

# Libertarian STRUGGLE

for Workers' Power

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## REDUNDANCIES—

THE THREAT TO US ALL

UNEMPLOYMENT is a part of the capitalist system. In the present crisis over a million people are signing on as unemployed which means that possibly four million people are dependent on the meagre State unemployment or social security benefits.

It is clear that the ruling class is making workers — especially the weaker sections of our class such as women, immigrants and those in poorly or non-unionised industries or services — pay for their capitalist crisis.

However, it is clear that the working class can and must defend itself against these attacks.

### OCCUPY!

The only really effective way to fight this menace is by occupying workplaces that are threatened with closures.

—Occupations stop machinery and stocks being moved out and avoid all the difficulties of picketing.

—Occupations are in most cases much stronger weapons than strikes.

Most close-downs are not due to lack of demand for the goods produced but are a manoeuvre by the bosses to shift their capital into a more 'profitable' area.

Their profit of course.

This leaves the workforce the opportunity to grasp the means of production — a

position which can and must be strengthened by creating links with other workers that bypass the State and reactionary trade union bureaucracies.

An excellent example is provided by the action of the Lip workers in France.

### RED HERRINGS

The 'cure-all' suggested by the Leninists and left-wing Labour Party members, that of nationalisation, is only a red herring.

Nationalisation is NOT workers control — rather it is state control, just another face of capitalism.

It does not even protect our jobs: British Steel is laying off thousands of workers, British Rail is attempting to do the same.

Another fishy panacea is the 'workers co-operative, co-operative with the Government that is, which are saddled with impossible restrictions and decisions made not by the workers but by the State as financier and helped by management 'experts' committed to the capitalist system.

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paper of the Anarchist Workers Association



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Workers already out of work have other problems and again their needs are not served by the demands made by Leninists and left-Labourites.

The right to work is merely the 'right' to go back to wage slavery.

Unemployed workers organised in claimants unions have already put their necessary demands — five days pay work or no work, socially useful work and an end to wage slavery.

The militant unemployed must work within the claimants unions and where necessary force them back from unpaid social work towards a strong political campaign amongst the unemployed and other claimants.

The 'revolutionary vanguard' only works with the unemployed when it suits the party, so that we see the rather nauseating spectacle of IS slamming the policies and even the form of the National Federation of Claimants Unions but selling their literature to strikers in order to boost their image on the industrial front on the backs of the claimants.

### SELF ACTIVITY — what's needed

So it appears that not only does the Labour Party Government have no desire to see a socialist solution, where there would be working class power over all aspects of everyday life (surprise, surprise) but the much vaunted Labour left have nothing for us but their little Englander ideas of import controls — think back to their little Englander opposition to the Common Market.

The Leninist, Trotskyist ideas of nationalisation hold no hope for working people.

Bureaucratic control by civil servants is no definition of socialism.

Only the vigorous self-activity of the working class can get us out of this capitalist vicious cycle and lead to a true social revolution: the only and final cure for capitalism.

By building rank and file factory committees having close co-ordination with other workplace committees, by using occupations as a weapon against redundancies, by close co-operation between workers in their unions at branch level and unemployed workers in claimants unions, we can defend ourselves against the capitalist crisis and gain the necessary organisational skills to make sure it never menaces us again.

Editorial Collective



Workers retaliate to the bosses' threats with occupations.

# FIGHTING BACK

**THE STATE is pulling out all the stops in its attacks on the working class, from direct police violence on the picket lines to mass police raids and arrests of black youths in immigrant areas of Liverpool and Leeds.**

In such places high unemployment leads to the frustration of youth, who then question or reject the state system.

Since they then become a threat to state control, their repression is necessary to destroy, however slim it may be, the chance of any organised opposition from today's youth.

### FITTING UP THE WRP

A more sinister instance was the diabolical attack on the Workers Revolutionary Party's educational school in Derbyshire.

The AWA condemns this attack, along with all the other groups of the working class

like the Liverpool dockers, Glasgow Council drivers shop stewards, Vauxhall stewards, as well as numerous trades councils and individuals from the trade union movement.

But although, as the WRP say, it is an attack on basic democratic rights, is it the well-organised attack they say it is, or are the government forces of repression over-reacting out of panic, brought on by frustration at their own inability to control the economic failings of capitalism.

After all the police are to bring no charges against the WRP, who have been able to make good use of the raid to highlight the repressive nature of the state system.

So it would appear that instead of a highly organised raid, it was a complete balls-up by the police.

But either way we can be sure that the police will learn from any mistakes they made in this instance, and whoever is next in line for this kind of attack will probably be fitted up nicely beforehand like George Davis and the BWNIC 14.

But as we can see, all these extra dangers, like police violence and conspiracy charges, have not intimidated the working class from defending their standard of living by striking at:

**November 4th:** Liverpool boilermakers have occupied a bulk carrier ship, the Mary Elizabeth, in a dispute with a multi-national company, International Processing Industries (IPI). After demanding more stringent safety precautions all the men were sacked, including those who were off sick. They were forced to occupy because of the unfortunate attitude of the other unions on the job who called on their members to cross the picket. This was especially true of the CEU, who normally do land work and say that a ship is a site and not a ship. This is playing into the hands of the employers and all workers on the job must work together to get the 150 sacked men reinstated by supporting the picket against IPI.

**November 5th:** the Talk of the Town in London's West End. 120 T&GWU workers are out, some of whom take home only £17.93 for a full week's work. They have a difficult fight on because the owners of the Talk of the Town are Trust House Fortes, a conglomerate who have resisted trade union recognition over the past years.

**November 6th:** White collar workers at Plesseys in Liverpool are planning strike action as soon as the firm send out 700 redundancy notices to the 2,000 work force. So far, 200 have volunteered for redundancy, but the work force are determined to defend their right to work.

## ARE YOU COMING?

EARLY IN the new year, the AWA will be holding a one-day open day school on the subject of 'Libertarian Communism'.

Among the subjects to be discussed will be:

- Anarchism in perspective—a critical history
- The basic tenets of libertarian communism
- Anarchism in Spain
- The Russian anarchists/the Makhnovist movement
- The development of rank and file organisation in the British workers movement
- British anarchism after the Second World War

The school will take place on February 7th at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 starting at 10am and finishing at 6pm. A crèche will be provided for those who want to bring their kids, and accommodation is available for those who come to London the night before.

The cost of the day will be 30p in advance or 40p at the door. For more information, write to:

Day School,  
BCM N.LON. AWA,  
London WC1 6XX



## SPICE JARS IN THE SINK!

**DAPHNE MOSS** is a teacher. For two years she has lived in a small but comfortable bed-sit in Mayfield Road, Whalley Range, Manchester.

On Friday night September 26th, she arrived home to find the room in a shambles, the door was smashed in and splintered cutlery, broken cups and jars, clothes were dumped on the floor, a shelf-full of spice-jars had been swept into the sink.

Posters even had been ripped from the walls. Ms Moss discovered that barely an hour before her arrival home the police had raided the house, which consists of separate flats.

The Landlord had been arrested and charged with running a brothel.

The brother of the Landlord told Ms Moss that he thought her door was still intact when the police left with their prisoner, yet by 12.45am the whole house had been vandalised.

NOT NOW, LUV

Police at the Moss Side station were apparently uninterested in investigating the "Break-in". That morning, Saturday, Ms Moss contacted the Manchester Evening News.

Reporter Paul Horrocks saw the state of the flat and it is likely that News queries to the police, very shortly afterwards, brought a copper round to her flat to — almost — apologise.

The P.C. did say that if a search warrant was taken out it covered the whole house.

Ms Moss also found as she cleared up that some things — a fur coat, rugs, jewellery — were missing.

**SOMEBODY** certainly broke into that locked room; somebody also left a trail of damage throughout the rest of the house.

A fast-acting vandal? Or was it the police, whose 'search' for evidence against the Landlord led them to kick tenants' doors in and disrupt their homes?

from MOLE EXPRESS No 46

## Arab Communist Organisation

ON AUGUST 2nd 1975, five people were hung in Damascus, the capital of Syria. They were four Palestinians and a Syrian.

In the same trial five others were condemned to life imprisonment with hard labour and four more received hard labour for 15 years.

All were members of the Arab Communist Organisation (ACO) and were accused of having participated in several actions, principally against American property in Lebanon and Syria.

Amongst these were attacks on the American pavilion at the Damascus Trade Fair, against the Banks of Syria and Chicago in Beirut and the Jordanian ambassador to Lebanon.

Although it is often made out to be a terrorist organisation of the Palestinian mosaic, the ACO however distinguishes itself on two essential points: —by its method of action: attacks on precise political, military and economic targets, and a

refusal to go in for indiscriminate terrorism. —by its internationalist character and the political positions it has taken.

The ACO is not in fact an organisation whose only struggle is for the creation of a Palestinian state. Its objective is to support the class struggle in all arab countries.

### HUNTED BY LEFT AND RIGHT

For the ACO, only an international anti-capitalist revolution can solve the Palestinian question. Thus, they have members in several arab countries (Kuwait, Lebanon and Syria) where it is opposed to the existing reactionary and nationalist arab regimes.

This means that the militants of the ACO are hunted down not only by the authorities in these countries, but also by the groups and parties of the marxist-leninist vein who cannot tolerate the ACO's

opposition to the state-capitalist "Communism" of both Moscow and Peking.

This serves to give the ACO a libertarian flavour to their aspirations.

At present, other members of the ACO are rotting in the jails of several countries awaiting trial.

A German libertarian communist, recently back from the Middle East, commented:

"These facts are little enough known in Europe, let alone the Middle East, where the bourgeois, reformist and leninist press keeps quiet on the reality of this revolutionary arab organisation."

We can but offer solidarity to the comrades of the Arab Communist Organisation who struggle for a revolutionary alliance of arab workers and peasants against nationalisms and the divisions they produce.

CORRESPONDENT



# National Graphical Association

## GOOD TO ANYONE!

IN THE current economic situation of falling real wages and massive redundancies proposed in every industry it is absolutely vital that the trades unions — at present the only large and effective organisations of working people — do everything in their power to defend their members.

Are the National Graphical Association doing that? Not on your life.

The printing industry is going through a period of great technological change.

Photocomposition, computer typesetting, and the trend towards bigger and more advanced printing machinery are making the industry more efficient and less labour intensive.

But rather than sharing out the benefits of this by increasing wages and shortening the working day, the employers want to throw large numbers of the workforce onto the dole.

Instead of challenging this, the NGA are meekly accepting it, putting up only a token resistance.

In a letter to the Newspaper Publishers Association, Bob Wade (NGA Assistant General Secretary) wrote:

*"...it is the National Council's view that rationalisation of manning levels and the introduction of new technology are not only desirable but necessary".*

### UNPREPARED

A lot of important struggles over redundancies are coming up in the near future; especially at the Observer and at provincial newspapers.

The Daily Telegraph and the Daily Express are also planning 35-40% cuts in jobs (this will mean about 570 redundancies at the Telegraph alone).

The NGA are unprepared for these battles, in spite of having several years forewarning, and it is almost certain that the National Council will accept redundancies through 'natural wastage' — the very thing it can't afford to do with the overall number of jobs in the trade declining drastically.

### CRAFT

The NGA has a history of reactionary policies.

It was formed in 1964 by the merger of two compositors' unions, the Typographical Association and the London Typographical Society, and has its roots firmly in craft unionism and before that in the guild system.

It sees itself as the elite of printworkers, journeyman members going through a rigid apprenticeship with strict indentures.

It's a common complaint that the National Council, and the London region especially, put all their efforts into negotiations for compositors, letter-press printers and newspaper members, ignoring the other areas of the trade, especially litho.

The main negotiations in the last couple of years have been to maintain 'craft differentials' (percentage extras paid to NGA members for being in a craft union) with other unions, and a divisive hierarchy of differentials between operatives of different categories of machines.

The London region, housed in prestige offices in a plush annex to the Press Association building near Fleet Street, spent four times as much — £111,800 — last year on salaries for full-time staff as on all organisational expenses.

### CAPITULATION

When it came to a set of demands really worth fighting for earlier this year (including a £14 increase in basic pay and a 35 hour week) the NC capitulated after a half-hearted overtime ban.

During the ban, several chapels were locked out by their employers and *no action was taken* by the NC, in spite of resolutions from numerous branches to escalate the action.

At the end of June, Kent branch resolved to ask for a special meeting to discuss *"why the NC have conducted the wage claim to the detriment of the members"*.

In August, regional meetings were held to

endorse this call.

At the London regional meeting, discussion got under way and a lot of criticism of the bureaucracy was expressed — but after half an hour the NC closed the meeting, insisting that the discussion wasn't on the agenda, and hence against the rules.

Six months after Kent's motion, there has still been no meeting arranged.

### SEXIST

One aspect of the union's reactionary policies is its attitude towards women.

They don't allow women to go on union apprenticeships and women are only recruited in keyboard operating and small offset.

Having kept women out of the trade throughout the history of printing and denied them the access to learning printing skills, they now turn round and say "Well, you don't expect a woman to be able to operate a press, do you?"

In addition to sexist policies they discriminate on a day-to-day basis — for example the last Biennial Delegate meeting instructed the NC in June to seek an adjustment of pay for Monotype 400 keyboard operators — the majority of whom are women — and the NC have just informed the membership that they've decided not to implement this.

### ACTION

What can the membership do?

In the light of the impossibility of having any effective control over the bureaucracy, the answer must be to build a strong rank and file with full involvement at chapel and branch level.

In my chapel we have adopted a system of rotating FoC, so that instead of one person acting as FoC for years as is usually the case, the position is rotated every six months.

Effective communication should be established between work-places, particularly to discuss tactics to fight redundancies.

NGA FoC

# Sliding Wages on a Scale: UP or DOWN?

INFLATION, in one form or another, has been with us as long as capitalism. But, now that they know we are fed up with running faster and faster to stay in the same place, and now that capitalism is yet again in crisis, certain educated people are expressing great concern over our welfare. They want to mop our brows and ensure that we suffer as little as possible. They propose various schemes, designed to alleviate the situation — not to cure it, just make it bearable! One such scheme is the so-called *"sliding scale of wages"*, a term that we've all come across, thanks to the loud voices of a great many "lefties".

The basic idea is straightforward — every time that the cost of staying alive goes up, there is an automatic rise in wages. For example:

Rise in the cost of living.....10%  
Rise in wages.....10%

According to the apologists (good word for them too!) of this scheme, this wouldn't rule out the possibility of other rises.

But who do they think they're kidding?

With everybody thinking that everybody else is taking home £100 a week, any extra wage demand — outside the accepted system — would be jumped on like fire in a gun-powder factory!

### How it Works

Leaving all that aside for the moment, how is the scheme supposed to work? The first thing to note is that wage rises will be "indexed" (which means indicated I think) by price increases.

It's often suggested that trade unions should be responsible for this "indexing", which means — in fact — that a small group of "experts" will have control over our

wage rises — not us.

This also means that we would have no knowledge or control in deciding what indicates the need for a wage rise and what doesn't.

And to top it all, we would still have an inflationary price-wage spiral.

### High Hopes and High Prices

Perhaps automatic wage increases might make the bosses think twice before putting up prices.

Not a bit of it. The boss has to buy things like raw materials, machinery and advertising from his fellow bosses. He might even pay rent.

Because they've all got to "make a profit", they charge each other more than these things originally cost.

Why are they so friendly towards one another? Because they all know that, ultimately, it's us down here who foot the bill.

Apart from anything else, prices need to go up before a rise in wages can be calculated, and the people calculating may not think it as urgent as the rest of us.

This means that wages will always be trotting along behind galloping price rises.

And another thing. If there's a rise of 10% in the cost of living index, those getting £100 per week would be entitled to another £10, while those of us who earn about £30 a week would receive no more than an extra £3.

It's the old, old story: the rich get richer, the rest of us get poorer!

### An Alternative?

If the people who support the idea of a sliding scale were really our friends, which they say they are, they would be campaigning for an alternative scheme.

As they're "educated" and this alternative has been around for quite some time, they



can hardly plead ignorance.

The first advantage of this other scheme is that we start with a proposed wage rise, not a price rise. We then calculate the actual rise as follows:

$$\frac{\text{firm's maximum salary} \times \text{proposed wage rise}}{\text{present wage}} = \text{actual wage rise}$$

If we demand an extra £7 a week, this means that in a firm where the maximum salary is £100 p.w., but where most people are earning £35 p.w., a person getting £100 p.w. gets:-

$$\frac{100 \times 7}{100} = £7 \text{ p.w. more}$$

and the people getting £35 get:-

$$\frac{100 \times 7}{35} = £20 \text{ p.w. more}$$

But...

All the same, there would still be capitalism — and therefore inflation, along with all the other evils.

The only real advantage of the alternative scale is that we would all get 'screwed together' — rather than some of us poncing off to office jobs and the like, thinking of themselves as "middle-class" or something.

As long as the present set-up continues, we have to go on fighting, just to survive. In that battle for survival we need weapons like the alternative scale, but we must remember that they ultimately solve nothing.

The idea is not to fight our way into eternity, battling with the capitalists over every last crumb.

The battle is not the object; what we want is victory!

Hocus-pocus

As long as we continue to be fooled by all this hocus-pocus about cash flows and credit crises, we'll be fighting and surviving on their



## ATTACK ON INFLATION

## A POLICY FOR SURVIVAL

A guide to the Transitional programme

terms.

We must look behind this dazzling display of stocks and shares, pounds and percentages. We've all come to see that money means only as much as it buys.

We must take another look at our factories. They weren't built with money but with hands. There were machines and materials but they weren't conjured out of space — we built them!

Red Herrings

"But you've got to eat while you're building a factory," you'll say, "that's where the money came in!"

But what did the money buy?

It bought food that working people have planted and harvested.

There's no getting around it. It's what we make and build and grow that counts. Money might be a useful method of exchanging these things, but when it starts telling us what we can and cannot do, it's time to cut it down to size.

How? By communicating with one another within our work places and between them, so that we know what goes into every individual product.

By deciding amongst ourselves what we need and what we don't.

By taking over the factories, farms, sites, and warehouses, producing what we, as a community of human beings need, and thereby rendering this hideous, overweight edifice of money redundant.

That's how!

Frank Lea

*This article is a response to the position taken by French ORA on this subject. Although there is basic agreement, certain aspects have been emphasised and others played down.*



# PORTUGAL:

**FOR THE bourgeois state to exist in its full form the government must not only be able to pass laws, but also have the police and military forces to enforce these laws.**

The VIth Provisional Government does not have these forces; the state in its full form therefore no longer exists.

This situation cannot continue indefinitely: there are three possible solutions.

The first is a direct return to Fascism through a coup by the extreme right; the second is a gradual return to Fascism as the bourgeoisie gradually succeeds in recreating the state in the absence of any strong counter-offensive; and the third is a final complete destruction of the state by the combined action of the working class and rural labourers and small-holders.

Control of the army is the decisive factor in this situation.

In July, the Armed Forces Movement (AFM) came out decisively in favour of a socialist revolution, and the replacement of the state by a system of Popular Assemblies based on the Workers and Residents Commissions.

In a programme full of contradictions, the AFM announced the gradual replacement of the state by this system, the creation of Popular Assemblies at all levels being dependent on the initiative of the AFM, and the Workers and Residents Commissions being vetted by the AFM before being accepted.

Since the fall of the Vth Provisional Government this can be seen as the dream it always was; the army cannot create a socialist society for the working class.

But as long as the army as a whole is not available to carry out the orders of the Government, a revolutionary situation remains.

## SOLDIERS UNITED WILL WIN

The AFM is disintegrating with the rise of the SUV's (Soldiers United Will Win) which are now found in all areas of the country.

The Co-ordinating Council of the AFM itself has recognised that the revolution cannot be carried out for the working class by a hierarchical armed forces:

*"The answer to the problem of discipline must not be found in the refusal of the revolutionary discipline of the new society which is being born and in a return to the authoritarian relationships of the society which is dying... an increase of power in the sense of authority corresponds to a decrease in discipline (both social and military), power always preferring being authoritarian to being popular."*

Along with the SUV's, cells of which scattered throughout the army are working

in co-ordination with the urban and rural workers' autonomous organisations, whole sections of the army are not available to the bourgeoisie — in particular RALIS (the main Lisbon infantry regiment; RASP and CICAP in Oporto and COPCON.

At the national level, the actions of COPCON have had the effect of strengthening the left (they have been particularly concerned with the problems of



Soldiers of SUV and Radio Renascenca workers in the offices of the station

small-holders of the north), but at a local level their actions are sometimes difficult to understand.

This is partly because of their continued attitude of 'WE are going to build socialism for you' and sometimes dictatorial method which comes from this.

## MERCENARIES

Faced with this situation the Government has almost given up hope of winning control of the army (except the Air Force, which is re-arming itself in co-operation with NATO and may be planning a coup in the near future).

They are trying to create a second armed forces based on AML, regiments made up of Fascist returnees from Angola and Mozambique, mercenaries and previously dismissed soldiers with Fascist sympathies.

It isn't large enough yet to be a real danger. For example, when the Spanish Embassy in Lisbon was burned, no section of the army was prepared to go and stop the looting.

The same happened with the occupation of the toll-booths on the main motorway into Lisbon by disabled soldiers — the money they collected was given to the SUV's.

The Government is doing its best to force a swing to the right without any repressive forces to enforce its measures, covering itself in revolutionary slogans to try — without much success — to hide its real nature.

It is nominally Social-Democrat, but in the situation in Portugal social democracy is an impossibility: it would need so much repression to maintain that it would itself be Fascism.

## SANCTIONS

On the one hand the Government-controlled radio stations play 'revolutionary' songs; on the other the new statement of the aims of the Government includes:

*"...the prevention of abuses of economic power... and the assurance of balanced competition between firms"*

as though economic power was anything but

The new short term economic plan is yet to be announced but a new law has already made it possible in theory for capitalists and landowners to be paid for property nationalised or turned into co-operatives.

The Government is trying to destroy the Land Reform law: the Institute for Land Reform gets practically no finances at all.

And another new law has lifted the ban on members of the old landowners federations or people who don't make their

living from farm work becoming members of the co-operatives' directing councils, allowing the return of the old landowners and the imposition of 'agricultural technicians' by the Government.

Meanwhile, the Fascists continue their organisation unhindered by the Government. There are still large numbers of arms being brought over from Spain by the ELP.

There has been a wave of bombings by Fascists (the 'Front for Western Democracy') in the Lisbon area.

Known Fascists in the Air Force are organising.

## RESISTANCE

There is no alternative state to counter-balance the VIth Government, which would be an impossibility.

The resistance to the Government can therefore best be seen at a local level.

## SETUBAL

### General

Setubal is the third largest Portuguese city (after Lisbon and Oporto) and heavily industrial, with several car-assembly plants, the Setnave shipyards, cement factories, quarries, a large building industry, and so on.

Resistance is organised in several forms: the Setnave embryo Soviet; the residents commissions and workers commissions which cover the city and are co-ordinated through the *Comite de Luta*, the FUR (United Revolutionary Front, made up of LUAR, MES, PRP, UDP, FEC(M-L) and others), and the SUV group in RIS, the local infantry regiment.

# THE PRESS FUND.

As events in Portugal draw to a head, we in Britain can help best by preventing British capitalism getting its money's worth out of the Portuguese workers and peasants.

And the best way of doing that is by extending the revolution into this country, taking the gains made by the Portuguese people and pushing them further.

As a part of this process, *Libertarian Struggle* has a role to play — to be a forthright voice of communism — of libertarian communism — spreading news of the struggles that are going on, sharing experiences across all the boundaries that capitalism draws for us.

Portuguese workers' struggles giving inspiration to British workers; the lessons women learn in their struggles showing the men a thing or two; those in work learning from claimants; schoolkids teaching the teachers; and of course people in one industry or union learning what's going on in the workplace nextdoor, the other unions and neighbourhoods around the country.

To do this *Libertarian Struggle* must expand. More pages are necessary in each issue, it must come out more often than monthly if it is to be relevant to more people; more copies need to be sold.

*Libertarian Struggle* is a collective effort of many people, none of whom are professional journalists. In order that a libertarian communist current is created within the working class (a trickle even!) we need to know what the readers think of the articles, brickbats as well as bouquets, what you think a revolutionary anarchist newspaper should contain. Stop being a passive consumer — start participating! Write now!

Above all, we need CASH. Printers bills have to be paid, costs of distribution are mounting. Any contributions will be most welcome. Send what you can afford to:

*Libertarian Struggle*, 13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside.



Occupations — the working class community in control



# Power to the Party or Power to the People?

The *Comite de Luta*, in co-operation with the SUV is organising for the armed defence of Setubal in open meetings in the Town Hall.

## Information

Last week the workers of the local paper, the *Setubalese*, formed a co-operative and took over the running of the paper in

efforts but by the decisiveness and quick action with which the organs of popular power helped us against all these manoeuvres the owner was carrying out, not only against us, but against the whole population, in forcing this paper to the right."

And Maria Isabel, one of the office staff:

"All this is a result of the crisis which was created by the forces of capital against

investment not only for the Lisbon petty-bourgeoisie but also for emigrant Portuguese workers.

This was particularly true in Setubal.

After the 25th of April the boom collapsed, leaving dozens of enormous blocks unfinished in the middle of a housing shortage.

A typical case is that of Virgilio da Silva, who slowly bled all the capital out of his building company, leaving it heavily in debt, then fled to Brazil leaving at least two blocks almost finished.

The workers co-operative which now runs the company has no money to finish the buildings, which now only need wiring.

One of the workers told me he expects the local Residents Commission to organise the occupation of the blocks soon.

One of the main tasks of the residents commissions so far has been the occupation of empty buildings, together with the creation of creches.

## Setnave

Setnave is going through a crisis owing to the international boycott. 800 of the 4,000 workers are idle.

Meanwhile, the Government has once again abolished unemployment benefit, though workers still pay for it in their wage packets!

In response to the boycott, the Lisnave and Setnave workers have organised workers soviets.

An attempt by the management to manipulate the soviet through a form of 'co-management' was defeated last week.

The general assembly is the supreme body of the soviet, and all workers elected to specific positions are revocable.

No workers can now be dismissed.

## Land Reform

In the countryside around Setubal — the Alentajo — the latifunda have almost all been taken over by the farmer workers.

In one of these, the '1st of May' co-operative, the owner fled with all his capital.

As happened in many places, the farm-workers found themselves unable to take on extra labour to help with the harvest.

A metal worker from Setnave gave up his salary of 8,000 \$ per month to organise voluntary labour at the co-operatives standard 'wage' of 4,000 \$.

Throughout the summer over a hundred volunteers went out from Setubal every weekend.

Films of Chile and Cuba were shown in the magnificent squire's mansion.

On the first day of the take-over, the workers performed a mock-service in the private chapel!

The Government's 'land reform' law, with its ridiculously high ceilings for expropriation, and total lack of funds, is being ignored — only 40 co-operatives have been recognised as 'legal'.

The railway workers are voluntarily taking out supplies of manure and fertilisers to areas with shortages.

## The Fascists

The wave of Fascist bombings around Lisbon was followed by a general COPCON alert, the arrest of several ELP members, and the discovery of quantities of arms.

The Centre for Agrarian Reform in nearby Alcacar do Sal was destroyed by Fascist bombs; a massive farm workers demonstration simply occupied the town mansion of the largest ex-landowner — Branco Nuncio — and turned it into a new centre.

One of those present said:-

"This Government defends the land-owners and has tried from the beginning to boycott our work, saying that all this was illegal.

Maybe the hunger and misery us people have had is illegal too. It seems not."

This Government cannot and will not defeat the people of Setubal. The only alternative is revolution.

## PODER POPULAR!

## FOOTNOTES.

1. Analysis by Co-ordinating Council of the AFM published October 30 1975.
2. Article 2 of the 'Lei Fundamental Portuguesa' revised by the Constituent Assembly October 29.

## PRIVATE PROPERTY?

TWO EVENTS in the last week have shown the attitude of the capitalist state towards property, and the possibility of an alternative. One was the destruction of Radio Renascenca by the sixth Provisional Government; the other, the trial of a squatter by a People's Court.

### one

AT DAWN on Friday 8th November, a squad of parachutists was told to go off and carry out 'special duties' in *Radio Renascenca*, one of the most powerful stations in Portugal with transmitters covering the whole country.

The parachutists were not only not told what they were going to be doing, but fooled into thinking that COPCON, the radical division, would be there.

What they did, in fact, was to place 15 kilos of plastic explosives in the building, and leave it a complete wreck.

*Radio Renascenca* was the only truly committed left-wing station.

Run by a workers co-operative, it was the only station not to co-operate with the soldiers sent to occupy all radio stations at the beginning of October.

As a result it was closed and sealed up. Two weeks later it was re-opened by the workers co-operative and Residents Commissions, backed by a demonstration of 10,000's.

Back on the air, the Government found itself completely impotent; the only possibility for a bourgeois government faced with a genuine popular revolution is wanton destruction.

## LEGAL or ILLEGAL?

Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo tells the story in his own words (speech in Lisbon 10/11/75):

"The beginning of the affair was the illegal occupation of the station, carried out by force, which brought about a conflict with the Catholic Church (to which *Radio Renascenca* legally belongs) which could have had, and to some extent did have, serious consequences.

Next, a military occupation, followed by a return to barracks and the sealing of R.R. Then, the removal of the seals and break-in by the people who had occupied it before, followed by an emotional campaign against the organs of power.

This was made worse by the timing (openly provocative) of the occupation the day before the visit of the President of the Republic to Pope Paul VI.

The Council of the Revolution could not do other than make amends to the President of the Republic, the authority of the State and of the Catholic Church, and following from this last the Catholic faith, to which the majority of the Portuguese people belong."

In defending the right of the Catholic Church to 'its' property the Government destroyed that property.

It doesn't seem that this has upset His Holiness. That 'property' was a possession of the Portuguese people; it was something both useful to that people and built by their own efforts.

Another quote from Pinheiro de Azevedo:- "Without force, authority does not exist; without authority, the government cannot govern."

### two

EARLIER IN the same week as the *Radio Renascenca* affair, a woman called Maria Rodriguez was tried for having occupied a house in Lisbon.

Not by the 2nd Correctional Court, but by the people, who turned the yard of the Boa Hora Court into an audience hall for the first people's court to try a squatting case — there have since been four more.

She was found innocent.

Long before 10.00am, the time set for the bourgeois trial, a mass of people called together by the *Penha da Franca* Residents Commission had gathered in the space in front of the court to stop the trial being carried out.

When the judge failed to have them moved, he had the trial postponed.

Chanting 'no postponement' and 'a people's trial now', the people moved into the courtyard and formed a court, with members from 28 Residents Commissions present.

A member of the secretariat of the Autonomous Revolutionary Commissions of Residents and Squatters ('CRAMO') opened the session, summing up in a few words the history of the squat, and the subsequent incidents with the PSP (Security Police) and pointing out relevant 'details', such as the fact that Maria Rodriguez was pregnant when arrested and had aborted as the result of maltreatment by Captain Ferreira's mother and another woman.

Maria herself added:

"I occupied a little room, not a house. I was attacked by two fascists and aborted two children. And at the end of it all they try ME and not those fascists."

## THE PEOPLE'S VERDICT

After the reading of several motions, the verdict was voted on:

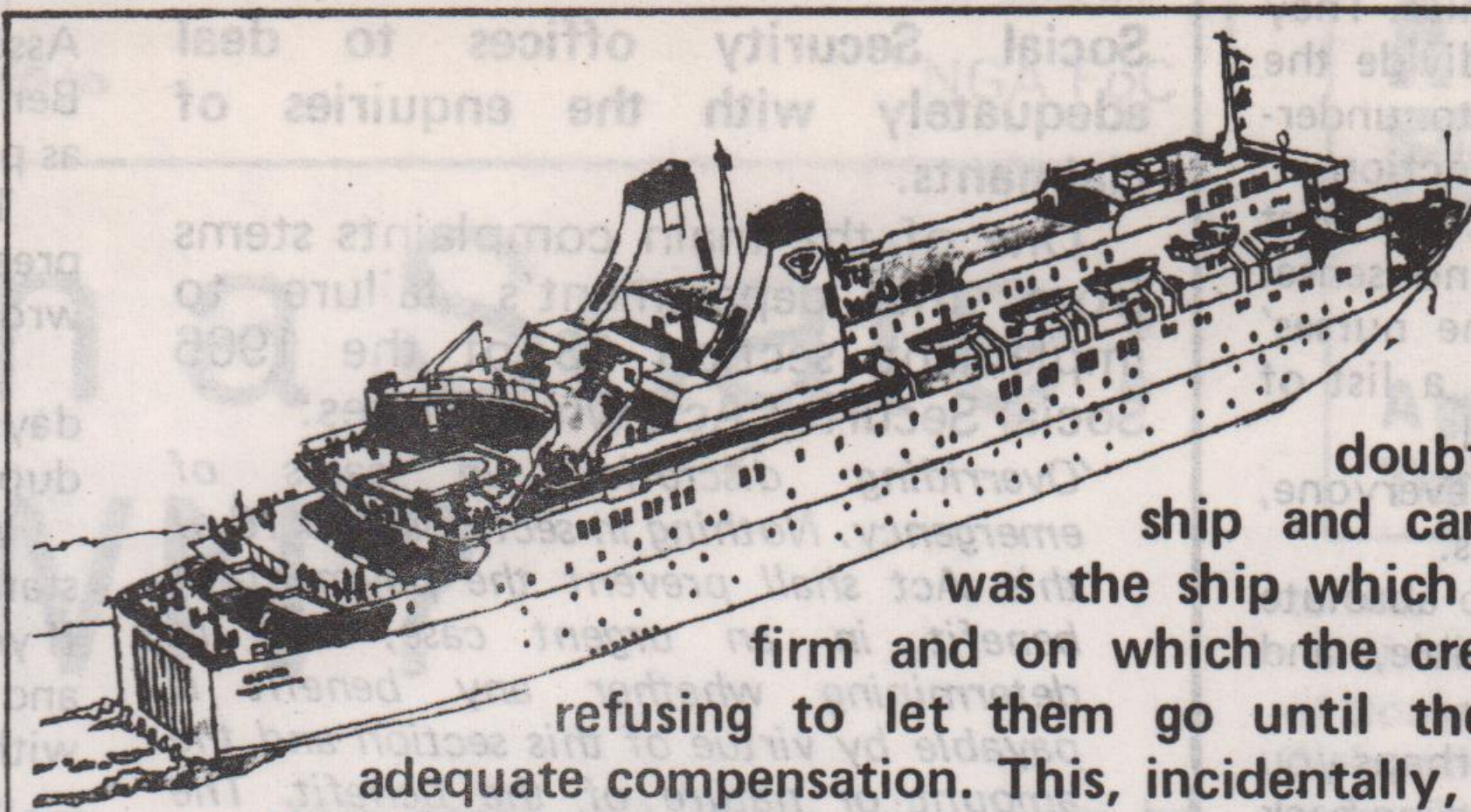
"The People's Court, meeting today 4th November at 10.45, took the following decisions in accordance with the will of the people:

- 1) The Landlord is guilty of speculation, and exploitation;
- 2) We consider the Captain's mother and associate as fascists, criminals, and enemies of the people.
- 3) These criminals will be subjected to a people's trial when the workers have taken power.
- 4) We consider M. Rodriguez innocent and with a full right to the house she is occupying."

A decision was made to occupy the court any time a retrial was attempted.

The crowd dispersed chanting 'The people built the houses, the houses belong to the people'.

But they don't; not without a revolution. It's what expropriation's all about: the right to take back what you have built, not allow you to use it and then destroy it.



The strike which hit the front pages last month was without doubt that of the P&O cruise ship and car ferry the *Eagle*. This was the ship which P&O sold to a French firm and on which the crew barricaded the cars, refusing to let them go until they had reassurances of adequate compensation. This, incidentally, was the ship which did the Southampton — Lisbon run. Was this an example of the tactics being used by revolutionary Portuguese workers giving inspiration to the British sailors?

## REPUBLICA

IN ORDER to raise much needed funds, the Workers Committee of *Republica*, the Lisbon daily paper which was taken from the control of its Socialist Party bosses and is now put out under workers management, in conjunction with the 'Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class' in Britain, is producing one English language issue which went on sale here in Britain in mid-November.

The issue is an 8 page edition (price 20p) which contains not only a detailed article on the *Republica* struggle itself, but also up-to-date news on the situation in Portugal, written by *Republica* journalists and typeset by *Republica* printworkers in their own free time.

Individual copies of the paper are available (25p including postage) from the offices of the Solidarity Campaign, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2.

Why not place a bulk order and sell them to your friends. Fill in the box below and send it off with a cheque or postal order. All profits from the sale of this issue will go direct to the workers of *Republica*.

Please send ..... copies of *Republica*

I enclose £ ..... p

Name .....

Address .....

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Setting the type for the first *Republica* put out under workers control. (photo *Diario de Lisboa*)



## A Letter from a Libertarian Patient

THE National Health Service is one of the few State institutions that we can see being much necessary in an anarchist society.

Of course, we don't want it State run and there's plenty of other improvements to be made.

Amidst stories of the imminent collapse of the NHS, and of west-bound airliners loaded with consultants, I've just had a minor orthopaedic operation.

I want to set out some of the contradictions and farces that have been thrust in my face.



### HIERARCHY

The first thing to hit you is the staff around you. The range of uniforms is enough to make the 57 varieties of Spanish police-men seem unimaginative.

The uniforms represent, of course, not just a hierarchy, but many hierarchies. They clash, intermesh, duplicate, and divide the workforce. I've never been able to understand the structure, let alone the function.

From a patient's point of view, the least you can do is to cut out that nonsense. You're not encouraged to use the nurses' forenames, not that you're given a list of peoples titles when you're admitted.

It doesn't come natural to title everyone, and it comes hard to most patients.

On the other hand there are no absolute experts, nobody totally responsible, and there is team co-operation.

No obvious bullying goes on, perhaps you only really feel your rank when sitting back at home.

### WHO ARE YOU?

You are a patient, somehow incapacitated. You know that, but they're not going to let you know much more than that.

You are basically stupid, and incapable of understanding medicine, even if it does concern your body, and even if they do condescend to de-jargonise.

Despite having been employed in the same hospital — as an ancillary — I ran up against this wall of non-information.

Obviously there are ways of extracting information. I made up questions that had developed from each other.

Eventually I would end up with everything I 'didn't need to know'.

To grasp the medicine and treatment that you receive is to demystify the National Health Service.

### INSTITUTIONALISATION

In the space of a fortnight I have felt increasingly domesticated, useless and rooted. Food is brought, lights are operated for you, you're even likely to be washed.

Some patients are so malleable, they settle down in a few days... totally. What sort of a 'normal' life does such a person lead?

Rest assured (excuse the pun) you do come across such cases. I've even met an individual who reached puberty at 23!

Now I've seen the State deliberately cultivating its 'scroungers' and the like!

### IMPROVEMENTS

One thing that comes to mind is that the hierarchy is not one of merit. If the (graduate) doctors had to go through nursing training, they might understand, better, the problems of their nurse servants.

If the medical graduates were drawn from the nursing ranks, the opportunities to train were made generally more available, we might never need sweat over the loss of a few 'experts', who are on to get-rich-quick medicine.

But immediately there is a need for greater organisation of all hospital workers. They could, and should, administer their own work.

They should have liaison with the community as to what health services are needed.

J.T.

*The AWA is pledged to defend the NHS from Government cuts; we also need to see an end to the authoritarian lines of running this maintenance department of H.M.G. enterprises.*

## STATE EDUCATION

ONE OF the most objectionable sections of a state system is the propaganda machine, such as Hitler used to convince the German people of their superiority.

Well, the Labour Government are also putting out some propaganda through the Office of Fair Trading, the aim of which is to maintain the class system in Britain by leafletting schools with a pamphlet aimed at 8-13 year olds, and designed to instill in them the acceptance of their "proper place in the social structure", to accept government and Law without question.

20,000 pamphlets called **Thinking about Shopping** have been sent post free to schools all over the country.

### MAKING IT

One section is called *How shall we pay?* A good question especially if you have been unemployed since you left school, or if your Dad's on the dole after being made redundant.

Of course it does not give the answers to these problems, these things must be accepted.

Another section is *Which shall we buy?* Well, not much problem there for the working class, with the housekeeping buying 30% less than a year ago the choice is hardly very wide, food first and the cheapest going next.

But far from pointing out to the children that the cause of the economic crisis in capitalism is capitalism itself, the next chapter is a blatant glorification of the exploiting every-man for himself capitalist system.

They are asked to write a story about a strip cartoon hero who has, by hard work and accepting society as it is, succeeded in becoming a boss of a supermarket chain after starting in a small corner shop.

This is of course to con them that by hard work, and only through private enterprise, can they win in society.

In effect they are being told to support the very system that is the root cause of all the problems of the working class.

### DISCREDIT

Then there is a chapter on the good and bad points of borrowing money.

Well we can't deny Labour's qualifications to speak on this subject, after all they are borrowing vast sums of money from all over the world as fast

as possible, to prop up the crumbling failures of capitalism, but no mention of this to the children,

But no mention of this to the children, just the hints required to get their acceptance that as the working class, they will be dependent on credit to obtain what they need in life — even though it is credit that is destroying our standard of living by having to pay gigantic interest rates, whether to foreign finance, or on money borrowed by cities to meet council spending.

They are then asked to draw adverts of their own design or copy out Fair Trading labels.

### CONSUMERS

Then they are shown pictures of a record shop and boutique, and asked to write a list of things they need and things they want.

This is to get them to accept that as working class people in a capitalist system, they only need the basic essentials to live and any 'luxuries' they have is only thanks to the bosses' kindness in paying them more than they really require to exist and to work for the propertied classes.

But the most obvious attempt at getting the children to accept a class system is the chapter bulling up the state institutions under the suggestion of making a wall chart of all the state agencies that will 'protect' them.

There is for instance the County Court, which they will probably come up against soon enough, or the Department of Health and Social Security, who they also will soon meet when leaving school when they go and collect their dole.

Then there's the Price Commission who watch the prices rise and the value of the Department of Health and Social Security's dole money payments decrease.

But of course it is all presented in a very subtle way as all propaganda is, nevertheless it points out the complete absence of socialism in the Labour Government and its total anti-working class position.

Lyn Hurst

### THE ORGANISATIONAL PLATFORM OF THE LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISTS

by Piotr Arshinov, Nestor Makhno, Ida Mett, Valevsky, Linsky. A critical look at the role of the anarchists in the Russian Revolution, with practical conclusions, by a group that was active at the time.

An AWA publication

20p + postage from:

AWA, 13 Colman Street, Hull

## Direct Action at the D.H.S.S.

THE Claimants' Action Group in Leicester has been very concerned about the failure of the Norton Street Social Security offices to deal adequately with the enquiries of claimants.

One of the main complaints stems from the department's failure to implement section 13 of the 1966 Social Security Act, which states:

*'Overriding discretion in cases of emergency. Nothing in sections 8 to 10 of this Act shall prevent the payment of benefit in an urgent case, and in determining whether any benefit is payable by virtue of this section and the amount or nature of the benefit. The commission shall not be bound by anything in schedule 2 to this Act or in any regulations made under this Act which appears to them inappropriate in the circumstances of the case.'*

This section of the act reduced to simple terms means anyone who is in urgent need of money, whether unemployed or in full-time employment, is entitled to a cash payment over the counter.

If you need money urgently, at any time when the social security offices are closed, you should visit the nearest police station and ask for the visiting social security officer.

S/he carries a float of £200 in a briefcase for these emergency payments and can be called out at any time.

### REPUTATION

The reputation of the DHSS in Leicester is extremely poor. Many people when they first sign on as unemployed at the Labour Exchange, go to the SS and are kept waiting for hours before even getting to reception.

They are then told either to come back another day for an appointment or are assured that an officer will call round and see them in a few days.

If your case is in any way urgent, you should insist on an appointment for the same day. You should have your rent book or at least evidence of your address (a letter addressed to you will do), a B1 form from the Labour Exchange and your last two wage slips.

Arrange beforehand, if you can, to have

someone with you to help and dissuade them from asking questions they are not supposed to ask.

Insist that you are sent a 'Written Assessment of how your Supplementary Benefit is worked out' (form A124), as soon as possible.

This will provide you with evidence to present to the tribunal if your case has been wrongly assessed.

If you don't receive an A124 within a few days, insist upon it in writing and keep a duplicate copy of the letter.

When writing to the SS, never put a stamp on the envelope, but mark it OHMS1. If you need to phone them, ring the operator and reverse the charges; insist that you are without funds.

### DEMANDS

Leicester Claimants Action Group is organising a regular picket of the Norton Street offices to demand:

- 1) Emergency over the counter payments for claimants in urgent need.
- 2) A speed-up in the processing of claims. Some claimants have had to wait up to two weeks before receiving money.
- 3) Automatic notification to the claimant of his or her assessment with form A124.
- 4) An end to the notorious co-habitation ruling which penalises and harrasses women by making them dependent on one man for their money.
- 5) Notices proclaiming the CAG to be placed in prominent positions in the DHSS offices and the employment offices.
- 6) Payment in cash to be made for all 'exceptional needs' claims.

Action in support of these demands has included Dave Merrick chaining himself to the railings outside Norton Street.

The local radio station was contacted and a reporter sent to interview us.

Dave Merrick's interview was broadcast and a short report was carried on ITN.

George Ames, who was delayed payment of his sickness benefit for alleged failure to provide a medical certificate, staged a protest in the private part of the offices by refusing to leave this section, situated behind the interview booths.

The assistant manager called the police and George was forced to leave. The

assistant manager did agree, however, to give him a food voucher.

Exceptional needs payments are only claimed by a small minority of claimants.

Your benefit is supposed to cover regular weekly expenses such as food, rent, electricity and so on.

It is not designed to cover so-called exceptional needs, like the purchase of clothes and furniture.

The DHSS is not required by law to make cash payments for these articles if it can arrange payment in kind satisfactorily.

For several years now, a charitable organisation called *People Next Door* has supplied furniture to claimants on behalf of the department.

In most cases we have found this furniture to be defective. Either it has been shaky or riddled with woodworm.

We are urging all claimants to refuse furniture supplied from PND if it is in any way unsatisfactory and to demand cash payments.

### FIGHT ON

Our fight is being stepped up and we will soon become affiliated to the National Federation of Claimants Unions.

The state must be forced to guarantee an adequate standard of living for everyone without recourse to a means test.

Capitalism is a chaotic system which throws thousands of people out of work in every economic crisis.

If the state cannot guarantee us the

necessary means to live without recourse to begging and stealing, the time must surely have long since arrived to throw capitalism and all its props right out of the window.

The working class produces all the wealth but it allows all the profits to be creamed off by the bosses, leaving us with only the crumbs.

As we produce the wealth, it only remains for us to begin the movement to control and produce for ourselves and the community; in other words a society producing and organising for need and not for profit.

On the dole or working, reject this insane capitalist system, refuse to accept authority and above all have confidence in your ability to change things.

Ray Burman (AWA claimant)



## Socialist Teachers Conference: entrism

THE AWA Teachers caucus has supported the Socialist Teachers Conference (STC) from its inception because we have felt that whatever the faults of the other revolutionary groups concerned (and principally the *International Marxist Group*), here was a chance to debate future tactics for the left in the NUT.

The composition of the second conference, which took place at the end of October in London, was encouraging since the majority of people there were from outside London.

A number of political groups were represented including *Big Flame*, *Workers Fight*, *Workers Socialist League*, *IMG*, some *Labour Party* supporters and other people not so obviously branded.

A notable absence was that of the *International Socialists* and in fact very few *Rank & File* supporters attended. The *IMG* were the largest group by far.

### FIGHTING CUTS

The agenda of the STC centred round how to fight the public expenditure cuts; motions for the NUT conference and the relationship of the NUT to the *Labour Party*. The success of failure of *Rank & File* was also discussed.

Unfortunately, it was the question of the *Labour Party* which was to dominate the conference for most of the weekend, but it was inevitable that it should have done.

The *IMG*'s conception of how to fight the cuts centres around action committees which consist of trade unionists, delegates from other campaign organisations of the working class, representatives of all the left political groups, and most importantly, affiliation from left *Labour Party* branches.

The large Medical Campaign Against Private Practice was organised on this basis.

The *Labour Party* issue rapidly became the central theme of the debate because it dominates how the cuts can be fought.

The vast majority of the people attending were Trotskyists who believe that the revolutionary left should orientate their activity towards militant sections of the *Labour Party*, and who sympathise with the *IMG*.

### CLASS AUTONOMY

The AWA and *Big Flame* argued that fundamental to any kind of attempt to build opposition to wage controls, unemployment, and the cuts should be the realisation that only independent rank and file activity in the mass of the working class will be successful.

Our main argument was that in building independent rank and file activity on a large scale at union branch level and in the community you have to fight the *Labour Party* as well as the Tories.

This means building campaigns around the cuts and unemployment which have their own revolutionary perspectives, and which do not rely on accommodation with the local *Labour Party* branch or Council, however militant.

We argued that many sections of the class were rapidly becoming disillusioned with the *Labour Government* and although this followed the same pattern since the first *Labour Government*, the depth of the crisis this time could push many working people into the arms of the National Front.

The only way to counter this is to present clear perspectives for action which clearly break with the *Labour Party* and their cohorts in the Trade Union leadership.

### PROBLEMS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Finally, we argued that, qualitatively, the nature of a mass campaign against the *Labour Government* attacks would be altered if the *IMG* and its adherents concentrated on organising the 'vanguard' of *Labour* lefts and militants instead of trying to involve people through their day to day lives in the struggle.

Although the *IS* have made many political mistakes in the past (the biggest one being their relationship to the *Rank & File* groups) their general orientation to the working class is far better than the rest of the Trotskyist movement.

They made a great mistake in boycotting the STC because they had a chance to finally get to grips with *IMG*'s politics, and particularly around the debate on entering the *Labour Party*.

Instead it was left to the AWA to carry the whole weight of putting arguments against 'entrism'.

Whether the STC will develop into a united front or not is now in the balance, given the decision it has taken.

That — and whether a non-sectarian dialogue between all the revolutionary groups will develop — puts the question of whether, finally, a coherent National Campaign against the Cuts will get going.

J.B.

## Teachers Expelled

AT A recent all-London Aggregate of the National Union of Teachers *Rank & File*, moves were finally made by the *International Socialists* to expell the *International Marxist Group*.

The issue came to a head after four years wrangling when the *IMG* made it plain that they were no longer going to tolerate being left out in the cold as regards putting up candidates for the local and national elections for official positions in the NUT.

The *IS* have systematically refused to allow anyone but themselves to stand on a *Rank & File* platform for these elections by operating a highly effective slate.

### NEW ARENA

The meeting narrowly passed a resolution requesting that all members who do not agree with the R&F Constitution should leave.

Although the AWA feels that, to a large extent, elections divert socialists from concentrating on mobilising as many people as possible on basic issues, we condemn the *IS* for turning what should be a united front of revolutionary socialists into a democratic centralist organisation much like the Communist Party operates.

This is why the AWA teachers caucus will be supporting the Socialist Teachers Conference from now on as the arena for debating the political issues that face all workers.

J.B.

### ABORTION CALENDAR

1976 SEES the fortieth anniversary of the Abortion Law Reform Association.

A calendar has been produced dedicated to all those who have campaigned for freely available contraception and safe, legal abortion from 1915 to the National Abortion Campaign of 1975.

The calendar has thirteen photographs from the 1975 campaign and a monthly diary. The size is 12" X 17" when opened for hanging.

Copies are available from A Woman's Right to Choose Campaign, 88A Islington High Street, London N1 for £1 plus postage.

### .....POEM

On my 40th birthday  
I went for a walk at 1 a.m.  
And was arrested  
For not having a dog

from *Mole Express* No. 45  
'Manchester's Other Paper'

## AIMS & PRINCIPLES

- 1 Capitalism is a class society.
- 2 The basic irreconcilable contradiction within it is between the class which owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, the bourgeoisie, and the class who produce the agricultural and industrial wealth, the working class.
- 3 The social enslavement and exploitation of the working class forms the basis on which modern capitalism stands, without which capitalism could not exist.
- 4 The state is the instrument of the ruling class. To destroy the power of the bourgeoisie, we must destroy the power of the state.
- 5 Russia and China are class societies in each of which a ruling class of administrators collectively owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, and in which a working class, the sole producer of all wealth, is exploited by that class. These states we define as corporate state capitalist in that the ruling class is totally integrated with the state, as is the trade union structure.
- 6 The class nature of society is reflected in all the dominant philosophies: class, race, sexual, social and personal relationships. The class relationships are expressed through all social relationships and generate attitudes such as sexism and racism.
- 7 The conflict of interest between the two classes generates the class struggle. In the history of society, the class struggle has been the primary factor in the determination of the form and structure of society.
- 8 The day to day struggles of the working class reflect the class struggle. The position of the working class as the collective producer of society's wealth makes it the only force capable of replacing capitalism by a classless society. The existing defensive organisations thrown up by the working class, such as trade unions, whose bureaucracy is increasingly incorporated into capitalism, are not adequate for the smashing of the capitalist system, and the building of a free, classless society. However, the working class rank and file organisations such as democratically controlled shop steward committees, factory committees, strike committees, are developing through the place of work. These organisations are the forerunners of workers councils which are the expression of working class power. Outside of work, the working class has developed other forms of organisation that are potentially revolutionary, such as tenants action committees, rent strike committees, and tenant-worker joint action committees.
- 9 Dual power exists before the power of the bourgeoisie is smashed. If the working class are successful, then the organisation of the needs of society will be firmly based in working class hands. This is the collective working class in power, in which the working class destroys all remnants of bourgeois society, such as racial hatred, the family and hierarchies. This is the period of transition between capitalism and libertarian communism.
- 10 From our analysis we reach the inevitable conclusion that capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way and that the only meaningful transformation of society is through the development of working class organisations and by means of a violent social revolution. Violence becomes inevitable for the working class to defend themselves against the onslaughts of the dispossessed ruling class.

### The role of the AWA

- 1 The task of the AWA is to aid the preparation of the working class for their seizure of power. The establishment of an anarchist society is something that has to be consciously fought for by the working class. The AWA is a conscious organised expression of libertarian communist ideas. Through the shared experience, information and knowledge of the class struggle, AWA must be able to analyse and disseminate the nature of the problems facing the working class, and apply these lessons in the class struggle.
- 2 The AWA aims to offer a lead within the working class movement by example and explanation; and to build into the movement a high level of political consciousness so that it is capable of defeating capitalism and fighting the creation of a new ruling class. Fundamental to this is the contradiction between the organisation as a tendency within the class and its being in ideological advance of it. This contradiction can only be resolved with the establishment of a libertarian communist society. During the period of transition, the potential basis for the emergence of a new ruling class is progressively removed so that the need for a separately organised libertarianism will decrease.
- 3 The AWA seeks to develop and support working class organisations which are the forerunners of workers councils and to develop in them revolutionary consciousness. The AWA does not seek independent power for itself but seeks to work through the working class organisations.
- 4 The AWA seeks to establish international links with libertarian revolutionary organisations and groups with an aim of establishing an international libertarian communist movement.
- 5 The AWA seeks to combat attitudes of sexism, racism and national chauvinism as attitudes that help maintain class society.

The form our organisation takes is a realisation of libertarian perspectives in the current situation. We recognise that it is not a social model of a free society and must itself develop in interaction with the developing liberation of society.

- (1) We are a membership organisation.
- (2) Membership is open to those who agree with our analysis of society and its transformation, and who work towards this end.
- (3) The main policy making body will be the National Conference. Between National Conferences there will be held bi-monthly Delegate Conferences to co-ordinate and carry out National Conference decisions, to decide interim policy and to initiate activity. Delegates are mandatable and rotated. Delegate Conference decisions can be revoked by National Conference.
- (4) We seek to establish AWA groups in all areas, not only geographical but also industrial, educational, etc.. Groups interpret National and Delegate Conference decisions to relate tactics to their local experience.

As agreed at the National Conference in London, 31st August — 1st September 1974.



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# new opportunity

ANYONE travelling between London and the Midlands or Northwest by rail can't fail to notice a huge sign proclaiming: 'Telford New Town - Your Opportunity'. The exact nature of this 'Eldorado' or how it comes to be there is, however, not explained. What follows is a warning to any workers who might be thinking of bettering their conditions by moving to one of Britain's 30 odd new towns.

New towns are one of the bizarre results of capitalism's pathetic attempts to plan its economy.

Originally just a place for London's lower middle class commuters to live - like Welwyn Garden City - the idea of building new towns caught on in the sixties, as a way of providing extremely poor quality housing on cheap land.

Families moved out of the city by slum clearance projects, which replaced their homes with office blocks, were rehoused in conditions not much better than they had left.

The experience of what happened in Telford and its 'parent city' Birmingham is typical of people in other similar situations eg Washington/Newcastle, Waterlooville/Southampton, Cumbernauld/Glasgow and Skelmersdale/Liverpool.

## SPECULATORS

In Birmingham, the huge City Corporation, led on by a powerful lobby of speculators eager to get their hands on office building land, began wholesale demolition of areas of working class housing close to the city centre.

Many of these areas were certainly overdue for demolition, but in a desire to clear the ground for office block building, many houses were knocked down which could have been improved at little cost.

Meanwhile, slum areas away from the city centre and therefore of no value to the speculators remain standing - Handsworth, Balsall Heath, etc.

As a result of this activity, corruption ran riot in Birmingham Town Hall.

Bryants, who started off as a small local building firm, were suddenly given two thirds of Birmingham Corporation's slum clearance and building projects.

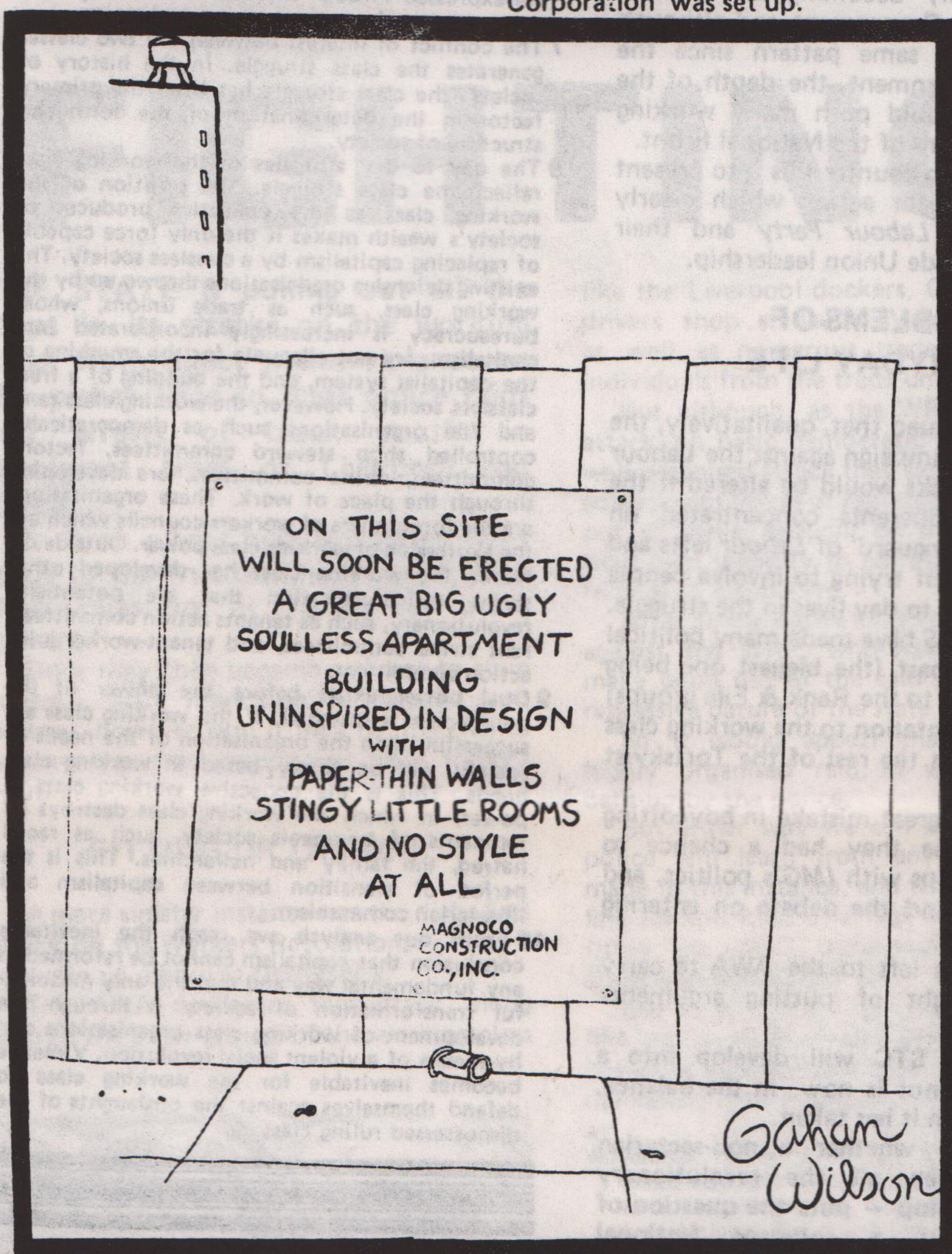
As a result, Bryants became giant sub-contractors, sub-contracting out to hundreds of small and shady bosses who employed almost entirely lump labour.

Bryants grew fat on over-priced tenders and the Town Hall officials developed large bank accounts.

After years of local pressure, some prominent members of Birmingham Corporation, including the City Chief Architect are now being brought to account,

prosperous West Midlands conurbation.

In order for the bureaucrats to have absolute power to push forward their disgusting plans, regardless of the protests of the uprooted city dwellers and the indigenous populace, a 'Development Corporation' was set up.



but many have slipped through a deliberately wide meshed net.

## MEANWHILE...

Meanwhile, a dumping ground for the dispossessed Birmingham workers and their families was being found 40 miles away in Telford.

The Telford site was chosen because being a long-decayed industrial area it had a large amount of derelict land.

Moreover, wage levels in the Telford area were considerably lower than in the

New town development corporations are in no way responsible to anybody except the bureaucrats of the Department of the Environment.

It was perhaps not a coincidence that the development corporation's first chairman was Sir Frank Price, formerly Alderman Price, leader of Birmingham Council, who left Birmingham shortly before the campaign against official corruption began.

Not surprisingly, Telford Development Corporation turned out to be a hot-bed of corruption and nepotism.

Armed with their almost unlimited

planning and compulsory purchase powers (far greater than any local council), the Corporation proceeded to build some of the highest density low rise housing in the country.

The pattern of jobs going to firms which put in high tenders for poor quality work was repeated.

Sub-contractors employed thousands of lump building workers. The extent of jerry building was unprecedented.

On the Woodside estate, a hundred yard retaining wall collapsed of its own accord, leaks appeared in roofs and windows won't open.

Shifting ground on the Sutton Hill estate has caused huge wall cracks in many houses.

The ultimate irony was that the Sutton Hill estate, self-evidently an absolute slum, was given a National Design award!

It was the mass employment of lump labour in Telford which led to the area receiving considerable attention from flying pickets of organised building workers during the 1972 strike.

Ruling class action against the picket leaders, in the form of conspiracy charges, led to the imprisonment of the 'Shrewsbury 3' on the 'evidence' of Telford lump workers.

## ATTRACTIONS

Attracted by the low wages, some small manufacturing firms have come to Telford. They include an aluminium plant which was rejected by Halesowen Council as unsuitable because of danger to health.

The Development Corporation has sited it a few hundred yards from the main shopping centre.

The deepening economic crisis has meant that many of these small fly-by-night concerns are closing down and unemployment is growing in Telford.

There is a considerable danger that the modern function of new towns will be to provide ghettos of unemployment small enough for any working class militancy to be controlled.

New town workers must fight closures with occupations and build rank and file links both with the more powerful sections of the working class in the cities and big industrial areas and with local tenants and community groups.

John Morgan



## PUBLICATIONS

**DIRECT ACTION.** Paper of the Syndicalist Workers Federation. No. 9 contains articles on the Danish organisation 'Workers Solidarity', the Army, and the Samuel Heap Bleaching and Dyeing Mill in Rochdale, among others. 5p + 6½p post from Direct Action, c/o Grassroots, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester 13.

**SUBVERSITY.** The paper of students in the Anarchist Workers Association. Send a stamped addressed envelope for a sample copy. No more bundles of this issue as they are almost all gone. Subversity, 13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside.

**FRONT LIBERTAIRE.** Paper of the Organisation Revolutionnaire Anarchiste. Send £2 for 12 issues to:- Front Libertaire, 33 rue des Vignoles, Paris 75020, France.

## GAY LEFT

c/o 36A Craven Road, London W2

THIS new magazine is a socialist journal put out by a collective of gay men. The first issue discusses several topics which are of interest to anarchists who are involved in the class struggle as well as to gays.

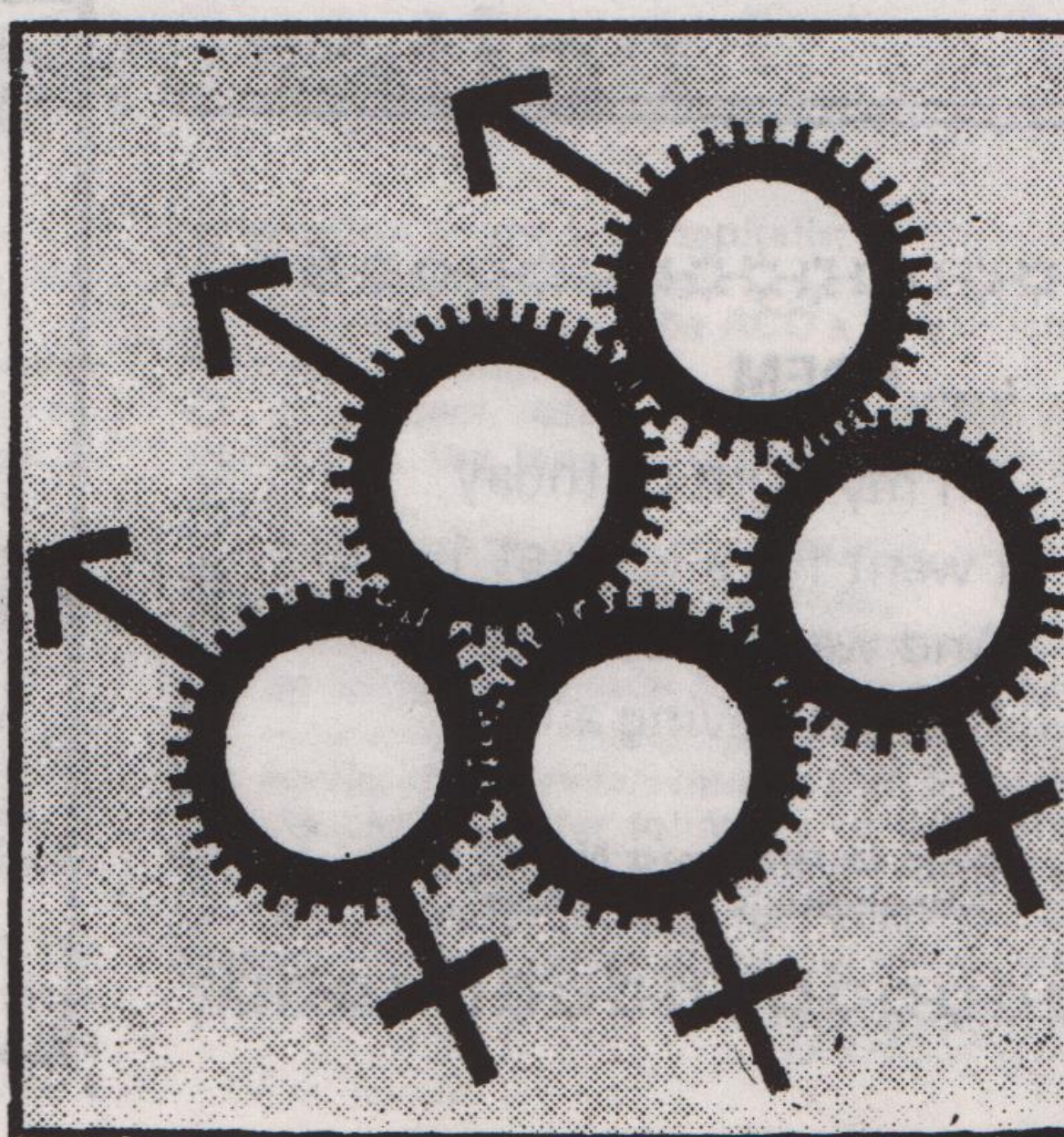
Amongst the articles is *The Case of John Warburton* by Nigel Young which outlines the troubles of a gay teacher who was victimised for talking about homosexuality to classfufs of taunting teenagers, and which was the first time that a group of gays organised themselves as gays to fight the twin bureaucracies of employer and union.

Bob Cant's article *Gays and the Trade Union Movement* discusses the experience of gays who are fighting for recognition of their oppression within the trade unions, and rank and file caucuses and suggests the building of gay groups within particular unions. This article makes interesting reading for all who are fighting for rank and file power within the trade union movement.

Single copies can be had from the address above for 30p (40p by post).

R.M.

Ireland. Libertarian communists in Ireland contact Alan MacSimoin, 4 Ard Lui Park, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland, with a view to forming an organisation.



THE 1976 'Big Red Diary' (Pluto Press, £1) is devoted to women through history and womens' rights.

It contains information on women workers in Britain, equal pay, womens' rights at work, health and safety at work, nurseries, housing, pensions and supplementary benefits - all from the woman's point of view.

The authors' knowledge of anarchism, however, as a current within the womens' movement, and the working class movement generally, is shown to be slight when, in the part devoted to Emma Goldman, we find her described as a "spokesman (sic) for the Confederacion Anarquista Iberica", a confusion of the FAI (Iberian Anarchist Federation) with the CNT (National Confederation of Labour).

At £1 it makes an expensive, but interesting, Xmas present, whilst as a diary difficult to use unless you write in red all the time yet it seems a shame to spoil it.

R.M.

group stamp