

# Solidarity Bulletin

No. 3 Spring '94

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## HEALTH and SAFETY: BOSSES AND POLITICIANS TO KILL FOR PROFIT?

**Within** the year the government is to abolish the Health And Safety At Work Act, VDU regulations and a number of other controls that offer protection to us at work, including controls on toxic chemicals. All these will be replaced with, at best vague and ineffective 'guidelines', at worst - nothing.

These attacks on us in the workplace will affect workers in industry. Here is some of what is being proposed:

- \* Limits on the weights we can be made to carry or lift will disappear.
- \* Workplace safety reps will lose the right to stop unsafe practices.
- \* Temporary workers will no longer get protective clothing but have to find it themselves.
- \* Companies will set their own safety standards.
- \* VDU (computer screen) regulations will go, so will users' rights to eye tests and spectacles from employers.
- \* Controls on the dumping and use at work of toxic chemicals (which aren't properly enforced anyhow), will be reduced to next-to-nothing.
- \* Minimum and maximum workplace temperature controls to be scrapped.

**EVERY YEAR 700 ARE KILLED, AND 200,000 INJURED AT WORK - THE VAST MAJORITY DUE TO BOSS'S NEGLIGENCE.**

Even now, before the government has scrapped the health and safety laws, protection for us at work is disappearing.

\* The government funded Health & Safety Executive is telling local authorities to take a "softly, softly" approach to enforcing regulations.

\* New European health and safety laws are already being dodged, the UK has a "get-out clause" for small and medium sized business', where the highest proportion of deaths and injuries occur.

\* The government is refusing to introduce new EC fire safety regulations for workplaces, due in last year. And all grants for the training of workplace safety reps will disappear in 1995.

\* In the construction industry, where the highest amount of deaths and injury occur, countless firms have always ignored health and safety regulations. Unlike office workers, construction workers who suffer Repetitive Strain Injury have always been regarded as less important.

**What are all these changes going to result in? Who will benefit?**

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### Inside:

- \* **WHAT'S A JOPLAN?**
  - \* **TRADE UNIONISM IN CRISIS** - conference report.
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  - \* **STRIKING** - nothing to fear.
  - \* **SOLIDARITY CENTRE UPDATE.**
- plus news, reviews, events and more...

*the bulletin of Norwich Solidarity Centre*



# NORWICH Solidarity Centre

Room 13, Muspole Workshops, Muspole Street, (off Duke Street), Norwich.

Postal address: PO Box 73, Norwich. NR3 1QD.

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to issue 3 of the Solidarity Bulletin, the bulletin of Norwich Solidarity Centre. There's a wide variety of articles in this issue - an update on centre activities, a report from the recent "Trade Unionism In Crisis" conference, information on the threats to health and safety legislation, and plenty more news and views.

Since active solidarity is what we're about, the centre has recently donated money to workers at Middlebrook Mushrooms in Yorkshire (owned by Booker plc) who were sacked for refusing to accept a pay cut.

And in the spirit of internationalism, we've sent money to help the newly formed Nigerian Awareness League, an organisation similar in aims to our own, who recently suffered the arrest and detention of 4 of its members by the military in Nigeria. Anarcho-syndicalist organisations from New York to Australia joined in the protest against this, and to raise money for legal costs and to support their families. Over \$2000 has been raised so far.

We have also supported a group of Peruvian ex-miners, who are stuck in the middle of a labour dispute with no income. Currently begging to survive, they plan to set up a small self-managed restaurant to support themselves, and are now on the way to being able to do so.

Active solidarity such as this is essential, not only for practical reasons, but also to break down barriers which keep us divided instead of united. We should remember this, and also remember that there's more of us than there are of them - we've a world to win.

If you can take further copies of this bulletin to distribute to friends, or at work etc... please fill in the form below and return to PO Box 73, Norwich NR3 1QD

Please send another \_\_\_\_\_ copies each issue.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## SOLIDARITY CENTRE UPDATE

Norwich Solidarity Centre has been up and running for about two years. Along with workers' groups in a number of other cities, and the Transport, Education and Public Service Workers Networks, the Solidarity Centre promotes the principles of solidarity and direct control by the membership. We have no intellectuals or experts giving orders, decision making is on the grounds of full participation and discussion.

### DIRECT ACTION

We believe in direct action - change can be best brought about through collective action, not by petitions, or favours from those in power. Likewise we share the aim of replacing the present order of things - bosses living off our work, governments continually eroding freedom, environmental destruction, the world's wealth being hoarded by the rich - with direct workers' control of industry and community, on the basis of need not profit. From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs.

These are aims and principles which are far more desirable, and workable, than any of the countless schemes the various political parties dream up to distract us from the problems which we really need to address.

### NETWORKS

Up to now, the centre and its members have been busy supporting the industrial networks in their work, developing an anarcho-syndicalist alternative to the inadequacy of the trade unions and the Labour Party. This has included distribution of 1000's of network bulletins to various workplaces, and fundraising for the networks. This has paid off with growth in interest and membership of the networks.

Video showing and discussions are now being held regularly at the centre. Over the past year these have included video showings on the Liverpool Rent Strike in the 1970's and the recent program made about the Burnsall dispute. We've had a sacked railway worker speaking at the centre about his sacking (along with 3 others), and the crisis in the RMT (Rail, Maritime and Transport Union). We have also donated funds, when available (we're usually skint) to workers and communities in struggle.

We recently held an open day which allowed anyone interested to call into the Centre, meet some of the members and see what the Centre has to offer. Infamous Solidarity Centre socials which both raise money and entertain Centre supporters have included parties and barbeques, Solidarity Centre days out are on the cards for this year! **contd on page 3**

### REVISED OPENING TIMES:

Tues (first four of month) 7pm-9pm.

Sat (first of month) 12-4pm.



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We have an expanding library at the centre, and loads of reference material whether you need advice on health and safety at work, industrial law or how to deal with police interviews. We also have a wide selection of books for sale, and also badges, stickers and T-shirts. Centre members are involved in a wide variety of other activities such as anti-fascist work, and in the womens movement. We're a friendly bunch so feel free to call in or get in touch. You know it makes sense!

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## REVIEW: BLACK FLAG #203 Autumn'93 £1

**Black Flag** is back! After several years absence, the infamous anarchist paper is back. This time it's published as a quarterly magazine, glossy enough to impress any snobby relatives, and radical enough to keep the most uncompromising revolutionary happy.

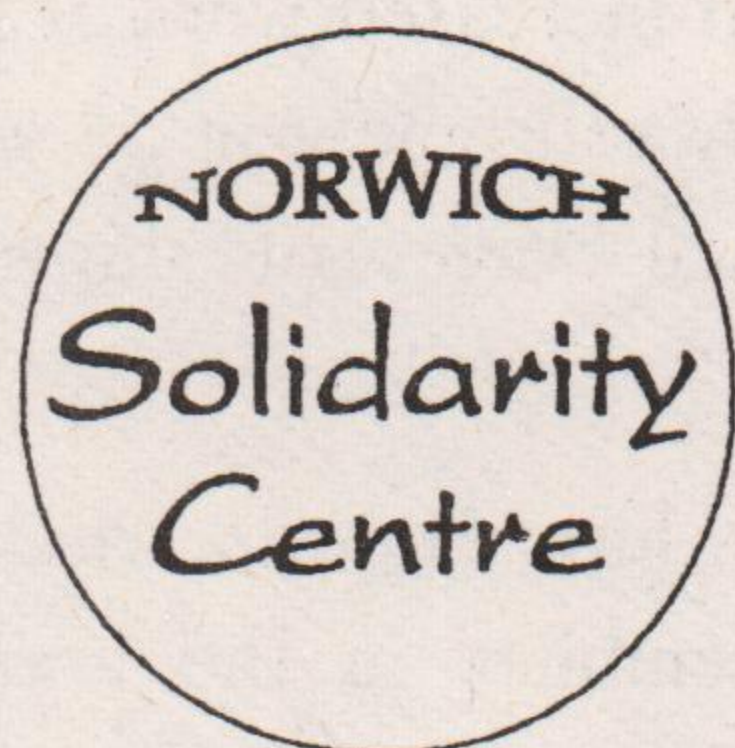
A new issue is underway as we go to print, but we still have copies of the first new-look Black Flag, sure to be a collectors item!

It contains articles on strikes, anti-fascism, anarchist history, Ireland, vigilantism, sex and sexuality, news from Nigeria plus the regular anarcho-quiz! No subject is too controversial for the Black Flag collective, it's good to see them back again, we wish them well and recommend that all our readers subscribe immediately!

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**BADGES:** Solidarity Centre badges in smart red and black are now available in two sizes, 25p small and 35p large. (Shown actual size). Please include an SAE with your order, or call in to the centre.

Centre members get a free badge and matching membership card on joining! Ask us about details of membership.



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The government has set up a "Health and Safety Commission" to develop these attacks on all working people. The names of some of those on its working groups and how much they've given the Conservative Party gives a fair amount away:

Managing director of McAlpine - donated £95,000 since 1979,

Chairman of BOVIS - £670,000 since 1984,

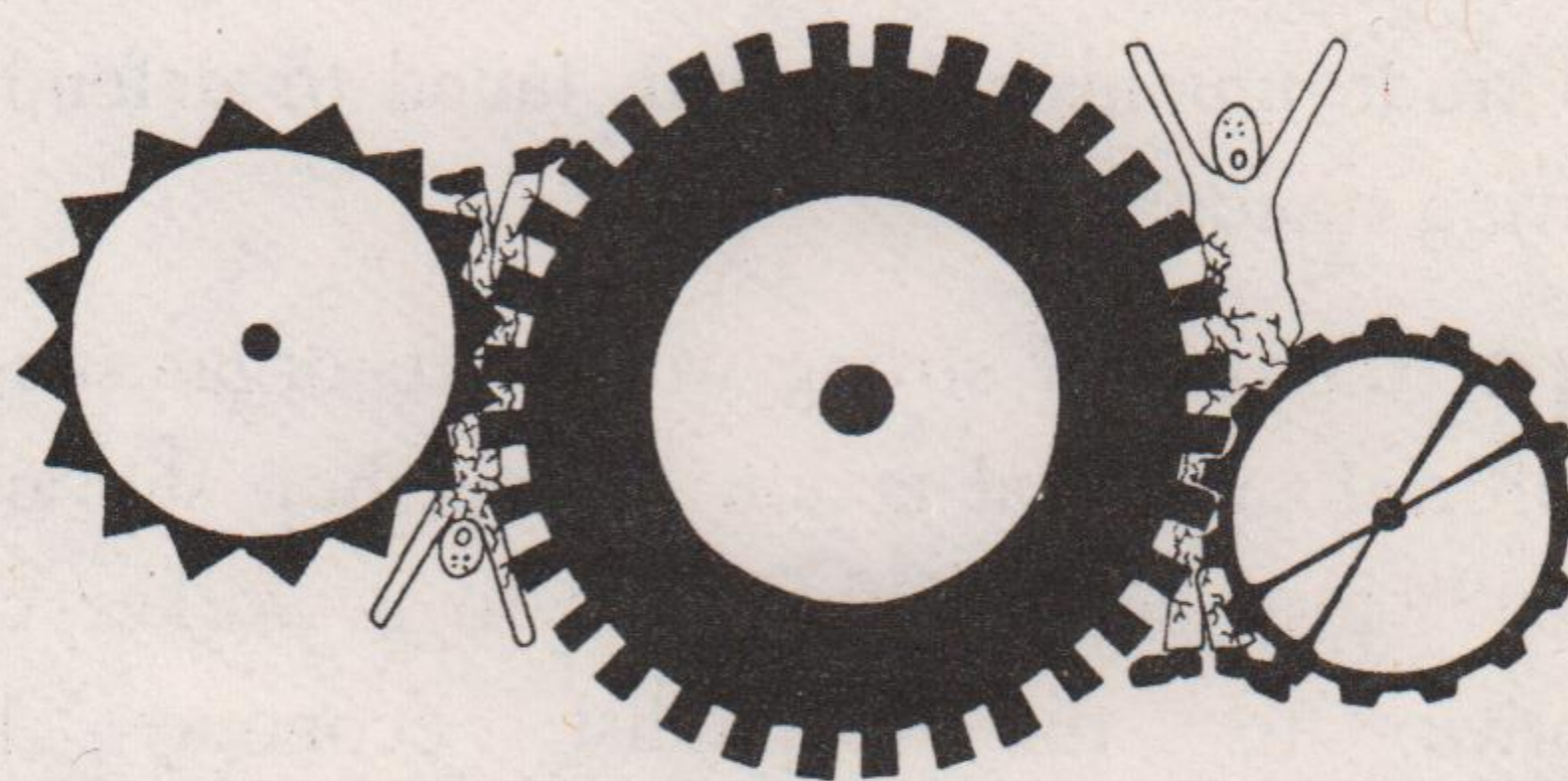
Director of Swire & Sons - £179,000 since 1979,

General manager of Slough Estates - £251,500 since 1979,

Director of GEC - £100,000,

Managing director of Whitbread - £241,670 since 1988.

The government has always been funded by its boss pals in big business. Their relationship with government has always been one where investors and controllers side with the bosses, and PR/professional con-men side with the politicians. Now is the time when with profits getting slimmer for the bosses, they are calling in favours - at the expense of **OUR LIVES AND SAFETY**.



Sadly, but true to form, during the past year the TUC and the trade unions have also been represented on the Health and Safety Commission, but has failed to even come up with a squeak of protest. And even when and if it does it will be wasting its breath. The TUC and unions' long-held policies of being law-abiding, ineffectual and full of wind long ago taught us not waste any hope in them.

Taking the fight to the bosses will be the only way to resist their parasitic plans. As they are the health and safety laws are abysmally inadequate - ask anybody who has spent years working with computers, on building sites, the emergency services who pick up the pieces...

In the coming weeks it will be important to look very carefully at where your employer will be putting you at risk for more of the profits we never see. But more important still is that, with the removal of inadequate legal protection, we strengthen and build workplace organisation that can force the bosses to compensate regardless of what senile judges say, to provide the protective clothing and equipment we believe necessary, to listen to us when we stop the job in emergencies or to stop injury.

Norwich Solidarity Centre will shortly have workplace leaflets with further information on the threats to health and safety available for bulk distribution. Call in to help distribute. A public meeting and campaign launch dates are yet to be finalised. Please get in touch.



# "TRADE UNIONISM IN CRISIS" CONFERENCE

**Norwich Solidarity Centre** members attended this conference on the decline of trade unions, and the need to build a political and industrial alternative to the shambles which is the present labour movement. The conference was attended by a large number of shop stewards and workers from a wide variety of unionised and non-unionised industries. It produced a high level of debate, and many suggestions on how to go about organising a fightback.

## FAILURE OF TRADE UNIONISM

After registration we heard from Tony Crowther, one of the Manchester Piccadilly train guards sacked for Trade Union activities, on the reasons for the decline of the "labour movement". Tony explained how the two main currents in British trade unionism had both failed to defend working class living standards.

The first tradition of strong workplace organisation based on unofficial industrial action led by shop stewards failed because it lost sight of the need to a worker controlled alternative to the capitalist economy becoming inward-looking and limiting itself to wage militancy. Social democracy, the second tradition, of electing Labour MPs to parliament to work with national trade union leaders for social peace and managed industrial relations failed because it depended on the Keynesian economic plan to manage demand and thus stabilise capitalist economies. When the basic underlying weakness of the British economy became clear in the early 1970's, the TUC had no answers beyond pleading with employers to allow them to negotiate redundancies/wage cuts rather than having them imposed.

## NEW FORMS OF WORKERS ORGANISATION

With this historical failure and the fundamental changes which have taken place within the economy during the last 20 years - the decline of many traditional industries and the existence of high unemployment, more casualised labour and the resulting attacks on workers' wages, conditions and ability to organise - Tony considered that new methods of organisation were necessary. Workers' organisation is needed to defend us against all the attacks we face, whether in the workplace or as in the case of the poll tax, more indirect taxation such as VAT on fuel or environmental problems. Such workers' organisations will need to be based as much on locality or community, as the workplace. They

would also need to take responsibility for political actions, instead of relying on professional liars in parliament to "look after the workers' interests". The only type of workers' organisation which is capable of defending our class against a bankrupt capitalist system is one that would scrap it. Revolutionary unions or anarcho-syndicalism is that alternative.

The next speaker enlarged on the question of how revolutionary unions operate. Martin, a Lambeth council worker, explained that such unions follow two basic principles; direct democracy - the members of the union should control all decision-making and be able to recall any delegate who breaks their mandate, and direct action - a workers' organisation lives or dies on its ability to promote class solidarity and a culture of resistance. Education is a crucial role for a revolutionary union to prepare organised workers for the day when they take control of society and run it for need not profit. This is what anarcho syndicalists mean by "building a new world in the shell of the old".

## WORKERS AND COMMUNITY CONTROL

Without doubt the third speaker was the star of the day, we welcomed Pepe Gomez, a shipyard worker from Puerto Real in south-western Spain and a militant of the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist union, the CNT. Pepe spoke firstly on the principles of the CNT and the 1988 strike in his shipyard which was illustrated with a slide show. The conference was extremely impressed by the determination and ingenuity of the strikers who organised entire shipyard communities in support of the strike through mass assemblies of workers and their families in the towns, villages and communities around the docks. The tactics they employed varied from sabotage of road, rail and telephone links, to armed occupation of the ships in the dry dock. When the smoke cleared from the barricades of burning tyres around the shipyard, the strikers were left with a remarkable victory which has assured increased work at the yard, a job rotation scheme and early retirement at 55 with pensions linked 100% to the actual wages of shipyard workers.

Since then other disputes and issues have been interlinked with the continuation of mass assemblies in the area - struggles around education, health, cultural issues, opposition to the building of a new golf course, local tax increases, the privatisation of a cemetery and numerous environmental issues... All showing that anarcho-syndicalism is about more than just what goes on at work. Unlike the

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reformist trade unions' and political parties' emphasis on separating the economic, social and political issues that affect us, in order that we remain powerless over our own lives, the CNT is promoting an active democracy that involves all in addressing their problems directly. Only 2 weeks before the conference, 6,000 people took part in one town assembly.

Rather than town councillors making decisions for people, the mass assemblies are taking decision-making back to local estates and communities. The mass workers' assemblies during the strike at the shipyard have also continued, in contrast to the ways of reformist unions in concentrating decision-making in the hands of a few. (A booklet on the CNT in Puerto Real, going into greater detail will appear early 1994).

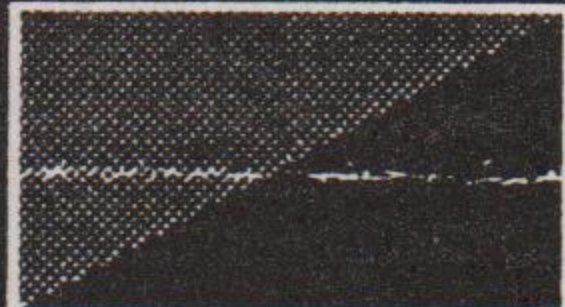
After a lively session of questions from the floor, the conference broke up into workshops to discuss how we can take these lessons and apply them in our own industries. Norwich Solidarity Centre also hosted a workshop on building local centres.

Substantial agreement as to the problems we face in different industries; sub-contracting/CCT, individual contracts and the destruction of pay rates and conditions of employment, was echoed by the solutions which industrial networks can provide; good and accurate information to workers about management attacks, the need to develop links between industrial networks in local areas, the need to be flexible and work with other militant workers on immediate campaigns and to provide realistic and effective courses of action for our supporters and new members.

The conference was felt to be a great success by all who attended. After some concluding remarks from the Chair for the day, we reconvened in the bar and indulged in further discussion and some well-deserved liquid refreshment. Thanks must go to the organisers of the day who did a flawless job, we went away informed and greatly encouraged for the struggles to come.

**OUR POWER  
LIES IN  
REVOLUTIONARY  
UNIONISM**

**DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT**  
ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS  
PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15



## STRIKING - NOTHING TO FEAR

So it is possible for workers to break the dreaded "anti-union laws" and get away with it. This much emerges from a recent study which looked at examples of industrial action across 25 public and private sector unions.

The survey showed that 25% of those who replied had received some form of threat by employers to use the law over industrial action, usually in the area of strike ballots. However, legal steps were taken in less than 7% of these cases. Again 35% of union negotiators said they had experienced threats to dismiss workers who "breached their employment contracts" by taking industrial action - but only a quarter of these reported cases where the threats had actually been carried out.

Whether or not workers actually had been breaking the law (and employers were often on shaky ground legally when making these threats) the point is that bosses themselves are usually reluctant to use such a heavy handed weapon when dealing with industrial disputes.

### LEGAL THREATS

What's more, it seems legal threats carried little weight with strikers; while 21% said the threats had influenced them "a lot", 35% said they had affected them "not at all". The report comments: "it is noticeable that where steps were taken to start legal proceedings, this was by no means seen to have undermined industrial action."

Those already involved in struggle then aren't put off too much by the dread of legal proceedings. Unfortunately this isn't always the case with those without direct experience. "The law" has, in the 13 years or so of its existence, become a kind of ogre with fabled powers far beyond its actual scope. Many workers think it's illegal to go on strike at all.

### THE LAW IS A BLUFF

Though the government hasn't yet done that to us - just hedged strike action around with so many restrictions and qualifications that it's becoming that way - the fear itself is a potent deterrent. As the report puts it, "Legal proceedings...are still clearly the exception. But the impact of the law is much wider. The evidence was that by and large unions had sought to adapt their practices to legal requirements."

The law itself is no more than a gigantic bluff - one that can be called the moment we've got the sense to realise there's a whole lot more of us than there are of them. Until someone somewhere starts calling that bluff lost disputes and sacked workers will be the norm.

*The report this article is based on is available for reference at the centre.*



## TRANSPORT WORKER NETWORK REPORT

The last three years have seen a steady increase in members and contacts within the bus and rail sectors, now spanning dozens of towns and counties across England. This has been achieved by consistent distribution of leaflets and bulletins (7 to date) - in total 30-40,000.

These have focused on the ongoing process of privatisation of British Rail, deregulation of buses in London, promoting giant cross-industry strike action to defend our common interests as workers. Equally as importantly, we promote worker-controlled organisation as an alternative to the continuous directionless drift of the leaderships of the TGWU, and RMT, which vary from the ostrich-like, to outright collaboration with management attacks.

This year following a number of open meetings, the Transport Workers Network is starting to develop local industrial branches, which are promising to offer more than just criticism and theory, but put anarcho-syndicalism into practice in our workplaces.

Contact address: TWN, PO Box 73, Norwich. NR3

## EDUCATION WORKERS NETWORK REPORT

The EWN has slowly been consolidating its membership, especially as a result of the "Trade Unionism in Crisis" London meeting on October 30th last year and similar meetings in Newcastle and Bristol. We hope to bring out an introductory pamphlet soon, addressing the major issues at stake in education and a strategy on how to fight for our interests.

Contact address: EWN, PO Box 29, SWPDO, Manchester, M15 5HW.

## PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS NETWORK REPORT

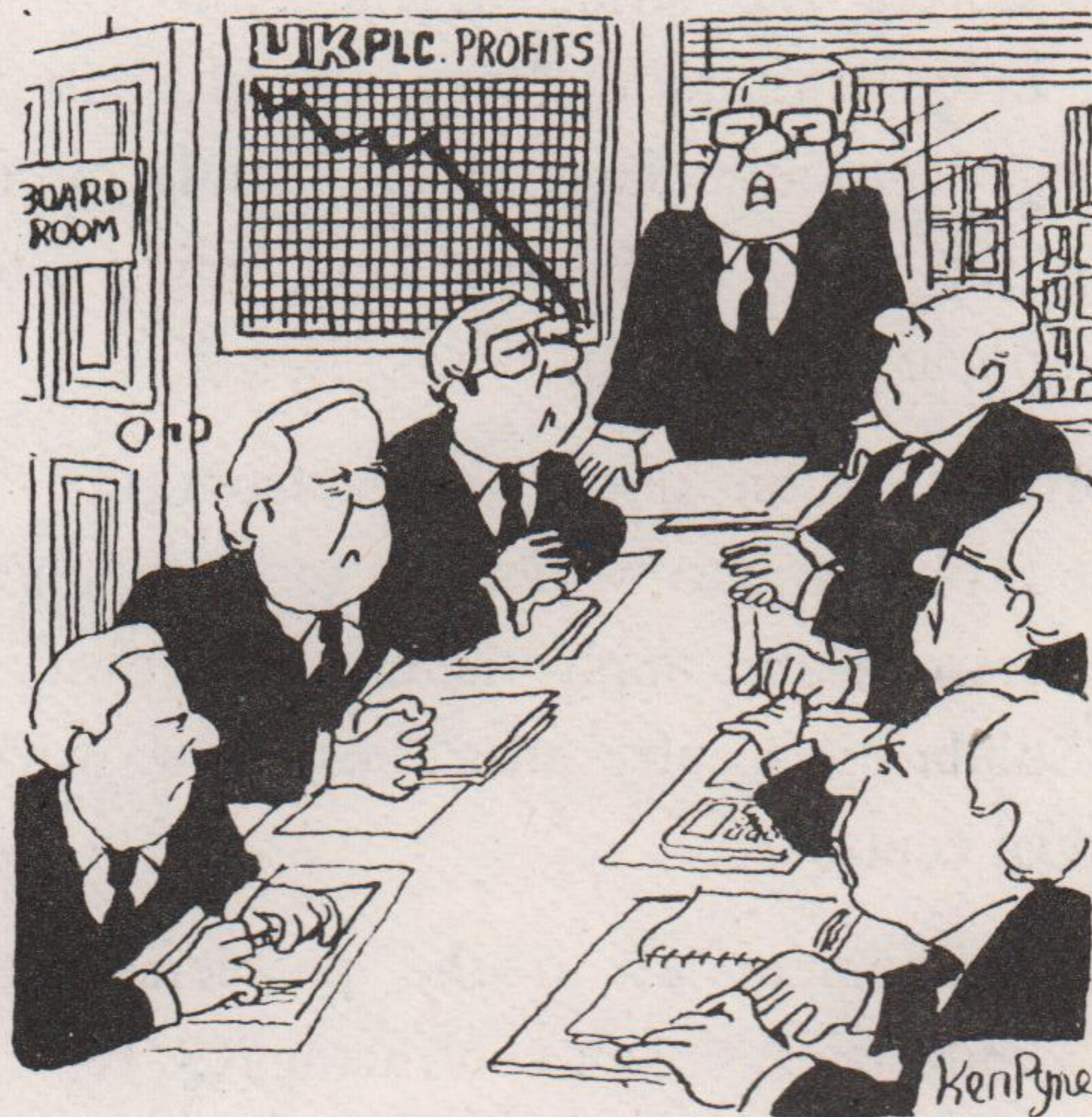
Over the last few months the network has been slowly expanding and keeping up its distribution of "Network", our paper of propaganda, discussion, and practical hints and tips for beating the bosses! Issue four of "Network" is to come out in late March.

The Network has also been talking to the other industrial networks and the national anarcho-syndicalist organisation the Direct Action Movement with a view to amalgamating and forming a new national federation of industrial networks and local groups. Things are looking up!

Contact address: PSWN, PO Box 1681, London. N8 7LE.

## "SCROOGE OF THE YEAR" IN NORWICH.

The Low Pay Unit named Norwich businessman Robert Pugin "Scrooge of the Year" last year for allegedly seeking to employ a full-time clerical worker for the miserly wage of £50 per week. Mr Pugin's company "Aromatica" pays its homeworkers 7p per item, reckoned by the LPU to be equivalent to an hourly rate of between 28p and 42p.



*'Gentlemen, there's only one thing for it - we'll have to give ourselves a massive pay rise'*

According to Mr Pugin, he was advised by Norwich Careers Service when seeking a young person for the clerical job, and it was they who suggested £50 per week as a wage! He eventually employed a 17 year-old on £65 per week, which is apparently £5 a week more than he pays himself out of the business (expected turnover this year £95,000). Of course there is no mention of the hidden perks of being in business - writing off bills, cars, petrol, meals etc. against expenses, let alone VAT.

When informed that he was named "Scrooge of the Year" Pugin said he was considering legal action over what he sees as a falsehood and went on to claim that his reason for paying such appalling wages is "competing with 'a bowl of rice a day' products which are produced in their billions."

This is a pathetic and convenient excuse which we are seeing more and more often. Setting workers in this country up against workers in the third world, laying the blame on the poorest who work for a bowl of rice or starve. If you can't afford to pay "decent" wages you shouldn't be in business.

On 16th December last year the Low Pay Unit published a report which showed that 37% of workers in Britain earned less than the Council of Europe's decency threshold wage of £5.75 an hour. In my experience 100% of the jobs advertised in the jobcentre here over the last five months fall way below this mark. The average is £3 per hour.



# TRADE UNIONISM: CHANGE OR BUST?

*This article was pinched and adapted from Transport Worker #6.*

The TUC strategy of "do nothing now and pray for a Labour government" has led us to the present situation of an enfeebled trade union movement which accepts that there is no alternative to a capitalist system and whose strategy is to wait for the economic crisis to sort itself out. As workers we must realise that the so-called "golden era" of the post-war boom with full employment has gone for good and is never likely to return. We are now returning to what has been the normal state of affairs for capitalism for the previous 200 years with a mass pool of unemployment; widespread poverty and low pay. With these massive problems facing working class people, the TUC and the Labour Party have got neither a clue nor a future.

Unable to pose an alternative to the present crisis, the leaders of the trade unions are turning in on themselves, fighting over who controls a Labour Party that is so bankrupt of ideas that the only hope it holds out for working people is a paler shade of Tory policies. With all the problems facing us, it is utterly scandalous that trade union leaders can find little better to do than argue over how many votes they will wield at the Labour Party conference.

As if this is not bad enough, behind the scenes we have the T&G and GMB leaders using the debate to jockey for position as to who is going to lead a new super-union. This is a reflection of a trade union movement that is totally out of touch with the realities faced by ordinary members.

Working class organisation was built through the struggle and sacrifices of millions of ordinary people against a vicious capitalist system. Those early militants knew that the only way forward was to smash capitalism and that the only way to do it was to take control of society and end wage-slavery forever. This is a lesson that must be re-learned and it must be clear by now that the shambles that is the TUC and Labour Party are not about to mount that challenge.

To meet this situation, workers must begin to form organisations that are both capable of defending and improving our day to day living conditions and in the long term going on the offensive against capitalism. We believe that anarchosyndicalism, through its use of revolutionary unions based on strong workplace and community organisation and a strategy of workers' control, is the way forward.

As part of the process of building such organisations, Norwich Solidarity Centre, similar groups in many other towns and cities, and the transport, education and public

service networks, are currently discussing the benefits of federating to form a single organisation to revitalise workers' organisation in the British Isles.

## WHAT'S A JOBPLAN?

When it's been your privilege to draw the dole for a year, the local jolly jobcentre will nowadays treat you to a week of "Jobplan".

Quite why is not defined, but I joined a small group of fellow sufferers last year. It is one question we asked each other. The course organisers said it was because a politician had been asked in Parliament "What is the government doing about the long-term unemployed?" He answered: "An initiative is being prepared." So they had to do something, however ineffective.

My suspicion was that the 4 1/2 days course and half day a fortnight later was calculated to make life very difficult for any moonlighters. Others jumped to the obvious conclusion that we were being guided towards jobs with crap wages (the organisers denied that they were pushing anyone, they didn't). We were all aware that employment was further away than mere effort on our parts.

The organisers were almost jumpy at first that some of us would display "attitude problems" but relaxed after we'd 'negotiated' an early end to the day for a shorter lunchtime and to treat each other with respect. My suggestion that we concentrated on things we reckoned were more important was carefully sidelined. It was agonisingly slow! Never obviously patronising, it became close to it often. The useful advice could have fitted two days, no trouble. If you've been to jobclub it's much the same minus the free postage and telephone.

We all got individual advice and yards of computer printout of information. I correctly got diagnosed as being capable of a variety of jobs (some would never have occurred to me) and I spent a few days showing willing chasing after plum jobs that are rarely vacant and always finding droves of applicants. No effort was made to stifle argument, it was the best way to make the week tolerable for us all. I lost no opportunity to push the ideas that seemed relevant ... solidarity, union organisation, reduced working week, overtime avoidance, experience of outwitting bosses, etc.

There's a bit of money in it ... travelling expenses. Worth milking as hard as possible ... prepare your case. The fortnight later saw none of us hired, everyone with a list of fool's errands partially done and one bright moonlighter had used the course to launder his operation.

We said "see you next year" but by then it will be sure that we have an attitude problem and will be on "Restart". For most of us it's hard to evade the course, it does offer a chance to take better ideas to a few of our fellow victims.



NORWICH

# Solidarity Centre

## VIDEO SHOWINGS AT THE CENTRE

Tues 22nd March, 7.30pm.

### NOAM CHOMSKY: THE MANUFACTURE OF CONSENT

Noam Chomsky is a U.S. libertarian, activist and professor of linguistics, he has written numerous books and articles critical of capitalism, particularly the American brand. This video showing consists of excerpts of interviews from the past few years. He discusses the U.S. government's foreign policy for economic supremacy at any price - be it by the maintenance of poverty in the 'third world' or by financing foreign armies to protect what are called 'American interests'.

Chomsky also shows how the media in the 'free world' serves the interests of the state and corporate power, preventing anyone from questioning the state's actions. Manufacturing consent indeed.

Tues 26th April, 7.30pm.

### INCIDENT AT OGLALA.

On a hot June morning in 1975, a shoot-out between FBI agents and native American Indians erupted on a reservation near Wounded Knee in South Dakota. Two FBI agents and one indian died. Eventually four indians, all members of the American Indian Movement (AIM), were indicted on murder charges. One of them, Leonard Peltier, is still serving two consecutive life sentences. How much did this have to do with FBI-backed goons who in 4 years killed over 200 residents, and the multinational companies' desperate drive for the mineral rich reservation?

Tues 24th May, 7.30pm.

### SPAIN 1936-7 : SOCIAL REVOLUTION...

Has there ever been a workers' revolution, made not by would-be dictators or marxist tricksters, but by millions of ordinary workers? Men and women, in industry agriculture and at home? For their communities and the benefit of all? A world without bosses?..

How did it happen? How did they create a society more just, free and democratic than any today?

## REVIEW: THE FREE - M. Gilliland

*"I seen all this coming for a long, long time. I seen us reduced to begging and I seen them destroying the houses and I seen the prisons filled up to bursting. I have seen the youth, pulling at their bonds and longing to be free."*

There's one thing Linda knows about, and that's longing to be free. Everywhere she turns she is hemmed in: by her teachers, by her Dad, by everyone who labels her a 'bad girl' But when she floors Sister Bernadette with a right hook, things really start to change....

This is Linda's story, along with that of Barney, Macker and thousands of others. They are 'the Free', spreading their Co-ops and Free Unions across the Country. This book charts their rise and their eventual fate in a stunning tale of love and longing, anger and rebellion. And along the way it gives a glimpse of the brilliant new world waiting to be built on the ashes of old.

Available from Norwich Solidarity Centre for £3.

**REVISED OPENING TIMES:** As of March '94 we will be open Tuesday evenings 7pm - 9pm (first four of month) and the first Saturday of the month 12noon - 4pm. We will not be opening on Wednesdays for the present, to give us more time to get out of the centre and publicise our activities. We can open the centre at other times if groups or individuals wish to use it, please get in touch to arrange.

