

JOB SATISFACTION

ANARCHY

SSO

20p

ANARCHY 25

Anarchy, 29 Grosvenor Avenue, London N5, England. 01-359 4794 before 7pm.

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The changing attitudes of the firemen.

2. THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE AND THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT.

What happened and what didn't & what was learned.

6. THE ANTI - STATE / ANTI - NUCLEAR MOVEMENT.

After we've dismantled the State we will inherit nuclear waste, lethal for 25,000 years.

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The human race.



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Remember Anarchy is only as good as the material and feedback we receive.

Who said this?

1. "A general prohibition of child labour is incompatible with the existence of large-scale industry, and hence an empty pious wish."

2. "The work-ethic holds that labour is good in itself, that a man or a woman becomes a better person by the act of working. The work-ethic of the American people is alive and well on this, Labour day, 1971."

3. "Labour, obligatory for the whole country, compulsory for every worker, is the basis of Socialism."

4. "Work is freedom."

5. "Six days shalt thou labour."

6. "Hi. ho, hi ho, it's off to work we go!"

Answers, - BACK PAGE.

PICKET - LINE POLITICS

The Firemen's strike showed in many ways the contradictions existing amongst workers in the Trade Union Movement today. For me it exemplified some of the most exciting and depressing possibilities for a libertarian workers' movement in this country.

Despite working in the same building as a branch of the Fire Prevention Service for almost a year, my first real contact with local firemen was when I interviewed them for a community paper a few days before the beginning of the strike.

Like most London Firemen, they had voted against strike action. They felt there should have been a ballot rather than a delegate conf., and anyway due to a London allowance, were rather better off than their colleagues in other parts of the country.

In some ways the interview was disappointing - there was very little criticism of their own Union bureaucracy, and their insistence on comparing themselves with the police led to an angry debate on Grunwicks. But what did come across, even at that early stage, was the frustration with endless enquiries and the fact that they expected the strike to be solid.

The strike

From the first day of the strike, when the picket-line went up outside our office, a few of us began to spend our lunchhours sitting round the brazier chatting with the strikers. Looking back it seems difficult to imagine how a small union, with no strike fund and little industrial muscle, could have hoped to take on the Govt. over the 10% and win. But at the time, morale amongst both the strikers and their supporters was high. Three things particularly struck me as exciting:

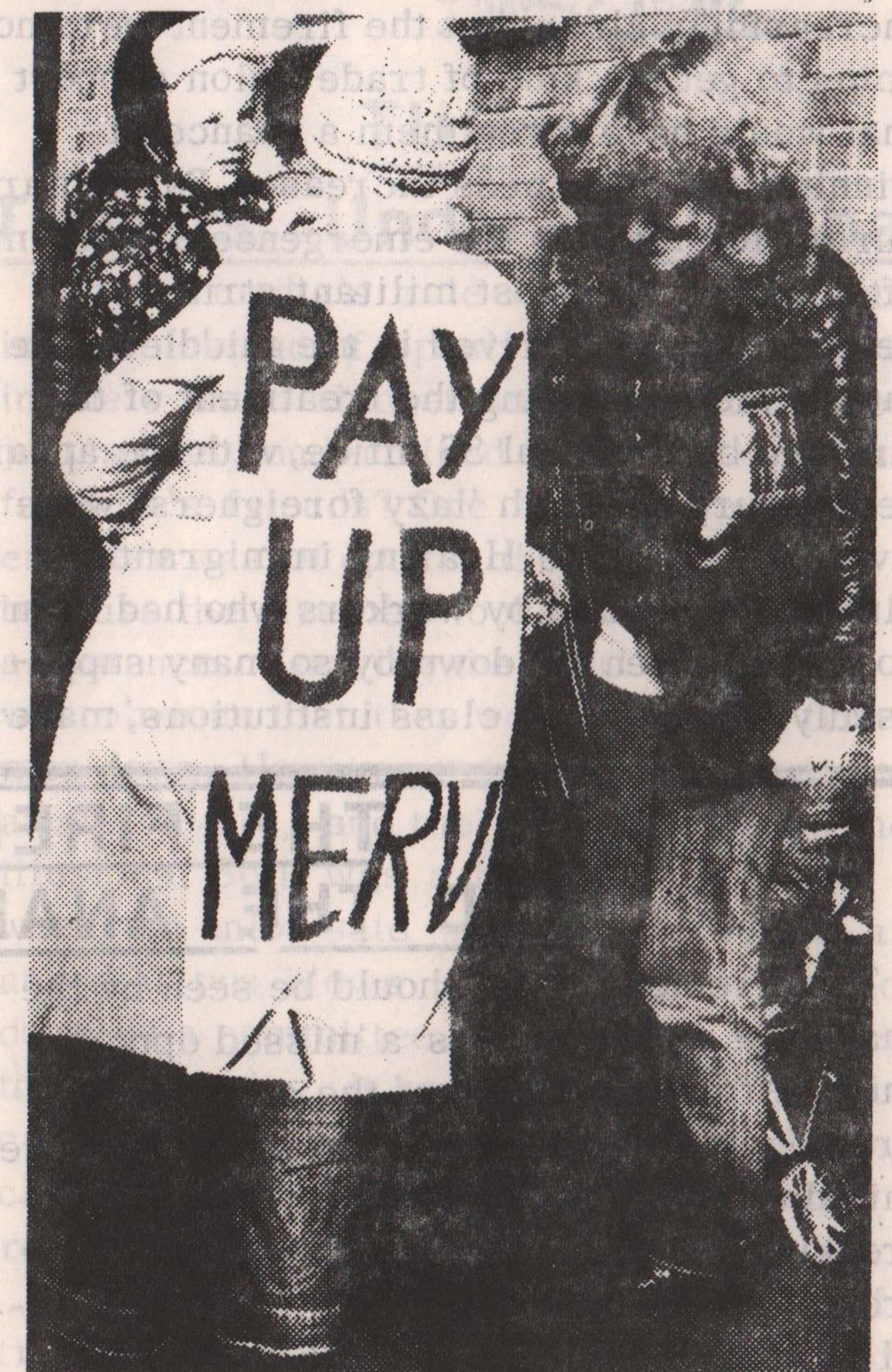
*the tremendous sense of co-operation and solidarity among themselves, presumably born of the long hours spent talking in the station and the way in which they have learned to trust each other by facing danger together.

*the individuality and ingenuity of publicity - each station having different slogans, petitions, leaflets etc., and the regularity with which new ones appeared. The Fire Brigades Union did virtually nothing in this respect.

*the support from the public, with all kinds of people coming forward to sign petitions, offer money, food, wood etc.

Initially all the firemen's anger was directed at NAFO-the officers' Union - with whose support they felt, possibly correctly, that the strike could have been brought to a successful end more quickly. They were particularly bitter that officers had agreed not to cross picket lines, which they thought was a cop-out as they were in effect getting paid to do nowt.

After a few days though, their anger spread - to the press, as they realised how it distorted the reality, to the TUC, and to the Social Security system. Their own Union also came in for a fair amount of hammering. I was at the station one day when the daily strike bulletin arrived.* For a start it was a day



No mistaking the message for the Home Secretary from wives in Romford.

old. Two thirds of it was taken up with a justification of the TUC's first refusal to back the strike. The Union leadership was arguing that the firemen were not to take this personally - the TUC wasn't against their claim, just against them threatening the 10% ! The remaining third was a curt warning about drunkenness on the picket line - as if anyone

*This was usually dumped by a Union official who took their collected money and left.

could afford it. The SWP's Rank & File Fireman was much better - filled with news and encouragement despite the stock leftist phrases.

The going gets harder

I don't know whether this was general, but in our local station the whole quality of the strike changed when the picketing was cut down to save fares. Each group of 4 or 5 was on duty only once every 8 days, with no contact beetween times. For instance, many firemen never heard about the local march until it was over - a classic example of how little the FBU did to help the strike.

As the strike wore on, and it became increasingly clear that the firemen were not going to get the kind of trade-union support that would have given them a chance of winning, the bitterness increased. Particularly hurtful for me was the emergence of racism, often among the most militant strikers. Several times I arrived in the middle of the latest tale comparing the treatment of the firemen by the local SS office, with the apparent luxury in which 'lazy foreigners' were living off the state. Hearing immigrants ultimately blamed by workers who had been so clearly been let down by so many supposedly pro-working class institutions, made

me realise how enormous the task of combatting racist attitudes really is.

Whether we have seen the end of industrial action in the fire service is hard to say. Some firemen think there will be trouble between FBU and NAFO members, especially when the troops moved out; and that either a settlement in excess of the 10% - e.g. for the powerworkers - or a conservative victory in the next Election, will precipitate another strike. Neither is it clear whether the firemen involved in the strike, have become more, or less militant as a result of their action. But they have certainly learned a lot about the Labour Govt., their Union, the TUC and the national media.

For the few anarchists actively involved in solidarity work with the strikers, it is difficult to see what more material support we could have given. The posters and stickers produced by the Anarchy group and others were certainly much appreciated. Perhaps we could have set up a support group earlier in the strike, and tried to involve a wide section of workers, much in the way that some of the Grunwicks support committees did. Or perhaps we should have spent more time simply talking to firemen on the picket line.

Babs.

THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE AND THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

The firemen's strike should be seen by the anarchist movement as a missed opportunity. At the beginning of the strike the firemen were very strong, in that they were united (only very few officers were strike-breaking, despite the impressions being created by the media), they were determined and they were confident. They also possessed huge public support, which is unusual these days, and this support seemed so strong that even the press and television were not attacking the firemen for their action. There were indeed some articles printed supporting the firemen in quite strong terms.

This situation presented us, I believe, with a unique opportunity. We could be putting out propaganda on an issue on which most people already agreed with us, and attacking a government on an issue where it did not have any significant support.

The consequences of the government losing the strike were enormous, it would have encouraged, almost forced, all other public sector unions to go for similar rises over 10%, and in the end might have brought the government down.

The economic theory behind the strike was simple. Without the fire brigade there would be mounting fire losses, borne by the insurance companies who would start mounting pressure on the government, as would more and more firms worried about their chances of a small fire completely gutting their premises causing a dislocation of business against which they are not insured. Against this the firemen's union does not have a strike fund, so the possibility of starving the men back to work was a real one.

But as is so often the case the economic base of the strike was not the determining

factor. The government victory was a propaganda one. I would almost say a brilliant one. Looking back through the press reports you will notice how little attention was paid after the first week to the rights and wrongs of the strike. This I am sure was due to the governments feeling that the firemen's case was an unusually strong one, and the more it was talked about even in the biased media, the more people would support the strikers. So what did the media talk about? Well firstly they talked about the effects of the strike. They were stating time and time again, the strike was having very little effect. If you tried to check this information you would have found that officially there were no figures available. The whole thing was very convenient. With no information being released (except that the number of fires was normal) it is difficult to challenge what they were saying and impossible to accuse them of deliberately lying, but with them repeating this day after day the assumption grows that it must be true and if it is true then the firemen might lose.

Then from half way through the first month the winning propaganda line was

Remember

MOORGATE

Our firemen will
never forget it.

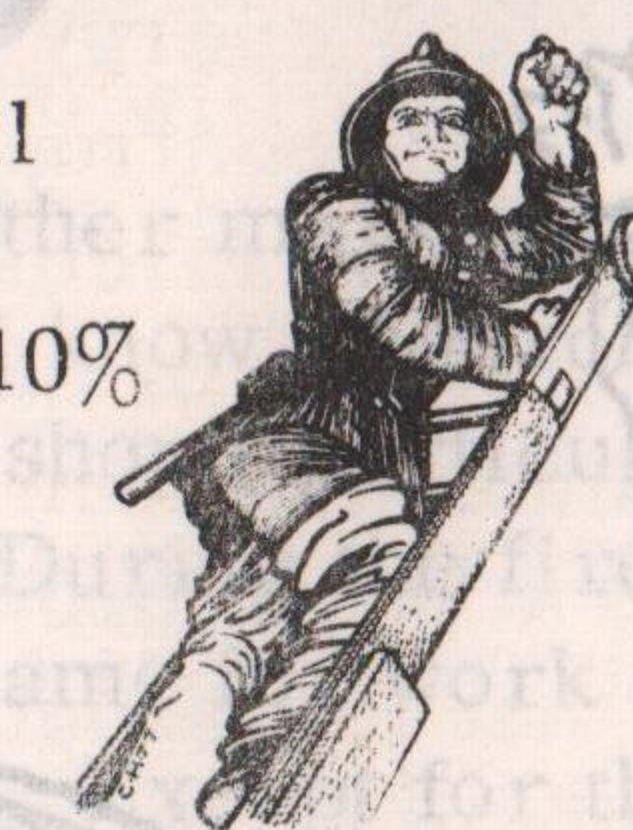
GIVE THEM THE MONEY
THEY EARN IT.

- One of our stickers

produced (I think first in the Financial Times, but I could easily be wrong). Like many of the best in propaganda it was a little thing that most people will have ignored, consciously that is. But very soon it was coming into more and more people's conversation. The winning line? "The firemen are going to 'lose' or "When they have lost". As time went on almost every report

on the strike contained this gem. There was never any explanation as to why they might 'lose' or argument over it, just the bold assertion that they were, repeated over and over and over.

We all
know
that 10%



Won't
buy food
AND
pay the rent.

GIVE THE FIREMEN THEIR DUE

- Another sticker.

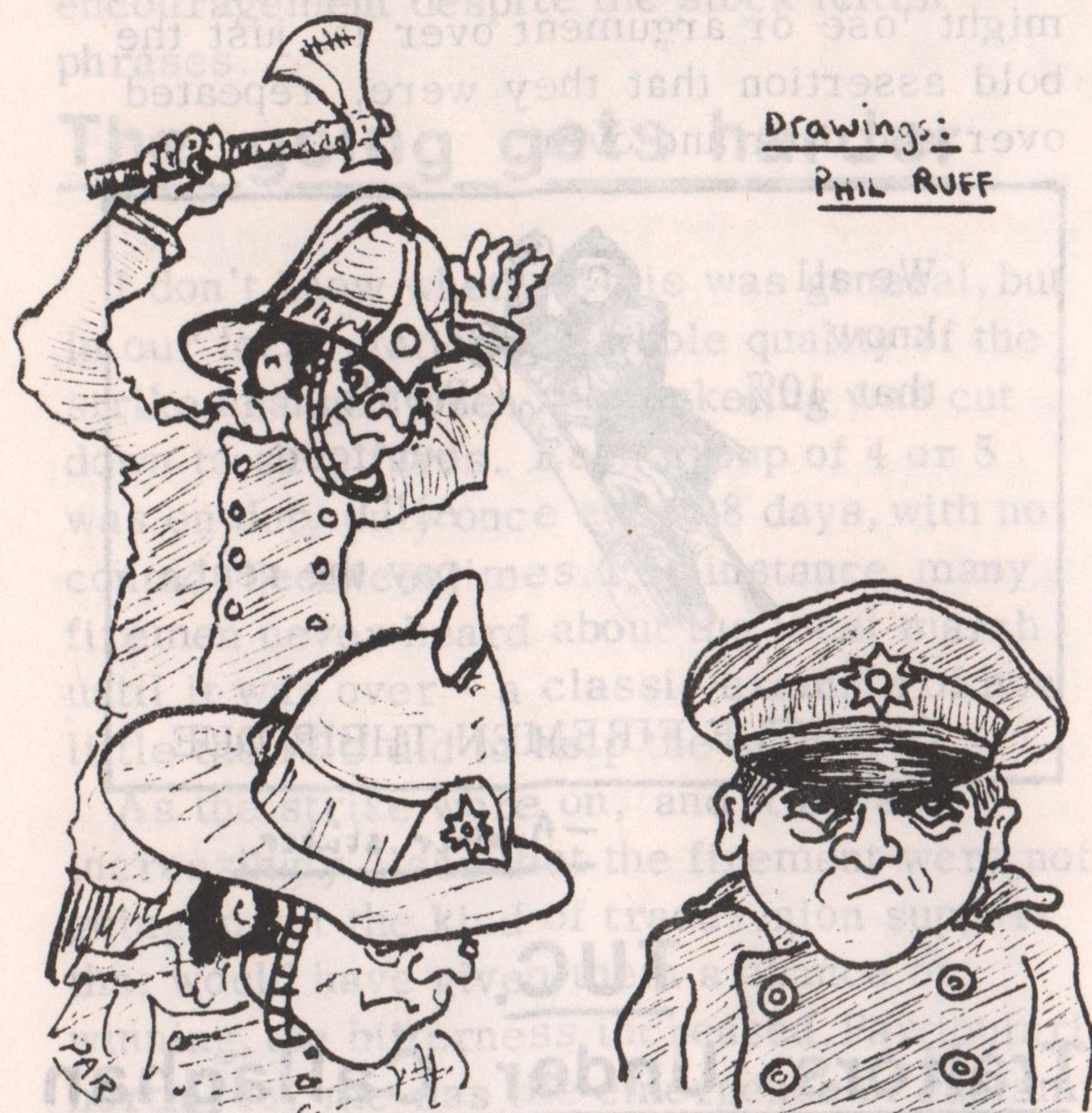
TUC.

Traitors Under Callaghan

So the media's role was an unusual one, in that instead of openly opposing the strike, in their usual sledgehammer fashion, they just subtly undermined it. But what of the firemen's friends? One of their greatest enemies was of course the TUC, and just because the firemen looked to them for assistance. Knowing the TUC's record it was obvious that they would turn the firemen down. However most firemen were not aware of this, and their union fostered their illusions. So it was a body blow to them when the union said 'no'. Worse, it was arranged as two blows - first they are turned down by a committee, but there is hope yet, the union cries, it has to go to the full council, so a couple of weeks later the full council meets, and delivers the blow again by repeating the answer - no support.

Now we knew this would happen. Some of us tried to warn the firemen, but got a very cold reception. There seemed nothing we could do in advance to soften the blow. But we knew this was coming so we could have been ready. We could have launched a strong attack on the TUC within one hour of their decision being known; because we could have prepared it all in advance. Propaganda coups like this are what makes the difference between a movement pissing into the wind and one which is seriously threatening the government. We repeatedly run down the TUC, but when nobody is interested, when suddenly 40,000

people are very interested we are just pausing for breath, and a chance is missed.



Grass roots unionists

Thousands of union branches gave the firemen their support and money. This support was the only true support the firemen got from other unions. Here again an opportunity was missed, although not really by us, for our influence is small at union branches. The problem was just one of making this support grow each week and become stronger. It did not, it slowly died out. Why? Because nothing was done to make it go otherwise. There seem to be two factors. The firemen did little to encourage them. A number of union branches approached their local firemen to come and speak at a branch meeting. The firemen said they would and then never turned up. The second factor is that, as I see it, the lefties at any local branch are always bringing up 'political' issues, and when an important political issue comes up most branch members don't want to know, the lefties have turned them off already.

The union officials of all these other unions seemed to be on a go-slow throughout the strike. A go-slow so that they would not be calling their members out at the same time as the firemen were out. Such a move as that might well win two strikes at once, but would almost certainly lose a union boss his knighthood.



The left

Of course the good old left supported the strike, we all saw their posters - support the firemen, read the daily worker. They all seemed to see the strike as another membership drive, handing out leaflets saying 'if you want to win the strike you should join the SWP and build the revolutionary party'. We did not see the revolutionary party very much in action, however, and the ones I met down the fire stations sickened me, and I think most firemen too, by their attempted party building. This was also shown by the number of posters I saw at fire stations supporting the firemen, which had either the top or bottom cut off, where it had said in large red letters 'Support your Trotskyist Hacks' - or words to that effect.

This parasitical behaviour of the left was probably as bad for the firemen as was the TUC's behaviour.

So what did YOU do in the strike daddy ?

From the beginning we tried to produce posters, stickers, leaflets, supporting the firemen and attacking the government. We also tried to support our local firestations with money, chat and cakes.

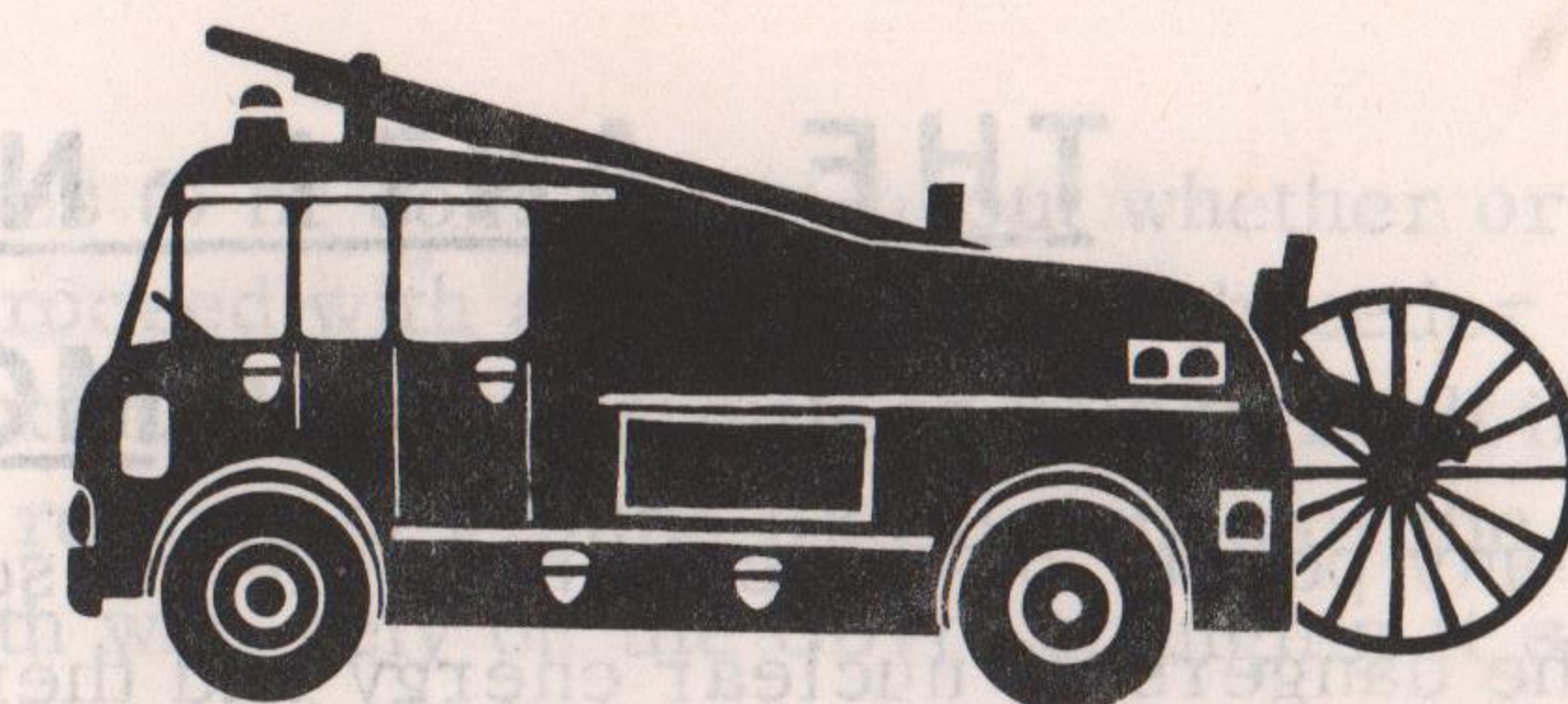
The strike was lost so we can claim no great success, but there was only a few of us putting effort into it, so not much could be expected. However, we produced posters which were distributed by firemen throughout the London stations and which were very warmly received. They were also reproduced in Newline and other left papers, and one was on the tv.

As I saw it the object was not to talk about anarchy, but to win the strike. The firemen's weakness was in propaganda, so this is where we provide the help, and we try and say what helps them the most, and not what we would

most like to say. We got out one poster which had been suggested by two of our local firemen. But although I think we were working on the right lines, it was a case of far too little, too late.

I must say that I was deeply disappointed in the attitude I met amongst most of the anarchist movement. If we are going to have a movement without any central structure, as is right, then we must be self-mobilising. That is, each and every anarchist must move themselves at a time of crises, so it does not take six months for the movement as a whole to realise that the wind has changed.

Part of the difficulty is perhaps that we have become too inward looking and study our navels too much, but maybe we are losing our flexibility which used to be one of our major strengths. For instance I have long been an advocate of working in local areas on local issues, rather than getting involved in national or international campaigns. To suddenly change from a purely local issue to devoting as much time as possible to a national strike might seem to some a bit of a turn around, but instinct said it was right, so that is what I did. Maybe we should give our brains a rest occasionally and give our hearts a bit more of a chance.



I have another major grouse, dear comrades. As most will know, Anarchy magazine maintains a printshop (particularly for occasions like these). During the firemen's strike anarchists came for work on Germany, Greece and Spain. Except for the people within Anarchy itself, working with a few close comrades, nobody came for work to support the firemen. As far as I know, the only other thing produced during the strike by anarchists in London, were some stickers (good ones of course) printed by one of the AWA factions.

As an almost lifelong critic of 'Freedom' newspaper, honour forces me to mention that they are to date the only anarchist paper to reach me with articles on the strike. Of course, as a 'Freedom' hater I do not give them credit for this, I just mark the rest of the movement down a double dose for not even being able to match 'Freedom'!

Chris Broad.



THE ANTI-NUCLEAR/ANTI-STATE MOVEMENT

Many people on the continent are conscious of the dangers of nuclear energy and there have been several violent confrontations between them and the State forces who obviously protect the interests of the multi-national energy companies. Such confrontations have occurred at Wyl, Brokdorf and Malville. We think that it's about time that people in Britain become directly involved in the question of nuclear energy because it will affect not only us, but also future generations.

The case against nuclear power is extensive; it is known that the levels of radiation are increasing in the environment, and the effects of too high a level are cancer or genetic malformations, transmitted from parents to their children. Those most affected are the workers in the industry but there is no agreement about the safe level of exposure for these people and it's been repeatedly lowered, which is great news for those who've been working for years and had thought they were protected.

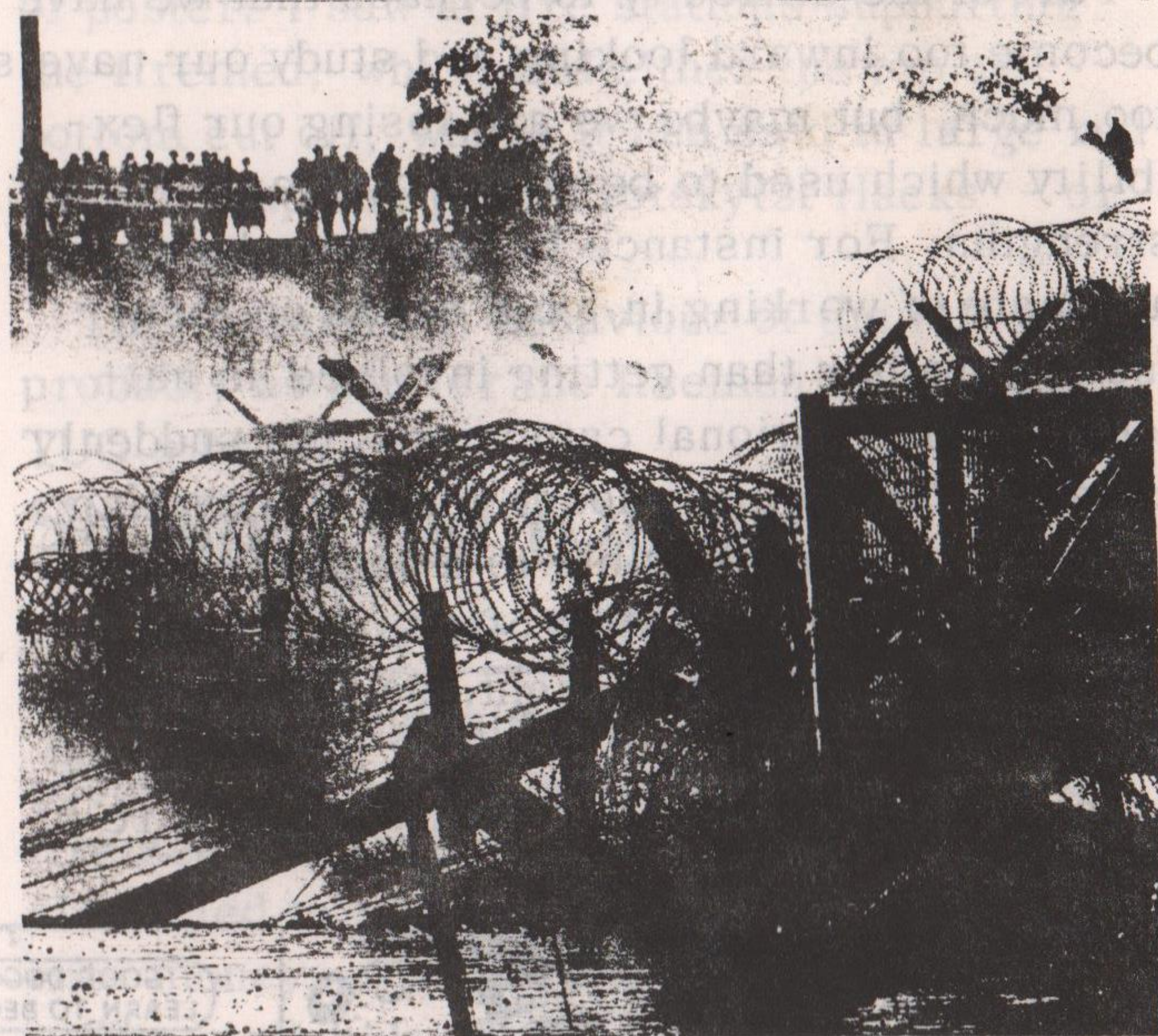
Nuclear waste remains a potential danger to the community for thousands of years and is at present being stored because no satisfactory way has been found of disposing of it and leaks may occur. Between 1970-6 there have been 99 recorded incidents at Windscale during which a high level of radioactivity was discharged over a restricted area. There is also the question as to whether the technology involved with the nuclear programme has been tested. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. who wish to develop a new thermal oxide reprocessing plant at Windscale, admitted at the enquiry the need to use in part unproven technology. If you consider the potential danger, this is bloody disgusting.

Do we need the stuff?

Do we actually need nuclear energy? Like a fucking hole in the head. Several people have arrived at different answers to the question of the future demand for energy, using different growth rates on which the need for nuclear energy rests. This is a great basis for a programme proposed by the Atomic Energy Authority of 104,000 M.W. of nuclear capac-

ity by the year 2000 is a great number of reactors.

There are also far reaching political implications of the nuclear programme. State interference is bound to increase in the sense that initially new measures will be taken to protect the nuclear industry. A special Constabulary has already been created and consists at present of about 400 pigs. They carry arms and can



Barbed-wire, trenches confront German demonstrators trying to occupy a site.

pursue and hold anyone 'suspected' of theft of nuclear material; what great potential for the state to step up its violent intervention into our lives under the guise of the protection of society from (ironically) a nuclear catastrophe. People working in the industry will be subject to greater surveillance by the security forces and security checks on people living near to reactors will increase as the nuclear programme develops and obviously all revolutionary groups will be watched. These more open police-state methods are inevitable and we will fight them with everything we've got. It is also likely that as the technology is sold abroad, the ability to make nuclear weapons will grow. West German Rulers sold a complete nuclear fuel cycle to Brazil in 1975, and France sold a reactor to S. Africa in May 1976. W. Ger. was prepared to deliver the type of technology described as 15% identical with the production of an A-bomb... to this Govt.



10's of thousands of French people kept from Nuclear site by armed police.

No thanks!

Our opposition in Europe is massive and powerful, consisting of; the multi-nationals, the Govts. and their civil servants and scientists, the majority of political Parties and all those with interests in the nuclear industry, and this body has tried to build up the view that it is inevitable and harmless. The British Govt., concerned with its dependence on the Arab oil-states, the possibility of further energy crises and its policy of economic growth at any price, is totally committed to a massive nuclear programme. Because this is technologically possible and profitable, they pursue such a programme irrespective of whatever detrimental consequences, in order to keep the decaying capitalist system together. In furthering their aim, any dissent is unacceptable to them, and through the media the State has for a long time been 'preparing' all of us to accept its decision. We oppose their decision.

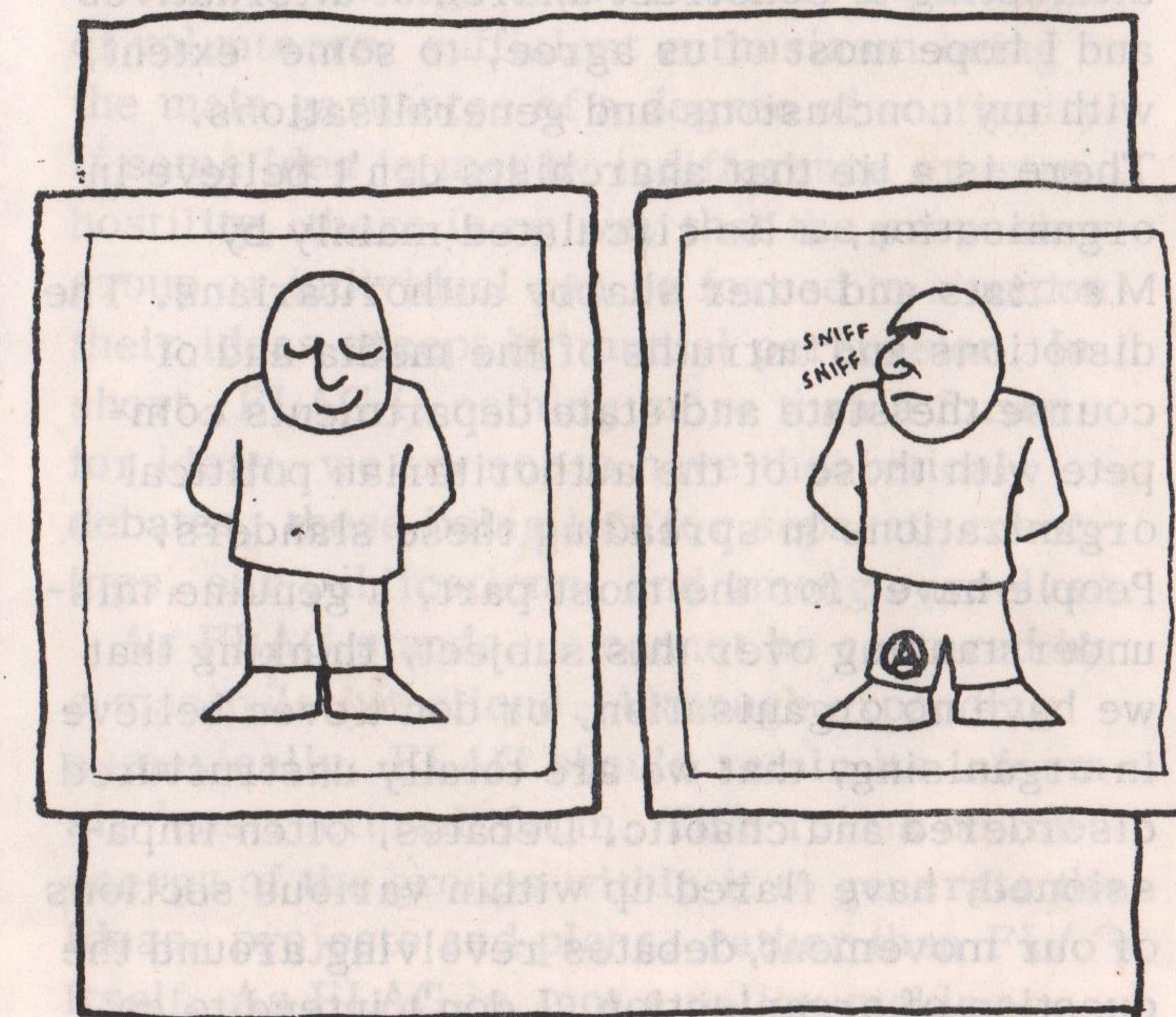
The question now to be asked is what tactics should we use to stop this death-programme? I have tried to show that the Govt. is intent on following a nuclear programme and so any reliance in, or working for the setting-up of, public enquiries which are instigated by the Govt. is totally useless. The Windscale enquiry was a waste of time and so will be the next which will allow for wider relevant

issues to be considered, about whether or not to proceed with a prototype fast-breeder reactor. Also it's fruitless having faith in any reformist groups like Friends of the Earth who rely on the Govt. changing its mind and who will back out of the struggle as soon as the fight gets violent, or having faith in the Communist Party controlled CND.

We must now organise and then undertake direct action such as occupations of prospective sites and relevant Govt. buildings, mass demonstrations and more imaginative actions. Our State forces will have reviewed the actions of the French and German pigs at the mass anti-nuclear demos, and so they will be preparing for any confrontation. We must also learn from the European battles and act knowing the violence the State forces are prepared to use, and preparing to defend ourselves. We must encourage thousands of people, through agitation and knowledge, to stop this menace, and as the movement grows we should go on the offensive because the only way to halt this Programme and its disastrous consequences is to smash the State and then the rotting capitalist system it is part of and protects, will fall.

Trev.

NB. To satisfy those people who doubt the intentions of the Govt. and energy companies; the research and development of nuclear fission between 1977/8 is expected to cost £127m while research and development into alternative, safe energy resources for the same period is estimated at only £3m.



ANARCHY IN THE U.K. — O.K.?

Introduction

Is there an anarchist movement in this country? The answer to this must be a qualified 'Yes'. In relative terms, the anarchist movement, although in the classical organizational sense is fragmentary, and in numerical comparison to the authoritarian left only modestly represented, it is at present experiencing a progressive growth. This is reflected in several inter-related ways; for example the increasing number of publications such as papers, magazines, periodicals, pamphlets and books, dealing with, by and about, anarchists and anarchism. There is a mushrooming of anarchist groups and a substantial increase in the number of anarchists and people moving towards an anarchist perspective. Anarchist ideas are seeping into various movements that are not anarchist, such as the women's movement (1). These are just some of the more visible manifestations. Although there are still important vacuums waiting to be filled; although the process of expansion (in all its meanings) has tentatively got underway, the future outlook is more optimistic than it has been for a considerable period. Outlined below, are the trends I can distinguish organically developing within our movement, with some possible indications, hinting at subsequent events and tendencies. We, as anarchists, are going through the process of disseminating anarchist ideas and attempting to construct anarchist alternatives and I hope most of us agree, to some extent, with my conclusions and generalisations. There is a lie that anarchists don't believe in organisation, a lie circulated mainly by Marxists and other shabby authoritarians. The distortions and untruths of the media and of course the state and state departments compete with those of the authoritarian political organizations in spreading these slanders. People have, for the most part, a genuine misunderstanding over this subject, thinking that we have no organisation, or don't even believe in organising, that we are totally unstructured and chaotic. Debates, often impassioned, have flared up within various sections of our movement, debates revolving around the question of organisation. I don't intend to go

into the mechanics of these particular arguments, rather I would prefer to tackle the question using the situation as it stands at the present time. I want to use the example of FLAG (Federation of London Anarchist Groups) because despite its present limitations, it's the organisation with which I'm more familiar, rather than, say, the other regional federations although I assume they conform to the same pattern. I also look on FLAG with a favourable eye, because as I see it, it's more suited to today's situation, than a more rigid and structured organisation.

Organisation

Anarchist organisation is anti-authoritarian. We prefer a non-hierarchical, horizontal formation, functioning on a dynamic of constant examination, questioning, experimentation and education; in short existing on a mainly empiric basis. We still however, operate in an anarchist framework, anarchist theory is not relegated backstage, it is however not developed into an unbending ideology, incapable of innovation; it's a question of balance and accommodation and the occasional compromise. Breaking down of roles and a sharing of skills is another product of a more informal grouping. Within anarchist organisations, emphasis is placed on the autonomy of groups and the full development and emancipation of the individual, given of course, the limitations and the context of our actions in any situation. Ideas percolate, branching out in many directions, usually this doesn't happen at the expense of clarity, it prevents groups from becoming immobile and too entrenched. Whenever anarchism has developed into a mass movement, or indicated that it may grow into a significant or influential force, the dangers of bureaucracy, leadership in the manipulative and authoritarian sense have loomed up. Anarchists from the time of Bakunin onwards have been obsessed, correctly and with the utmost justification, with tackling and solving these problems. Arguments and controversy still accompany questions revolving around these crucial challenges, it's still an ongoing problem. The solutions, partial or otherwise, will only be arrived at by a continuous free flow of dialogue and ideas. Authoritarians of all

shades will be horrified by this mode of operation because it is difficult to control, regiment, to pound into 'shape', into the 'correct' 'historical' or 'dialectical-materialist' or even 'revolutionary party' line. For us, autonomy of groups, independence of thought and action are of paramount importance. Although we may believe in some form of structure, our formations are constructed in exceedingly unassuming terms, we prefer, indeed encourage, a horizontal organisation as opposed to the authoritarian pyramidal complex, so beloved by our rulers would-be or otherwise. For us, there is very little to choose between Mao's gibberings or Hitler's obscene rantings (2). So far I have dealt with organisation in abstract terms, I shall now tackle the question of anarchist organisation in a concrete manner.

Groups

First of all, a brief glance at the composition of groups that constitute FLAG:

- 1) Local groups - this speaks for itself, a group operating on a geographical basis.
- 2) Groups involved in the production of anarchist papers and magazines. In London especially many of the groups (four) are centred around publications.



- 3) University groups - self explanatory groups based in universities and other places of 'education'.
- 4) 'Political' anarchist groups - or as they prefer, 'organised'. LCG (Libertarian Communist Group) and ACA (Anarchist Communist Association). LCG don't send delegates but are drifting toward the IMG - dominated 'Socialist Unity'. ACA do send

delegates, they form their groups on a local basis (more about these below).

- 5) Delegates from anarchist and libertarian groups centred around campaigns or involved in issues such as atomic energy or from, say, libertarian leaning bookshops, prisoners groups, international topics and of course the anarchist centres.
- 6) London Workers group - a group of working militants, who are meeting 'to establish and encourage communication and solidarity between workers in all industries'.
- 7) Delegates from the sex-pol groups - such as anarcho-feminist and gay groups.
- 8) Individuals, who usually form their own groups or join others (but not always).
- 9) Any other groups.

FLAG

Basically, FLAG functions like this... groups send as many delegates as they wish, usually one or two. There is a great diversification in the composition of groups, never the less disruptions are minimal. (Generally) FLAG has no rules and regulations (3), no permanent secretaries, a chairperson and secretary being chosen at each gathering. These people volunteer spontaneously. All that happens is that group delegates attend the (approx. monthly) meetings, inform others present as to their activities, collect general news and inlist or give assistance to whatever is going on. No general decisions are made except where and when to have the next meeting. If a proposal or project is worth supporting, there is never a shortage of volunteers, sufficient enthusiasm being the main guarantee of a degree of continuity. If some idea is met by indifference or even hostility, there is no way that the proposing group or individual can be forced to abandon their ideas except by mutual persuasion. In short, FLAG is nothing more than a forum for ideas, we try not to have theoretical debates; these being left for separate meetings, our publications, and among ourselves.

As FLAG stands, it cannot be captured by a manipulative clique. Although expanding numerically, FLAG should retain its informal, 'unstructured' form. This relies on the energy of the groups within it to generate the ideas, projects and plans, rather than FLAG itself. As FLAG is not a policy making

council, or anything like that, when it comes to sending delegates to other federations, it's better for groups to send their own representatives rather than 'FLAG' delegates. Unless the people at FLAG are unanimous concerning a matter, the aforementioned suggestion is preferable. Another reason for groups to send their own delegates, is because FLAG contains such diverse elements, and the danger of a group 'representing' FLAG when it represents only itself. It's usually a question of APPROACH and TACTICS that divide us, although in the main it is ideological differences that are the most important factors. Individual and personality clashes also play their part.

A product of FLAG is the 'feedback' and cross-fertilisation of ideas and information. Anarchist groups are strengthened by an organic process. It's all a process of encouragement, there's never too little to do, the result of our endeavours is a complex, but not baffling, flow of ideas. Activities cover an expansive range, impossible to describe within this limited space. We have never had to expel a group, or prevent an individual from attending. This situation may eventually arise. I think we have sufficient intelligence to deal with this or any similar predicament.

The reason FLAG hasn't splintered and fragmented, containing such differing elements is pretty straight forward. FLAG is a forum, a rendezvous of groups, into which ideas are fed, leaving the groups to decide what to do. This system functions for us, whereas a central apparatus churning out directives, orders and instructions, is totally alien to us. The diverse elements in FLAG are able to fall back onto the activities of like-minded groups rather than becoming involved in factional polemics. This form of respectful unity in FLAG doesn't mean automatic collapse every time differing opinion arises, neither does it necessarily mean a negation of inter-group solidarity.

ANARCHY
IS THE BEST POLICY

If FLAG did disintegrate, because most of us are interconnected as groups and individuals, the terrific amount of 'overlap' - most of us meet on an informal basis anyway, or in several groups - it would be a loss, but not a fatal one. Activities would still continue, we would still grow, and anyway, eventually we would probably reconstitute on a basis similar to FLAG.



O.R.A. - A.W.A.

Before FLAG existed, an attempt was made by some disillusioned comrades, to build a highly structured organisation, done in revulsion at the (as they saw it) confusion and irrelevance of the decaying AFB (Anarchist Federation of Britain). Their own organisation, ORA (Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists) went through a name change to AWA (Anarchist Workers Association) as did their paper 'Libertarian Struggle' to 'Anarchist Worker'. The futility of organising on a neo-party basis was proved, because far from mitigating differences, it possibly exacerbated them, one tiny AWA global taking the logical conclusion of it's growing authoritarianism joined the Trotsky-worshipping Workers Revolutionary Party. For anarchists, building an organisation on fixed principles is a total time-waster, as AWA demonstrates. AWA, as it drifted into the arms of Trotskyism became more sectarian in it's relation to the other anarchist groups. An inability to develop both theoretically and numerically, led eventually to a split, the Anarchists being thrown out (!) The AWA rump became the LCG

moving into the 'Socialist Unity' electoral coalition, where they are one of the factions arguing for a more 'centralised framework'. (4) The remainder have formed the ACA, who support FLAG and are moving (or seem to be) in an anarchist direction, while their ex-comrades go the opposite way.

All this shows the impossibility of building a centralised anarchist group, bordering on a party, hoping that people will 'join'. Anarchist groups must grow organically, and as part of this process they will tend to consolidate themselves into larger groups and then federations. An artificial 'boost' only upsets growth as far as we're concerned. A 'mobilising' tendency must develop from within rather than from without. It's no good setting yourself up as a deliberate organisational clique as this breeds elitism, sectarianism, and only alienates other anarchists and groups.

Anarchy

Anarchist groups are usually 'affinity groups' with the members being in close contact outside the group also. I would like to write about the ANARCHY collective as this is the group I know best. Although we cannot be regarded as 'typical', we share many characteristics with other groups. We are a small collective, each involved in other things going on both within and outside the

movement, i.e. at work, in the neighbourhood, printing, anti-fascism, nuclear power opposition, and 'outside' - with our kids, motorbikes, nasty-substances, and chatting to people while waiting hours at bus-stops. (Added by typist!) As a group we are attempting, along with Zero magazine, to refurbish a house in the East End in order to create a joint office (grateful thanks to the 2 ACA members, and one from the SWP for doing our rewiring!) We have close links with many anarchist groups and individuals, and some of us are in close touch with Left groups. We are all youngish (18-35) but several of us have been anarchists for a considerable period. We each have a different understanding of anarchism and this is reflected in our articles in the magazine. 10 people, 11 opinions! Where we are in agreement on an issue, we usually disagree on tactics or emphasis. We would welcome more feedback-if you think the stuff in ANARCHY is garbage (or inspiring), say so. If you fancy writing an article or letter, who can stop you! We would be able to receive more feedback if more people street-sold Anarchy, and we could find our way into more bookshops and newsagents. We're trying to get it out quarterly (Feb, May, Aug, Nov). We think that every anarchist paper should publish a list of contacts so that isolated sympathisers can reach other anarchists.



'Ere, officer... there's farsands of anniekists and other riff-raff taking over the streets'
(ANTI-FASCISTS - LEWISHAM)

The Future

I would like to make a few observations in summing up. In the wake of the amazing events at Lewisham and Ladywood, with the near certainty of repetition - possibly at Ilford during the May council elections, we must prepare ourselves to take full advantage of these situations, in every context: 'political' and physical. These are the training grounds for the stormy future. As we become more successful we can expect more hostility from certain sections of the authoritarian Left. We should be ready to repel these attacks, being more than just physically prepared. Some of us are nearly ready. The remainder of the 70's should see anti-nuclear feeling grow - in a Malville/Greys/Brokdorf sense, not a Windscale enquiry. Again we should be preparing - unprecedented conflict is around the corner.

Lefties may sneer at our size and forms of organisation, asking what chance we stand against the forces of the State, but just look at the miserable performance of the Left and the mighty Unions at Grunwicks. At 1 point, 15,000 workers completely surrounded the Grunwick plant, cutting off the buses of scabs, defeating the police attempts to clear the area, and what happened? They allowed themselves to be led away by Scargill and Co., just like sheep. From the jaws of victory... If a tin-pot boss like Ward, a few snotty Tory MP's, the creeps from the NAFF plus a couple of thousand uniformed thugs, can beat the whole 'trade-union movement' and the pathetic 'revolutionary-Left', it's time we took ourselves a bit more seriously. We must begin to build up a presence on the streets (as elsewhere). I would like to suggest that we start by mass paper sales, branching out from there.

We should read as much as possible, of our own, and the 'enemies' literature, in order to expand our understanding and our capability to grapple with the chicanery and macheiavellianism of the authoritarians. We won't become contaminated by exploration and study. We should have closer contacts with libertarian-leaning or 'ultra-left' groups like Solidarity and Social Revolution. Also likewise individuals. We need to conduct more extensive propaganda on every level, and have more, much more, discussion amongst ourselves. We must not be frightened by the prospect of confrontation, neither should we allow ourselves

to be led into ambushes or situations beyond our control. We have to iron out the contradictions that arise during the growth process, this is an ongoing thing. We shall never become a cohesive whole, but should we? I don't think so. Let's have some more definitions, of authority, hierarchy and government. Let us be aware that we are capable of breeding elitism, hierarchy, authoritarianism, just as much as everyone else, then perhaps we can deal with it. I would like to see us become less of a colourful appendage of the left, more independent. Anarchist groups whither away as well as shoot up, but lately there has been more consolidation of local groups. We've seen more positive signs as of late. We are still sowing dragon's teeth, but wait! What's this? Some are hatching already?

'M' Bang on the start of '78

Footnotes.

(1) See 'Socialism, Anarchism and Feminism' by Carol Ehrlich. 'Anarchism: the Feminist Connection' by Peggy Kornegger, and 'Anarcho-Feminism, Two Statements' in Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review no. 3

(2) A perfect example of the authoritarian mode of thinking is offered in Mao's Red Book, the section on 'discipline'. "We must affirm anew the discipline of the party namely: 1. The individual is subordinate to the organisation. 2. The minority is subordinate to the majority. 3. The lower level is subordinate to the higher level. 4. The entire membership is subordinate to the central committee. Whoever violates these articles of discipline disrupts party unity."

Only one thing is missing: "The central committee is subordinate to me".

(3) No rules, except that the newsletter is only mailed to affiliated groups.

(4) See The Islington Gutter Press no. 42 page 15.

Comment - "I like it - after it was translated into English"



IN BRIEF

A BELFAST WOMAN.

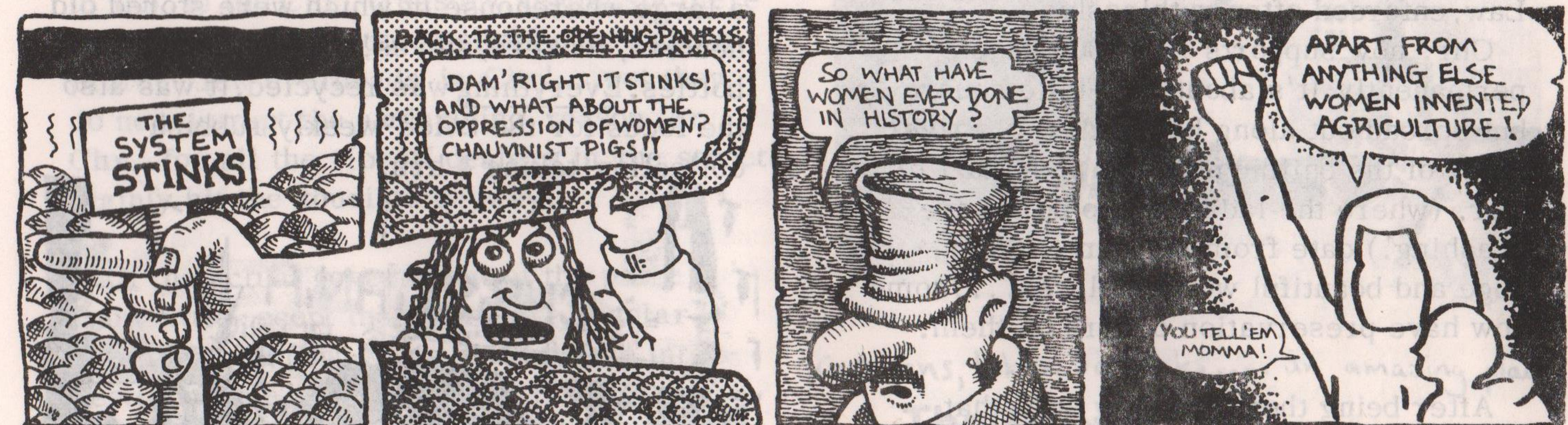
Noreen Winchester, a 21 yrs old Belfast woman, was sentenced this summer to 7yrs prison for killing her father after being raped by him for years.

Her mother, Annie, had a terrible life in the Sandy Row protestant district, and is now in a mental hospital outside the town. She has given birth to 17 children, 8 of whom lived. In 1974 after being brutally beaten by her husband Norman, she left home taking 4 of the kids. The others were terrorised by Norman, and he started to rape Noreen. The

trial suppressed these facts because of 'the shame it could bring on the family'. What 'family'? As the horrific 7yr sentence was passed, the solicitors refused to appeal, telling Noreen she was 'lucky' to get ONLY 7YRS, and she should be grateful to them.

This is the sort of 'family' the State wishes to promote and protect.

This is the 'justice' it is so proud of. For more information, contact HAPOTOC; S.I.P. - Leeuwarden, Holland. P.O. Box 376 And write to... Noreen, Armagh prison, N.I.



JUST LINES ON THE MAP.

On Dec 3rd, 2 young Italians - a woman and man, were mountaineering near the top of a 6000ft peak in the Alps, when the woman fell. The bloke clambered down and found her alive but badly injured, so he rushed down to the local village for help. He was soon airborne in a helicopter with the local police chief, and 4 hours after she had fallen they were hovering over her. But instead of landing and carrying her to safety, the police chief ordered the pilot to return to the village, saying: "The border passes right through this mountain and she is on the French side. We cannot land without permission." The bloke pleaded but the Chief didn't even bother to radio the French authorities.

Back at the village, the guy organised a rescue squad from the local Alpine club, reaching the woman in darkness 5 hours later. "I took her in my arms but she was dead. I'm sure we could have saved her if the helicopter had landed."

The police said, "no comment."

This episode speaks for itself. Borders are for rulers to keep us fenced-in like sheep. These dotted lines on the maps of the Bourgeoisie insult our intelligence, for the only boundaries we know are between river and plain, mountain and forest, village and city, and the respect of each of us for the privacy and community of others. The land belongs to us all but each State seeks to impose tighter controls on 'its' territory and people, murdering and imprisoning those who fail to conform. The Iron Curtain is the clearest example, but all wars have been fought, with millions slaughtered, because of the territorial arguments between States.

A new war is being waged now, between: on one side, ALL governments (as co-operation increases), and on the other side, ALL the dispossessed of the world. For although they may argue, all the States agree on one thing: international anarchism is their common enemy.

CHRISTIANIA

Let me make it clear: this is by no means intended as a statement of 'authority'. It is based on a visit of some 3 weeks to Christiania (chr.), during which I took leisure there and intend as soon as I can get my ass together, to go back.

The Place

Inevitably, Chr. is situated in one of the oldest parts of Copenhagen, about which nobody gave a fuck until it was squatted 6 years ago. It was an Army camp left to go to rack and ruin, when it was taken over. This, in spite of a Euro-Criminal trespass Law, enforced often ruthlessly.

Chr. now supports 700-1000 people permanently. It's about a 1/2-mile square but spread out along both sides of a river. Many of the buildings in the main part of Chr. (where the lads used to do square-bashing!) date from the early 1800's, huge and beautiful wooden places... some now have preservation orders on them.

After being there I'm now sure that people can live anywhere, for there are homes made of every conceivable structure: small sheds, large dormitory houses/work-shops, buses, caravans, flats, self-made wooden houses by the river, a pyramid, dome etc. Some are deliberately primitive while others are no less luxurious than ordinary apartments. It's up to you.

Here again is the constructive use to which the place has been put, but on a human scale. Some of the amenities that come to mind: a bakery (delicious!), flea market, bathhouse, general store, clogmaker, candlemaker, bike repair (tons of these about, very few cars), clothes recycling, cinema, gallery, information centre (run by the anarchist group) Posthouse, three cafes, bars, motorcar and m/cycle workshop, any number of smithies, carpenters, welding shops, a medical centre, school and kindergatan.

Work

It's a motley of organised chaos, as you'd expect with anything connected with the Army... and squatters! Some Buildings are completely residential, others are a

mixture of workshops and living space.

The economic system is organised, in theory, around a 'Rainbow Army', which is an idea which grew organically. Basically, each area of activity has a colour which symbolises some building or work, (e.g. the Grey Hall where large concerts are held to raise money for various activities; the Blue House, which is part of the co-ordination and outside campaign-this handles meetings between various workgroups, collects a modicum of rent to pay for electricity used on the site; the Green Hall where I worked-a large warehouse in which were stored old heaters, cookers, stoves, fridges, wood, iron, bottles. Everything was recycled. It was also the focus for the twice-weekly rubbish collection, taking 4 hrs.



The work structures were a curious mixture of the organic and organised; people would simply get going with something they wanted to do either as individuals or groups, and gradually others would join in, drop out, leave, yet the work still got done. An example of this was the cafe Faeleskokke, where everyone helped out although there was a steady group running it. This doesn't mean of course that one could simply walk into any activity and begin-it all depended.

...And Money

The profit-motive was discouraged under the social pressure system, but this of course depended again on who the people were, and what the purpose of

the group was; yet I found that it was at least a 1/3 cheaper to live in Chr. than outside in Copenhagen, even if you were paying rent in Chr. (For everyone was asked to contribute voluntarily to the general electricity bill).

The bread that came out of the bakery was good and cheap... clothes in the flea-market, though second-hand, were likewise. The general store, which sold everything, provided dairy stuff at very reasonable prices, making enough profit to keep a group of 10-15 people, at the same time putting money back into the store and giving (as all enterprises were supposed to do), to the Chr. treasury. Obviously there are people who go there simply to make a profit... few overheads in Chr!... yet they do not disrupt the underlying reason for Chr., for all the rip-off dealers in the streets mainly hit the tourists anyway.

Of the actual government of the place I know little, except that there are regular meetings and pow-wows amongst the interested people of the different colours... basically everything is done in true libertarian fashion right the way through the shopfloors and houses, which can lead to interminable meetings but things get done all the same.

Work apart, there is much to occupy leisure (though many are at leisure when at work)... the cinema, the large numbers of pot-dealers hanging out, the cafes (which have live music half the week), the grey hall opens for all-night concerts and events, and surprisingly enough, the bath-house: this contains the most amazing sauna built by one man, Wolfgang, the centre of the German colony in Chr. Everybody looks forward to a shower or sauna there after work or during the day (it's open from about midday until 10pm) and it's a big meeting place, a social scene, as well as bringing some money in. (But it's free to people working in one of the Chr. industries or workgroups.) Once you know people, then there is always a bed for the night, if you can't be bothered to go back to your own.

Many ecological experiments are underway... a windmill, mini-farming and horticulture along the lake (there is a green-grocer to sell this produce); there are

chickens, horses, goats and even a pig there!

There's lots of kids about and its definitely a great environment for them. People seem receptive to them but although is a school and kindergatan and lots of entertainments, in general individuals, mostly women, ended up looking after them.



Caravans, bikes, barracks.... an amazing place.

The People

The people are not easy to get to know in the summer because of the tourists, as the official handout states... 'Don't be surprised if a lot of doors turn out to be closed & some of us not overwhelmingly friendly.', but it isn't difficult when you start to simply live & work in the place & they see you're not fucking around.

The people are the life-blood of the place of course, & no amount of description could accurately present the atmosphere of raggedy-assed organisation & kindness that flew around. It was a tonic for a jaded politico to go there & see people proving that a governmentless society can work, even if it is still dependent on Copenhagen economically. And another major point-one could feel that everybody, from the worst rip-off dealer to the most conscientious Christianian, realised that the next step was to get rid of the bread. Everyone knew it could be done without destroying anyone's incentive to work or live-or any other of that sort of shit we're handed out-indeed, in some cases it was the money stopped people doing what they wanted to do.

This has been a very sketchy idea of what life is like there; it is not all good, with daily police harassment (of dealers, immigrants, politicians, anybody). There's the poor hygiene in the showers and public toilets, and getting a pad together is difficult now so many want to go there-and there's arguments and occasionally fights, plus the usual hassles over money-but compared to what is being done there these are minor considerations.

Christiania is the most important lesson on the left today, shrewd minds are at work there, & good work is being done with the place being built up still, although it may be cut down in it's prime like so many other things, this spring if Danish officialdom has it's way. After some legalities it will be a matter of sending the police in, although there is widespread support in Copenhagen, across Europe, and a strong Liberal buffer as well.

Yet not enough news comes across to England which shows a marked insularity perhaps on both sides, which has to be broken down before a real internationalism can be established. I hate to think how long such a place could last here... it is among the most important stands in Europe today and too many people & considerations will go with it if it is allowed to die.

Sean War.

I'd just like to add that I went there too, and had an interesting and enjoyable time. A real eye-opener. The community is alive and anarchically organised, the main problem being hundreds of people who just use the place as tourists, dossers or hip-capitalists. The people are incredibly tolerant of all the shit they have to put up with.

The general attitudes are anarchist, pacifist, hippy, individualist, collectivist, small capitalist, or just plain confused. There is an Anarchist group of people involved in the projects there. There are demonstrations, festivals and open days to 'get the message across' to the residents of Copenhagen. But more could be done to abolish the capitalist and proprietarian things-however, remember that no place can be an island of anarchism.

Despite everything, it works! Go and see for yourself before it is smashed. Ah, what we could do with the WHOLE WORLD!

E.S.

EAST EUROPE: STRIKES AND SABOTAGE SHAKE STATE

Although it likes to present itself as an impregnable monolith, the State in the 'Communist' countries of Eastern Europe, like the State everywhere, is vulnerable to the direct action of the working class. In the last decade, strikes and other direct action by working people have shaken the State to it's very foundations.

In 1967, workers in the Soviet town of Pryluky rioted after one of them was beaten to death by the police, smashing up the police building. They threatened to set fire to the petrol pipe-line which runs through the town if their demands were not met.

On Mayday 1967, the red and black flag was run up on the tower of a village church in the Skole district of the Ukraine. The young people held to be responsible were arrested, but set free by an armed group.

The Militia Commander of the River Transport near the water power-station of Kachovka, was killed as a protest against Stalinist repression.

When the police went to arrest 3 miners in the Donetsk basin area, the miners opened fire on them. 2 of the miners were sentenced to death, the 3rd to 15yrs. Earlier there had been a General Strike of miners and factory workers for higher wages in the city of Luhansk in that area.

On Dec 9th, 1967, 4 men went on trial in Leningrad accused of forming an underground organisation which was supplied with arms by a Red Army officer. Strongest in Ukraine, it had groups in Sverdlovsk and Leningrad.

The ship 'Commisar Stepanov' loaded with wheat bound for E. Germany, was sunk in the seaport of Odessa by workers who opened the sea cocks. Previously, dockers there had refused to load tinned butter bound for Cuba.

In 1969, as a protest against the Soviet

invasion of Czechoslovakia, a Lieutenant Illyin attempted to assassinate Brezhnev. In May that year several officers of the Baltic fleet were arrested for forming a Union of Fighters For Political Freedom.

The Ukrainian town of Dniprodzinsk witnessed 2 days of rioting sparked off by the arrest of several young people. During the riot the offices of the KGB, the Communist Party and Young CP were destroyed.

In Georgia an alleged nationalist was sentenced to death for bombings which occurred in 1975/6. 2 more death sentences were announced following the killing of a police officer.

Students in the Estonian town of Tartu demonstrated when the Authorities banned a concert not liking the political overtones of the music. Police sent to break up this demo were pelted with bricks and bottles.

In Latvia, 4 dockers were imprisoned following a strike in Riga against meat shortages.

On Oct. 10th, 1977, 15,000 people marched through the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, overturning and burning police cars, and tearing down banners celebrating the 60th Anniv. of the 1917 Revolution.



Polish Army taking over central Szczecin Dec. 1970

The above are but a few examples of the struggle which is being waged with increasing ferocity by the people of the USSR, against the totalitarian, Stalinist dictatorship. These patterns of revolt and repression are repeated throughout the E. European block. Czechoslovakia has witnessed the armies of the Warsaw Pact crush it's attempt to break out of the Soviet orbit, and more recently the repression of the supporters of the charter 77 human rights manifesto (the trial of 3 signatories opened in Prague in Oct. 77). Recently 6 of the signatories published an open letter protesting the repression in West Germany.

Romania, where 60,000 political prisoners perished during the construction of the Black Sea canal, where in 1961 peasant riots turned into sporadic guerrilla fighting, witnessed in 1977 a strike by 90,000 miners in the Jiu Valley, scene of a previous strike in 1972. During the strike the miners arrested and held hostage three members of the central committee of the communist party. An appeal from the newly formed human rights committee received 200 signatures, 50% of them being workers. A leading figure in the committee the writer, Paul Goma, was arrested and subsequently released. Another member, Ion Negoitescu, was threatened with prosecution for homosexuality.

In Hungary, the author, Miklos Harazi, was given an 8 month suspended sentence and made to pay 9,600 florints court costs (4 months wages for a skilled worker) for having written "A worker in a worker state", a brilliant exposure of the "desert of piece rates" in which workers are forced to dwell by the managerial bureaucracy in its relentless drive for increased productivity and higher profits.

Poland has experienced two major strike waves sparked off by raises in the price of food. The first of these in 1970/71, which was blamed on anarchist, hooligan and criminal ele-



Romanian miners on a May Day demonstration in the 1920s. The memory of the great miners' strike of 1929 is still present amongst the striking miners of the Jiu Valley today.

ments led to the downfall of Gomulka and his replacement Giereck. Workers responded by painting up slogans saying: "Giereck same as Gomulka" and "Down with the Party". The workers defence committees (KOR), set up in solidarity with those victimised during the strikes of 1976, are still active.

HITLERS DOGS.

"Hitler was a man so manifold that he also encompassed the role of a St. Francis. At a course arranged by the Nazi Party of Jena in summer of 1935, the lady lecturer recounted an experience with a talking dog of which she had been told at the house of Baroness Freitag-Loringhoven a few days earlier. "The Baroness prompted my husband to put a difficult question to the dog. My husband asked, 'Who is Adolf Hitler?'. We were deeply moved to hear, 'My Fuhrer', out of the mouth of the creature." At this point the lecturer was interrupted by an old Party comrade in the audience who shouted, "This is in abominably bad taste. You are misusing the Fuhrer's name," to which the lecturer on the verge of tears replied, "This clever animal knows that Adolf Hitler has caused laws to be passed against vivisection and the Jew's ritual slaughter of animals, and out of gratitude his small canine brain recognises Adolf Hitler as his Fuhrer."

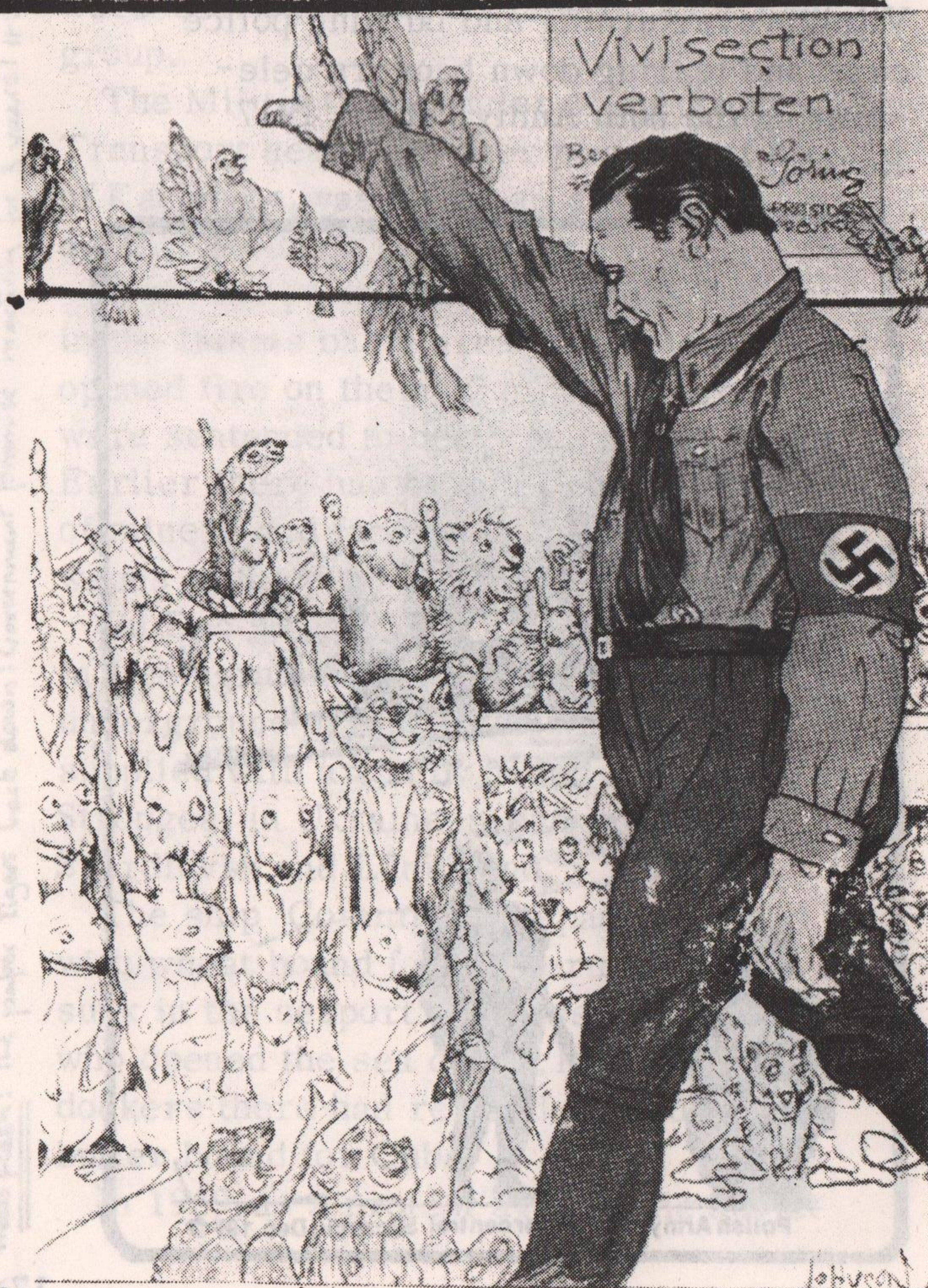
From 'A Social History of the Third Reich.' by Richard Grunberger. P118-119.

In Bulgaria, despite imprisonment and exile, libertarians continue to struggle against the state.

During the celebrations for the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the GDR, youth in East Berlin fought with the police following the cancellation of a jazz concert.

The deals on human rights, cooked up between the rulers of East and West, are not worth the paper they are printed on. When threatened by the revolutionary action of working men and women they'll react as they've reacted with repression and terror, with imprisonment, torture and murder. The only guarantee of freedom for all is the overthrow of the state, the positive abolition of capitalism, hierarchy, bureaucracy and classes; the free association of free individuals in self-managing syndicates, communes, federations and workers councils. In short, the realisation of the libertarian dream.

Terry Liddle.



EUTHANASIA-A REPLY.

I doubt if Kris Collier is fully aware of the implications of her article on euthanasia (Anarchy 24) - at least it is charitable to assume she isn't. Let me make my own position clear at the start: I think every man and woman should be free to choose the time (and place, and means) of his or her own death PROVIDED that the choice is made solely and exclusively by the individual concerned - and on that little word "provided" I and friend Collier part company. I will not resort to religious arguments about the sanctity of life, though, albeit for irreligious reasons, I am largely in agreement with them; nor regurgitate the horrible idea that a life of suffering is a cross to be borne to the bitter end at no matter what cost, for I cannot think of anything I would justify regardless of cost. Instead, I would say this. My own body is the only body over which I have an absolute and inalienable right; my own life is the only life I have the right to take. If life becomes unbearable for me, or if I simply decide that I have lived as long as I desire, the door of suicide should not be barred to me by any sort of stigma or restrictive law. Death has no terrors for the person who is genuinely decided on it, and if such a person should ask me for my help then, yes, I should give it. But I have no more right to persuade another individual, no matter how old, no matter how suffering, to allow me to kill them ("for their own good" my conscience adds) than I have to walk out the door with a gun and shoot the first person I see.

For there is nothing more important in life than the leaving of it: death is the one truly irrevocable decision, and for that reason it must be a decision freely reached. Is friend Collier really unaware that the power of persuasion, especially when exercised over the old and weak, is the equivalent of simple coercion? Is she so naive as to assume that friends and relatives always have the sufferer's best interests at heart? I have known one old man put into a home by his wife and son who persuaded him to sign the necessary form - and he signed, not because he wanted to, but because he was too broken-hearted to stand up to

the hectoring of his own family. The wife's motives - she wanted the four roomed house to herself. The son's motives? - he was four hundred miles away and didn't give a damn. If they could legally have persuaded that quiet and harmless old man to sign his own death warrant, they would have done it - his wife would be happy to save £40 a week in costs.

A second point arises from this. In the present ordering of society how easy it would be for the State to take over a euthanasia law to enable it to get rid of those it is tired of having around; for that is what euthanasia amounts to. The Government of the Third Reich passed exactly such a law, the Euthanasia Decree of 1940, which enabled the next of kin (or the state, if there were no next of kin) to request the health service to "terminate the natural existence" of any person deemed to be suffering on the grounds of (1) age, (2) physical, or (3) mental disabilities, including inherited disease, insanity and the like. Any person deemed (by the state) incapable of rational decision, would



have the decision made for them by the next of kin, who, in a totalitarian society, could be expected to be more than amenable to government "suggestions", including material benefits (cash down) and the praise of the all-powerful local Party leadership. A disgraceful feature film was even made of it by the state

film studios starring the Nazi equivalents of Paul Newman and Robert Redford before the vociferous opposition of the Roman Catholic bishops in Germany led the government to beat a hasty retreat. The Nazis' motives were to strengthen the Master race, and save money at the same time by exterminating those who were a burden in the state - a noble aim which they later accomplished at the expense of people who had no highly placed churchmen ready to speak out on their behalf - but their arguments were exactly those tear-in-the-eye vapourings which Kris Collier puts forward. Yet again, Goering's Luftwaffe "accidentally" flattened quite a few old people's homes and lunatic asylums on practice bombing raids after the Euthanasia Decree was revoked. Why not write a note to the Royal Airforce, friend Collier?

A third and last point. Mentally deficient children - "Mongols, etc." (and how many thousands of children are to be included in that "etc.") - will be killed at birth in this Final Solution. Like old Sparta, new Britain will expose its infants and the weak will go to the wall, complete with firing squad. But what criteria will be used to judge the mental capacities of a newly born child? Or the insane, by extension, for which state no legal definition even exists? I know of a perfectly healthy and happily married young woman today who for the first 15 years of her life was regarded as mentally retarded and treated accordingly. Should she have been killed at birth so that the government would save enough money to maintain a cabinet minister's mistress for a week, or decorate St James's Park with a hundred marble bird-baths Kris Collier's name engraved in gilt letters on each one?

No, no-one who calls themselves an anarchist can support the sort of arguments Kris Collier puts forward, can afford to support them; for that belief in the freedom and absolute unhampered integrity of the human individual which is the very root of anarchism, as it is ultimately of all liberal and humanitarian thought, simply cannot co-exist with the desire to rob people of their power of decision. I may kill myself - I may even ask another to help me

kill myself - but if I, in my own arrogance and glory, decide to kill my fellow beings simply because I have decided that they are not fit to live, then I may call myself by many names, fascist, communist, nationalist, patriot, but anarchist is not one of them.

Colin Mackay.

It would seem that I didn't make it clear that far from proposing an 'euthanasia law', I advocate the rescinding of present laws which prevent euthanasia. Mein lieber Colin, in the present 'ordering of society' the State increasingly curtails our liberty in an interfering attempt to preserve life - I want a lack of State interference. As you point out, your life is your own, and so is your death - or it should be.

Yes, I expect old people could be persuaded to die - but do you really consider them so senile or weak-willed as to be tricked into an undesired end? I would have thought that the older and more experienced a person is, the better to make their own decisions - at present, they are not merely persuaded, but practically forced to continue living; they may be lonely, in pain, unwanted - but the State will unmercifully keep them alive in homes and by means of interfering social workers!

Mentally deficient children - I quite appreciate the force of your arguments, but maintain that it should be the right of the parents to make the decision (and the unfortunate 'etc.' to which you took such exception was intended to indicate extreme cases, not children who are merely retarded!) If a deficiency was obvious at birth, then by definition it must be extreme, since lesser deficiencies are only detectable as the child develops. As another letter pointed out, the difficulties of parents raising mentally handicapped children would be much reduced in a differently constructed society - such a child could be raised in a commune, and the responsibilities shared - in the present nuclear family, the problems are too often overwhelming.

So, euthanasia is the responsibility of the individual, or, as above, the parents of such children who will never be capable of such a decision.

K.C.

LETTERS

Dear comrades,

I see that my subscription to ANARCHY has now run out. I won't be renewing it, and perhaps it would be useful if I explained why.

It seems to me that ANARCHY has very little to offer nowadays in terms of news or analysis. It discusses things already discussed in a 100 other places, and instead of analysis we are offered a series of unreflective diatribes. Personally I am interested in understanding the situation we are in, and trying to identify the ways forward to a possible libertarian socialist future. I don't feel ANARCHY helps me in this.

You say that Anarchy is only as good as the feedback and material you receive. Isn't this a bit of a let out? In trying to publish the third issue of our local anarchist mag, Black Jake (Newcastle), we realised we simply didn't have enough decent material, so we dropped it, rather than publishing it just for the sake of it. You don't have to put out an issue at a given time. But if you feel that your current material is good enough, all I can say is that I disagree.

I hope these criticisms are taken in the comradely way in which they are intended.

If we all keep on working in our own ways, I'm sure we'll get something together in the end.

Yours, Martin Spence.

Dear Comrades,

We'd like to comment on the article on 'Work & non-work.'

1. I am quite sure that it is impossible to find anyone wholly involved in 'real work' or 'imaginary work.' For example, when a docker is unloading foodstuffs or medical supplies he is involved in work of benefit to the community, but when unloading weapons or nuclear waste, he is not. This doesn't mean we don't support him as a worker in his struggles. On the other hand, even those arch-doers of socially harmful work - the police - sometimes do work that is useful, i.e. at accidents etc.
2. Given the impossibility of dividing people up according to the usefulness or otherwise of their work, it is also impossible to allocate support on that basis - given the social and ecological climate at the moment I would say the work of someone in a car factory wasn't of much use, but this adds to, not subtracts

from, my support when they strike.

3. To say then that anarchists must work for the elimination of those involved in 'imaginary' work is far too narrow - what we must always make clear is that in this society, work will always be alienating, whereas in an anarchist society all work would be useful.

Love and solidarity,
Hastings Anarchist group.

Dear Anarchy collective,

I sent a reply to Sidney Street's article - 'Up the provos' in Anarchy 22, but I've learned that you didn't get it. So here's another go.

In the first 2 sections the author sets out the reasons for opposing the northern State, the British Army, and the loyalist paramilitary assassination squads. What anarchist would disagree with this? The only flaw I found was in... 'your gallant boys in khaki...' So the B.A. is not the armed wing of the State, but is delegated (with instant recall of course) by the populations of England, Scotland and Wales!

In section 3 we get to the meat of the article. Why support the Provos? 'The bulk of the young volunteers and officers, particularly those coming out of Long Kesh university, are radical left-wingers.' This observation has been repeated periodically by left-wing apologists since the first releases from Long Kesh, yet the author acknowledges it's only a recent development (this presumably avoids having to show much evidence). The little evidence that does transpire, "as a reading of Republican News recently clearly shows...", any left-wing rhetoric used is vanguardist - a revolution will be made on behalf of the people. The RN of Christmas '77 states... "UNKNOWN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC the republican movement set up three months ago in Belfast a body known as the Civil Administration. This body... was to... forge even stronger LINKS WITH THE PEOPLE and build the necessary base for the establishment IN TWO YEARS TIME of People's Assemblies." (my emphases). It's nice to know when the revolution is, and that it's going to be staffed with people! How many totalitarian states have emerged in the 3rd world since World War 2 using 'radical left-wing' rhetoric?

"The Provos...have consistently with great courage fought against the Army, the State and all its agencies..." Consistently? They claim to have blown up a small cafe in Rosemary St. last autumn, to give one example. Oh...yes...but that was a symbolic target, (inside the security zone), an economic target. All its agencies? Have they confronted those statist concepts which their own organization reflects, namely hierarchy and patriarchy - or will that wait until AFTER THE REVOLUTION? The Provos are also practising capitalists, owning at least 2 hotels and one garage. It is apparent from Eire Nua, the Provos long term policy document, that they want to set up their own Republican State with all its agencies.

If this is the organization the author has in mind when he says "At least we've started (to take our own freedom). Can you say the same thing?" Then I hope you can't.

The section on Irish Prisoners in England is important and useful, but the author does not seem to realise that as part of connected long term work the position of Irish prisoners is already receiving some attention eg Leeds Other Paper (no. 60 July 22) produced by a collective including several anarchists, carried a special report on Wakefield Prison with the emphasis on Irish prisoners.

To end up - as an Irish Anarchist I would replace Connelly's declaration, "...The British Government has no right in Ireland..." with NO GOVERNMENT HAS A RIGHT IN IRELAND.

In solidarity,
Belfast Anarchist.

Dear Anarchy,

With reference to the article on the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital by Charlotte Baggins in the last issue.

We think everyone who calls themselves anarchists would agree that the NHS is a hierarchical institution. We would also agree with her statements about the attitudes of the medical profession and the quality of treatment. What we can't accept is her conclusion - that if we can't have patient controlled hospitals, then better no hospitals at all.

Charlotte says she doesn't write from a back seat. But she has obviously never been seriously ill and denied access to a doctor; nor on the year-and-a-half waiting lists that are now common for hospital treatment, particularly in fields such as gynaecology. If so, she could certainly not celebrate the closure of the only hospital to make any concession at all to women's health needs.

Neither, presumably, has she worked in a hospital. The thing uppermost in most people's minds when they start a campaign like that at the EGA is not, would you believe it, "Revolution"; far from it; the only thing the EGA workers wanted when they started out was to protect their jobs. It is true that since the hospital went into occupation some of the participants have become politicised. However, revolutionary consciousness is not an overnight phenomenon, it takes time.

It is partly through participating in such campaigns that people will begin to see the need for real social change, and begin seriously to consider the need for a social revolution. Speaking as she does, so dismissively of the health workers' struggle to keep the hospital open, would she also feel contemptuous of the Grunwick strikers, the miners, powerworkers or firemen, all of whom are presently involved in struggle? Perhaps she may also have the 'correct' political analyses for their situation too, and would be unwilling to help them achieve their goals because they are not sufficiently revolutionary.

The article on the EGA is nitpicking, and a way of avoiding the real struggle in the real world, with all its contradictions. Of course we want patient power and more control over their work situation for the EGA workers. Indeed we would go further and say that people should be learning about their bodies and trying to deal with some aspects of health care right outside of hospitals and doctors' surgeries. But to propose change in the way this article does is both negative and arrogant.

North London Anarchist Communist Asscn.

Collective Reply:

We want to add a reply to this letter because we think it may have obscured the

issues rather than made them clearer, which we see as Anarchy's job in the future.

There seem to be three main questions:

1. Are hospitals useful? There is a whole range of opinions on this varying from those who see hospitals as the bees knees of the health service, to at the other end those who see hospitals (and the unfortunate patients in them) as glorified toys in the hands of status seeking doctors.
2. Do we support workers defending their jobs? At the extremes we would all agree, so not the police or army. But in the middle areas there are differences of opinion - the extent to which you will support a hospital worker will obviously depend to some extent on what you think of hospitals.
3. It's a woman's hospital. It is not the only one in London. It is questionable as to whether it does make any concessions at all to their health needs, and it is after all a general hospital not a specifically a gynaecological one. The only difference seems to be that those in Authority (doctors, consultants) are women. But so what?

Most of the above letter does not add discussion to these points.

Charlotte is clearly one who sees hospitals as some see concentration camps, but there is no need to attack or question her experience. In fact the personal attacks in the letter tend to destroy its serious content, firstly, because they tend to obscure the issues and secondly because being in fact erroneous those who know Charlotte will tend to believe the rest is in error too.

NB. The EGA has a stay of execution till March, and they are still trying to mend the lift. Contact the EGA Euston Road NW1.

Social Services Correspondent

A CONSULTANT surgeon who refused to treat a partly-disabled patient for three months, using him as a "pawn" in a bureaucratic battle with hospital administrators, is heavily criticised by the Health Service Ombudsman in his latest report, published yesterday.

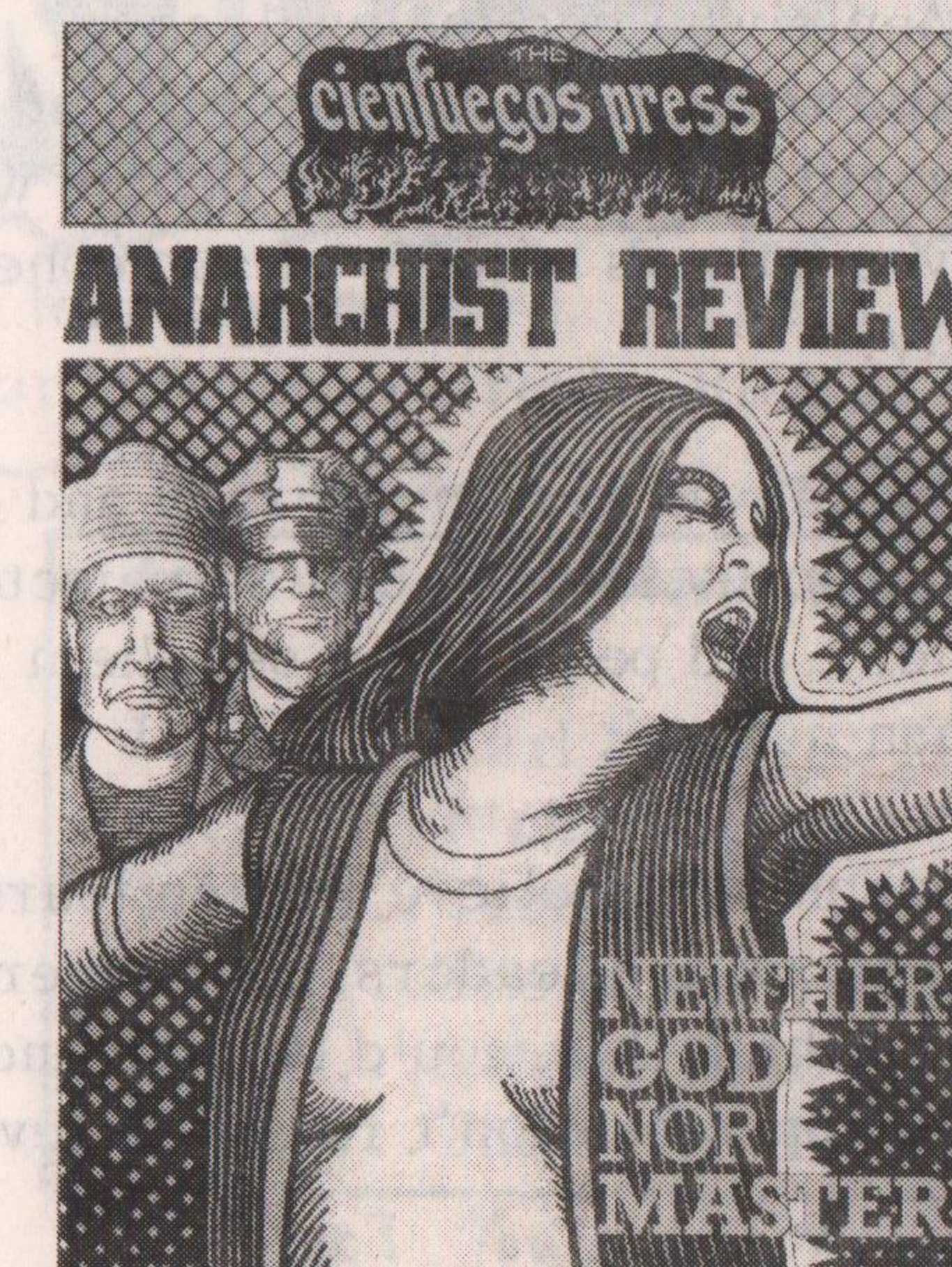
Another doctor, who took a decision described as "inhuman," sent a 103-year-old woman—who had suffered a fall—back to her nursing home in the middle of a freezing night. This was "in every particular a shocking case."

REVIEWS

CIENTFUEGOS PRESS ANARCHIST REVIEW, £2, Box A, Over the Water, Sanday, Orkney Scotland.

'Spouse I ought to do a really long 'in-depth' review of this unbelievable production as long as a 400 page book. Can't be bothered though! Read it for yourself. This, the 3rd issue from Cienfuegos, has grown into a mature and useful historical/philosophical/social and literary review of anarchism. It's got stuff about our principles, histories of the movement in Spain, Japan, Bulgaria and Mexico, bits and pieces about guerrilla warfare, anarcho-feminism, Germany, Science, Poetry and a couple of prominent anarchists in this century, plus a comprehensive review section of 40/50 books of interest to all revolutionaries. The breadth of ideas, the strength of the anarchist vision and the care and warmth of the production is really encouraging, making the Encyclopedia Britannica look like Jack and Jill. Worth every penny, days and days of fascinating reading, and Cienfuegos should be congratulated on bringing this out. Order copies through libraries or buy as presents for your mum and dad (or kids), fellow workers, friends, neighbours or local nazis. NB. Write to Cienfuegos for further information, donations, booklists and bookservice.

ES



Volume One No. 3 Autumn 1977

The latest Anarchist Review—and best so far.

ROUGH THEATRE PLAYS, 95p
32, Bravington Road, London W9.

Do you like reading plays? I thought I didn't until I read this book of their four street plays as seen and heard in parks, demonstrations and benefits. They are lively, funny and often as sharp as a sword, as they show us ordinary characters, very human too, caught up in the crazy web of London life. The four plays are about: a council worker who is ordered to board up his own house, someone trying to get a house off the council, two dubious characters out to make money by getting retired colonels to join their fascist group, and lastly about a politico who tries to evict a fellow-member from her house. The anarchistic politics shine through without dogma. Enjoyable reading (and dare I say it...performing).



THE HARE & THE TORTOISE

There are people who are more or less in a constant state of rage at the society in which we live...and there are people who feel like they can get along OK.

There are people who are only really happy when they are doing something (however small) to overthrow this society...and there are people who are happier doing something else.

There are people who see themselves as subjects of history, able to understand and change the world...and there are people who see themselves only as objects of someone else's activity.

There are people who see bureaucracy and elitism as ideas and practises which can be rejected and overcome...and people who see them as part of 'human nature'.

There are people who believe we can learn to live without bosses and leaders...and there are people who think this would be nice and wish it could happen but don't really believe it will.

There are people who are eager to try and figure out what we can do to begin the revolution

...and there are people who see only the difficulties, who don't know where to begin and believe it's impossible to find out.

There are people who believe the best of their sisters and brothers of the human race (even though this often seems contrary to the evidence)...and there are people who don't.

These differences can't be argued rationally. the only proof is the future. If a classless society is achieved, then the 'optimists' are right. If not, then the 'pessimists' are. *

But it does strike me that these sort of attitudes are perhaps far more relevant than, (for example) the precise wording of our position on armed struggle.

For will we ever be free if we do not believe it is possible that we can free ourselves?

ED CLARKE, California.
(from SYNTHESIS magazine.)

*Typists note: put me down as an optimist... why else would I be doing this ridiculous mag?

THE ANARCHIST DLTNS WKLY - No. 4

Groups

ABERYSTWYTH. Mike Sheehan, Newadd Caerlaan, Victoria Terrace, Aberystwyth.

BELFAST. For a Belfast anarchist contact B.A.C., c/o 52 Broadway, Belfast 12 (correspondence only).

BRISTOL. Anyone interested in forming group contact Bob, Flat 4, 14 Westfield Park, Redland, Bristol

BOLTON, contact 6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton (tel. 387516).

CAMBRIDGE, Raphael Salkie, Queens' College, Cambridge.

CORBY anarchists write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants.

COVENTRY write John England, 48 Earlsdon, Coventry.

DORKING Libertarian group, Howard Fuller, 6 Oak Ridge, Goodways, Dorking Surrey (tel. 07814).

EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians, Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.

EXETER Anarchist Society, Devonshire House, Stocker Road, University of Essex.

LEAMINGTON & Warwick, c/o 42 Bath St., Leamington Spa.

LEEDS, Tony Kearney, 4 Ingle Rpw, Leeds 7.

LEICESTER, c/o Blackthorn Books, 74 High-cross Street, Leicester.

OXFORD, Martin Harper, Keble College

PORTSMOUTH, Carolyn Cahm, 2 Chadderton Gardens, Pembroke Park, Old Portsmouth.

READING University Anarchists c/o Students Union, University of Reading

SHEFFIELD. Change of address. Sheffield Anarchists (& Libertarians), Box 1A, 341 Glossop Road, Sheffield 10 (tel. 667029 or 731780. Regular mtgs. Tuesday night at 10 Hanover Square, Sheffield 3 (tel. 731780).

Students contact Box 159, 341 Glossop Rd.

THAMES VALLEY, Adele Dawson, Maymeade 6 Congress Rd., Maidenhead (tel. 062 2974).

WESTON-super-Mare. Anyone interested in forming group contact Martyn Redman, Flat 5, 23 Milton Road, Weston-s.-Mare, Somerset.

LONDON FEDERATION of Anarchist Groups, Anarchist Black Cross, 123 Upper Tollynston Park, N.4. (tel. 691 6533)

Anarchy Collective, 29 Grosvenor Ave., N5 (tel. 359 4794—before 8 pm).

Brixton Anarcho-Situationists, 8 Heywood House, Tulse Hill, SW2 (tel. 674 6402)

Clapham, 3 Belmont Rd. SW4 (tel. 622 8961)

East London Libertarians, 123 Latham Rd., E.6. (tel. 552 3985).

Freedom, 348 Whitechapel High St., Angel Alley, E.1. (tel. 247 9249).

Hackney Anarchists—contact Dave 249 7042

Kingston Libertarians, 13 Denmark Road, Kingston-upon-Thames (tel. 549 2564).

London Workers Group, Box W. 182 Upper St. N.1. (249 7042)

Love V Power (write only) Desmond Hunter, 4 Swinton Street, WC1.

S.E. London Anarchist Feminist Group, 54A Westbourne Drive, Forest Hill, SE23 2UN (tel. 699 0268).

South London College, Knights Hill, West Norwood (tel. 678 7036).

KENT ANARCHIST FEDERATION: Canterbury (1 Steve Dawe, 12 Claremont Place, Wincheap, (2) University: Dave Norman, Univ. of Kent Anarchist Group, Keynes College.

Ramsgate: Peter Ford, 22 Royal Road. Sevenoaks: Jim Enderby, 70 Bradbourne Rd.

MIDLANDS ANARCHIST FEDERATION, Sec Louise Crane, 13 Arden Terrace, Braunstone, Leicester (tel. c/o Sid & Pat Leicester 064511)

NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION

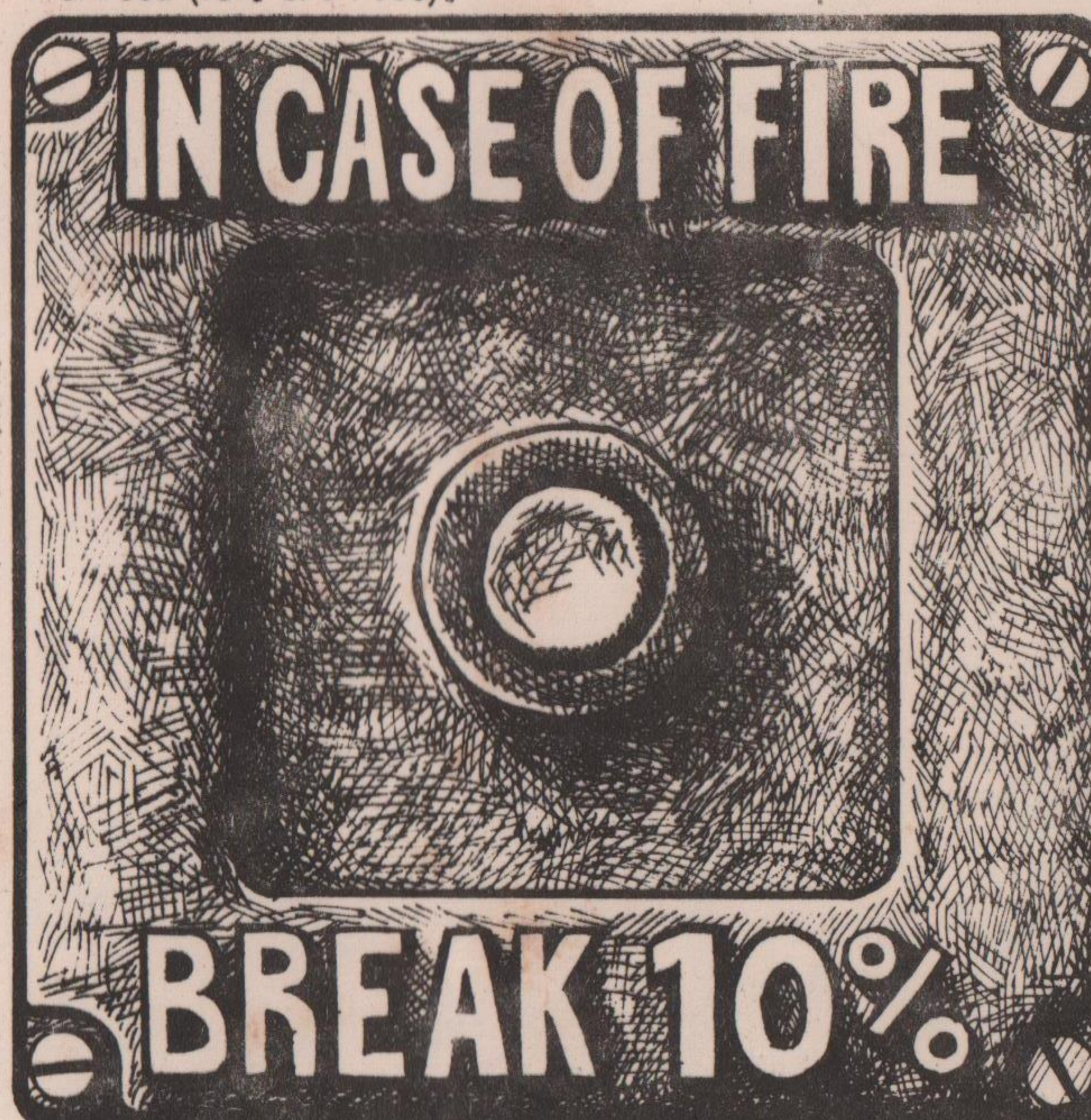
6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton (tel. Bolton 387516). Mthly mtg., newsletter.

ANARCHIST STUDENTS Network: Secretariat moved to Reading University Anarchists, c/o Students Union, University of Reading

SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION:

Aberdeen: Mike, c/o A.P.P., 167 King St. (tel. 29669). Also for Dundee, Fife, Edinburgh

Glasgow: C. Baird, 122 Benneray St., Glasgow G22 (tel. 336-7895), also for Port Glasgow and Stirling.



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Don't forget to read the other anarchist papers:-

ZERO (monthly), FREEDOM (fortnightly),

BLACK FLAG (excitingly irregular)

OPEN ROAD (Canadian Quarterly)

LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION, PEACE NEWS,

INDUSTRIAL UNIONIST, and many others.

And a fantastic round of applause for the first ever Irish Anarchist paper: BLACK RAG, from 52 Broadway, Belfast 12. Donations needed. Well done comrades!

Answers - TO FRONT PAGE QUIZ.

- 1.....Karl Marx.
- 2.....Richard Nixon.
- 3.....Trotsky.
- 4.....The gates of Auschwitz.
- 5.....Attributed to GOD.
- 6.....The seven dwarves.

All right? You bloody Anarchist!