

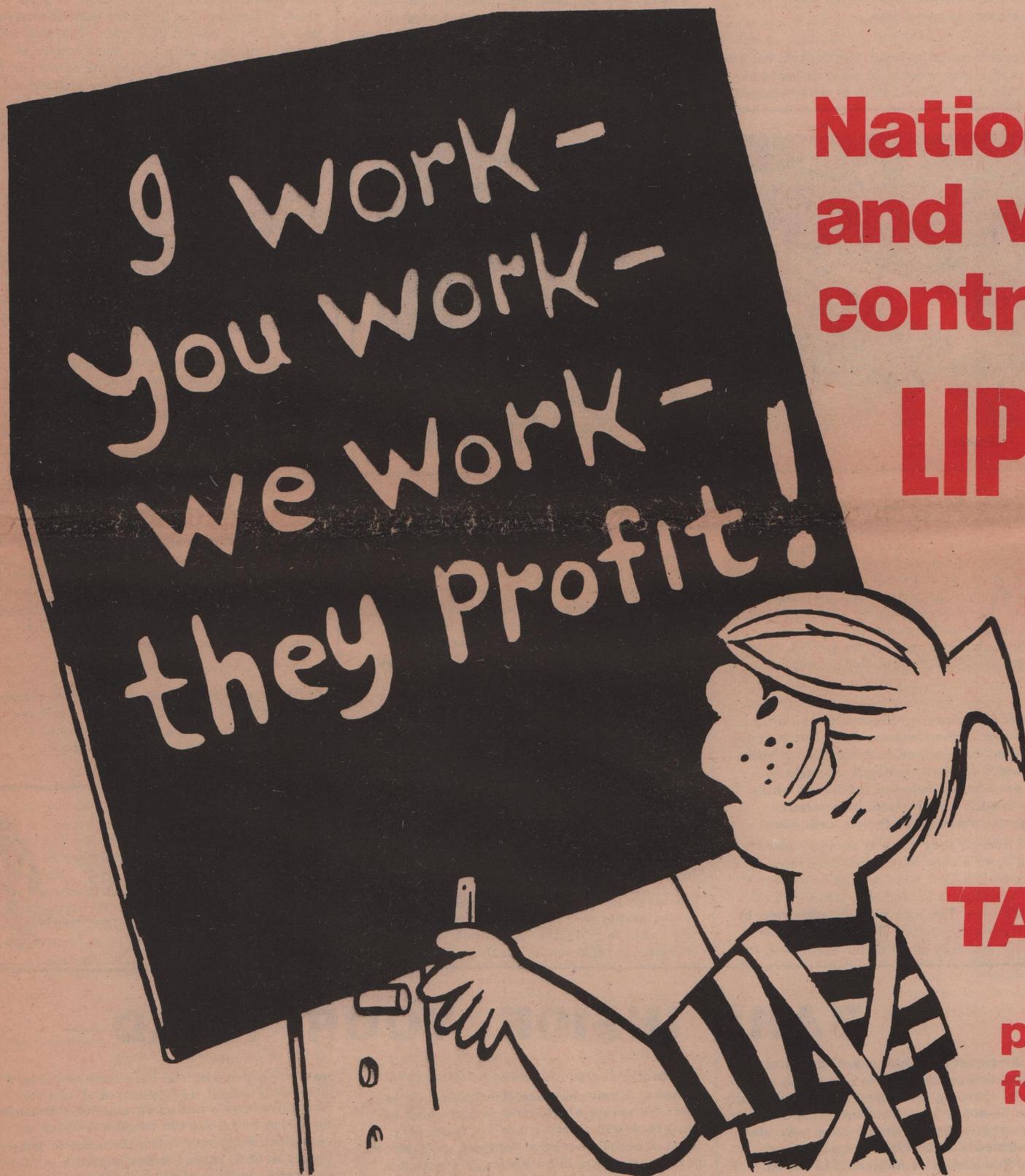
libertarian struggle



No.7

SEPTEMBER 1973

5p



**Nationalisation
and workers'
control**

LIP STRIKE

**COD
WAR**

**TORY
TAX TRICK**

plus usual
features

paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



CHRYSLER

Last month's L.S. looked at the reasons for the Chrysler dispute and mentioned the use of the flying picket, a tactic which has been used with success recently by miners, building workers, and now car-makers. This month a correspondent examines more closely the tactics used at the strike.

Chrysler, as the saying goes, needs no introduction, the name is synonymous with ruthlessness in seeking to defeat its workforce. This was demonstrated yet again when car workers, drawing on the experiences of their comrades in the mining and building industries began to apply the technique of the flying picket.

The company was being hurt and this without the necessity of bringing out all the Chrysler workers in Britain. This type of picketing was so effective that within two weeks the management announced that they would have to stop all vehicle production in the UK.

Trouble began with the so-called 'shoddy work' dispute at Ryton. It would have suited management down to the ground, had the strikers isolated the dispute by limiting themselves to picketing Ryton. A few informed workers, the Ryton Action Group, pressed for the flying picket, and some workers moved up to the Ansty car compound. From there, the picket moved on to Gosford Green rail-link with Linwood. This was at first thought to be the

key to Chrysler operations. The company switched to road transport, driving the stuff up to Leyland in Lancashire where a transport firm picked it up and hauled it to Scotland.

Thanks to well-built links with the workers at the Stoke plant, the picket was informed as to what was happening. There was nothing for it now but to picket Stoke which had become the new key to operations.

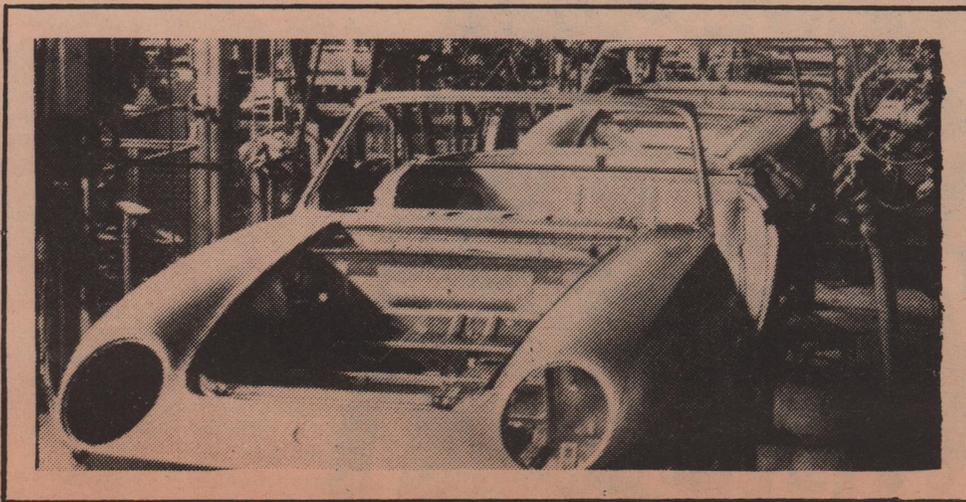
Chrysler failed to break this picket, but the lengths they went to in their attempts to do so should be a revelation to those workers

Coventry, the drivers unhitched the cabs from the trailers and drove back.

As stocks ran out, management put whole sections on brushing the driveway, painting, and generally giving the place a clean-up. The intention being to give the picket the impression that their strategy was failing. Another measure, in keeping with this approach, and having its own sinister implications for the future, was to have the company photographer take shots of all the pickets.

Even without their contacts within the Stoke plant, the pickets soon received proof of the company's desperation when they called in their gangster squads. The company, of course, expressed its regret over the fact that a Dunstable gateman was knocked down, and millwright John Docherty was 'accidentally' coshed when they inadvertently got in the way of the scab task force.

Working the 'crooks shift', these scabs



who still imagine that class-war is a passé term and all disputes are negotiable.

Some of these measures reflected the resources that were pitted against the strikers. Such as clearing and floodlighting a huge area inside the plant to accommodate a helicopter landing. The first solution to a flying picket... flying scabs? In the event, the plan was scotched - before it got off the ground. Stewards declared that they wouldn't handle the goods.

Other preparations reflected the growing desperation of the management and their inability to do anything effective to combat it. Some being reduced to attempting to smuggle in spare parts in the boots of their cars, while others tried ineffectively to burrow holes through the walls to the factory next door!

The nearest they came to success was in ripping down a door which wasn't covered by pickets as it hadn't been opened in twenty years. Six wagons loaded with parts for Linwood shot out. Two men took off after them by car, catching them up on the M6. Having been 'advised' that they might never again work in

pulled down a section of the fence and in the early hours of the morning allowed their cronies to slip through in bootleg convoy style, just like the good old days. At a pre-arranged signal they re-emerged, hammering through at top speed, and sending the pickets scattering for their lives. Thwarted by the nimbleness of the pickets, they prepared for the next encounter. This time as the picket fled they had the additional hazard of bottles, bricks and lumps of concrete hurled at their heads.

The police had arrived before this second break-out. Neither these acts of violence, nor the fact that none of these vehicles had lights on or registration plates, moved them from their role of silent witness. They simply watched the wagons take off up the road.

Chrysler's first answer to effective picketing was to hire thug-labour to do their fighting for them, and at £500 a load there was no shortage. Ask the Walker Brothers of Toynbee Street, Stepney. This was their judas-pay.

Footnote: Ford Motor Co. delayed announcing record profits for 1972 of £468 million until days after they finally signed this year's wage agreement of £2.20 across the board.

ILL-DIVIDED WORLD

While workers are fighting to sustain their existence and gain more than a mere living wage it must come as a shock to find that the inequalities of Victorian Society still exist. Recent figures issued by the Labour Research Department expose this.

One twentieth of the adult population of Britain own three quarters of all the personal wealth of the country. More than 8000 people receive over £20,000 a year (almost £400 a week) and 138 people receive (note that we do not use the word earn) a staggering £3,600 a week. There are those who would like to believe that the class structure of society is no longer with us but, knowing these figures, who will deny that Britain is a society of great class divisions? Yet there are parliamentarians who willingly accept this state of affairs and explain that this difference must remain, as the country does not possess the resources to rectify the imbalance. What they actually mean is that there are priorities - priorities for a smart young woman to have £25,000 spent on 'coming out', yet an old age pensioner may die with only cardboard to eat.

However this lack of concern and inactivity is not centred exclusively on the Conservative Party. What did the Labour Party do during their last term of office, and what will they do when they are returned to office to sweep Britain clear of the comen and parasites of society? It can confidently be said - bugger all.

A report has also just been published on Sweden where it is shown that after 40 years of Social Democrat government not even the beginning of a socialist society exists. Five per cent of the richest people have a third of Sweden's taxable fortune and 94% of industry is still privately owned.

After all these years the capitalist structure is no way threatened by this democratic 'socialist' government but in fact, because of the increased contact between government and business leaders, the system seems as ready as ever to withstand change. Motions passed at the Government Party Conference, to nationalise the banks, were never even seriously considered by the government.

The parallels between the Swedish Socialists (SPD) and the British Labour Party are obvious and a warning to those who believe a return to Labour will lead to socialism.



ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

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

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

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

As part of our attempt to put this kind of politics into practice, we have rotating editorship of each issue.

We are producing this paper (none of us are professional journalists) to provide one means of spreading some hidden facts, of publicising what workers are thinking and doing, to workers in other industries and other parts of the country, to talk about what claimants, women, immigrants, pensioners and schoolkids are doing, and how these battles can't be separated.

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

BARS INSIDE YOUR HEAD

Since the mid-sixties anti-psychiatry groups have attacked the oppressive role of the psychiatrist by exposing the violent and scientifically dubious nature of treatments involving drugging, psychosurgery, electro-shock. They have also demonstrated that the label 'mentally ill' as applied to a particular individual is not an objective diagnosis like appendicitis, but it is the product of a relationship between the individual and those around him, (family, teachers, police etc), who attempt to invalidate or neutralise any aspects of behaviour they might find threatening.

As a reaction to the tyranny of the mental hospital and the very concept of mental illness, self-help groups like 'People not Psychiatry', attempting to develop non-oppressive community therapy, have been formed. However it is only in the past year that in Britain mental patients themselves have been organised in the form of the Mental Patients Union to fight for immediate improvements and the eventual abolition of the institution.

The MPU is organised along similar lines to the Claimants Union and has groups in Leeds,

SE London, and Surrey, with two about to be formed in Birmingham and Manchester. On one level the groups aim to help patients held against their will whether they are trapped by legal or equally coercive informal pressures, and to represent them in their wrangles with the hospital authorities and the law. They stress that so-called 'mental illness' indicates a sick society rather than a sick individual; that the primary causes of the flood of people in mental hospitals is the result of the problems posed by bad housing, unemployment and social inequality. The callousness of the society which spawns such misery is reflected by the psychiatric industry which, caring nothing for the individual, attempts a patch-up job on the society. Success for a cure is almost invariably measured in terms of rehabilitating the individual housewife, schoolchild or factory worker back into the very situation which messed them up - only they're pushed back into it minus the ability to force any changes.

The MPU recognise that the destruction of the mental hospital and the eradication of man-

ipulative psychiatry can only come about as a result of a radical transformation of society. They also have a series of immediate demands for action to expose the lengths to which an authoritarian society will go in order to keep people in their place. Mental patients in their thousands are now enduring imprisonment with no release date, compulsory detention orders can be renewed indefinitely in the interests of public safety or that of the individual; infliction of irreversible treatments like lobotomy, treatment used as punishment, cheap labour masquerading as occupational therapy, using patients as guinea pigs for untested techniques.

It seems probable that psychiatry, by putting bars inside your head may to an increasing extent, take over the functions of prison. Brain surgery has already been offered by a judge as an alternative to a long jail sentence, and the emphasis on punishing homosexuality has been almost replaced by the idea of 'curing' it. One look at the repression masquerading as psychiatry in the USSR entitles us to ask the question 'Who is next?'

the press

No. 2 Nottingham Wednesday, July 11, 1973. 2p.

TRUST BUREAUCRATS & FAIL

The workers at T. Bailey Forman, Nottingham, printers of the local papers, were on strike for six weeks. The five unions involved: SLADE (lithographic Artists, designers and engravers), NGA (compositors), NATSOPA (printers), NUJ (journalists) and SOGAT (general) stayed solid throughout the struggle. In spite of this unity of effort, they ended by returning to work without having attained any guarantees whatever. To understand this failure it is necessary to follow the progress of the whole strike.

The trouble started when management told SLADE members on Monday June 18th to operate a new letterflex machine. They refused and three scabs brought out that issue of the paper.

Next day, the SLADE members were told to work the machine or be sacked. Again they refused and were sent home. The NUJ and NGA backed them. At a mass meeting, these two unions were joined by SLADE, NATSOPA and SOGAT. The strike was made official by all five unions and a strike liaison committee was set up. This left only the AUEW (engineers) and the EEPTU (electricians) members in. They stayed in throughout the strike.

On June 25th a national agreement was reached and locally the five unions drew up a settlement. On 27th TBF told them to return to work next day or get sacked. The firm also insisted on the right to re-negotiate local pay deals, and talks broke down. Talks were resumed but broke down yet again when the bosses insisted on written assurances that the scabs wouldn't be victimised. Threats were made to close the local morning paper, the Guardian Journal. This threat was withdrawn and then, six hours after saying it was put off, the bosses chief hatchet man announced on local radio that the paper was closed with up to 150 men losing their jobs.

Understandably the print workers' enthusiasm went into producing the Press. It was started simply as a strike tactic but became much more than that. For years the firm had ignored any suggestion that the workers

were more than cogs in their machinery. Now they had control over their production. The result was a convincing demonstration that workers' control does work.

As July began, TBF appeared to be retreating a little, but after three days the catch became obvious. The intention was to keep the Guardian Journal closed, leaving only the Evening Post. The bosses insisted on these terms and the workers refused to buy them.

Both sides settled down for a long fight. Five days later on July 4th, the strikers brought out their own paper - The Press - coming out every two days. In its nine issues it grew from six pages to ten, but even more impressive was the circulation which reached into thousands by the final issue. The paper was printed at Russell Peace Foundation's Partisan Press and workers spent up to twenty hours on its production.

Unfortunately, this had the effect of keeping the picket small and ineffectual. Nobody enjoys picketing - especially when there are only a few of you. Another reason for the small numbers on picket duty was that Union policy from the beginning had involved turning down offers of help on the line from workers outside the firm. Although non-strikers, apparently helped to turn out the Strike Liaison Committee's paper, the Press. Perhaps to release resulting tension, the Committee did organise a motorcade which drove around the TBF building.

PICKETS

The pickets - never strong & being manned by some who had never been on strike before had their determination weakened even further. On July 7th, a lorry delivering newsprint drove straight into the ranks of the pickets and then delivered its load. The next day another lorry crossed the line without obstruction.

By this time Nottingham City Council had followed its Labour colleagues at Mansfield.

The two councils were now not advertising in the scab Evening Post, were ordering council officials not to give it any information, and were barring its reporters from council meetings. This decision was followed by the Press being given the facilities that the Post had lost. The Post really began to get the hammer when on July 15th Newark District Council followed suit by withdrawing facilities from the Post. The Press was now getting plenty of advertisements as well.

Support was coming in from trade union branches, even from non-unionised workers. Notable among the unions offering support were various NGA and NUJ branches, NUT, UCATT, ASTMS, TGWU busmen, AUEW, US AW Co-op workers and NUPE. Although AUEW branches supported the strikers the AUEW members of TBF worked right through the strike, as did the EEPTU who played their usual role of open, unashamed scabs.

There were more talks on July 10th. Management still insisted on the closure of the Guardian Journal and on redundancies. When the director announced the closure on June 29th, he admitted that the paper had made appalling losses. It's clear that this was the real reason for the closure and the redundancies and not the strike. The strike only provided an excuse. But is it that simple? The new Letterflex machines which sparked off the strike were introduced only days before the national agreement was reached. Why didn't the bosses wait? There is only one answer. The whole thing was deliberately set up.

On July 23rd, talks started again when a team from the Newspaper Society (provincial newspaper bosses' organisation) met the NGA. On July 27th, the Press announced that the strikers were going back to work, but omitted to mention the terms. The essence of the return terms seemed to be - no guarantees, Everybody back, a month's truce and negotiations over redundancies. An early retirement scheme was mentioned. It seemed as though the Union leaders were relying on some people not wanting to go back.

By now, although the journalists were the most militant, NATSOPA and SOGAT were the two unions in control. They and SLADE voted immediately to accept the terms and return to work. The NGA was split. The NUJ were the only ones against the return to work, but agreed to return. In fact the terms, especially the redundancies were worse than they seemed. TBF has the right conceded to it of making people redundant. The one concession on the right to discipline scabs has been made meaningless by the union leaderships agreeing to reinstate anyone kicked out.

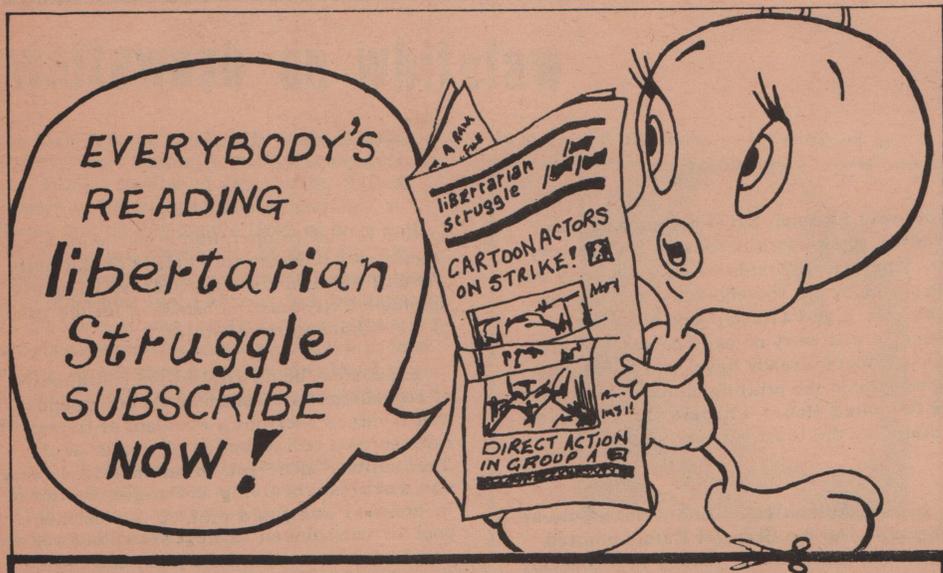
They went back when victory was easily within their grasp. Some of the engineers had come out and there was a definite possibility of the AUEW finally pulling them all out. There was massive trade union backing, including specific offers of help on the picket line. These offers included one from the building workers who in their first strike had ignored the Union leadership which was forced to tailend them for months. Help such as this would have been invaluable. The scab Post had a shrinking staff, was deprived of access to local councils & was so desperate that it had to virtually lift its news from a rightwing area paper in the city. Such was the victory of the strikers and yet they went back with no guarantees.

It is clear what they should have done. That is occupied T. Bailey Forman's, thus preventing the Evening Post being published. It would have made the Press even more successful and would have avoided the disastrous picket line. An occupation was even apparently considered by the Liaison Committee.

How democratic was this strike? The clear impression was one of NATSOPA and SOGAT in control and of a Liaison Committee which conveniently prevented militant initiatives by prattling on about the amazing unprecedented solidarity of five unions. Would the men on the picket line have said no to help from the building workers if there had been genuine discussion? I.S. organised a meeting aimed at finding out how they could get workers elsewhere actively giving support. It ended up with the people on the Liaison Committee working overtime to avoid the objective being achieved.

What was needed, in the face of the inevitable failure of the Union bureaucrats, was an attempt to set off some kind of rank-and-file initiative. Only I.S. was in any sort of position to set it off, with contacts in the strike and members in a range of other industries. Tragically, but typically, they didn't.

The need is to build, rapidly, an organisation which will provide this kind of initiative, a genuine and practical commitment to autonomous working class action. We need links between shopfloor workers who are prepared when necessary to bypass the Union bureaucracies and to expose them. We have to break with the tailending of Union bureaucrats and instead help to build effective, democratic rank-and-file workers' movements



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If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself.

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LOCAL GROUPS.

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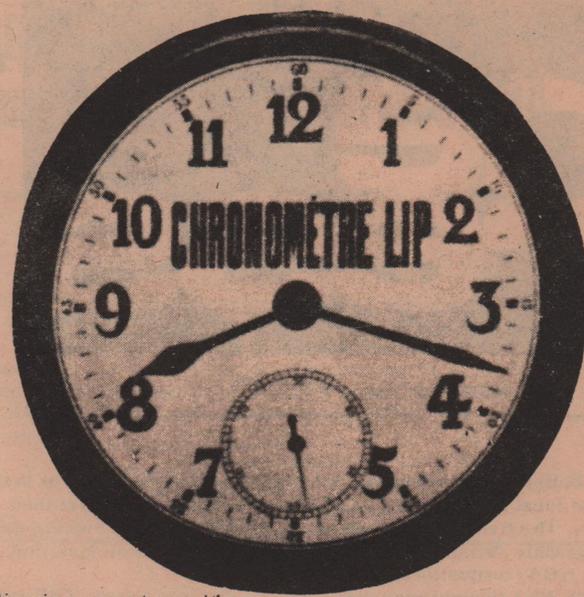
Hull: Marion McCartney, 21d Pearson Ave., Hull. North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E.17

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk St. York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

Leeds: Trevor Bavage, flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6.

There are also contacts in Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech, Liverpool, West, East and South London, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading, and Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to the North London group.

watch it!



STOP PRESS:

The occupation of the LIP works by 3,000 riot police has not ended the struggle but escalated it to a new stage. Important machine parts, stocks of watches, and the entire company records are still in the hands of the workers. Massive demonstrations in Besancon have turned into open confrontation with the police and despite the attempts of the Trade Union leaders to restrict support to one day strikes there are indications that many workers are prepared to go much further than that. Whatever the outcome for LIP itself the occupation has played a crucial role in exposing the policy of collaboration with the government which the CGT is engaged in, and in this way will contribute to breaking the hold the Stalinist CP and CGT have on the French working class. This brings the fight for working class power many stages closer.

On June 19th workers at Lip, France's best known watch company took over their factory in response to company announcements of massive lay-offs and a refusal to pay wages. The factory at Besancon employs one thousand three hundred and twenty workers, over half of them women.

For some time the company had difficulty in keeping solvent. There had been attempts at diversification and injection of fresh capital. But in April the parent company of Lip, Ebauches S.A., a multinational Swiss corporation, announced plans for 'restructuring' Lip, which would result in lay-offs of two hundred workers.

Workers responded immediately to these threats, stopping production to hold meetings on how to fight the proposals.

On June 12th the management announced it was applying for bankruptcy and that workers would not receive wages or holiday pay. Faced by this the workers locked in the managers and went through the company files. There they found plans for laying off nearly half the work force, plans for funds in case of 'social disturbance', a wage freeze and elimination of the sliding scale of wages and benefits that workers had won in May '68.

That night CRS riot police invaded the factory to free the two managers and intimidate the work force. In response, the next day workers occupied the factory, took over a store of sixty-

five thousand watches, and hid them. They decided not to sell them but to keep them as security and instead to sell watches they produced to ensure a living wage.



With watches being sold at 40% of the normal price, the workers are now able to pay their own wages. This puts them in a strong position. The capitalists are obviously worried by this, but cannot as yet move against the work-in.

The workers organised themselves into commissions to look over production, selling, propaganda, defence and showing round visitors.

At the factory the workers themselves are firmly in control. There are general meetings every day and they have organised whole series of entertainments. A child-care centre has been established, staffed by volunteers from the town and the factory has a reception

area for sympathetic visitors, set up with information boards. They have also found that they can produce in four hours, what took nine hours before.

The problem of securing raw materials has been overcome by an approach on two fronts to firms for supplies. A simple request to the management of the supply firm has been accompanied by an approach to their fellow workers; the threat of industrial action by them has assured a plentiful supply of materials.

They turned to the population of Besancon for support in their struggle against lay-offs and also to Swiss watch-workers who have had to face massive redundancy. Following widespread coverage in the French press, many factories voted for unlimited strikes in the event of government and bosses moves against the Lip workers.

The Paris Chamber of Commerce warned, "Lip is the most disturbing social conflict... because the continued social operation of the factory, after a robbery, in essence, of the shareholders, calls into question the principles of authority, of property, of responsibility, of respect for contracts, vis-a-vis suppliers and sub-contractors, which are at the very base of our economic system and of our commercial law."

The Pompidou government has also been aware that any strong move against Lip would be disastrous for them. In fact, Faure, President of the National Assembly, stated that the workers were capable of 'participation' in the running of a company. On these lines, the government proposed that the workers should run the factory as a co-operative. However they rejected this carrot, saying they did not want to be capitalists, "we are struggling against capitalism."

It seems the government will have to turn to their tried and trusted ally in their fight to control the French working class - the bureaucracy of the C.G.T. - the Communist controlled Trade Union federation.

As a pointer in this direction it is interesting that the C.G.T. refused to sign the manifesto drawn up by the Lip section of the CFDT (the other main trade union federation), and the Lip Action Committee. The manifesto, in which workers are obviously well aware of the revolutionary implications of their occupation, stated "Our struggle can be an important gain for all workers, if tomorrow other attempts are made in the same direction, if we collectively think out methods of action to make them most effective."

As we go to press, the outcome is uncertain. Dismissal notices have been served by the official receiver but bumed and the workers have refused to have the gates of their works to be officially sealed.

According to the press relations officer, the workers would accept an offer from a capitalist if he would sign a written agreement to their demands: no dismantling of the plant, guaranteed jobs for all workers and maintenance of all other previous gains. Their acceptance of this would be understandable, since their occupation like most others, was a defensive action against redundancies.

Although complete workers self-management can only be realised in a free socialist society, a spread of occupations is a great step towards achieving this, and any offensive action against the Lip workers, by the bosses or the State, could trigger this off. Every occupation shows the workers not only their capabilities of running production, but also their collective power to run society.

'The Lip workers have shown that the bosses are not indispensable and that the workers are capable of organising themselves, on their own, even in the economic sphere. It is not only the management of Lip that has been challenged, but the whole employing class.'

(Part of the manifesto of the LIP action committee and the CFDT)

... THEY PROFIT

Recently there has been a lot of publicity about proposed reforms aimed at wiping out 'The unacceptable face of capitalism'. An example of this is the White Paper which attempts to placate public opinion on corruption, insider deals, etc as seen in the Lonrho and Poulson affairs. Their concern is to convince us that the capitalists play the game cleanly. Workers participation, however is supposed to change workers' conditions directly - alleviate boredom, give workers a say and dispel feelings of being a cog in a machine.

This new panacea of workers' participation has been expounded by the Daily Mirror / Daily Record, in a four day teach-in. The T.U.C. and the C.B.I. have prepared cautious reports on it and the government is shortly to issue a Green Paper on the subject.

Most attempts at workers' participation have come from the Continent, although here there have been worker-directors on the boards of nationalised industries, like Ron Smith of the British Steel Corporation. Of course there has been no change in the condition of ordinary workers. There are also worker sharehold-

ers in I.C.I., though not with enough shares to give them any power. Volvo of Sweden has now replaced assembly-line production with small groups of workers producing the cars from start to finish, with election of Foremen.

COMMON MARKET

Most important for this country are the Common Market proposals. These suggest Supervisory Boards for firms, composed of representatives from shareholders and from workers, two-thirds shareholders, and one-third employees, who are responsible to the general meeting of shareholders.

This Supervisory Board would nominate a directors' board, to be responsible for day-to-day running, and also nominate the management, chairman and personnel director. They would exercise control over them and have unlimited powers of inspection. The other main proposal from the EEC Commissions is for Works Councils to deal with the Board on matters of pay, holidays, hours and general conditions.

The drawbacks to these schemes are immediately obvious. You might be able to

elect your foreman, but if he has no control over his supervisors it doesn't get you very far. Supervisory Boards will always carry out the policy of the shareholders, who are the ones with a guaranteed majority. Works Councils will carry no more power than the Union leaders already have, and judging by experience in the printing unions, where there are federated House Chapels, the pace is dictated by the least militant unions.

Indeed the whole position could hardly be otherwise. As the Glasgow Herald pointed out, 'who would invest heavily in a company if he could be outvoted by his workers?'. Why then all this talk of 'workers participation', when it is fairly evident that it will make no difference?

The moves started after the events of '68 in France, when workers and students took control of their work and their lives. European capital was forced to think of ways that would give workers the feeling that they had some influence on decisions that affected them, while capital still retained control.

The other main reason for workers partici-

ipation is that co-operation by the work force is seen as necessary to increase productivity. the gulf between US and THEM which snarls up productivity must be banished for the good of all - Daily Mirror editorial.

Expansion, being vital to the continuation of capitalism, is commended on the grounds that it raises everyone's standard of living; more so than redistribution of wealth would. The reality is different. Inflation erodes every one's standard of living and wages are frozen in order to safeguard profits. A permanent pool of unemployed is necessary to force people to move around for jobs, and create the mobile labour supply necessary for expanding economies, which is at the same time less well organised. Expansion may create more goods but these obviously go to those with buying power, not to those in need. Capitalism cannot solve the problems of bad housing and rising prices. In its present crisis it is attempting to make the working class pay - through the Fair Rents Act and the Industrial Relations Act, the wage freeze in Britain and similar measures elsewhere. Now with workers participation being floated about, it is asking the working class to help in destroying its own ability to fight back and win control.

PUT SOCIALISM BACK ON THE AGENDA

The fundamental aim of the socialist revolution is to change the worker's relationship to the means of production. To make work a part of human life dominated by the worker's desires and needs rather than the central part which dominates every other aspect of his existence.

Workers' control of production is therefore central to a socialist system - which is not just concerned with the material conditions of life but with altering the way people live, and through collective action give the individual worker control over the way he lives and the things he does - for the first time in history.

Once these basic points are lost or forgotten, all sorts of weird and wonderful formulas and definitions of socialism can flourish and do a great deal of harm. For many years, the followers of Lenin (Stalinists, Trotskyists, etc.) argued that the essentials were State planning of the economy, State control of industry, and State regulation of foreign trade. With this yardstick, the Stalinists are able to say that Russia is socialist - and thereby give the enemies of the working class the best weapon in their armoury. The Trotskyists used the same measure to say that, despite Stalin, Russia is a workers' state (which means basically that it only needs a revolution to place a Trotskyist leadership in the Kremlin and very little else needs to be done). This, even though the working class itself is economically exploited, politically powerless and is not even allowed any means of expressing its wants and needs, since its trade unions are State organs for increasing production and work discipline. Trotsky himself said that Russia was in transition, that this idea of a corrupt bureaucracy balanced on top of a basically healthy structure was not in any way likely to last long - either the bureaucracy would re-make society in its own image and establish all the capitalist norms of exploitation or the working class would settle accounts. If anything, the bureaucracy as a group is in a stronger position than it was when Trotsky made his analysis forty years ago. It doesn't rule through individual ownership of property and factories like the western capitalists but as a group the bureaucracy do own and control the means of making wealth and do have the use of the surplus wealth extracted from the work of the Russian workers. If Trotsky was right (and no major upheavals have occurred either by workers changing the system or the bureaucracy making any basic changes either) then either Russia is a capitalist society of a different type from the West - and Russian workers need to make a revolution as much as we do - or the words 'transitional', 'unstable' mean 'can last fifty years with no basic change' which, for one thing, must worry anyone trying to make any use

of Trotsky's ideas.

The same formula - of State intervention etc - was accepted in the social democrat (i.e. the Labour Party and others like it) idea that nationalisation - taking industry under State control by peaceful parliamentary means - was the gentlemanly way to socialism. In this view, the institutions created by the capitalist class, manned by the capitalist class and based on the capitalist-inspired illusion that since we all vote for MPs ours is a basically equal and democratic society, can be used by a majority of well-meaning intellectuals supported by the trade union hierarchy (who wherever they originally came from live in a style closer to the bosses than their average member) to gently ease out the capitalists. After a few years, with nobody noticing, we would arrive at a just, socialist society. In 1945 the peaceful, parliamentary road got its chance. Labour won a massive majority, people had had enough and voted for change. Despite the advances that the militant mood of the country made possible, (one of the paradoxes of the parliamentary way is that before reforms are accepted there must be a strong movement which will make the ruling class unwilling to oppose them directly, yet electoral politics acts to demobilise the will to struggle and instead makes people rely on the reformers) the basic nature of our society was in no way changed. Anyone who thinks we're living under socialism needs his head examined.

What did happen was that unprofitable industries were taken over and used to provide a service to private industry, which is subsidised by the taxes we all pay. Profitable industry e.g. State steel industry prices are kept down so that industry is paying cheaper prices for its raw materials and so making higher profits for themselves. A few time-serving bureaucrats who forty years ago lifted a pick or spanner get knighthoods and jobs on the board - which of course also include the old owners who not only get exorbitant compensation but also fat salaries. The big trick is that when these operations are carried out by a Labour government, working people are supposed to give them the benefit of the doubt and hold off fighting for better wages and conditions. This makes the Labour Party very useful to British capitalism in times of crisis. The Tory press goes 'soft' on Labour, the reforming image gets a brush-up, Labour leaders appear at big strikes, pose for the cameras with their thick mugs of tea and then clear off to Hampstead to draft new schemes for 'technological revolutions' etc. etc.

THOUSANDS STRIKE

Between them, the Labour Party and the

Communist Party have made socialism a dirty word. The British working class, one of the oldest and most experienced in struggle in the world, has become demoralised time and time again. The general disillusionment with politics, voting for professional amateurs like the Liberals and in a small way the rise of the fascist National Front, etc., are all indicators that, on the political level, working people are fed up. This is not to paint a false picture of a working class that doesn't fight - on the contrary, militancy against the Tory policy of cutting living standards by rising prices and freezing wages is probably at a higher level than for years. It even goes so far as challenging the government, as when last summer hundreds of thousands struck against the imprisonment of the dockers shop stewards.



REFORMISTS

But it is at this point that another idea from the reformers' bag of tricks becomes dangerous - this is that economic issues and political issues are separate. If you want political changes

you vote for Labour or Communist Party reformers - if you want a better standard of living through better wages or conditions you do it through the union. This separates the way you are living from what you want to be living like.

It makes politics abstract and one-step removed and it also makes it taboo to argue that a particular demand is political because of the policy of the government in opposing it. Anyone who has ever attended union branch meetings knows that you usually get a 'no politics here'

from the chairman as soon as you start to try and link things.

Politics is about making decisions, what decisions, and for whom. Socialist politics is about the working class making decisions in its own interests and is relevant to every aspect of life because it questions every aspect of the way we live and is concerned about how we're going to change it.

Socialist politics is what the working class needs to solve its problems - to open the way for socialist politics means to argue that working people must make their own decisions about the problems that affect them, must carry out their decisions and must overcome everything that stands in the way. Before we can hope to successfully deal with this Tory government, which has to be done because every bread and butter question (whether it's rents, school meals, public services, better conditions, better wages, etc.) comes bang up against the fact that the Tories need to raise profits for their class by cutting our wages, putting our prices up and attacking our means of defending ourselves by gaoing militants, fining unions, etc. We have to push aside the enemies in our midst who talk about waiting for another Labour government, who oppose discussion on topics they think 'aren't union business', who monopolise communications between sections of the working class and oppose co-operation between them. We must remember the simple truth from which socialist ideas originate - everything in this society is produced and run by working people. They can't exist without us. The strength of the working class is enormous. We lack nothing but the will and the imagination. Years of Labour do-gooding has damaged our self-confidence but the Tories are as frightened of us as they can be - look at all their measures, from anti-union laws to aming the police.

The first step on the road to a society worth living in - a society where we as a class run our society for our own needs - is to fight to run the organisations we created to fight with. We need to control our unions, our Trades Councils, to do away with all restrictions on communications or else to ignore them. To fight to make the old slogan 'an injury to one is an injury to all' applicable not just to workers in factories (though that is essential God knows) but to everyone who is part of our class. To fight so that pensioners struggling for a living wage, women fighting for equal pay and decent nurseries and schools for our kids, people on council estates fighting rent rises, have the backing of organised workers in their factories. Once this process is started, working people will soon regain their dignity, their self-confidence. We will then realise that for us anything is possible.

whitewash on whitelaw

The long delayed and finally watered down report of the Community Relations Commission was finally published last month. Titled 'Report on Intimidation and Rehousing', it claims that 40,000 people (80% of them Catholics) were intimidated out of their Belfast homes. The government-financed agency completed the report last February but, because of its contents, it was rewritten. Many of the more controversial parts were deleted in this edition. It was then privately circulated to the security forces and government agencies only.

A third version, highly abridged and diplomatically worded, was sent to Mr. Whitelaw. A fourth version, even more reduced, is the one now published!

The report discusses within the general context of intimidation, the general role of the security forces. In a section that was deleted from the original report, reference was made to the attitude of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in the Rathcoole area of Belfast. It stated "Definite sympathies with the Ulster Defense Association have come to light in our investigations. The loyalist outlook of certain members of the R.U.C. colour their perception, judgement and response in dealing with intimidation and its attendant problems."

Dealing with the massive intimidation in



two other Belfast areas, Cregagh and Willowfield, where the Catholic population have now almost disappeared. "The most common grievance voiced by the people in both estates who want to stamp out intimidation, is that of police inactivity." This is borne out by the figures relating to convictions. In 1971, there were 2,746 reported cases of intimidation. There were 10 convictions. In the first six months of 1972, there were only two convictions out of the 1,300 reported cases of intimidation.

The army is also criticised in part. It is claimed that the Parachute Regiment was responsible for driving some catholic families from their homes in the mainly catholic Ballymurphy area.

"In certain communities in West Belfast, Army conduct has been an instrument of instilling fear into the civilian population and a major reason for people leaving the district. This statement was dropped in later versions. The Report goes on, "There are documentations of individuals and community groups faced by intimidation crises, who have appealed for help directly to the administration and army command. There are instances where this help was delayed or refused." It claims this was the case in Rathcoole, Cregagh and Willowfield.

The report highlights the sort of problems the authorities face in their attempt to make the police acceptable in catholic areas. Politically, the future of the police is of vital importance. Whitelaw has repeated constantly that he is not prepared to tolerate any drastic alteration to the RUC, possibly fearing a loyalist backlash. It remains to be seen whether this report will alter his view. However, the real tragedy will remain, the spectacle of the Northern Irish working class exhausting itself in a war of bloody and futile attrition while their real enemies, their class enemies, maintain their ownership and control of the country's economy.

CENSUS COVER-UP

It has come as no surprise that, after all the assurances given by the government regarding the privacy of the answers being demanded in the 1971 Census, the contrary is the case.

This is revealed in a recent high-level report criticising the security of information gathered in the 1971 Census. The report 'Security of the Population CMND 5365' has been heavily censored by the government in an effort to evade public scrutiny. The Office of Population Censuses and Surveys computer centre at Titchfield in Hampshire was found to have inadequate security arrangements against the risk of sabotage to the computer installation, identification of individuals from the census office files, deliberate alterations to information either before or after it had entered the Main Census File, or unauthorised removal of census information.

The security is reported to have been reinforced at Titchfield, though who will watch the watchers, and to what eventual use will all this knowledge be put?

TORY TAX TRICK

Recently, the Select Committee on Tax Credit published their report on the proposals made last October by the Tory government to radically alter the taxation system (Report of Select Committee on Tax Credit, June 1973). The press blew up one of the main proposed changes to the Green Paper proposals - that Family Allowances should not be abolished but should be increased to £2 a week for each child.

It looked like a victory for the Family Allowances campaigns, and to women struggling to cope with present rising prices it must have gone down as well as the government hoped. Even the Sun cynically commented that one of the main reasons for it was that the Tories needed it to retain the housewives' vote.

The proposals are a good publicity stunt, nothing more. At present, parents have tax relief on £200 a year for each child in their family, and a Family Allowance of 90p a week for the second child, and £1 for the third and all subsequent children. (There is no Family Allowance for the first child.) Over a year, this means that for a first child parents gain the £65 they would otherwise have to pay in tax on the £200 of their income, for subsequent children they have the £65 plus up to £52 a year Family Allowance. Under the proposed new scheme, each family will get £2 a week per child, to be called a 'child credit', but the tax relief on each child will no longer exist. Hence families will receive under the new scheme virtually the same amount of money each week as they do now - the difference is only pence.

So, apart from the increased allowance for the first child, families are only gaining on the roundabouts what they have lost on the swings. And how much will those extra pence buy when the scheme is introduced - a look at Concorde in a museum?

One point which the newspapers didn't mention is that the extra cost involved in the administration and staffing caused by payment of child credits to mothers at the Post Office instead of with the husband's wage as well as the cost of administering the whole scheme itself, will almost certainly be met from the money allocated to the whole scheme. In other words, money available for tax credits will go to pay for the bureaucracy it needs. Thus, in fact, families will be losing much of the so-called gains in this way. The Select Committee estimate these costs would reduce credit levels by almost 20%. The government estimate spending an extra £1300 million a year on tax credits, but in their paper on Public Expenditure they assess the cost of the scheme as 'neutral' - the scheme has to pay for itself. Also, one third of the extra £1300 million will be given to the 9½ million people living in households receiving over £2000 a year, but only 10% to the 10 million people in households receiving less than £1000 a year. The rich get richer indeed.

It should also be noted that these are proposed figures still, and that once the government has gained its publicity as the friend of the struggling housewife in her battle against rising prices, when it comes to actually im-

plementing the scheme they may find that they can't actually afford it, for they wonder "where their resources on this scale will necessarily be available". In any case, since the scheme doesn't come in until at least 1975, £2 per week then will be a pittance.

The April issue of 'Libertarian Struggle' analysed the whole tax credit scheme proposals, and reported on the Family Allowances campaign. It is possible that the government agreed to retain Family Allowances in response to the petitions and protests that the women's movement Child Poverty Action Group and the Family Allowance campaigns organised. They must have realised that these campaigns were a measure of the anger which would be caused by removal of Family Allowances, and that this would lose them the housewives' votes which had brought them to power in the 1970 election.

However, the proposals on the rest of the tax credit scheme remain basically unaltered. The scheme still only involves wage-earners, temporarily-unemployed (not yet registered for work) people, students, people dependent on supplementary benefits, the self-employed, families of strikers and of prisoners, are still not covered by the scheme. Unsupported mothers may not be included either - this depends



A CREDITABLE COLLECTION

on yet another government committee. Benefits which are tax-free now - unemployment, sickness and injury benefits, maternity allowances and invalid pensions - become taxable at the 30% level under the new scheme. The tax credits will still be paid by employers, which will increase their hold over their workers. The system will still increase the extent of means-testing. The credits will still be non-cumulative - strikers lose their credits for each week they are on strike and will not be able to claim them back afterwards like tax rebates can be at present.

There are two main reasons for introducing the tax credits scheme. Firstly, it is supposed to bring us into line with the EEC countries, which suits business interests. Secondly, it is an attempt to curb wage demands by replacing

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This journal is not intended to be a 'heavy theoretical' in which academics hand down established truths

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Having established the newspaper and begun the organisation of a libertarian revolutionary movement involved in everyday struggles the ORA hopes that establishing this journal for the development of ideas will prove to be another useful addition to the development of the revolutionary movement.

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them with dependence on state handouts to individual families. These handouts can be altered at any time by the government in power. This is made clear in one statement in the June report which says "our failure to provide a system of family support has encouraged wage negotiations to be based on the needs of the family man ... it is essential for family responsibilities to be dealt with outside the wage system". Yet another way of attacking militancy in the working class.

The Family Allowances campaign as waged by the women's movement may have allowed the government to pull £2-worth of wool over the eyes of working women and prevented them from seeing beyond the question of Family Allowances to the more important and far-reaching tax credit scheme. Where the tax credit scheme itself was brought up, stress lay - as would be expected in a campaign to involve women - on the ways women would be affected. The wider demands of the campaign were payment of the Family Allowance to every mother for every child, including the first child an increase in the amount for each child Family Allowances to be made tax-free mothers on social security must get the Family Allowance on top of the social security payments maternity benefits must remain tax-free

RADICAL FEMINISM

However the tendency of the women's movement was to campaign solely on the question of the right of the woman to receive the Family Allowance using such slogans as 'Hands off our Family Allowance', the campaign was called the Family Allowance campaign; most of the leaflets stressed this question, only mentioning the rest of the tax credit scheme briefly, if at all. One of the points that was stressed was that a man might not give his woman the money from his wage packet which represented the new child credit. This encouraged women to see men, and not the government or the needs of capitalism, as the enemy.

This tendency is, in the main, due to the prominence of radical feminism in the local groups who took up the campaign in practice. Radical feminists in essence believe that 'men are the enemy'. Not all women who call themselves radical feminists would admit to this extreme view but this view permeates their practice. It is the views behind the campaign's use of the question of whether women would get the child credit money from their men instead of the question of the tax credit scheme itself, and the political reasons for its proposed introduction.

The radical feminist view is also the basis of a campaign which has been linked to the Family Allowance campaign as an extension of it - the Wages for Housework campaign. In demanding wages for housework, the role of women in the home will be reinforced, and so also the isolation of women into individual homes separated from the rest of the working class movements. Radical feminism thus strengthens the capitalist's hand in dividing the working class.

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

The reasoning behind the Wages for Housework campaign is that 'money is power' and the only way for women to have power is to have money of their own. This suggestion was even put to the government Select Committee - that all wives, earning or not, be paid a tax credit and that non-working mothers of children up to 16 be paid £4 a week tax credit. Such suggestions were, however, rejected by the Committee.

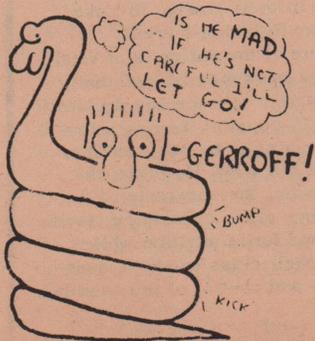
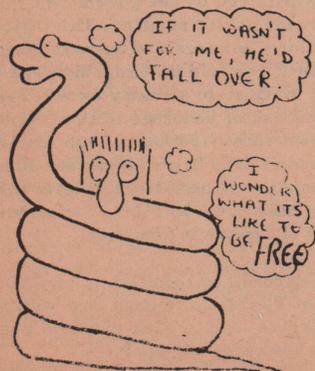
The result of the limitations of the Family Allowance campaign was that the government was able to collapse the whole thing by the announcement apparently granting the demands relating to the Family Allowance whilst leaving the tax credit system unaltered.

There is no doubt that the role of women in this society must be changed in a socialist revolution, and that campaigns must be undertaken which will involve women in realising their capabilities to organise themselves, bringing them out of the isolation of the home and into contact with other members of the working class in struggle. To combat sexist ideas within the working class and within revolutionaries, the questions of the role of men and women in society and the structure of the family must be consistently brought up in the context of such campaigns.

SEXISM

The tendency of women organising alone to see their campaign solely in sexist terms must be challenged. The government may have collapsed the campaign on Family Allowances, but since the tax credit scheme won't come into operation until at least 1978 there is still the possibility of a campaign against it. Because of the scheme's far-reaching implications, this campaign would unite mothers, claimants and the unemployed and workers of both sexes. The previous Family Allowance campaign was not effective. It apparently won a victory - we need to win the war.

snake





letters

Dear Comrades,
I was very impressed by *Libertarian Struggle*, which I have only recently come across, and particularly by the references to IS rank and file activities. I thought you might be interested to know something about their paper the 'Steelworker'. This caused a minor sensation in Corby when copies of the first issue were received by a member of the local Trades Council because it published a BSC master plan for running down the steel industry and forecast that Corby was to be 'almost entirely obliterated'. A spokesman for BSC denounced the plan as a forgery though this is certainly not true and the Corby Communist Party, in an interview with the editor of the local paper, condemned the activities of 'extreme left wing elements whose sole purpose appears to be the destruction of democratic society'.

But where did the paper come from? This is explained in 'Steelworker' No. 1 which bears an uncanny resemblance to early issues of 'Socialist Worker'. A meeting of steelworker militants was held at which it was decided that a newspaper was needed. Where or when this meeting was held is not revealed, neither is the number of steelworkers in attendance or the works that were represented. However, Jim Higgins, writing in 'Socialist Worker' of 31.3.73 assures us that papers such as this qualify as 'genuine rank and file papers' because everyone involved in their production is a worker in the respective industry. By this definition if a group of National Front members started a paper aimed at workers in a particular industry, as long as they themselves were employed in that industry it would be a genuine rank and file paper.

The 'Steelworker's' base in the industry is Lackenby No. 5 branch of BISA KTA and when 'Socialist Worker' compiled its round-up of the Mayday strikes (6.5.73) it said of this branch: 'BISA KTA - Lackenby No. 5 - wanted to take strike action, but had been ordered not to by full-time officials and told that if there was a strike the branch would be investigated.'

My own branch, Corby No. 11 was ordered also by the BISA KTA E.C. not to strike, as was every branch and when a meeting of the joint branches was arranged to discuss the strike despite this instruction, a further directive was received, this time from the divisional organiser. Both these instructions were ignored by the members of Corby No. 11 who met to discuss the Mayday protests and duly passed a unanimous vote in favour of a 24-hour stoppage.

Our branch has no self-styled leadership and is never likely to be threatened with investigation, unfortunately this is not the case in Lackenby No. 5 and if 'Socialist Worker's' report that the branch wanted to strike is true, the leadership there can only be an impediment to action.

Yours fraternally,
A Steelworker

Dear Comrades,
On the 22nd May we had a general meeting of the ORA groups in Hamburg. A comrade from Bremen was also present and the groups from Heidelberg and Essen sent letters. In Hamburg we have two groups and another group is 'under construction'. Most probably another Hamburg group with 10 members will join the ORA during the next weeks. Groups in Bremen, Heidelberg, Brunswick and Hanover are also 'under construction'. A group in Essen has declared to be an ORA 'group of sympathisers'. They agree with our statutes except the point, where workers-councils are concerned.

Last weekend a congress near Marburg took place with the aim to form an Anarchist Federation of Germany. But according to lack of information, nobody from Hamburg was there. But we will be informed by our comrades from Southern Germany.

As you see, things are going quite well here. Just recently we had the visit of a girl from the French ORA.

fraternally yours,
J.G.

Dear Comrades,
I read with interest the oil article in your June edition of the newspaper and feel your readership may be interested in the following.

In Nigg Bay, NE Scotland, Brown and Root build fixed platforms for the oil rigs. They are an American company and established their construction works in the area two years ago, after their planning application had been hastily passed when they promised that they would train and employ local labour. They also hinted darkly that if the contract was not forthcoming shortly, they would have to look for a site, the other side of the North Sea - Norway. Their contract was through in four months with not even a clause stating that they should rehabilitate the area when they eventually leave.

True to their word, Brown and Root opened a welding training centre and trained some 671 men and in September last year several hundred of them began work on a fixed platform to be ready for August this year. These construction teams worked round the clock in twelve hour shifts in order to get it finished. However it was found that the quality of the welds was deplorable due to the inexperience of the men and the inferior teaching techniques of the Welding Training Centre. 9.5% of the welds had to be redone by outside, experienced welders. With the bad quality of the workmanship the above case can be cited by future construction firms to destroy any argument that they should give employment to locally trained men.

The main result of the oil related industry is the soaring price of land. For a semi-detached the average price is around £15,000.

Scotland's economy has not been helped by the oil. Thousands of Clydeside steelworkers are threatened with unemployment while the steel being used in Nigg Bay comes from Europe and Japan. Of the oil related equipment only 12% is made in Britain.

It is therefore fair to say that only a small minority of scots, such as landowners, property developers, benefit from the oil industry.

best wishes,
M.

Dear Comrades,
On the question of free speech it was stated that the action of the CPE-ML was understandable if technically wrong. You fail to realise the fact that fascist tactics encourage these actions in order to gain sympathy and anti-left publicity furthering their cause and making the left appear more oppressive than themselves.

If we want to create freedom in a new society we cannot do so by approving the use of prejudice against prejudice. If we are not to create a sympathetic atmosphere towards fascists we must treat them, not as political dangers, but as cranks in the same class as flat earth believers and 'the moon is green cheese' believers.

You also talk of free speech for workers as a principle, falling for the old ploy that whatever a

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member of the working class does is right and everyone else wrong. The working class contains the bulk of reactionary elements - albeit caused by oppressive conditioning - quite partial to the persecution of hippies, homosexuals and revolutionaries.

Everyone has the right to free speech, even racists and bigots. People should be encouraged to respect free speech in this society otherwise we cannot expect toleration after the revolution.

Yours Fraternally,
G

Dear Libertarian Struggle,

Congratulations on your exposé of IS activities in Rank and File. However, it comes as no surprise to me. People involved in the squatting campaign of 1969 will remember how IS attempted to exploit it and then pulled out when they found they didn't make much headway. In the Brighton squats of 1969 IS intervened, hoping to recruit people involved to their organisation rather than with a view to helping people in struggle. When they met with hostility they withdrew and proceeded to denounce the squatting as adventurist and reformist, when what was most needed at the time was solidarity.

Another even more nasty example of IS opportunism was in Brighton in the same year, when a group of rank and file busmen decided to bring out a leaflet on conditions. etc. An IS student who happened to be working on the buses at the time volunteered to have it duplicated by his group. He then called a branch meeting where it was decided the statement wasn't worded in the way IS thought it should have been. They changed the leaflet and printed it with no consultation back to the busmen, much to the latter's rage when they found out.

In such a way is the vanguard theory of IS reflected in its action.

Yours etc.,
N.H.

Dear Comrades,

Whereas the editorial collective correctly replied to Rick Hatcher's letter by saying that IMG want their share of the Rank and File power structure and that genuine rank and file groups have a purely libertarian history. I think the statement that libertarians have failed to provide a perspective in Rank and File is incorrect and diversionary.

In short, we should never have needed to provide an alternative perspective in the first place if the group had been a genuine rank and file group i.e. federated groups of militants in the NUT working in their local Associations, with the journal as a forum for ideas and the Internal Bulletin as a means of linking the groups through exchanges of information. Instead, now that IS has made a thorough attempt to turn it into the party branch in the NUT, we need libertarians to get up and explain to the large numbers of disillusioned Rank and File members where they have been conned, and get a genuine rank and file movement off the ground. In fact, a group that embraces all the contradictions and problems of teaching as well as the economic ones. This is at present happening, and it was incorrect of the editorial group to give the impression that libertarians in Rank and File had failed.

Fraternally
J

P.S. All pissed-off Rank and Filers please contact 68a Chingford Road London E.17

REVIEW

THE LIFE OF ANDRES NIN by Wilebaldo Solano. Published by the Independent Labour Party (15p)

Andres Nin was born in 1892 and died in 1937. In many ways he was a model revolutionary. He was a militant activist within the Spanish working class movement for many years, and also held important positions within the international communist movement. Undoubtedly he was a man of great courage and firm revolutionary commitment. From the Anarchist point of view he was undoubtedly mistaken, when he helped to found the Spanish Communist Party, when he urged the huge anarcho-syndicalist union, the CNT, to affiliate to the Red International of Labour Unions (and thus accept the notorious '21' conditions which ensured the subservience of the International to Moscow). While in Russia, as a prominent member of the International, he saw the degeneration of the Revolution into a grotesque parody of socialism and remained within the Communist Party that was the perpetrator of this crime. Again, when on his return to Spain he helped to found the POUM (Unified Marxist Workers Party), by an unprincipled alliance between Left Oppositionists and the group headed by Maurin which was fundamentally petty bourgeois. Most disastrously of all Nin was wrong during the Spanish Revolution of 1936 when he and his party refused to urge the formation of workers councils that would fight the middle class governments of Spain and Catalonia, as well as the fascists, on the basis of a programme for the revolutionary transformation of Spain. Here Nin, like many sections of the Spanish Anarchist movement (it must be admitted) fell victim to vacillation and once again proved the truth of the saying that 'Those who make revolutions only halfway, dig their own graves.' In 1937 Nin was captured by the Stalinists in Spain who were engaged in a bloody fight to defeat the revolution that had been made by the Spanish working class. They accused him and his party of being Fascist agents - a charge that nobody could believe. Nin refused to 'confess' to this and died under torture, murdered by his former comrades in the Party he had helped to found.

Solano's pamphlet takes up none of these points in a satisfactory manner. Instead we are told that within Russia Nin 'fought to keep alive the spirit of Bolshevism', without any analysis of what this 'true Bolshevism' was, or why it was such a tiny movement in comparison to the orthodox Bolshevism of Stalin and his supporters. This is a typical example of the way that Solano avoids discussion of the political issues that faced Nin, or any serious

assessment of the way in which he solved them.

When the pamphlet discusses the most interesting and crucial period of Nin's life, the period after his return to Spain in 1930 when he helped found the Spanish left opposition and subsequently the POUM, it is even more unsatisfactory. No discussion of the issues involved in the break from orthodox Trotskyism; no discussion of the amalgamation between the Left Opposition and the Workers and Peasants Block headed by Maurin; barely a mention of the programme of the new party, the POUM; no justification of the participation of the POUM in Popular Front coalitions with Stalinists, reformists and the middle class parties. Above all, Solano remains uncritical of the way in which POUM abandoned many of its revolutionary principles after the revolutionary events of July 1936. There is no attempt to justify Nin's entry into the Catalan government as minister of Justice, nor the suicidal failure to support the Barcelona workers in their last attempt to halt the tide of Communist-led counter revolution in May 1937. What we are constantly given in place of serious analysis is the theory that the POUM and Nin were driven by events into the abandoning of many socialist basics.

In general it is extremely rare for biographical works to be of much value to the revolutionary. This grossly overpriced pamphlet is no exception. Anarchists have not got much to be proud of in the way that some prominent members of the Spanish movement behaved during the revolution. They made many of the same mistakes that Nin and the POUM committed. Pamphlets of this kind, that are exercises in syncophancy and hero-worship, do nothing to help us learn from these mistakes. One can't help feeling that the only reason that the ILP have printed it now, is to remind the political public that the group of aged reformists that composes their organisation were once connected with a party that had some revolutionary pretensions, however distorted. All the pamphlet does in fact, is to confirm that there still exist some people who view revolutionary history through a fairground mirror that makes cripples whole again. Nin was a heroic personality, and all revolutionaries can learn much from both his successes and, especially, his failures. This pamphlet teaches us little about either, and its uncritical manner does little credit to Nin, whose life was spent in criticism of the social system and the deformed 'working class' Parties that were challenging it. He deserves a better testimonial than this.

COD PEACE?

This article has been written by a former seaman whose perspectives, both on the conditions in the fishing, and present fishing dispute in Iceland we welcome. However, without being fully informed of the situation, we should like to point out that the fishing industry is organised differently in Scotland; a large number of the boats in the north eastern ports (Buckie, Macduff, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Lossiemouth and others), being bought on H.P. by their skippers. We are reasonably sure that the situation that the author is advocating would cause the Scottish fishing fleet to shrink and be replaced, if at all, by capitalists on the English pattern.

Many people must have been very surprised to see British capitalism's seafaring Securitor, the Royal Navy, rushing to the aid of the most exploited section of all the working class, the deepsea trawlermen of Hull, Grimsby and Fleetwood. Do they really care after all? Have they at last decided to do something about the 1% of trawlermen who are killed every year, (four times the number of coalminers),? Or is there more to fish fingers than meets the bird's eye? And why wage a war over cod, of all things?

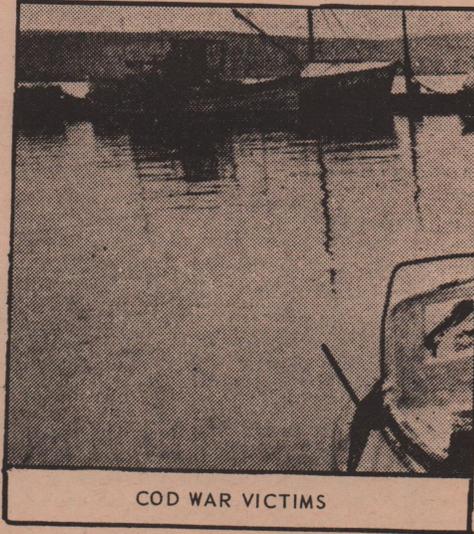
The answer lies, as might be expected, in profit margins and capital investment: British trawler owners stand to lose a great deal of money if Iceland 'wins' the Cod War. The British deepsea trawler fleet is run on classical capitalist lines, with companies buying a vessel, up to about 200 foot long, and finding a skipper and crew of about twenty to sail in it. The men are then paid on a differential

reward system - they get a basic wage, varying according to their position in the ship's hierarchy, and a share of the value of the catch. The galley boy's share is minute, the deckhand's is just enough to whet his appetite, while the skipper's is so immense, that not only are the rest of the crew star-struck with the possibilities of promotion, but the skipper is also highly motivated to work the men to the limit, and to apply the full legal horrors of the Merchant Shipping Acts if anyone steps out of line. The trawler owners end up with a tightly knit industrial unit of highly motivated and closely controlled workers - their only production problem after that is finding the raw material - the fish.

The deepsea trawler owner, in his search for profits, with his large vessel, has to find somewhere where the fish are in plentiful supply, not hampered by strict catch restrictions which conserve the young fish (but restrict the profiteer), preferably near to Britain, so the fish doesn't deteriorate too much with travelling, and in a cold climate to save on spending potential profits on expensive ice-making equipment.

So where does he go? Why, to Iceland of course, the major spawning ground of cod in the Atlantic. At all seasons of the year vast numbers of fish are just there for the grabbing and the Icelanders' own inshore fishing industry has, until recently, not had the political, economic, social or military strength to stand up for itself, or for the ecological balance of the ocean. One man's capitalist-exploited

deepsea fishing ground is usually another man's subsistence-level inshore ground. Remember the fuss about Britain's inshore grounds two years ago, when the nasty French, German, and Belgians wanted to do the same to us as we've been doing to Iceland for centuries? At last the Icelandic government refuses to see its only natural resource destroyed by the greed of profiteers several hundred miles away.



COD WAR VICTIMS

The Icelandic fishing grounds are being seriously overfished - it takes three British ships to catch the same amount in the same time as two could catch, only eighteen months ago. A fifty mile limit is a necessity for Iceland if they are to preserve their fishing industry and the communities and way of life that depend on it. They say that if the British really cared about conserving fish stocks they would fish elsewhere, round the Equator for example, where great shoals of fish live lives of carefree innocence, far from the threat of any Cod War.

switch grounds, they could say they had to do it to preserve the men's jobs, but they would not be able to improve conditions or increase pay just yet, as they had to spend so much money on the new vessels. So the men carry on as before, victims of a vicious exploitative circle.

What the Cod War is really doing is threatening the profit margins of the trawler owners, not the jobs or lives of the British trawler men. The capital investment involved in fishing the Icelandic grounds is minimal. Boats are of the lowest effective standard and the greatest possible age consistent with staying afloat, the fish are free and close at hand, and crew costs are a joke. The present deepsea trawler fleet is a disgusting collection of ageing hulks, where men live in conditions that make life in the trenches look positively idyllic. The deckhands sleep in cramped, cold, wet, bunkrooms, spend their off-duty moments squashed into a messroom ten foot square, and work 18 hours out of every 24 standing on the pitching deck, often in daylong darkness lit only by arclamps, with seas continually breaking over them, and ice covering their equipment. All this for about 25p an hour.

To move to other fishing grounds is technically feasible, socially desirable, and ecologically a necessity: but the short-sighted British trawler owners do not wish to know that, as they think they would lose money. The easiest solution for them is to have the Royal Navy stage a shoot-out with the Iceland fleet - a crude fight over a free factor of production. What they should do is start a crash building programme of new vessels designed for fishing the South Atlantic. This would obviously take some years to complete, but in the meantime they could divert some of their boats to the White Sea, further to the North, and at the same time agree a phasing-out period with Iceland whereby a reduced number of British vessels are allowed to fish within Iceland's 50 mile limit, for perhaps 5 years more, on the understanding that during this time the British owners will be building new vessels. But this is asking for a degree of common-sense and humanity that has been noticeably lacking from their behaviour in the past.

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ORA Publication

Tyranny of Structurelessness by Jo Freeman
Obtainable from Leeds Womens ORA, 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6. 5p. plus 3p. post.
'Libertarians in all movements should study this pamphlet because it contains the core of the argument that ORGANISED libertarians have stated'. review in April L.S.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS

MANCHESTER AREA REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISTS
Fortnightly public meetings
Thursdays, 8.00 p.m.
Lass O'Gowrie, Charles Street

LEEDS LIBERTARIAN SOCIALIST DISCUSSION MEETINGS at the Trades Hall, Upper Fountaine Street.
Wed. Sept. 5th "Has the Labour Party a Future?"
Wed. Sept. 19th "Lessons of the Spanish Revolution."
At 8pm. All welcome

GLASGOW ORA meet wednesdays 8pm at the Iona Community, 144 Clyde St.

LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS' FEDERATION?

Anyone interested in "a Student Federation within ORA, mainly those involved in Union work"?
Write to Larry Law, Berks Coll. of Ed. Students' Union, Bulmershe Court, Woodlands Avenue, Earley, Reading, Berkshire. READING 666506.

SCRAPPING

Why send the Royal Navy to do battle with the obviously worthy Icelanders then if there are fish elsewhere just for the taking? Because this would mean scrapping a large amount of capital equipment, three-quarters of the present deepsea fleet, and replacing it with new and very expensive vessels. These new boats would have to be very different from most of the present ones, with ice-making equipment on every one; they would have to be bigger, as the voyage would be much longer than the present 3 to 5 weeks, and the boats would therefore need much-enlarged storage space; and they would need better and more reliable equipment to cope with the different conditions.

ABNORMAL LIFE

Switching grounds is not expected to create labour difficulties, however, as the bosses in this industry have a particularly strong hold over their workers. The deepsea trawlermen of Hull, Grimsby and Fleetwood have little alternative employment. Once a man has gone to sea on the trawlers he enters a world which is very difficult to escape from, as his skills are not applicable to any industry ashore, and his life is so different from the 'normal' world of families, mortgages and mass consumerism, he very soon becomes dependent on his job for his identity. If he stopped being a Trawlerman he would become unreal - he must work. So when the trawler owners start talking about the Cod War threatening the trawlermen's livelihoods, they know they can count on the support of the vast majority of their employees whatever the merits of Iceland's case. And if the time ever came when the owners had to

The Front kept back

Crawley Trades Council has cold shouldered requests by the Crawley branch of the National Front and Crawley Young People's Housing Association (YPHA) to be represented on the Trades Councils Housing Action Committee which will be launched in September.

Dick Miles the Chairman told the Trades Council meeting that two letters he had received one from the Front and the other from the Housing Association, were both signed by Mr. H. W. Hill.

The Young Peoples Housing Association is a front for the Fascist NF, and has in recent weeks been holding regular meetings. The Front seems to have the support of a local advertising news sheet with a circulation of 27,000 in which the NF's racist views are regularly printed.

Locally, members of the ORA and IS have begun a campaign to fight the spread of the NF's fascist views.

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