000, came out with a clear majority in favour of all out national strike action. Less than 2,000 opposed any form of action. They usually get rises parallel with council manual workers, who just beat the freeze with £2.40. Demanding £4, they are offered £1.84. If the government wins, the basic rate will be the princely sum of £19.32-£23.32, according to grade. No wonder they all have to work overtime, and no wonder too, they are all feeling pretty militant.

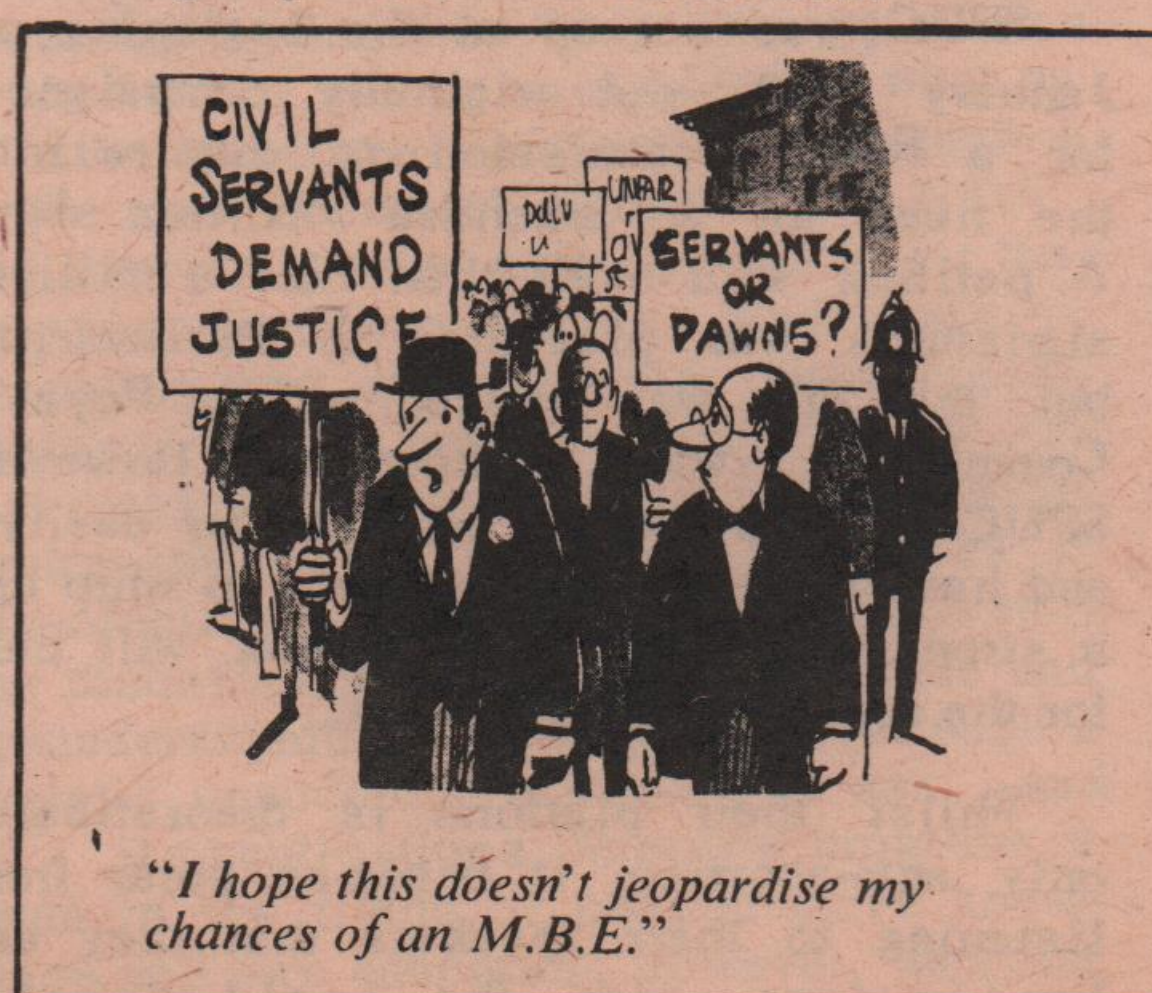
The miners have also rejected a government pay offer, and the NUM (National Union of Mineworkers) is demanding between £30 and £40 as a basic rate. The current basic rate is £23 for surface workers and £34.50 for those on the coal-face.

Water supply workers' unions are demanding the opening of employers books. They have been offered a £2 rise, and maintain the government's prescribed '£1 plus 4%' comes to more than this. They are demanding an increase of £4.50: at present they get a basic of £19.50 with a 'special bonus' of £1. The unions involved are the Transport and General, General

the Customs & Excise Group, are meanwhile being pushed into militant action by their members. In West Germany civil servants recently got a rise of between 7.7% and 8.5%. In France the right wing unions, the Force Ouvrier (product of anti-communist Labourites and American funds) has settled for 2%, along with the professional CTC. The relatively left-wing unions - the Communist Party's CGT and the CFDT (formerly Catholic, now Social Democrat, and in practice often more militant than the CGT) are rather less willing to knuckle under. The time is rapidly approaching when a call for British Civil servants to study those struggles, link-up with the militants in them, and learn from them, is not as far-fetched as it might once have seemed.

All is not well on the railways either, with ASLEF leaders seeking to avoid a collision with the government and with their rank-and-file pushing for action.

It's vital militants do not rely on their trade unions to coordinate and act as an effective weapon against the freeze, let alone against anything else. It is essential rank-and-file groups are built up and strengthened in all these unions, that shop stewards combines are created in every area, integrating workers in all fields, from social workers to gas fitters. It will be disastrous if militants think it is enough to build groups like NALGO Action.



At a time when the bosses face falling profits, it is the public sector workers who face them directly as class against class. Making it more obvious that the central struggle is not about £1 in the pay packet, but about who controls the job. And beyond that, who controls society.

If an integrated struggle is to grow and spread, and to achieve even a tolerable living standard, the battle for wage increases and against the freeze now must be recognised as part of the battle for control of society.

A defeat for the workers now will enable the government to speed up its attack on the working class and its integration of our trade union representatives into its organs for bashing us, like the National Industrial Relations Court and the Incomes committee.

The choice is simple. To leave the struggle in the hands of the union bureaucracy is as good as giving in now. We have only our own strength, and our own democratically run forms of organisation to rely on. These are tools with which we can make a way forward.

## NATSOPA:- SHOCKING EVENT! RANK & FILE RUN BRANCH MEETING

There has been further trouble for the NATSOPA bureaucrats since the report in the last issue. At the Annual Meeting of the London, Clerical Administrative and Executive Personnel (CAEP) branch on 25th January, there was uproar over the way Briginshaw, NATSOPA General Secretary was attempting to stifle discussion on the Lawrence case - when a union militant was victimised by a sordid conspiracy of the employer (the PA) and the NATSOPA union leadership.

An item on the Press Association strike was number 5 on the agenda. After number 4 the Chairman of the branch Barry Fitzpatrick said that the General Secretary had ruled that item 5 was 'sub judice' (i.e. we have invented a rule against talking about this, so piss off). Rather than be in conflict with the bureaucrats he compromised and adjourned the meeting. Whereupon the Branch Committee all walked out. Total confusion reigned for a time, but John Lawrence (delegate for the unemployed) was urged to take the chair, which he did. Denunciations of Briginshaw followed from all parts of the floor and a resolution was unanimously passed, calling for John's reinstatement. Delegates to the meeting were urged to go back to their individual chapels and to put forward motions to this effect.

Whether or not this will be any use in getting Lawrence reinstated remains to be seen. But the dissatisfaction with the manipulative and dictatorial methods of Briginshaw is obvious. This was illustrated at the same meeting when the report of the Branch Secretary John Lewis was rejected. Usually this goes through on the nod. This time the delegates found totally unacceptable not only the way the Executive Council had treated the Press Association strikers, but also the way it had got into trouble over the interpretation of a pay agreement with the Newspaper Publishers Association. This union-boss difference led to unofficial action by NATSOPA clerical workers in Fleet Street.



Civil Servants Rally outside Somerset House

Although under pressure from their membership, both union leaders' interests lead them to end up with an agreement which contains the smallest pay-off the rank-and-file will accept. Even the AUEW (Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers), angel of the left, showed its true role with the Manchester sit-ins last year - localised action which made defeat inevitable. And its response to being fined under the Industrial Relations Act.

The most publicised 'revolts' in the public sector are those of the hospital ancillary workers and of civil servants.

and Municipal and NUPE. In this struggle there is no mention of smashing the freeze, only of seeing whether they are 'entitled' to more. At the same time NALGO is effectively sabotaging demands for wage increases in clerical and administration work in the electrical supply industry.

In the meantime, the arch-scab union, the GMWU, faces a rising tide of militancy among gas workers and has had to concede demands for strike action following localised unofficial action.

The Civil Service unions, the CPSA, the SCS (Society of Civil Servants) and

## ORA

### groups & contact addresses

#### Bristol:

Mac, 10, Whatley Road, Clifton, Bristol 8

#### Colchester:

Peter Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester.

#### Dundee:

Mike Malet, 1, Lynnewood Place, Dundee.

#### Glasgow:

Gordon Sykes, 32, Queen Elisabeth Square, Glasgow.

#### Hull:

Marion McCartney, 21d, Pearson Avenue, Hull.

#### Lancaster:

Joe Thornberry, 56, Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

#### Leeds:

Trevor Bavage, Flat 3, 35, Richmond Road, Leeds 6.

#### Manchester:

Contact Leeds group.

#### North London:

Doug Durrant, 68a, Chingford Road, Walthamstow, London E.17.

#### Nottingham:

Jim Collins, Flat 3, 59, Forest Road, Nottingham.

#### Sheffield:

Ian Neary, c/o Students Union, Sheffield 10.

#### York:

Neil Hunt, 24, Moss Street, York.

There are also contacts in Birmingham, Edinburgh, Huddersfield, Leicester, London Universities Federation, East London, South London, West London, Norwich, Oakham, Oxford, Plymouth, Poole, Southampton, Southend, Swansea and Wellington. If you want to be put in touch, write to the National Secretary, c/o North London group to whom all enquiries about ORA should be addressed.



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# SPUC EXPOSED - AN ATTACK ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

The Womens' Liberation Movement demands freely available contraception and abortion. The emphasis has always been on contraception with abortion as the last resort.

Since the so-called 'liberalisation' of the Abortion Act in 1967, the number of National Health Service abortions 'granted' each year has risen from 7,000 to 70,000 but it is estimated that illegal back-street abortions have also risen - (obviously no exact figures are available). Hence more and more women are seeking to have abortions before they develop into unwanted children, and are even prepared to risk mutilation or death at the hands of unclean, shoddy abortionists, rather than produce babies they cannot cope with.

The reasons for this increased demand are in the article on the opposite page. This article is devoted to examining the campaign being waged by various rightwing 'backlash' organisations to have the 1967 Abortion Act repealed and for far fewer abortions to be performed by the National Health.

## HOLY SPIRIT

The most active hence dangerous of these groups is SPUC - Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child, which at first sight seems to be merely a Catholic front organisation.

The vast majority of the rank-and-file are Roman Catholics with a reasonable sprinkling of elderly or extreme Anglicans and Moral Re-Armament members - a typical cross-section of society!

## THE UNIVERSE

is a Catholic newspaper but in these critical days it can be read with interest and profit by all people of goodwill, anxious to do what they can towards restoring standards of morality. Perhaps, then, even if not a Catholic, you would care to give it a try and

## READ IT

SPUC was founded mainly by the efforts of two women - Mrs Phyllis Bowman and Miss Elspeth Rhys-Williams - and claims many medical worthies in the 'high command' and in the ranks. An investigation into the activities of these two women reveals some interesting facts.

Mrs Bowman, the National Press Secretary for SPUC, claims she was an agnostic when she founded the society. She is now a professing Catholic. She lives near Kew and so sees little of the misery that lack of adequate abortion facilities brings.

She earns her living by journalism, although claiming to work 'twelve hours a day' for SPUC. She also considers the Holy Spirit her literary agent because, 'whenever I get really desperate something comes up out of the blue.'

She met Elspeth Rhys-Williams, the Hon. Sec. of SPUC at the Birthday Trust, a charitable organisation for the improvement of maternity care, and whose benefactors - the Van Neste Foundation of Bristol - gave SPUC a grant of £3,000 for 3 years. Miss Rhys-Williams has had 'no formal career' and has been supported by 'Mummy' (Lady Rhys-Williams). She now lives on an income obtained from rented property an investment made for her by 'Mummy'.

Elspeth also belongs to the Housewives League (she is not a housewife), the Monday club, the Anglo-Zanzibar Society. All of them however innocent-sounding are connected with anti-immigrant, pro-South African, and neo-fascist organisations. (See the magazine 7 Days of 15/3/72).

Both women, however, apart from SPUC, are also founder members of the Human Rights Society, although neither claim any overt relationship with this organisation. At the present time, the Human Rights Society is mounting a countrywide campaign linking abortion and euthanasia and claiming that if the medical profession can carry out abortions, they can also murder the 'unwanted, useless eaters'. In this way they seek to implant the equation 'Abortion Equals Murder'.

Since SPUC's two attempts to have the 1967 Abortion Act amended or repealed have failed, but by a decreasing margin (mainly as a result of the 1970 election and an influx of Tory MPs), they are still campaigning as hard as ever for a return to the pre-1967 situation.

They also wish to make one of the two doctors necessary to give permission a gynaecologist - knowing that gynaecologists are generally opposed to abortion.

In response to fears expressed by SPUC and similar organisations that the 'conscience clause' of the 1967 Act was not working as intended - doctors and nurses may refuse to help with pregnancy terminations as a point of conscience - the Lane Committee, under Justice Lane (the only female Justice) was set up to enquire into the working of the Act. This committee has yet to present its findings, but some of the first to give evidence were SPUC and the Catholic Nurses Guild.

SPUC was set up at the beginning of January 1967, and originally campaigned for a Royal Commission to enquire into the need for an amended Abortion Act. A petition with more than half a million signatures was presented to Parliament, but the Bill was passed and no Royal Commission was forthcoming. However SPUC was not to be defeated so easily, and have been trying ever since to whip up a strong anti-abortion lobby that will call for the repeal of the 1967 Act.

Whilst their platform is theoretically only anti-abortion, it becomes clear from listening to their speakers that they are hand-in-glove with the Lord Longford 'Festival of Light' Brigade. In an attempt to hide the issues behind a cloud of emotional bigotry, the vast majority of their speakers always go on to speak of the next steps to abortion being general growth of of promiscuity and decline of public morals.

One of their speakers, Dr. Margaret White, attacked the Family Planning Association for not protecting young girls from harmful sex, and claimed that there is a third method for an unmarried girl not to have a baby, apart from contraception or abortion, and that was for couples to avoid 'lustful grabbing'. Their view of the role of women can be summed up by quoting Dr. White again. 'With women, once you start sex, it alters your whole personality. You start thinking about mini-skirts. And you start thinking about wall-to-wall carpeting. It arouses the women's nesting instinct'.

At a recent SPUC meeting in Leeds, two of the speakers claimed that people know 'more than enough already' about contraception', and that there is 'more than enough sex education in schools' - at which point

there was a good healthy Christian roar of approval from the faithful audience. (Which shows that they have no idea of the real deficiencies of the 'stork theory' or the 'gooseberry bush analysis'.)

In 1967, statistics showed that 25% of clinical psychiatrists and 62% of general medical practitioners were in favour of 'abortion on demand'. However, gynaecologists were not so much in favour.

In the Leeds region, consultant gynaecologists issued a statement saying, 'should the Bill become law, our present practice of terminating a pregnancy where well-established medical indications exist will be unchanged, and we do not expect to terminate more pregnancies than before'.

Note that one of the Executive members of SPUC is Professor James Scott, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Leeds and another is Mr. J Hiley, Tory MP for Pudsey (Leeds).

Research done by the local women's liberation groups found that Leeds has the lowest number of legal National Health Service abortions for any place in the country. A bigots conspiracy!

## AUSCHWITZ

To gain publicity, SPUC often try to use shock tactics - like the false claim made by Mrs Jill Knight, Tory and Monday Club MP for Edgbaston in Birmingham that aborted babies were being burned alive in hospital incinerators - intending to conjure up the image of Auschwitz.

Much was made of this in the gutter press - but very little made of the subsequent apology for misrepresenting the facts.

SPUC has also claimed that 500 members armed with tape-recorders would monitor full-time the BBC TV and radio programmes because of its strong pro-abortion bias - shove over Whitehouse!

They have had special prayers said in all of Scotland's 448 Catholic parishes on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, which has been declared an annual 'Day of Atonement' for the unborn victims of abortion operations.

Their most recent 'shock expose', under the auspices of the Human Rights Society, is that NHS doctors are being denied promotion unless they agree to do abortions. So that some doctors are even being forced to emigrate.

One such doctor spoke publicly about this in January, claiming he has been discriminated against in the NHS for his anti-

abortion views and has had to emigrate to private practice in Canada to find the position his qualifications merit.

This is plainly rubbish. The vast majority of consultant gynaecologists are anti-abortion - his views would no doubt be an aid to promotion. Perhaps he should move to Leeds!

Early in 1972, SPUC claimed some converts from the Young Liberals - the Liberals Against Abortion Group - although Peter Hain, the YL Chairman was quick to disassociate the Young Liberals as a body from their activities. One of the most vocal amongst the minority group is David Mumford a Vice President of the YL National League who spoke at the Leeds meeting mentioned earlier, along with Phyllis Bowman and yet another doctor from Leeds.

Both Bowman and Webster (the Leeds doctor) were rabidly anti-abortion, anti-contraception, anti-sex education and anti-sex itself. The Liberals Against Abortion Group is plainly being used as a 'liberal' cover for people with far from liberal aims.

SPUC have been quite active recently mounting public meetings and demonstrations. In June 1971 they held their first major demonstration in Birmingham. Birmingham was chosen to be the most suitable area because 'it had always been a focal point of the abortion battle'. In fact the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) which is a charitable organisation giving advice and practical help with sterilisation and abortion operations, opened its first centre in Birmingham amid much controversy stirred up by the strident Jill Knight.

Nearly 10,000 people attended the first rally and another was then planned for Liverpool - where the BPAS had just opened another centre. This rally took place in April 1972 and was attended by 40,000 people. There were so many that the speeches down at the Pierhead by such worthies as Leo Abse MP and Malcolm Muggeridge were over and done with before the last of the marchers had set off from the starting point.

The story of SPUC's vigilance continues. In late October 1972 BPAS asked permission to open a fourth centre, this time in Leeds. Sure enough, there is a large public meeting a month later organised by SPUC. At the meeting petitions were circulated calling on the Minister of Health to reconsider the permission given to open a clinic at Horsforth (Leeds), that BPAS would use. And in the face of 'public pressure' the Leeds council are dithering as to whether or not to grant permission for the clinic. A decision has been put off till later.

SPUC is therefore not an organisation to be taken lightly. They have organised yet another march for the faithful to be held in Manchester on Sunday 25th of March and they have said that they expect 100,000 to attend. SPUCees are rallying at Platt Fields Park and then marching through Manchester to Albert Square. A counter demonstration has been organised, meeting outside the Women's Centre at 218, Upper Brook Street. There will be speakers and then we will move off to the starting point outside the Students Union.

SPUC, like the Festival of Light is an example of a new, and so far very successful, tactic for extreme right wing forces. The tactic involves wrenching a 'subject for public concern' from its context and using the genuine worries of ordinary people to muster support which can then be used for other purposes.

The Festival of Light is not concerned with 'public decency' but with the imposition of an oppressive morality, with political consequences such as 'law and order' 'discipline' in work and at school.

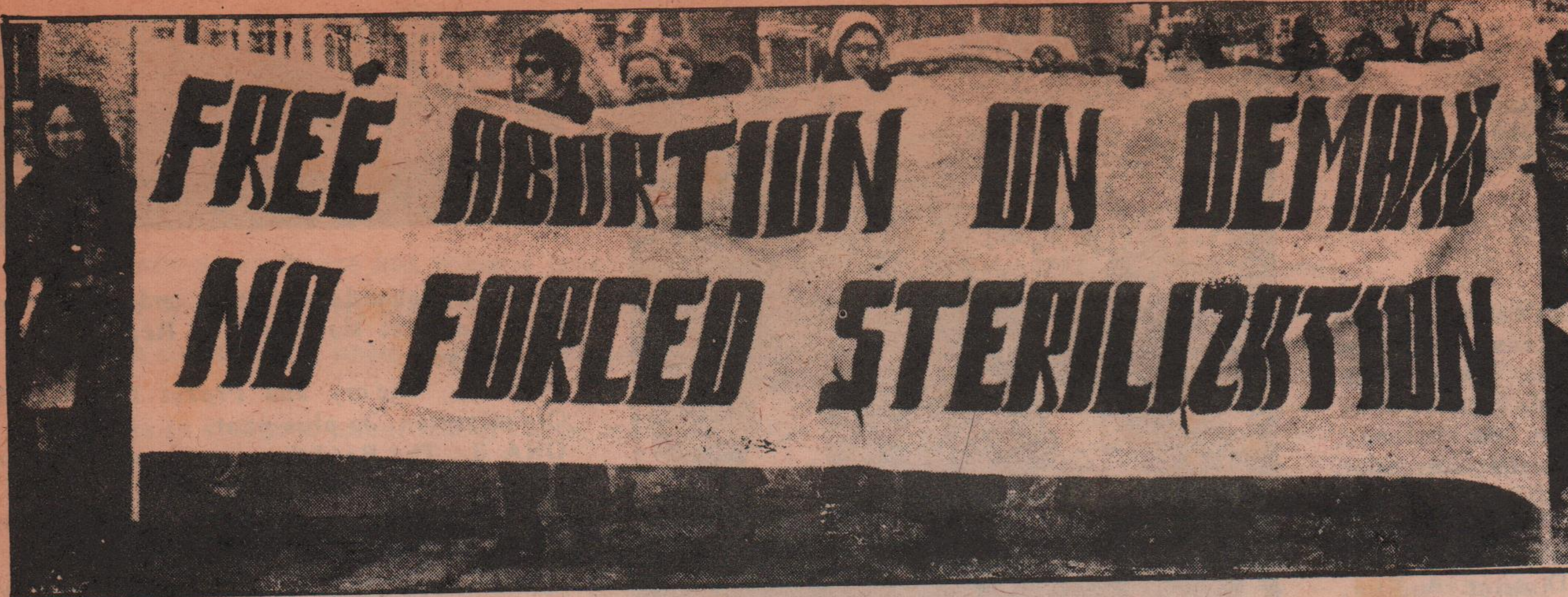
SPUC lifts abortion totally out of the context of the needs of women and the needs of families. In fact it is a cover for an attack on the right to contraception, an attack on the growing movement for women's liberation.

**BEHIND THE LIBERALS STAND THE BIGOTS. BEHIND THE BIGOTS STAND THE FASCISTS.**



ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS - MARCHING AS TO WAR?





# A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE!

One of the basic assumptions of women in the Liberation Movement, as well as many women in all walks of life, is that a woman has an inalienable right to control her own life - including her own body. Women must be able to control their own fertility, to choose whether or not to have children, to choose the right time for them, their family and the future child, without legal or social restraints being forced upon them.

Now that society has, with modern methods of abortion and contraception, the technology to achieve these aims, why must women still be limited by their so-called 'biological role'?

The truth is that some sections of society are afraid that once women have 'escaped their biology' and have no need to fear pregnancy as a result of having sex, then they will no longer be subject to guilt feelings about extra-marital sex, or intra-marital sex - and may even enjoy it! Unless women are made to feel guilty about sex and are made to suffer the consequences then promiscuity will be rife, and the traditional values of marriage and family life will be endangered, they feel. Exactly! The underlying idea behind those who march against abortion is not, therefore, the 'sanctity of life' but the fear that women may begin to shake off their sexual guilt and start to be free.

The Womens' Abortion and Contraception Campaign (WACC) was organised by members of the Womens' Liberation Movement about a year ago in order to publicise the gross inadequacies of the 1967 Abortion Act, and its misuse at the hands of unscrupulous gynaecologists like those in Leeds who refuse to implement the Act as it was conceived (sic). The WACC makes the following three demands:-

- (1) FREE, SAFE, and RELIABLE contraception available to every woman on the National Health Service.
- (2) Abortion - a woman's right to choose: any woman who is unwilling to continue her pregnancy should have the undisputed right to a FREE and SAFE abortion.
- (3) No forced sterilisation - pressure should not be put on women to accept as a condition for an abortion.

What led to the formation of this campaign and what has it achieved so far?

## CONTRACEPTION

The contraceptive pill was introduced just over ten years ago - now nearly two million women in Britain use it to determine whether or not they will conceive. Until that time, London Rubber Ltd (manufacturers of condoms) had a virtual monopoly. However, they aren't doing badly today, as many more women will not take the pill because of its many unpleasant side effects, and its minor associations with thrombosis. But what if a woman cannot take the pill and she cannot trust her man to use a rubber sheath, or is afraid of its failure rate (it is only 80% effective)? She may use the cap or diaphragm - a soft rubber cap that must be inserted into the vagina before intercourse and not removed until at least six hours afterwards. However, such a method of preventing conception can be distasteful and uncomfortable to some women, and the cap is by no means completely reliable. So what else is available? A woman may use spermicides of some kind (chemical creams, pastes, foams, jellies etc.) but these too have a high rate of failure. Some women may even resort to the rhythm method - choosing times to have intercourse when an ovum is least likely to be available for fertilisation - but the size of many Catholic families gives an indication of its efficiency! Unfortunately she will not be able to use the newly-developed C-film, which is not yet on full release in the UK, nor is it approved by the Family Planning Association (FPA) which is generally a little tardy in such matters. This substance has been tested very thoroughly in Hungary and the US, it has been found to have an efficiency of 97%.

C-film is a small square of 'plastic-type film' either inserted into the vagina or placed on the tip of the penis, and which dissolves during intercourse releasing a powerful spermicide. Of course, a woman may try and use the IUD (intrauterine device, loop or coil), but if the woman has no children it is not considered medically safe to have a plastic IUD fitted. The copper coils which can be fitted to single childless women are not yet fully researched. A married woman needs her husband's permission to have a loop fitted. The IUD is pretty reliable, needs no attention once firmly in place, can be forgotten about for months on end, and means childless women can enjoy sex without fearing pregnancy.



So what can a woman do if she doesn't want greatness (maternity) thrust upon her? As yet, there is no completely safe and reliable contraceptive method, although hints are thrown out from time to time that breakthroughs in research are just around the corner. Research is being carried out on a method of immunising women against human sperm, so that once done a positive decision has to be taken to have a child and not vice versa as at present. An interesting idea, but of course none of the major drug companies is helping to finance or do any of the research - there are no profits involved for them. Work on the much-heralded prostaglandin proceeds apace - a snail's pace. Prostaglandin is a substance which would form a 'morning after' pill, or even a once-a-month pill. However, this method would mean a woman would not ever know if she had been pregnant - and so this method has incurred the specific opposition of the anti-abortion faction in our society.

## ABORTION

'Abortion on demand' has been a slogan used in the past by women who are seeking to control their own bodies, seeking to choose when they have children or not, seeking to avoid unwanted children being brought up in misery. These are the reasons why women must obtain the option of a safe and free abortion to be available to all women as a basic human right. Rich women have always been able to obtain safe abortions - it's the poor that pays the price. Many thousands of women die each year even now from illegal abortions that have gone wrong,

and there are many old wives' tales that are still hopefully tried by women desperate enough to try them. What woman hasn't heard at one time or another of remedies such as violent exercise, an overdose of pills, castor oil, a hot mustard bath, gin, taking salts or herbs (Saffron, Juniper, Yew, Nutmeg, Pennyroyal), injecting soapy water or Dettol into the vagina, or penetrating the cervix with a sharp instrument such as a knitting needle or bent coat hanger? All extremely dangerous and futile - the most common results of these methods are septicaemia, haemorrhage and death.

Abortion should not be seen as a means of contraception and it is certainly not seen as so by women who have any experience of abortion or who have any idea of what an abortion at present involves. Contraception is the most important aspect of the WACC, and abortion is seen as a last resort for those whose contraception was inadequate, or for those who did not know about contraception. It is, perhaps, hard to believe that many people do not know enough about contraception but the more one talks to schoolchildren or questions people, the more one discovers just how much ignorance and misunderstanding still exists about such a socially unacceptable subject as sex, and all its implications. Whatever progress is made in the fields of contraceptive knowledge and sex education, however, abortion will always be necessary as a fail-safe mechanism for those women who are unwilling to become mothers.

The operation required to terminate pregnancy is itself used as a form of punishment - for besides a doctor's power to withhold or permit an abortion, he can also dictate the degree of pain and trauma suffered. People who cannot afford private abortions and who are forced to seek one under the National Health Service are always subjected to delaying tactics, so that some feel forced into accepting the pregnancy. A woman may suspect she is pregnant two to three weeks after conception, a pregnancy test will give definite results four to six weeks afterwards, and yet many women have been forced to wait until they are twelve and fourteen weeks pregnant before being aborted. What can be a simple minor procedure that causes no pain and little or no traumatic guilt feelings, is escalated into at best an operation under general anaesthetic and at worst a full-scale abdominal incision, with all the attendant pain, inconvenience and post-operative depression. Present methods of abortion in common use include vacuum aspiration of the contents of the womb (up to twelve weeks pregnant) or dilation and curettage ('d and c'). The latter may be performed up to fourteen weeks of pregnancy and both methods require at least an overnight stay in a clinic or hospital. For more advanced pregnancies, termination may be induced by either saline injection into the womb, producing labour contractions, or by hysterotomy, which is a 'mini-caesarian'. However there is a fifth method of abortion currently used in trials at two hospitals only in Britain, despite its extensive successful use in America. This is a modification of the vacuum aspiration technique, developed, by a psychologist Dr. Karman, some years ago. Called the Karman cannula method, this method can be used without any anaesthetic at all, can be done in ten minutes from start to finish, causes no pain and has given rise to the term 'lunchtime abortion'. It can be used up to the tenth week of pregnancy and does not require the skills of a full operating theatre team. However, the medical profession are not taking up the method, preferring to retain methods which require the doctor's services and which make an abortion an 'event' in a woman's life. It wouldn't do, after all to allow women to have painless abortions and not suffer for their sexual wrongdoings.

One must question however, the motives of some of those who support the slogan 'Abortion on demand'. Groups such as Population Control advocate freely available abortions, especially to those women in the lower socio-economic groups, so that those

who through no fault of their own have families larger than 2.1 children will be made to feel socially irresponsible and penalised by such proposed measures as tax benefits for small families only, no child allowance or maternity benefit for third or subsequent children, and council housing designed for one and two children families only. Apart from the vindictive Nazi-like nature of these suggestions, I would put forward that the social irresponsibility lies with those who advocate measures to cure the effect and ignore the cause. Population Control groups seek to punish the poor in yet more ways and give ammunition to doctors wishing to force pregnancy terminations and sterilisations upon our less fortunate sisters.

## NO FORCED STERILISATION

Which leads to the third demand of the WACC, namely that no forced sterilisations should be performed. Statistics show that of those women who are forced by their economic circumstances to grovel for a National Health Service abortion, some 50% are sterilised as well. Women in WACC have collected evidence from many women (some of which was presented to the Lane Committee looking into the working of the 1967 Abortion Act) showing that the 'undesirable breeders' are offered the carrot and the stick - they may have an abortion only if they agree to be sterilised. No matter that sterilisation performed at the same time as abortion is considered medically unsafe, no matter that because of culturally induced guilt feelings about abortion many women are in precisely the wrong sort of emotional condition to make such an important decision about their bodies, no matter that some women may have hopes of having children later at a more practical time. There is the case of a woman in Bristol who was pressurised into accepting sterilisation because she had taken pills early in pregnancy. The gynaecologist said these pills might produce a deformed child and she preferred not to take that risk!

What then is the WACC doing in order to achieve its objectives - free safe contraception and abortion on the NHS, without fear of enforced sterilisation? Women from WACC have worked with other organisations, such as the Birth Control Campaign, and have done a lot of local ground work leafletting estates etc to inform people of their rights at present, of the location of their Family Planning Clinics, (which are obscure and open at odd and inconvenient times), and of the methods and need for contraception. They have campaigned locally for free contraception and abortion on demand, lobbied MP's and, at the time of writing, have by such combined efforts managed to achieve free contraception in 13 London boroughs and 3 provincial cities. Many women, however, are not happy with either the tactics used to obtain these concessions, nor the act of 'demanding' something from those with power to 'give'. Now that the Minister for Health, Sir Keith Joseph (who is an MP for that hotbed of sexual licence - Leeds - see article on SPUC), has, under the National Health Reorganisation bill due to come into force in 1974, taken away the right of these 16 boroughs to provide contraception free to all, many more women are turning to the idea of self-help projects. Some groups do this in such ways as free pregnancy testing, free advice centres, and referrals for abortion. In London, it is hoped to set up a Woman's Health Service, as a demonstration of the kind of service that women require. This clinic hopes to provide pregnancy testing, menstrual extraction by the Karman method, out-patient abortion, counselling on all sexual problems, and advice and information on all other facilities available in this country.

Women are beginning to realise that they are no longer content with 'demanding' and being 'given' concessions, but that they must initiate activity, and act for themselves. What they want is 'reproductive workers' control'.



# THEN THERE WAS ONE...

By the end of February only one out of dozens of Labour Councils in England - Clay Cross - has held out against the Act. There are seven in Scotland - Clydebank, Alloa, Saltcoats, Barrhead, Denny and Dunnipace, Cowdenbeath, and Cumbernauld. In Wales Merthyr Tydfil and Bedwas are on their own.

When the Housing Finance Act was first passed, a hundred Labour Councils in England and Wales declared they would not impose the new rent rises. The Tory government knew this would happen and made provisions for it in the Act. Even so they were surprised by how many 'rebelled'. They knew that the majority of Labour Councillors won their election on pledges of opposition to the Act, but expected the Labour Party to continue with its 'it may be a bad law but we can't break the law' policy. The Labour Party National Executive promised to refund fines to victimised councillors and to repeal the Act on its own re-election to government. Significantly however, after fating around, it refused point blank to call on Councils to refuse to implement the Act. In just the same way as it had refused to support working class action against the Industrial Relations Act.

The Tories weren't going to launch into a head-on collision which would strengthen the opposition. Instead they told Councils to think again, and sat and waited, letting Labour's respect for 'law and order' do their work for them. It was made known that Councils could apply for reductions in the rises demanded of them. Up and down the country, we heard Labour Council leaders denouncing the interference with the rights of local government, the stride towards a totalitarian state, and the rest of it. They went on to say that the Act would be enforced anyway. The government would send in housing commissioners, who would impose the Act. They are now assuring us, that it would be better for us if they knuckled under and made the most of a bad situation. Time and again even the supposed 'lefts' in local Labour groups had followed the new local Party line.

By October only 40 Councils still refused to implement the Act. The government now adopted different approaches for England, Wales and Scotland.

In Scotland, Councils were told that subsidies due any time would be cut off. The Tories had no intention of repeating their defeat after their gaoling of the dockers. Glasgow was the backbone of the Scottish opposition, so the government made a bee-line for it. The Corporation's refusal to implement was followed by a default order. When they threw that out it was followed by a Court enforcement order. The Right wing Labour councillors voted with the Tories and after that, Scottish opposition collapsed. Predictably, there was no suggestion that the faction changing sides should be expelled from the Party. They continued to form part of the Corporation Labour majority group.

In London Camden borough faced having £8½ millions in subsidies cut off by the Tories, and with making massive increases in its rates to meet a rising deficit, gave in. There was no attempt to confront the government by moving beyond the single issue of the Fair Rents Act.

In Wales, Methyr Tydfil, Bedwas and Machen had Housing Commissioners appoin-

ted. Strategically they were Welshmen, and the first stage of the rent increases, although reduced were brought in. The Tories offer to disregard the deficits owing instead of charging the councillors for the balance, failed to produce the desired surrender.

Which brings us back to Clay Cross and Conisborough councils. Both had their books publicly examined by a District Auditor. The councillors of Clay Cross have been told that they themselves face paying for the rent owed; and also with being barred from standing for the Council. There are hundreds of tenants prepared to take their place, and it is unlikely that the government will attempt to imprison them. However, as a result of these attacks Conisborough has voted 10-1 to back down and implement the Act. Local owner-occupiers at Clay Cross have come out in open support of the Tories, and one Councillor is talking about having been pressurised into continued opposition.

When the Act was due to be enforced, tenants' associations all over pledged themselves to fight it too, and total rent strikes were talked about. But only a smattering of these continue.

At Liverpool workers and tenants came together. There was a one day strike and massive demonstrations. But this promising and necessary step forward, the link-up between tenants' and industrial workers, didn't lead to anything new. In this, the role of the Labour Party was important. Tenants' expected their Councillors to stand firm. They expected to be backing them against an already detested central government. The betrayal at first led to a wave of anger among tenants, but it eventually ended in widespread demoralisation. Now some Labour Councils are even threatening to evict 'rent rebels'. The existing tenants' associations were totally inadequate. Partly this was due to their generally undemocratic structure and partly because of their domination by the Labour Party or its 'red shadow' the Communist Party. The Labour Party has always claimed to represent workers and to act for us. If you have a housing problem you go to your Councillor, and he or she 'takes it up for you'.

The tenants' association arises as the response to grievances that Councillors can't or won't deal with. Militants who demand a change of leadership, or a new group to act for the people, simply repeat the thinking of the old leaders. The lesson, as in all struggles, is that we have to act for ourselves. We have to refuse to allow anyone, however sympathetic, to act for us. We have only ourselves, in our class solidarity, to rely on. Everyone who has sought to represent us, save a tiny minority, have sold out. It's no accident that where Councils have held out, resistance has been of a whole community, which the Councillors are genuinely very much part of.

The present struggle isn't just a small community against the government. It is the struggle of workers against bosses. Because workers interests are completely opposite to the bosses interests - the workers gains are the bosses losses and vice versa. This time the bosses are using their Parliament to attack the workers. They are attacking our solidarity. They are trying to turn tenant against tenant, as they are worker against worker, the classic



'divide and rule' method. The Housing Finance Act rests on a single principle - to rob the 'better off' tenant to subsidise the 'worse off', while the property speculators, landlords, and housing-loan sharks in the City go scot-free.

We have to build democratic action groups in every working class community, based on a realisation that a rent struggle is part of an all-out struggle against the bosses and for power. These action groups have to coordinate, act together, spread struggles, share experiences. Each action group has to link with struggles of militants in industry. Learning and moving forward until we are strong enough finally to overthrow the whole rotten system and, out of our cooperation in struggle, to build a society worth living in.

Throughout this struggle it is vital that we control our own organisations. Democratic organisation, with open committees and the right to recall delegates at all times, is essential if we are to avoid bosses within, whether formal or informal.

## LAST WITNESS

**DO YOU REMEMBER: December 12th, 1969 in Milan and Rome bombs exploded, killing 16 and wounding 103. The police immediately accuse the Italian left and arrest libertarian militants.**

But little by little this accusation will be demonstrated as false. The direct witnesses in the case disappeared mysteriously, victims of 'accidents', or more simply 'suicides'.

Like Guiseppe Pinelli, libertarian rail wayman, 'suicided' from a window at Milan Police Headquarters. Like Armando Calzolari, who disagreed with his fascist friends, whom he knew to be guilty - he could have talked. Like Udo Lenke, who implicated the leaders of the extreme right - removed to a psychiatric hospital. Like the 'superwitness' taxi-driver Rolandi, who admitted receiving £33,500 for recognising Valpreda. Like five libertarian militants participating in a counter enquiry - they died in a road accident. Like the lawyer Ambrosini, an original witness, who committed 'suicide' from the 8th floor of the hospital where he was under observation.

Sergio ARDAU was arrested with Pinelli and went with him to the Milan Police Headquarters. Later he testified against Supt. Calabresi, accusing him of assassinating Pinelli.

Sergio ARDAU is the only witness to have seen, at Police Headquarters, the handkerchief containing the remains of the bomb found at the Commercial Bank of Milan which was later detonated by the police against the advice of experts who wished to establish the method used in producing the bomb (another proof disappeared).

After laying charges against Supt. Calabresi in the Lotta Continua/Calabresi trial he took refuge in France in order not to suffer the same fate as all the other witnesses.

Today, under the pressure of Italian public opinion, the truth has triumphed, formally declaring Valpreda innocent, proving the collusion of the extreme right with the CIA, and forcing the arrest of those truly responsible: ie. the Italian extreme right aided by the CIA and the Greek Secret Services.

Valpreda, today in provisional freedom is gravely ill following his stay in prison and the ill-treatment he has suffered.

## ORA Publications

- ORA 1. Towards a History and Critique of the Anarchist Movement in Recent Times 5p plus post.
- ORA 2. Theory and Praxis in Anarchist Organisation. 3p plus post.
- ORA 3. The Bombthrowers: a study of terrorism. 10p plus post.
- ORA 4. Neither Washington nor Hanoi but Libertarian Socialism. 2p plus post.
- ORA 5. Introduction to Revolutionary Anarchism. 10p plus post.
- ORA 6. 1plus1equals10: Computer Ethics. 5p plus post.
- ORA 7. Bakunin - Essays on Revolution. 5p plus post.
- ORA 8. Free Speech and Social Revolution 5p plus post.

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Available from 68a Chingford Road, London E.17.

### LOCAL GROUP PUBLICATIONS

Suppressed Report on the Derry Massacre - 2p from North London group.  
Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists. 10p from N.London group.  
Anarchism and Ecology. 10p from Lancaster Revolution: Past and Present. 10p from Leeds group.

### PUBLIC MEETINGS & EVENTS

**NORTH LONDON ORA SOCIAL - DISCO & GROUP - Friday 2nd March at 7.30pm. St. Clements Building, Houghton Street (LSE) London WC2.**

**YORK. Thursday March 8th. 8pm at the University. LIBERTARIANISM NOT LIBERALISM. Speakers Ro Atkins, Steve Kibble and Tony Fleming.**

**ORA CONFERENCE, GLASGOW, EASTER 1973. If you wish to attend as an observer, write to Glasgow group.**

3 years after the outrage, Valpreda is still awaiting trial, which the police are postponing in the face of accumulating proofs of his innocence.

Today, the multitude of proofs in the possession of the Italian Police, implicating extreme right organisations and State organs of the guilt for the massacre, oblige the Italian Government to make every attempt to suppress the case.

Valpreda is sick, he may die.

If Sergio ARDAU suffers the same fate as the other witnesses (disappearance and 'suicided' with the help of the police)..... the case will be closed.

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It is this which explains why - in full knowledge of the case, in contempt of the security and LIFE of Sergio Ardaul, and with no justification, while he leads an orderly life and has worked regularly in France for the past 2 years - the French Government notified him that his residence permit is withdrawn, in flagrant contradiction of the myth 'France - Land of Asylum' which is propagated in other contexts.

It is easy to imagine the fate of Sergio ARDAU once he leaves France.

A Support Committee has been created by comrades of ORA France, in Solidarity with Sergio Ardaul, protesting against this expulsion, which was originally planned for January 27th.

**SERGIO ARDAU MUST REMAIN IN FRANCE**  
'Support Sergio Ardaul'  
33, rue des Vignoles  
75020 PARIS, France

The latest information from France is that the Government is putting off the expulsion from week to week - because it doesn't want to spoil its image so soon before the elections. Because of its touchiness over the election period, adverse publicity, letters from local organisations, union branches etc. can prove more influential on the French Government than is usually the case for such methods of protest. Send them to the French Embassy. More direct action such as pickets and leafletting outside Consular offices will also help to keep Ardaul alive.



THE LABOUR PARTY LEFT THE TENANTS HOLDING THE BABY.....



# W F R A ?

ILL ASCISM ISE AIN

A few months ago a residents association was formed in Waltham Forest (a borough in North East London). This association was started by a small group of racists. They claim to be a 'non-political' group, and they attempt to blame all the problems that plague working class people onto the black people living in this country. This racist group are only non-political in that they have no solutions to the problems that we have to fight every day. This 'non-political' front is an attempt to attract people who are disillusioned with local politics because the normal party politics, too, has no solutions. It is very easy to see through this blatant lie, however, for they have recently stated they will nominate candidates for the local Council elections.

They also suggest that it is 'the politicians' fault for letting the "black swarms" into this country.

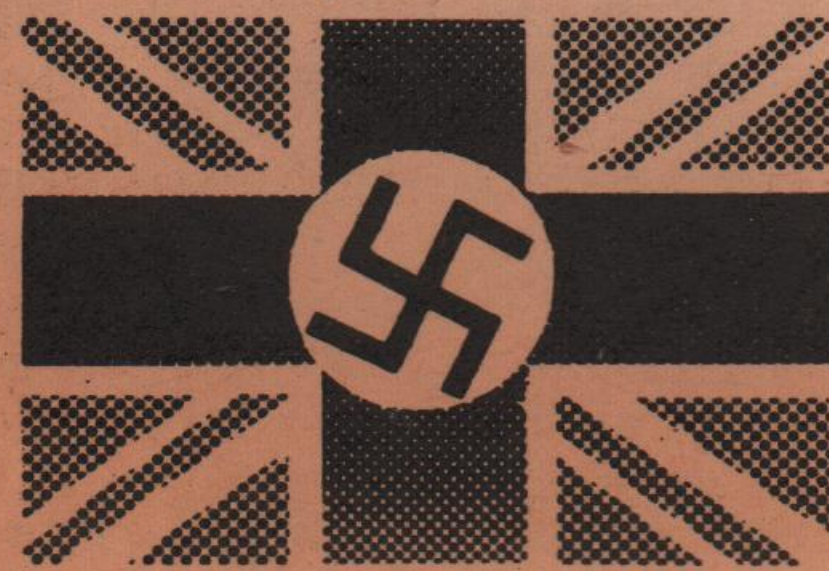
## UNEMPLOYMENT

The WFRA states that the reason there is such a high number of unemployed workers at the moment is - immigration. Why then were there a million unemployed in 1946? Unemployment is a necessary part of capitalist economics, the bosses need a 'pool' of unemployed workers to keep up competition for jobs so that many workers, unless they are in a very strong Union, do not dare press for better conditions or wages because they know they can easily be replaced.

To combat high unemployment in certain areas, called 'depressed areas', means that firms have to be offered generous tax allowances and building grants (paid for by us) to get them to move to these 'depressed' areas, thus firms are assured of high profits and a willing workforce. There is such a case in Waltham Forest itself, with the British Oxygen Corporation intending to move to the North of England. 750 workers in the North London area are redundant. This is in spite the fact that BOC made £33½ million, an increase profit of £3½m. in the last year.

In Britain we are considered to have 'full' employment when unemployment is around 2½% (300,000 - 400,000).

The WFRA also claims that we are overcrowded already and that black people

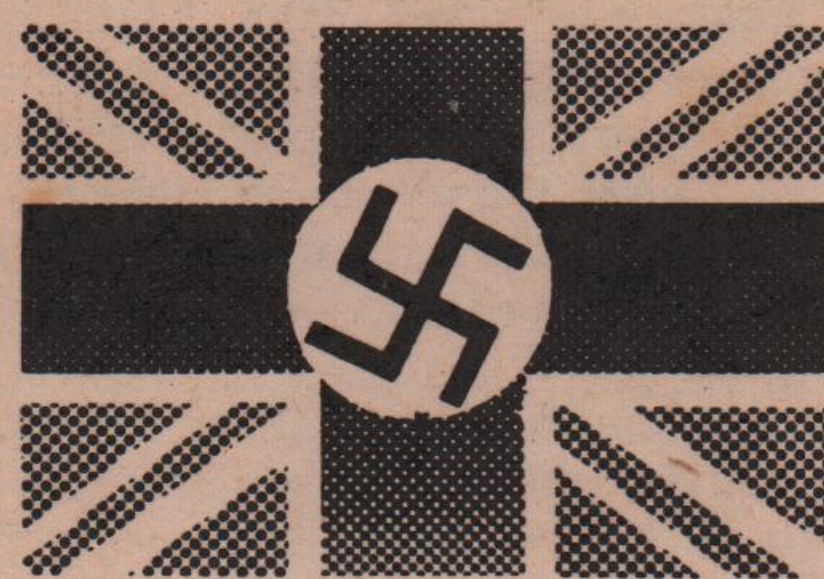


are 'stealing' all our houses. In fact the population figures for England show that the population is declining. Working class people may well be overcrowded and living in appalling conditions but the bosses live in huge mansions with acres of grounds around them. Thousands of working class people are homeless while more and more office blocks are built only, in some cases, to stand empty for years on end. The production of building materials has also been strictly limited, so that less houses are built. This means that the bosses can get much higher profits as the demand for houses increases. Millions of pounds have been made by property speculators buying and selling land at enormous profits. Council rents are also going to double in the next five years (already 80% of Council rents go to big business men in the City as interest payments). So it is easy to see who has created the situation - it is the bosses in their mad scramble for profits.

There is a more basic point which must be considered. Many black people were forced to come to this country because of the poor living standards of their own countries. Under capitalist economics workers are considered as a factor of production, along with machinery etc., the bosses want to be able to make workers move about wherever they have to put their factories, this is called the 'mobility of labour'. So black people, because big nations have robbed them of their natural wealth and have deliberately stopped the advance of industrialisation in Africa and Asia, are forced to come to Britain to live, the same way that people in Scotland and Ireland are forced to come to England.

## TACTICS

The WFRA like all racists, care nothing for facts of course. They have also claimed that 'we never had a drug problem until we had a black problem'. This is a typical lie. The WFRA have made statements on very few issues, the only reason why they mention the 'drug problem' is because the local Tories have exaggerated the issue. These racists are following a well-established method of operation, they try to exploit working class peoples genuine fears about the very real problems that face them. They also try to exaggerate and distort minor issues and attempt always to scare us into believing their lies. The WFRA, like the right-wing Tories (Powell etc) and the fascist National Front, are not the first to try these tactics - Hitler rose to power on a similar platform, only in his



time it was the jews. Mosley also tried similar tactics. The working class people, of all nationalities, united and kicked Mosley and his gang out of the East End of London in the Battle of Cable Street. The fascists will always try these scare-mongering tactics because they have no other hope than to encourage working class peoples fears - they have no policy but try and be all things to all men. Big Business will usually condone or encourage racism in a period of crisis because it helps to divide the workers and to shift the blame for poverty, unemployment, bad housing etc and all the other hardships we suffer in the interests of higher profits. Big Business in periods of crisis, will even support by financial backing, such fascist groups - as they did Hitler.

## Hospital Workers

MUST NOT FIGHT

ALONE (cont.)

After the Dec. 13th official half-day national token stoppage, when the union leaders faced a rally of thousands demanding '£8 NOW' and advised us all to go to Westminster and lobby our MPs (NUPE sponsored MPs voted with the Tories to join the EEC), LASH announced a National Action Week for late December, and NUPE responded by announcing a national ballot of members to measure opinion on further action, to take place 'soon'.

The National Action Week was a flop, and a week later the ballot papers arrived. Despite the proviso that the suggested action should continue until 'a satisfactory agreement' was achieved, there was no commitment to refer agreements back to the membership for ratification, (and not much hope now of the union's pursuing action into April when strikes and claims become illegal), and despite the absence of an assurance that emergency services will be maintained. AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF BRANCHES VOTED IN FAVOUR OF ALL-OUT STRIKE ACTION (207 COMPARED WITH 37 VOTED FOR SELECTIVE STRIKE ACTION). A COSE ballot, for or against industrial action, which for some unknown reason included nursing staff not involved in the claim, produced an 80% MAJORITY IN FAVOUR OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION.

The results of the NUPE ballot were known several days before the unions turned down an offer for £1.84 on January 26th, but not released until after the negotiations

## BRIANT'S FOR SALE

At the time of writing, Briant Colour Printers (BCP) are waiting to see if their intending entrepreneur, Brockdorff, can raise enough money or whether or not an attempt will be made to evict them, before he can buy the Old Kent Road plant.

Since last July Briants has been operated under a work-in. They took the factory over when the previous owner, Syder wanted to close down and make everyone redundant. When the workers started to run the plant, there was much talk of Workers Control of the printing works. A joint chapels committee of all the unions involved was set up with Bill Freeman jun. as the chairman.

A good deal of support immediately came in, not just from other printing workers but from dockers, Covent Garden porters, Kent miners and others.

But the emphasis changed from workers' of their jobs to one of the 'Right to Work'. This was at the same time as the Communist Party and the union officials began to exercise more control. This was reflected in the obvious attempt to repeat the UCS experience by making 'respectable' appeals on the 'Right to Work'. A lot of left groups who wanted to help by having literature printed, such as Solidarity, were turned away by Briants in this new respectable phase. As well as this concentration on trying to find some rich capitalist to buy the plant, the democracy inside the plant began to fade. Instead of daily mass meetings that took the decisions, meetings became weekly ones that merely passed on information.

This not only disheartened some of the workers at the plant, who began to leave, but also turned away a lot of supporters who weren't prepared to support another UCS sellout, but who would have really helped out on a fight for workers' control. The workforce declined to about 50 from the original 105, and many of those left began to feel disillusioned about the amount of control they had and the way things were going. The union officials increasingly

failed. The Executive Council was to meet a week later to discuss what action to take.

On that day, February 2nd, Bristol workers walked out again to inspire the Executive Council, pickets on a 24-hour strike at St. George's at Hyde Park Corner were joined by CPSA civil servants, 220 NUPE members began a 3-day strike at the Pontefract General Infirmary, supported by over 50 ancillaries in Birmingham, 60 at another Pontefract hospital, and walk-outs at several Leeds hospitals. Shop stewards toured hospitals in Leeds and Wakefield getting pledges of strike support everywhere they went, but Pontefract General Infirmary was back at work in 24 hours.

The reason? NUPE AREA OFFICIALS BROKE THE STRIKE. Full-time NUPE officers followed the strikers on their tour and ordered local stewards not to strike. At St. James's hospital in Leeds an official told stewards representing nearly 1500 workers 'the 5-week dustmen's strike in 1970 nearly broke the union, we don't want this sort of thing to happen again.' The dustmen, of course, won on that occasion precisely because they refused to limit themselves to the official selective strikes called by NUPE.

That evening, February 2nd, with a clear and decisive mandate to take all-out action, NUPE's National Executive Council announced regretfully to the press that 'it might be necessary to close some hospitals'. In the week that followed, the mini-TUC of unions with frozen claims was inconclusive, UPW and NALGO (which represents many clerks in the National Health Service) proposing united action against the freeze. ASLEF's Buckton declaring it was impossible to unite claims (maybe but what about united action?).

On February 9th, a week before the four unions were to meet and plan coordinated action, a conference of delegates representing the 15,000 TGWU members involved in the claim called for all-out strike action.

On the 16th, a last ditch offer of £2 for men and £1.80 for women (a reduction of 4p for women since the January offer) was turned down and NUPE, COSE, GMWU and TGWU announced their plan of attack. Selective strikes, overtime ban (which for hos-

became more important. Money from other workers began to decline - as the months went by. The unions were paying Briants wages from their strike funds. All the money was shared between the workers but this was the only form of socialism that operated.

It would have been possible for the workers to have bought the plant and run it as a community printshop under workers control, with the yard being used as a children's playground. The original asking price for the plant was £¼ million. If some of the expensive four-colour machines had been sold off, some cheaper equipment for this new use as a community press could have been bought, this would have helped raise money to buy the plant. But this Fakenham-type situation was opposed by the CP and IS - they said it would involve 'taking work from other workers' and that IS 'didn't believe in socialism in one country let alone the Old Kent Road'.

The conservatism of these groups has never been better illustrated. Rather than giving any backing to workers who wanted to experiment in the control of their working lives, by the abstractly 'correct' attitude they took, they were in fact saying 'don't rock the boat, leave it to the union'. So these highly principled gentlemen served the interests of the 'Revolution' and Briginshaw at the same time, by slapping down any hope of the Briants workers learning to do things for themselves.

The control that the union bureaucracy exercised was shown by the fear that the leaders of Briants had of stepping out of line over the John Lawrence victimisation case. The print union leaders have also endorsed the attempt by Brockdorff to buy BCP, with his decision that 2/3 of the jobs would have to go. The other details of any agreement with him are unknown, but it would probably be similar to the UCS 'deal' (manning agreements favourable to the boss etc.)

Whether or not it is still possible at Briants for the workers to actually run it themselves as their own plant is doubtful, but this struggle shows that work-ins just on Right to Work platforms inevitably degenerate into mere hunts to find a new exploiter. The role of the CP and union officials in acting as the midwives of the sellout has again been shown. The lesson of the need for autonomous working class action to achieve any control of our work and lives has never been more apparent.

pital workers means more work for less pay), general non-cooperation. A direct violation of the mandate given to NUPE, COSE and TGWU executives.

Let us be clear about what this means in terms of winning the claim. Heath has proclaimed that there will be no exceptions to the '£1plus4%' guideline. After April 1 more strikes and threatened strikes against the freeze will be illegal. TUC policy is not to break the law. COSE already accepts the Industrial Relations Act and in its consultative document on reorganisation NUPE reveals plans to streamline the union by forming bigger branches with full-time secretaries, and divide present branches into sections according to job grade, organising around differences instead of common interests; 'these changes, and those necessary to accommodate the branch and its officers as a result of the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act, should, in the view of the Executive Council, be incorporated in the revised rules of the union'. If the NUPE Executive Council already accepts the Industrial Relations Act, we can only expect them to knuckle under when Phase 2 is law.

Phase 3 will mean no wage rises unless tied to productivity deals. This is a long-term method of freezing wage costs, and would last for at least 3 years.

UNLESS, that is, hospital workers and other frozen groups recognise the reality of the history of the public sector. That only the organised rank and file, fighting alongside other workers similarly organised in other services and industries, stands a hope of winning this dispute. That only the defeat of this Tory government, and the continuing presence under a Labour govt. of a well-organised, self-conscious and independent rank and file movement cutting across the craft and policy divisions of the trade union hierarchy, can prevent living standards plummeting as VAT is introduced (also April 1), food prices continue to soar as never before in this country, the Housing Finance Act continues to raise rents, Social Services are slashed, and wages stand still.

In other words, everything the British working class has fought and suffered for, more often than not in open defiance of ruling class laws, is in the balance.



# AN ENDLESS ROUND OF PARTIES

From hints given by its daily paper 'Workers Press', it seems that the Socialist Labour League (SLL) is going to declare itself 'THE revolutionary party', either during or after its next rally in London.

Another group which claims to be the 'true heirs of Lenin - the International Socialists (IS) - who are bitter enemies of the SLL, are also exhorting anyone who will listen to 'build the revolutionary party'. They, of course, mean 'join IS'.

With these groups urging people to rally behind their, opposing, leaderships, an opportunity occurs to re-open debate within the working class movement on the age-old problems of organisation, revolutionary activity, and 'new leaderships'.

The bulk of groups and organisations on the left of the Labour Party trace their ancestry to the ideas of Lenin and the organisation and tactics of the Russian Bolshevik Party. Ignoring the fact that they all denounce each other as heretics and traitors, all 57 varieties - Stalinists, Trotskyists, Maoists etc., all share to some degree the principles laid down by Lenin in 1902 in his pamphlet 'What is to be done?' The central ideas derived from this pamphlet can be summed up as follows:-

'Trade Union Consciousness' - by itself the working class can develop a partial understanding of the nature of capitalist society. Leading from this Lenin said that the working class could only develop defensive organisations such as trade unions. These will fight for material benefits, but only within the context of accepting capitalist society as a whole.

'Professional revolutionaries' - are needed to provide the working class with socialist ideas and with the leadership which will urge the working class towards socialism. Lenin says that these will initially be recruited from the more socially-conscious sections of the middle class and the intelligentsia.

'Democratic Centralism' - these revolutionaries must be tightly organised and disciplined. 'Reflecting the organised distrust of the leadership for the rank-and-file'. The most experienced should lead and the rest should obey. Once a question has been decided, everyone has to carry out the decisions.

Libertarian Communists/Revolutionary Anarchists start off our criticism of these ideas with a reminder of the kind of society we want to achieve. We want a society in which the working people actually have the power to decide how their lives are going to be lived. A society where decisions are made by a multitude of democratic organisations - federations of workers councils, community councils, estate councils, schools and education councils etc., each linked to the other and within each decisions deriving from the bottom. With delegates being elected for definite periods, with definite mandates, and who are instantly recallable. This kind of organisation means that we place great importance on the self-management of struggles now, because through fighting, people not only learn how to work together and what to work against but they also learn how to organise themselves.

This means that now, as well as after 'the revolution', we reject all those who want to act 'on behalf' of people - whatever their motives. We attack reliance on trade union permanent officials, local Councilors, 'left' Labour MPs and 'new revolutionary leaderships'.

The importance of each struggle is what people learn from it. Whether they succeed in creating a viable, democratic and lasting form of organisation eg. rank and file bodies that last, tenants associations that are working on all the problems of a community, all the time, not just appearing with every new rent increase. The measure of success is not the number of 'recruits' gained for any Party but how much closer people are

FORWARD - with  
Gerry Healy, Nat.  
Sec. of the SLL  
TO 1917??



to organising themselves and learning for themselves. Honestly made mistakes, from which experience is gained are far better than the guidance of the most perfect 'leadership'.

So....we disagree with the Leninists because we think that however successful they may be, the kind of society they will bring about will not be very different from the one we live in now. We think that the Soviet Union is a good example of how not to make a revolution.

The idea of the naturally low level of working class understanding and of the professionals to lead us along, leads to the Party substituting itself for the working class. Creating a society where the Party is in power 'on behalf of the working class', and where in the interests of socialism the Party occasionally finds it necessary to shoot workers who don't understand their own 'best interests' (the history of the Russian revolution is full of such events - often the workers being shot by Lenin and Trotsky were those whose fighting had made the revolution in the first place eg. the Kronstadt sailors, the workers of 'red' Vyborg etc.) \*\*

This doesn't mean that we deny the need for organisation, for understanding history and for organising to help each other in struggle. Neither does it deny that all the media, all the traditional organisations such as the TUC and the Labour Party act to dampen down struggle and divert it into parliamentary impotence. There is, obviously, a need for papers and groups that combat the lies that are pumped out every day, that returns their own history to ordinary people brought up on the admiration of thieving priests and murderous barons.

We think that these organisations must not be separate from the ordinary everyday struggles and must be concerned with encouraging people to learn and act for themselves. Our view of socialism is a society where revolutionary organisations are irrelevant because ordinary people are running things themselves, NOT one where we sit on top doing things for people, perhaps in a better way, perhaps not.

This attitude means that we try and make our own organisation as democratic as possible - to pass around skills and knowledge so that everyone benefits. Again, honestly made mistakes, providing we are organised in such a way to learn from them, are much better than the dictates of the most infallible Central Committee. We therefore reject the 'thou shalt obey' attitudes of the Leninists.

If each question can be approached on its merits, rather than each problem being a battle to the death because the minority must submit, then the progress towards a coherent and cohesive organisation is quicker in the long run. The history of the Leninist groups shows that the 'efficiency and discipline' of forced activity covers the growth of blocs inside an organisation - based upon 'beaten' minorities, and leads the profusion of splits and splinters that litters the political landscape. This does not mean that libertarian organisations do not expel scabs or racists or split on matters of principle, but it does mean that the freer discussions and decision making are the better in the long run. That it is not inefficient in the long run to allow minorities to maintain their position rather than force them to follow the line of the majority.

The creation of this type of organisation, making sure that skills, knowledge, and responsibility are spread to everyone, is more difficult than building an obedient machine around the dictates of a Centre. This is because people are used to being told what to do all their lives. THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT WE ARE WORKING TO DESTROY.

\*\* read 'The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control' 25p from SOLIDARITY, 27 Sandringham Rd., London N.W.11.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

There will be marches in London and Manchester on Saturday March 10th to mark International Women's Day on March 8th. Speakers at the London rally will talk on the Womens Abortion and Contraception Campaign, the Family Allowances Campaign and the Anti-Discrimination Bill. Meeting at Speakers Corner at 1.30

## BURSAR'S LAPDOG'S

The Students' Union of Bradford University has tried to prevent publication of Bradford Anarchist Group's newsheet 'Bradford Black'. 'Bradford Black' has consistently exposed the complicity of the Students' Union with the authorities, and its business ties.

Acting on behalf of the University authorities, the Union has twice cut off the group's funds and harassed its members.

Using its power to control societies' funds, the Union executive has been prompted to move by the authorities of one of Britain's tamest universities. This situation is not unusual in Bradford University, which has no reputation for militancy.

The University and its students are under the influence of the textile industry (British Wool Secretariat) and other enterprises. 80% of the students are on sandwich courses - courses where the students are seconded by firms or paid to attend by companies, in order to gain a B.Tech degree.

When he was Prime Minister, Harold Wilson became the Chancellor of this one-time College of Advanced Technology. The Vice Chancellor Dr. Edwards is an ex-member of the Communist Party. This left-wing facade, coupled with a high industrial participation in the affairs of the University, has produced one of the quietest campuses in the country.

The failures to take militant action over the Warwick and LSE affairs (over secret files and the sacking of 'politicals') were the hallmark of a continuing tradition of inactivity that was instituted by several student executives. The final humiliation occurred in late 1971, when the Union refused to take any effective action against the presentation of an honorary degree to Edward Heath by the Chancellor Harold Wilson.

In June 1972 'Bradford Black' uncovered the fact that the National Westminster Bank (which holds the current accounts of the Students' Union and the University) was to obtain rent-free facilities in the new Bradford Union building. 'Bradford Black' also ran articles which revealed that the 'Annual Union President's Dinner' was paid for by the National Westminster, and that the Northern area manager was also a close friend of the University Bursar. The series of articles on the issue came to a head when the Bursar informally contacted the Union executive which, without public explanation, cut the funds to the Bradford Anarchist Group. Names of members of the group were, without permission, given to the University authorities, by the student executive.

Threat of public debate and action forced the Students' Union to unfreeze the funds, but a few days later the Union claimed 'Bradford Black' to be libellous and refroze the funds. The National Westminster Bank, the Bursar and the Chairman of Hall wardens threatened to sue the Anarchist Group.

A General Meeting was called in January 1973 which forced the Union to again unfreeze the funds of the group. Harassment of group members by the University authorities continued however. Some of them were frequently called before the authorities to explain their actions. The authorities then refused to allow the production or distribution of 'Bradford Black' on campus.

The Union has now broken its mandate from the students under pressure from the University authorities and will not supply the adequate materials required to produce 'Bradford Black'.

The Anarchist Group is planning to take action against the authorities, but it will have to fight the student union bureaucracy to do so. Condemnation of the executives role from other student bodies can force the Union to back down. For information, contact Bradford Black c/o 30 Ebor Mount, Leeds 6.

pm the march moves off at 2.15 pm to Trafalgar Square.

There will also be a regional march through Manchester. Meeting under the Mancunian Way at 2pm, moving off at 2.30 pm. There will be at least two speakers.

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**INSIDE STORY** the radical magazine which specialises in the stories Fleet St. won't print. For sample copy send 25p. to Dept. AP20, 3 Belmont Road, London SW4.

**BLACK AND RED OUTLOOK** monthly paper of the Anarchist Syndicalist Alliance. Sub. £1 for 10 copies. A. Roberts, 118, Albert Ave Prestwich, Lancs.

**LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION** magazine. Copies 10p. from 1, Wilne Street, Leicester.

**LIBERTARIAN WOMENS' NEWSHEET** is a 12-page journal published every 3 weeks. For a sample copy, send 6p to LWNN, 29, Cardigan Road, Leeds 6.

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**POINT BLANK** unusually coherent situationist group, in the USA. Details/info from N. London ORA.

**DE VRIJE SOCIALIST** paper of the Dutch Libertarian Socialist Federation. For copies write to Jan Bervoets, willem de zwijgerlaan 104, Den Haag, Netherlands