

Libertarian STRUGGLE

for Workers' Power

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Social Security Who are the real scroungers?

PROSECUTIONS for 'abuses' of the social security system are on the increase. *LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE* examines here some of the abuses the system is burdened with that receive little or no publicity.

At times like these, what better to warm the hearts of reactionaries everywhere than reports in the unbiased, 'free' press of scroungers being given their comeuppance by the fearless purveyors of law and order.

"The time has come" the editor said "to screw the bastards to the floor."

What if electricity bills did go up 50% in a year and potato prices 200% in three months?

Petrol's down 10% overnight.

Rules

After all, claimants had a rise in November and, if they behave themselves, they may get one this year — well within the £6 limit of course.

The rules must be obeyed at all cost. Ask any SS scrounger.

Dear Landlord...

Ask the landlord who ignores the rent increase limits which were laid down by the Government after the rent freeze.

Ask the landlord who charges £30 a week rent or the one who has a house turned into twelve bed sitting rooms at five or six pounds a week each.

Ask the landlord who by-passes the Rent Acts by letting accommodation as 'bed and breakfast' and charges two separate rates — the higher being reserved for SS claimants because he knows that the state will pay up.

Who does the press vilify?

Certainly not the capitalist parasite who simultaneously runs down 'layabouts' while benefiting from SS payments which, in turn, help him afford accountants and lawyers to evade paying tax.

'Real Evil'

The real evil, the press tells us, is not exploitation but communism and anarchy, not homelessness but squatting.

"The time has come" the landlord said, to kick them in the balls."

Dear Boss...

We can't buy houses, can't rent them and nowadays nobody's even building any. If we work, we're expected to be quiet and get the country out of the shit.

We can always claim Family Income Supplement (FIS) or rent and rate rebates.

Excellent! The workers' taxes used to

support employers who pay sod-all in wages.

Does our 'socialist' government change things? Not bloody likely. They're too busy pissing it up against the wall at banquets with their banker friends.

Even their own part of the magnificent social security system helps bosses at the same time as they berate the workers for being either lazy or disruptive.

If you're out of work and start a job on a week-in-hand the SS pays you for two weeks.

In fact it really pays the boss not to pay out any of his hard-earned capital for two weeks and at the same time gives him a hold over you.

It does the same if short-time working is forced on you, and again if you're laid off for a short period.

Perhaps the most blatant abuse is when bosses shut down factories for holidays and tell you to claim SS because you're not entitled to holiday pay.

Compare this approach to what happens if you go on strike.

Then, only your dependents can claim SS and you can bet the press will slag you off.

"The time has come" the employer said, to snap the sods in two."

Dear, dear...

Who are these bosses? What do they contribute?

They are the self-employed who want to be free of the already meagre amount of national insurance that they pay.

Tax Deductible

They tell the Inland Revenue their home is an office, their wife is a secretary, the dog is for security, the phone for business calls.

Almost everything is tax deductible.

Yet these are the people, the same ones who run down the unemployed as being work-shy.

They gain the most from state benefits to which they pay the least.

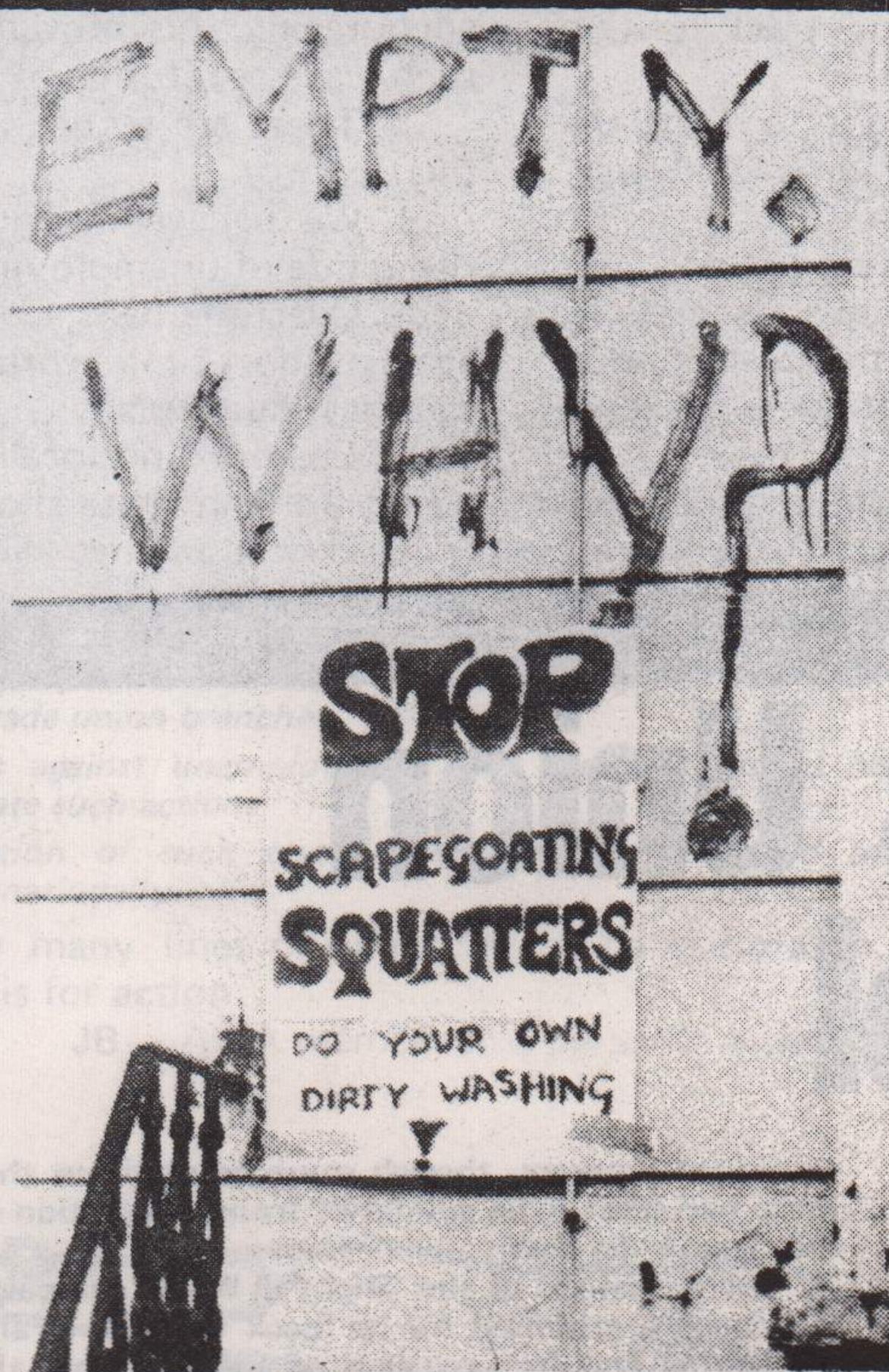
These are the real scroungers.

The SS and FIS claimants, the low paid, the Pay As You Earn tax payers are the ones who are abused by the state but are expected to go down on bended knees and thank our benefactors.

Not only that but we are expected to respect the entrepreneur, whizz kid, politician and bureaucrat who govern our life.

"The time has come to liberate ourselves." All together now.

Bert Brickerhoff



TRESPASS LAW Bosses and landlords' charter

THE MACHINERY for 'reforming' the law on trespass, as reported in the February edition of *Libertarian Struggle*, is still grinding on.

Fortunately, the alarm over the Government's haste to get the new legislation through Parliament was mis-placed.

Now the bad news. The Law seems as bad as ever.

The Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law, CACTL, is actively briefing opposition up and down the country.

On February 15, in the Lee Centre in southeast London, at a meeting organised by the newly formed Lewisham Libertarian Group, Frank Keeley from the Campaign brought the news up to date.

UNKNOWN

The Law Commission, responsible for the new proposals, only lets out leaks about its intentions.

Frank Keeley explained that the chances were, now, that the new law would limit its attentions to squatter situations.

Squatters are already a convenient scapegoat for bad housing conditions, as well as many other evils.

Nonetheless, holes would be left open for judges to gradually extend the arm of the law to throttle industrial occupations and picketing.

Trade union militants have made it plain that they will make it awkward for the Law if it threatens to limit their strength.

They have leaned on the union

INSIDE:

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LAMBETH WOMEN FIGHT
FOR EQUAL PAY
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THOSE BRICKS!

bureaucracies who, along with a handful of MP's, are opposing the Criminal Trespass Law.

CRIMINAL

The real change in the law is that these proposals will make squatting and occupations *CRIMINAL* offences.

At present, these are *CIVIL* offences.

Instead of long drawn out court wrangles, the property owner would only have to call in the Old Bill, and have them make arrests on the spot.

There is no intention of shelving the proposals of the Law Commission.

The Government will introduce a Bill and get it through soon, even if it takes priority treatment.

The Government will not be scared by the February 28 demonstration: it will only serve to make more people aware of the intentions.

The meeting in Lee has not left it at that.

As many local union branches and community groups as possible will be contacted to get greater opposition to the proposed law.

We urge all squatters, trade unionists and other working people to do similarly in their own workplaces and community.

Literature and advice can be had from CACTL, 6 Bowden Street, London SE11, telephone (01) 289-3877.

by

IVOR GRIEVANS

paper of the Anarchist Workers Association

Grim It Is

IT'S BEEN A grim winter. The big freeze is on in more ways than one.

Education is being cut. There'll be less teachers (higher teacher unemployment), less primary school teachers, larger classes.

There'll be fewer courses in sixth forms and colleges. The colleges of education and the universities are starting to cut back, the variety of courses are chopped, lecturers are made redundant.

We're going to have to put up with rail fare increases, and the cutting back of road and rail transport. We're going to have to suffer from reductions of the level of services in the parks and refuse collections.

There'll be cuts in housing programmes and housing maintenance. We're going to see massive cuts in

Action

the health service.

That is, unless we do something about it.

This means a big fight by workers to stop manning levels being cut, hospitals being closed, rail track torn up and bus routes abandoned.

Any initiative to mount campaigns to fight the cuts, whether in industry or services, or on a local level, should be advocated and supported.

Local cuts committees should be set up, too, not only including unionised workers but tenants associations and women's groups, as for example in the East London Committee against the cuts, which produces its own newspaper.

These cuts committees have to relate the cuts in

social services to the rise in unemployment: the two are inseparable.

Scapegoat

While we face a cut in the real wage through the attacks on the social services, unemployment and short-time working is increased.

The crisis forced by the bosses results in them trying to cut costs and to load the great weight of this crisis onto working people's backs.

Hence the lay-offs and cut-backs.

The local cuts committees should be developed and move towards a national conference to exchange information and to co-ordinate national action.

The activity in Germany and Italy around transport, electricity, gas and rates increases is an interesting example of how to fight on other levels.

The refusal to pay transport increases — on a mass level and an organised campaign in Italy not to pay gas and electricity increases backed up by workers encouraging this movement and offering solidarity by such ways as refusing to cut off supplies, show the way.

These are tactics that have as yet not been tried in this country.

We believe in encouraging stiff resistance to the rising tide of unemployment.

Overtime bans, slow-downs and strikes can be used against short-time working and workplace occupations against redundancies.

Factory and local work-place committees need to be set up, and these should link and combine with cuts

committees.

The claimants' unions can have an important role to play, in conjunction with employed workers, in fighting around the demands of full pay, work or no work.

They should try to stop unemployed people being used as scabs to break strikes.

Above all, they should fight, with their sisters and brothers in work, for higher unemployment benefits and social security, on which the State has placed a freeze.

The 'Fight to Live' campaign should be supported by everyone who see these demands as vital, and who see the inadequacy of the defeatist and mystifying slogan of the 'Right to Work' campaign launched by the 57 varieties of Leninists.

In the battle to maintain living standards, it should be seen by all sections of the working class that the £6 pay limit must be busted right through.

The cold winter of discontent must lead to a thaw, and rising militancy.

We have to really fight hard if we want to keep the gains we have won — again through fighting really hard.

We don't see a long-term solution to increasing misery and poverty without the destruction of the system which causes it.

We make no bones about it — after every other tactic and form of struggle has been tried by the working class revolution must be used as the solution to the crisis.

Free socialism is the working class answer to the grievous bodily and mental harm from the bosses.

Editorial Collective

Claimants Union Day School

THIS WAS initiated by the National Federation of Claimants Unions on the subject of 'Unemployment and the Fight to live.'

The school hoped to add body to the 'Fight to Live Campaign' which could move from people solely involved in the CU's to people in and out of employment.

The Day School took place on February 1 in Central London.

It proceeded along the lines of different workshops to various topics, followed by report backs, and then a general discussion on the 'Fight to Live' campaign.

The Day School, like many meetings and conferences of the women's movement, was attended by some (very persistent) members of the 'Wages for Housework' campaign.

These ideas have been rejected by the majority of the women's movement, and their ideas were strongly opposed in the 'Women and Work' workshop.

'Wages for Housework' doesn't help this portion of the working population at all; it fortifies and strengthens the present role of women in the home.

By far a better alternative was the idea that housewives who don't go out to work should receive social security benefit, which they don't at present.

Another interesting workshop which I attended was on 'Strategy for the Unemployed'.

Several shop stewards and unionised workers were present at this session, as well as the many unemployed and claimant activists.

Many expressed the need for links with

employed workers, though some pointed out that there had been little solidarity from this section of the class in the past.

The defeatism of the 'Right to Work' campaign was heavily criticised for its 'back to work at any cost' ethic and its exclusion of the idea that the unemployed can organise while out of work.

Discussion

While there was much good discussion at the school, a lot of ground was gone over that seems to have been covered many times before.

There was also a small group of people who seemed to think being unemployed had great virtues.

While not subscribing to the work ethic, we see little difference between getting 'reasonable' money and no time to oneself, and plenty of time and little money.

The only alternative to all this is a socialist society where we can control the work process ourselves, cut down on hours and improve conditions, and participate — every one of us — in an endeavour that is no longer 'Toil' but a pleasurable collective experience.

The general discussion suggested that a fight to live campaign should be centred around the CU's as they represented the true voice of the unemployed.

All other groups and individuals should work through the 'Fight to Live' campaign in association with the Claimants Unions.

This would be expressed at the next National Conference of the CU's where a decision would be reached on this.

AWA Claimant

Media Places Words End To End

ON 15th February an article by Colin Simpson in the *Sunday Times Business News* publicised the Tate Gallery's purchase of a work by Carl Andre.

This launched another of Fleet Street's periodic onslaughts on decadent modern art and a subsequent predictably unenlightening and defensive response from the art establishment.

This current replay of a familiar scenario should be interpreted in the context of the role of the media and its relation to the economic structure of the art industry.

The message conveyed by the media is that the art world is a symptom of the abuse of the 'free society' which is also evidenced by escalating crime statistics, widespread use of drugs, industrial unrest, vandalism, squatting, the activities of anti-social groups etc.

Society is free because it tolerates such activities and intervenes and legislates with reluctance.

Given that any medium or process filters and distorts information according to its implicit ideology, how has the information been processed in this particular case? Can we read the wrong newspapers in the right kind of way?

Here are two possible readings.

1. The 'decadent modern art' story confirms the status of the art world — artists, dealers, critics, administrators — as an exploitative but ineffectual

elite.

Ineffectual because it is apparently self-contained and unpolitical, exploitative because it parallels and supports an economic system based on exploitation.

A mere seven days after the original *Sunday Times* article, a full-page ad appeared in the *Sunday Times* portraying a highly untypical *lager* drinker as a caricature of the 'working man' inspired to achieve, without apparent physical effort, the same creative heights as Carl Andre.

This perhaps gives a clue to why this single art object has captured the popular imagination. The answer is envy.

Everyone would like to achieve without having to work, have conditions of oneself to believe that 'work' is the opposite of play, and the only possible ritualised survival technique.

2. The artist's involvement with his or her medium is not an admirable reinforcement of the status quo. The art world exploits the artist, controls the presentation of the artist's ideas and represses the capacity to self-organise.

Since the media are unable to relate to a form of communication which operates on a higher level of logic from their own, they effectively extend this repression and threaten to alienate each individual from his or her capacity to create new structures and initiate change.

M.B.

Secret And Sinister

ANYBODY who thinks that Wilson's recent decision to send the SAS — Special Air Service — into 'bandit country' South Armagh is the first manifestation of that ugliest group of an ugly army in the Ulster situation wants, as one of my old school mates used to say, "his head looking into".

Any idea that the SAS are just mere super-soldiers is also widely short of the mark.

Accusation after accusation has been made since 1968 that the SAS has been responsible for explosions and atrocities in Northern Ireland, including it is said, the Abercromby Restaurant bombing and the shooting of Catholic and IRA activists — shootings which are usually ascribed to the Protestant para-military groups.

This type of activity is much more in common with the real role of the SAS.

The idea of groups like SAS is to act in the 'counter-gang' capacity, that is they are intended to work behind enemy lines — in the Ulster situation that means in the Catholic ghettos — and sow confusion and fear.

Partly, this tactic of warfare means the execution of guerilla leaders — "pour encourager

les autres".

Oh, and by the way, in case you didn't know — and Fleet Street certainly won't tell you — the two pubs blown up in Brum were the haunt of West Indians, Southern Irishmen and assorted young folk.

Hardly a prime target for the IRA, I'd have thought . . .

One of the lessons of the Irish struggle that seems to elude the conventional Left, with its hang-up of supporting National Liberation in true 19th Century Liberal style, is that this type of warfare is being tried out in Ulster with the eventual aim of using it on the *British* working class.

Oh, and one further point. I did say in the first paragraph of this piece that Wilson was sending the SAS into Armagh.

The real fact is that he's got as much control over this gang of fascists as I have.

If the conventional army in Ulster acts as a law unto itself — then what price political control over a secret army?

Objectively, it's much more likely that the SAS owes its allegiance to groups somewhat to the Right of the late lamented A. Hitler.

Ian S. Sutherland

BHS Bashes Gays

TONY WHITEHEAD was a trainee Assistant Manager in the Worthing branch of the British Home Stores.

He was given a simple choice by his bosses: either he moved to a different part of the country or he resign his job.

What had provoked this?

He had appeared on a documentary on Southern TV kissing (horror!) another man.

Moving to another part of the country just wasn't on as it would mean being separated from his friends and his boyfriend, so Tony Whitehead is now without a job simply for being gay.

Hence, the picket outside British Home Stores in London's Oxford Street, as one of several up and down the country on Saturday February 7.

It was called by the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, in support of a CHE member: interestingly enough there were very few members of CHE actually there.

The overwhelming majority were from various Gay Liberation Front groups.

CHE has far more members than all the other groups combined but is inhibited by a top heavy bureaucracy and a conservative membership.

GLF, though now hopelessly split, is, with its radical and in many ways revolutionary outlook, the only part of the gay movement able to take action of this sort.

The picket itself, which was repeated on on February 28 in other parts of the country also, was only a qualified success.

We freaked out a few of the customers by holding hands, and one of the bosses was sufficiently annoyed we had even dared to be there he put the boot in on one member of South London GLF.

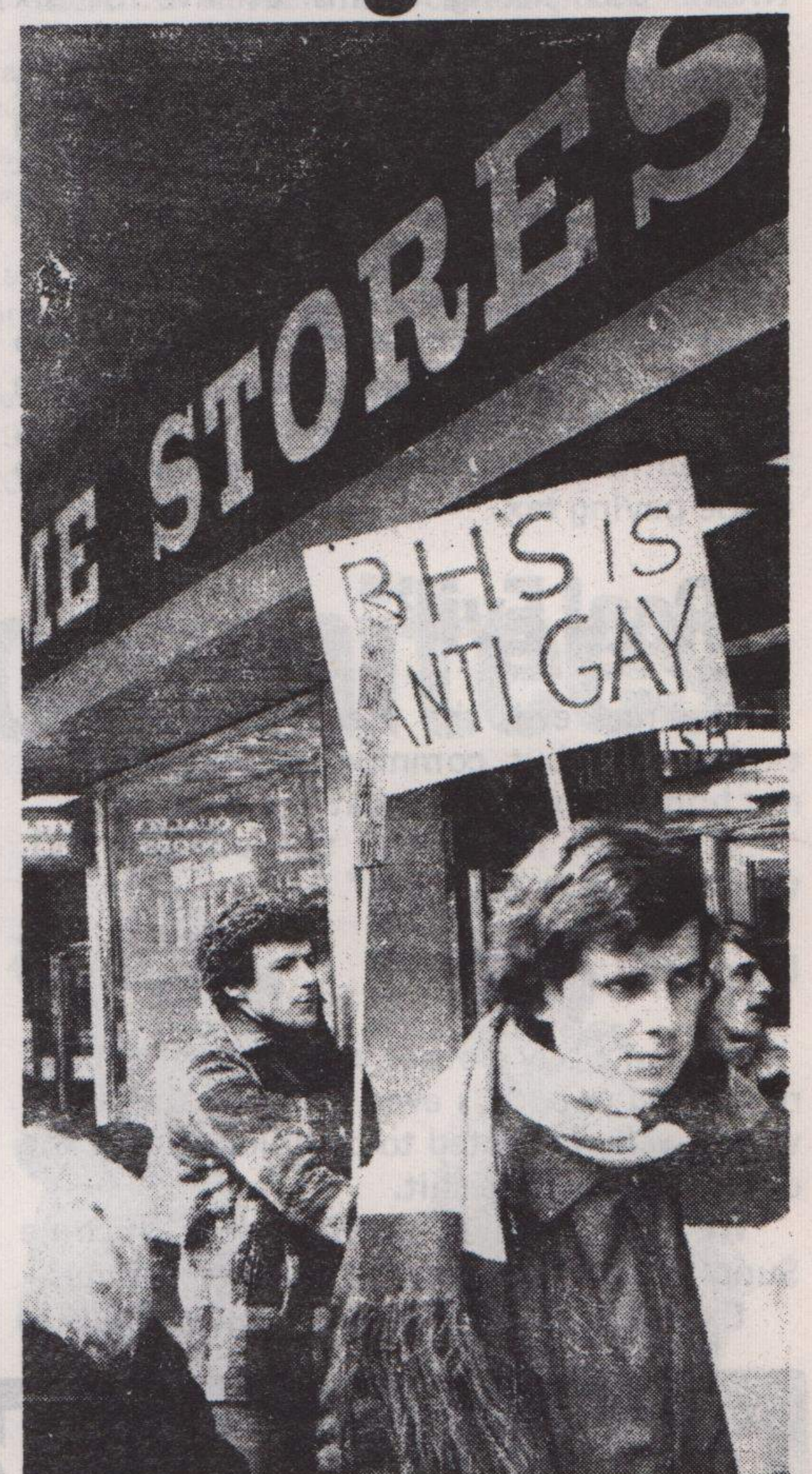
When leafleting inside the store we did get into some useful conversations, however, although we probably hit their sales a bit we really succeeded in being little more than a nuisance.

One possible underlying reason for the managers' wanting to get rid of Tony was that he had been talking to a number of people about trying to form a union.

British Home Stores is notoriously anti-union but this is probably unlikely simply because he wasn't there long enough.

It does show just how useful sexism can be in dividing the workers.

No need to cause extra trouble for sacking



The picket at the Oxford St branch of BHS someone for being militant — sack them because they are gay.

We are going to make sure they have trouble either way.

DAVID BARNSDALE
NUPE Gay Group & Social Revolution Group

Portugal: Turning Defeat Into Victory

THE Portuguese workers, during the process started on April 25th 1974, have acquired tremendous power: factory by factory, business by business, acre by acre.

And yet, at the end of almost two years, this huge power was not enough to win decisive and irreversible victories, so that the whole process is now at risk.

Why?

Because workers power is only being exercised point by point, factory by factory, acre by acre. The Portuguese workers have taken over most of the productive apparatus. But point by point, case by case. And they have not laid their hands on the key points of the economic circuits, on the inter-connections of the economic whole.

Now we must begin to create economic links within each sector, each branch of the economy, each region . . .

(extract from a motion approved by the General Assembly of Setubal's Workers Councils)

THE RIGHT-WING coup of November 25th in Portugal has been a major defeat for the left.

But it has forced the left into a necessary consolidation and linking of its conquests: growing links between each worker-controlled firm, and, equally importantly, the putting into practice of the words "worker-farmer alliance".

The farm-workers' co-operatives are being attacked at all levels: attacked by the increasingly aggressive parties of the right; attacked by fascist bombs; attacked by the Commandos of Amadora (leaders of the coup) under the pretext of 'searching for arms'.

But most importantly, the old economic links between town and country have collapsed into chaos.

There are nation-wide food shortages; shop prices are on average double the government 'fixed prices'.

Yet the co-operatives have so much food they can't store it. Production in the Alentejo, where the co-operatives are

strongest, has increased by a third.

So, here in Setubal, the farming co-operatives are now selling direct to the Residents' Councils.

Every weekend refrigerated lorries set off from Setubal with voluntary labour to load up with food from the co-operatives, which is sold in the Residents' Councils at two thirds the official prices.

And lorries set off in the reverse direction carrying canned and bottled food, drinks, and work clothes from the worker-controlled firms of Sabalho, Telede and others.

This weekend several hundred workers from the firm 'Mague' left for the farming co-operative 'The Left Will Win' to do two day's voluntary labour and present the farm workers with a tractor they made themselves.

Setubal's Metalworkers and Chemical unions presented the co-operatives with £313,000 last month alone.

As the motion passed by the General Assembly of Setubal's Workers Councils went on:

"...in each workplace the workers to be



Portuguese soldiers just after the November 25 coup

able to work and go on working depends on a demand for their products and on receiving orders for them . . . but in each workplace, the workers, to be able to work and go on working, also depend on being supplied with other products and services.

And the ordering of these products is for other workers precisely the solution to their main problem."

It is precisely in this way that the Portuguese workers are using the apparent defeat of November 25th to consolidate their position, to build an economy of their own within the slumping capitalist economy of Portugal.

And while one, based on profits, is preaching 'austerity' — and consequently unemployment — the other, based on the satisfying of need, is growing in strength.

Blacking Blackwells

BLACKWELLS is an Oxford bookshop and distributor with an annual turnover of about £12,000,000, employing about 650 people.

In the last twenty-one months about a hundred workers have joined the T&GWU 5/833 branch, despite the sacking of one of the original union members who was reinstated after a brief strike.

As the strength of the branch has grown, so has the hostility of the management.

Disciplinary measures were taken when union members attempted to negotiate with management through union representatives.

Time and motion studies and 'rationalisation' are being introduced, and when opposition was expressed by a union member elected to put the views of the staff he was transferred to a specially created job in an isolated department.

The management claimed he had not been carrying out his duties as a manager: in fact he was never on a managerial grade.

When he refused to accept this without discussion between union and management about this and other attacks on jobs in the firm he was sacked.

On January 28, seventy union members came out on strike to demand his reinstatement and union recognition, and began picketing customers and supplies.

Since then, support has grown steadily. Oxford Trades Council voted unanimous support and many other local unions and T&G branches have also passed resolutions of support and finance.

Many trade unionists are blacking the firm — the post office workers, the NUR and NUJ Oxford Mail have stopped deliveries; ACTS in Dillons London bookshop are blacking supplies and other bookshops, NGA and SOGAT are amongst those being contacted.

Students at many local colleges have also passed motions calling on their members to stop using the firm and have given support on the picket line and other practical help.

Blackwell's have continually tried to make out that one worker's record is the main issue: but what is at stake is the right of the staff to organise an effective way of putting their views to the management.

Blackwells prefer to rely on an Edwardian 'family firm' structure with pats on the head instead of decent pay and job security.

Bite

It took two weeks for the strike to begin to bite, and for the local union machinery to wake up and start considering making the strike official.

Some of the excuses made by customers

crossing the picket line were ridiculous — you'd think owning a book was a matter of life and death.

This is, of course, in a town with some of the most comprehensive libraries in the country.

Others stopped and joined the picket.

It also brought home the problems of the staff who were not out on strike (apart from no strike pay!).

One woman said, "I work here". "Why aren't you out then?"

"I'd get the sack if I joined the union."

This was in a department with a low proportion of union members where any normally excuseable fault could be used to victimise a union member.

But staff still take in the strikers' bulletins eagerly and a lot of work is not being covered.

At first the management wanted the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) to consider the dispute following a return to work.

ACAS, however, can neither guarantee a sacked worker's reinstatement nor effectively deal with union recognition.

The proposal was rejected at a meeting between staff and a local T&G official.

Mass Picket

Since January 28, takings of the firm have fallen and a backlog of orders is building up.

On Saturday February 15 there was a mass picket of over 150 people including supporters from Birmingham, Coventry, and London, and many local workers and students.

The T&G made firm statements that the strike would become official if no agreement was reached in the immediate future.

As a result of this the management consulted ACAS unilaterally and agreed to recognise shop stewards in four departments of the firm.

But even after the mass picket they refused to reinstate the sacked worker.

This was totally unacceptable to the union and no further negotiations are to take place until his reinstatement.

Consultation with the shop stewards over jobs can then take place.

Unless this is accepted by the company there can be no security for other workers against victimisation.

The management are clearly surprised as each day the strike continues, and gets greater and more organised support.

The blacking from other firms when the strike becomes official will hit their large mail-order and export dealing hard.



From the third day of the strike Ruskin College of TU studies and its TU defence committee gave substantial support, and a student support group to organise picket rotas, and so on, was formed.

The union strike committee is now asking for representatives from all trade union branches in the area to help to liaise with them and the students in arranging bulletins, picket rotas, and other assistance.

However high the odds looked at first, the strikers are firmly determined to win collective bargaining rights and the job security of workers who choose to be active trade unionists.

When this is won, the union membership will undoubtedly grow even faster than the present rate of 0 to 100 in under two years.

This doesn't happen through 'manipulation' by 'extremists' but by a large number of workers, extremists or not, working together in defence of their interests.

Anita Richards

STOP PRESS — News has reached us after this article was written and typeset that the strike is now over. Official recognition came on February 17 and the management rapidly proposed recognition of shop stewards and the reinstatement of the sacked brother. On these terms, strike action ended on February 23.

The
tyranny
of
sTRuCTuREleSSneSS

by
Jo Freeman

5p

The Anarchist Workers Association has never played any part in the writing of this pamphlet but has found it highly applicable to the ineffectuality of anarchism in Britain in recent decades.

In revulsion from the tyrannical structures of governments, unions and other organisations, some anarchists have shied away from any meaningful consideration of self-organisation.

In this pamphlet Jo Freeman attempts to sketch out an approach to organisation that would prevent the growth of elitist leaderships — which both highly centralised and highly informal groupings tend to produce.

Available now from your local AWA group or direct from 13 Colman Street, Hull. Include 7p p&p on single copies. Bulk rate 10 for 35p incl.

GROUP STAMP

SNP: The Tartan Tories

THE capitalist system is getting ever deeper into crisis — it might sound like a cliché we've heard the word *crisis* so often, but it's a fact. As working people begin to increasingly resist attempts by those who benefit from the system to blame us for the crisis, out come the various theories and groups and parties that seek to persuade people that all would be well if only someone would open Joanna Southcote's box, build a Channel Tunnel, devalue the currency, put fluoride in the water, or up the licence fee on dogs.

More seriously, voices begin to nag at the worker from the sidelines — kick the wogs out, they're stealing our jobs, it's all the fault of the Pakistanis/ the Irish/ the West Indians or, if you live North of the Border, the English.

Thus, as groups like the National Front in England begin to distract workers from the real issues, so their counterparts in Scotland put up a smokescreen for workers there.

Out in the smoke, of course, lies the boss, with a big club to hit them with, but the Scottish National Party — "We want international companies to know that we are not a Socialist Party" — doesn't want the Scottish working class to know that.

Nationalism is an attempt to convince you that class — and class struggle — doesn't have any real meaning.

According to the Scottish Nationalists, class will be irrelevant in the "New Scotland".

According to the SNP's policy document, 'The Scotland We Seek', master and man will co-operate together in the Tartan Future — there will be no real need for rubbishy English inventions like trade unions and all that sort of naughty thing.

This, of course, is the classic doctrine of the corporate state: the sort of thing that Hitler and Mussolini operated and which our Spanish comrades are struggling to defeat just now.

Under this kind of system, the idea is that boss and worker are lumped together under the designation 'industry', just as farm workers and farm employers are to be called 'agriculture' and so on.

The basic concept is that you are all in it together, all working like mad for the good of that nebulous thing, The Nation.

Does this mean, then, that everyone gets an equal share and that you all own a little bit?

and political problems.

Scottish industry was based on ship-building and other forms of heavy engineering from which, for generations, the owners had sucked everything they could.

A classic example was the Clydeside shipyard moguls.

By the early 1960's, these enterprises were fit for little more than the scrapyards and the owners flitted off merrily to the sunshine.

The Scottish coal industry received the same treatment — it was taken over by the state just in time to give the government the pleasure of closing it down and pitching thousands of men onto the dole.

Despite it all, despite the slums and the low wages, despite the unemployment, the violence, the illness, the alcoholism, the shutdowns and the sellouts, the Scottish working class remained staunch trade unionists and loyal Labour voters.

It used to be said that you could stand a stuffed monkey in a Scottish constituency and, provided it had a Labour label round its neck, it would get elected.

The Labour leadership took this to heart, and for generations quite a number of stuffed monkeys from Old Scotia graced the Westminster Gasworks' plush seats.

One such creature was sitting as a Scottish MP with a majority of over 20,000 a few years ago when at the same time an English magistrates' court was being told that he was innocent of shop-lifting for the very good reason that he was senile.

Corruption

The corruption of Scotland's Labour politicians is legendary.

As this article is being written, there are prosecutions taking place against at least a dozen assorted Labourites in the West of Scotland in connection with business frauds

store barons to give a monkey's damn for the corner shopkeepers.

Thus, the small business class saw in the SNP a means of expression: a political haven for their confused fear of the working class on one hand and their fear of big business on the other.

Between about 1965 to the present, one began to see small farmers, various rural business men, small shopkeepers, taxi owner/drivers, small fishing firm owners, and so on, increasingly standing for the SNP.

Under 'normal' conditions, this romantic, confused and essentially self-competitive

'Scotland's Newspaper'.

It still attacked every strike, of course.

No Opposition

The Left in Scotland at present reminds one ever so slightly of the position of the Left in pre-Hitler Germany.

Revolutionary opposition to the SNP just doesn't exist.

There have been one or two exceptions to this.

The International Socialists did some useful work in exposing the utter confusion



grouping would be an electoral disaster.

However, it co-incided with a weakening of traditional Labour loyalty among large sections of the Scottish working class (a political vacuum which the Left has singularly failed to fill in Scotland) and thus began to attract considerable numbers of disillusioned Labour voters.

The most recent manifestation of this unlikely political alliance was the East Kilbride by-election for Strathclyde Council — once a huge Labour majority, it went to an SNP vet (he'll know a lot about the way to fight for jobs at nearby Chrysler Linwood!).

At the same time, the traditional Scottish Tories, long since resigned to the prospect of

of the SNP over the Glasgow dustmen's strike and the wave of popular industrial action which followed involving large sections of the Scottish people from teachers to factory workers.

Worthy though this initiative was, it wasn't followed up.

Opportunists such as the traditional Communist Party and the new Scottish Labour Party (which, incidentally, includes at least one man whose name is whispered to have links with the CIA) abandoned even any pretence at commitment to socialist internationalism and headed off down the slopes of confusion and mysticism after the multi-headed Tartan Smokescreen.

Anarchists were either asleep or so involved in ritual attacks on the system that they also failed to catch on (with the exception of the old Aberdeen Anarchist Group 1968-72, who consistently included the Nats in their list of targets).

Threat

The threat of nationalism is a relatively new problem for the British Left: it cannot be readily met by the old solutions or by reification of old attitudes and policies.

All radical forces in Scotland are threatened by the SNP — make no mistake, Tartan Fascism will be just as bad as any other kind.

My personal view is that a wide Left Front is needed, combining at least the non-CP and anti-Labour Party groups (and that includes being anti the new SLP) on a common programme to actively fight the Nats and to organise the inevitable semi-underground resistance if the Nats take power.

The terrorist element always present in fascist and semi-fascist movements is already manifesting itself vis a vis Scottish Nationalism.

The far right of the SNP is forging links with both the UVF/UDA and the IRA, and physical attacks on Leftists can be expected.

As long as 11 or 12 years ago I used to receive regular death threats following anti-Nat letters in the press, etc.

Fatal

The exact nature and tactics involved in revolutionary opposition to the Labour Party needs careful consideration in the case of Scotland.

It is vitally important that the revolutionary Left does not fall into the lethal trap of self-deception that befell the German Communists of the 1930's, with their inflated hope in the imminent revolution leading to their adoption of the fatal position — 'After Hitler, us'.

In England, there has been a greater understanding — and less sloganising — than in the past, about the real nature of the National Front.

There has been a refreshing degree of common sense and unity on the part of the Left.

Can the Scottish Left do the same?

Ian S. Sutherland



Well... no, actually.

The bosses will still own the place you work in, give you orders, distribute the profits from your work to shareholders whose sole contribution has been to ring up their stockbroker and ask for a few more pounds of your sweat, speed up the work you do, swipe even the bloody teabreak and, finally, when you're past it, heave you out the door to the dole queue or the generous mercies of the old age pension.

As long as the capitalist system exists, that will be the fate of every single one of us.

Stop complaining there in the ranks, can't you see it's all in the national interest?

Problems

Scotland is suffering massive economic

and local government corruption.

The way is certainly clear for radical movements in Scotland — but one thing is certain, radical change *won't* be coming from the SNP.

To understand the essentially reactionary nature of the SNP, it is necessary to have some idea of who and what the SNP is.

Back in the 60's the Right in Scottish politics was represented by the Tories. Ruled over by the same people who now rule the SNP — people like the Fraser Store family, with their long anti-union record — the Scottish Tories represented the traditional Scottish industrialists and retail barons.

Scotland's small business class was poorly represented by this gang — who in many ways were the opponents of the small business class.

One could hardly expect the department

permanent opposition, realised that the new movement represented a last chance to save their bacon.

Also, the lure of getting their fingers sticky in the treacle barrel of Scottish oil overcame their political scruples.

Thus, although the bulk of the SNP membership still came from the middle class, from the small business group, from anti-union unorganised workers and from a fringe of near-fascist student romantics, the Edinburgh bankers and brewers and the Glasgow store barons donned their kilts, drew their claymores and announced themselves good Scots patriots to a man.

In the twinkling of an eye, the likes of Hugh Fraser switched the family millions to the SNP.

Overnight, the Tory Glasgow Herald boasted itself to be under, Fraser's ownership,

Cod Piece

Reykjavik (PNS Correspondent) — FOR MONTHS, the various political organisations in Iceland have tried to exploit the fishing rights controversy, falling over one another in their nationalistic ardour.

They have cleverly disguised the true nature of the conflict — a classic example of the chaos of capitalism. The recent fiasco over the Icelandic herring fishing demonstrates the point.

The high price of herring and herring meal a few years ago caused Icelandic capitalists to pour money into the herring industry. Millions were spent on special equipment, new boats and improved technology.

These bank-sponsored investments reached their zenith in 1967, by which time catches were falling.

In their blind rush for profit, the capitalist fishing companies had ignored the natural law of the sea — they were travelling faster than the fish could breed.

The result of this was rotting herring barrels, rusting equipment, wrongly-fitted boats and unemployment among the fishermen.

Protection of the main fishing stock is the main argument by the Icelandic government for extending territorial waters to 200 miles.

The same reason was cited in 1972 when the limit was extended to 50 miles — that if the British and West German trawlers were chased off, the total catch would decrease in proportion.

This line of argument did not take into account the nature of capitalism.

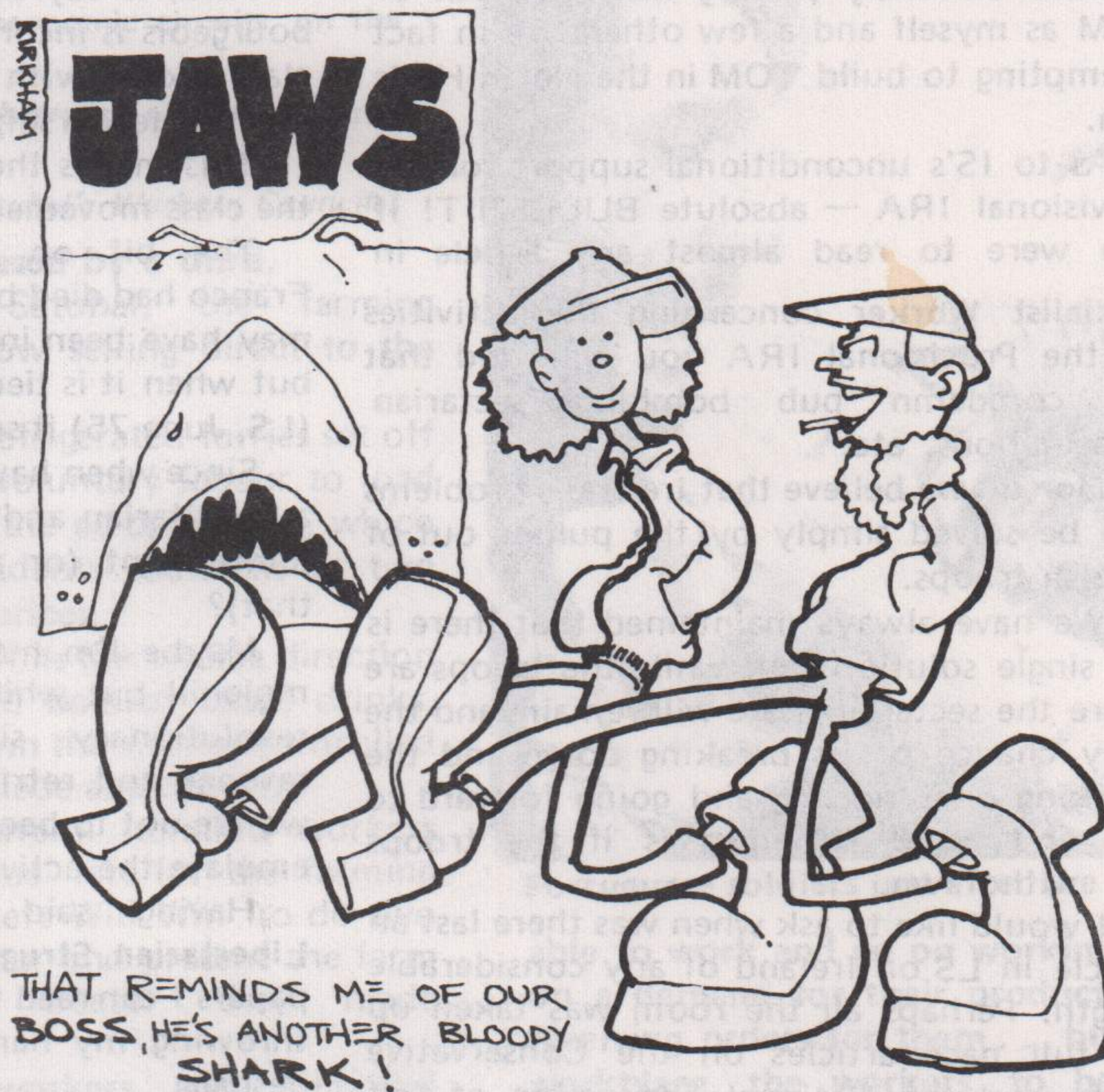
Despite constant warnings from marine biologists and economists, over-fishing continued, stocks were again gravely depleted, and between 1970 and 1973 the cod haul dropped by 20%.

Radical groups here see worker control of the fishing industry as the only way to stop the rape of the sea and economic ruin.

A prime demand in the struggle to organise fishermen is a monthly salary so that their wages are no longer ruled by the size of the haul.

Another demand is for full information to be made available on the state of fishing stocks.

The monthly magazine *Neisti* recently called on the fishermen's union here to co-operate with its counterparts in Britain and the other North Atlantic fishing countries in the struggle to free the seas from the all-devouring SHARK of capitalism.



review

THE WILHEMSHAVEN REVOLT

A Chapter of the Revolutionary Movement in the German Navy 1918-19, 45p. A Simian pubn. from Box AA, 1 Exchange, Honley, Nr Huddersfield, Yorkshire.

This little pamphlet charts the course of the Wilhemshaven revolt in the German Navy.

It was written by 'Icarus', alias Ernst Schneider, who before the war had been a merchant seaman and who was conscripted into the Navy.

He writes about the unrest among the sailors, and the growth of a revolutionary movement.

At the end of October 1918, the sailors rose up and took over the warships in the harbour.

Workers, soldiers and sailors councils were set up all over Germany.

The reactionary forces moved against them, and by January 1919 the Wilhemshaven Commune was surrounded and forced to surrender.

The pamphlet is interesting as a first hand account of a revolutionary situation and of the great heroism and creativity of working people.

My only criticism is that for 45p it's rather a slim pamphlet.

N.H.

Conference Day School

THE Anarchist Workers Association held its National Conference on February 14/15 in Wandsworth.

The conference was well attended by comrades from various groups of the AWA ranging from Derby to Brighton, Oxford to Hull.

Members had a chance to meet each other again as well as the many new comrades who are choosing to join the ranks of the AWA.

Matters of policy discussed and agreed included Unemployment and Ireland.

Among the decisions reached was that the name of the paper be changed to reflect the politics of the association, and to appeal to a wider number of people.

As from May 1976 the name of the paper is to be changed to **ANARCHIST WORKER**.

Discussion took place around turning the paper into a fortnightly in the near future, but of course for this we need to increase our sales and build the press fund.

So, as from May 1, look out for the **ANARCHIST WORKER**.

We intend to increase the effectiveness and strength of our organisation and the growth of the paper is an essential part of this process.

AWA National Secretary

THE DAY SCHOOL took place in London at the Conway Hall on Saturday February 7.

All the papers promised were delivered, kicking off with a critical history of the anarchist movement.

About 120 people attended the conference, and a large amount of literature was sold.

A lively discussion took place around most of the papers, although it tended sometimes to be the same people, experienced political militants, whose eloquence and fluency tended to intimidate others less experienced.

Another criticism to be offered was the wrangling started by some anarchists outside the AWA and AWA militants.

This was initiated by one or two people who seem to want to make sure they had their footnote in history and wanted AWA acknowledgement.

The Day School was intended as an introduction to people new to revolutionary anarchist ideas — not as a debating chamber to air old wounds.

However, all told the Day School was a great success and we hope to have more in the future, perhaps cutting down on the very long session that we had at this one, and outside London.

DAY SCHOOL CONVENOR

Hare Krishna, Hare Sexism

FEBRUARY *Libertarian Struggle* featured the 'Barmy Swami', His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhuda, head of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

He claims to be a 'perfect man' and says "How can there be a classless society? As long as society is maintained, there must be one class of men to administer the government and one class of men to sweep the streets."

Our latest news of the Pontificating Prabhuda is that he has proclaimed that women hold inferior roles to men in the Hare Krishna Movement because their brains are too small.

He says that women do not fit into the Hare Krishna class system except as wives and daughters.

When asked why, the 77-year old Swami explained, "Woman is not equal in intelligence to man. Man's brain weighs 64ozs, woman's weighs 36ozs."

MEPHISTOPHOLES



THE NUMEROUS over-simplifiers presented the civil war in Angola as being essentially a confrontation between US imperialism and Soviet expansionism for world hegemony (Maoist undertones).

While this is partly true, it completely ignores the very real revolutionary situation developing in Angola and, for that matter, throughout Southern Africa.

Anti-colonial struggle

The anti-colonial struggle in Portuguese Africa — which incidentally was responsible for bringing down the fascist dictatorship in Portugal — threatens western imperialism's strategy for the whole of southern Africa.

The principle liberation movement in Angola, the MPLA, is based on the aspirations of workers and peasants for emancipation and therefore represents an obstacle to the typical neo-colonial solution of handing over power to the nationalist bourgeoisie which profits from maintaining the interests of western capital.

Therefore as far back as the sixties the US government began assisting the rival right wing FNLA, while more recently British and South African capital fostered the UNITA movement.

Counter revolution

The last remaining Portuguese troops left Angola in a state of dual power, especially in the capital Luanda, where after the massacre of several hundred workers and militants by the FNLA, the MPLA armed the workers who had organised themselves into militias and who were eventually able to oust the FNLA from Luanda.

Western imperialist strategy was to



mobilise the Organisation of African Unity into demanding the formation of a coalition government comprising all three movements, MPLA, UNITA and FNLA, coupled with the disarming of the workers, the aim being to play for time while preparing military intervention from Zaire in the north and South Africa from the south.

But the MPLA refused to accept compromise and instead mobilised its forces in defence of the revolution.

South Africa's detente strategy with African states to the north, an important element in the survival of the Apartheid

state, was directly threatened and for this reason Vorster took the unprecedented step of invading Angola with 'flying armoured columns' which forced the MPLA, at that time not organised to fight conventional warfare, to abandon the south.

Simultaneously, Zaire troops and mercenaries invaded Angola from the north, advancing as far as Caxito within artillery range of Luanda, the main working class stronghold, which according to foreign correspondents was preparing for a 'Paris Commune like siege'.

As the US was increasingly identified with

South Africa's military intervention, and the FNLA offensive began to crumble, the US Congress and Senate vetoed Ford's desperate requests for continued financial aid to the FNLA, much to the chagrin of Kissinger.

Rocking the boat

Russia is involved in Angola on the side of the MPLA, not out of any support for social revolution, as in terms of their policy of 'Peaceful Co-existence' this would mean rocking the boat, but because their policy is to limit American power by supporting radical 'third world' regimes which exclude American influence by nationalising industries formerly owned by foreign corporations, eg. Peru.

But in the anti-colonial struggle, which included the fight for basic democratic rights, the Angolan revolutionary movement inevitably came into conflict with western imperialism which used the colonial administrative structure, provided by Portugal, to exploit the people for huge profits.

As a result there was a historical coincidence of interests between Russian diplomacy and the Angolan revolutionaries.

However, the over dependence of the 'Popular Movement' (MPLA) on Russian aid will present the danger of the revolution being stifled through the bureaucratic tendency within the MPLA coming to predominance.

To end on an optimistic note — the interventionist forces have been routed, altering the balance of power in favour of revolutionaries throughout southern Africa from Zaire and Zambia to Rhodesia and South Africa.

The only way to defend the revolution in Angola is to link up with the rising struggles in these countries.

Letters

Dear Libertarian Struggle,

Ian Sutherland, in his article on the International Socialists in your January 1976 issue says:

"Alas for those who saw IS as different from the other Leninist/Stalinist/vanguardist/elitists, the IS dog is now returning to its Marxist vomit."

How the image of a dog returning to vomit helps our understanding of the problems of revolutionary organisation I don't follow.

More important is that he regards the elitist Lenin-Stalin theory and practice (of a vanguard party, controlled from above, leading the working class to socialism) as the same thing as Marxism.

The Leninists would like us to believe this, which is why they call themselves Marxist-Leninists.

But whatever the failings of Marx, he did at least maintain that the emancipation of the working class is the task of the working class itself.

Non-Leninist and libertarian Marxist movements, such as council communism, have more right to regard themselves as Marxists than the cadres of the vanguard groups.

I am a member of London group of Social Revolution, a group containing people considering themselves Marxists, anarchists and neither.

We think that those of us working for a libertarian Socialist society should overcome the pointless divisions between "Marxists" and "anarchists" which reflect more the labels of obsolete traditions than real differences.

If we can do this, we shall bring the creation of a credible alternative to the authoritarian "Left" a little closer.

Fraternally,

Stefan, London N3.

Sectarian Pubs

Dear Comrades,

I have been reading LS regularly for the last few months, and on the whole the standard has been good.

However the January issue was pretty

deplorable; being a member of the International Socialists I was disgusted at some of the things stated in the article 'Left Hook - What We Think of IS'.

The lowest membership figures I have for IS are 2800.

The remarks concerning IS's attitude towards Ireland were either ill-informed mistakes or deliberate lies, I suspect the latter.

I took great exception to you saying that IS were currently pulling members out of TOM as myself and a few others are in fact attempting to build TOM in the North Herts area.

As to IS's unconditional support for the Provisional IRA — absolute BULLSHIT! If you were to read almost any article in

Socialist Worker concerning the activities of the Provisional IRA you will find that we condemn pub bombings, sectarian assassinations, etc.

Nor do we believe that Ireland's problems can be solved simply by the pulling out of British troops.

We have always maintained that there is no single solution, but while the troops are there the sectarian state will remain, and the only chance of its breaking down and the working class uniting and going forward to try and build socialism is if the troops are withdrawn.

I would like to ask when was there last an article in LS on Ireland of any considerable length. Perhaps all the room was taken up by full page articles on the Conservative Party and the National Federation of Self Employed as we've had lately.

Not exactly the articles I would have thought likely to draw the working class towards the AWA.

Fraternally,

Steve Cox, Stevenage, Herts.

more on IS

A Chairde/Comrades,

I enjoyed this month's **Libertarian Struggle** (January) — the front page was very well laid out — but I have a few friendly criticisms to make about the content.

The article by Ian S. Sutherland on IS had a few weaknesses which detracted from what was otherwise a very useful piece exposing the authoritarian policies of these vanguardists.

In my view a phrase such as "... the IS dog is now returning to its Marxist vomit" might be acceptable in **Freedom** but not in a serious class-based paper like LS.

While we must be sectarian to clarify our

differences with other groups on the left, we don't have to go to the base level of describing them as "dogs".

Neither is it of any use to call Marxism "vomit": Marxism is a theory and method of thinking from which libertarian socialists have acquired their basic economic ideas.

It goes without saying that we are opposed to Leninism but that shouldn't obscure the fundamentals of Marxism from us.

Also, to say that the Provisional IRA is bourgeois is incorrect — they are a working class group with a bourgeois or bourgeois inclined leadership.

This makes them even more dangerous to the class movement for obvious reasons.

The bit on page 1 complaining that Franco had died before he could be executed may have been intended as a cynical remark, but when it is tied in with Tony Devlin's call (LS, June 75) it seems a bit disturbing.

Since when have libertarians adopted such authoritarian and pointless policies as capital punishment (or any other punishment for that)?

Maybe I'm making a mountain out of a molehill but while we have to be firm in a revolutionary situation all thoughts of revenge and retribution must be avoided if we are not to become authoritarian and even emulate the activities of the Cheka.

Having said this, let me say that **Libertarian Struggle** is one of the very few papers I can read from start to finish without throwing my hands up either in disgust or despair.

Keep up the good work.

Is Mise,

Alan MacSimoin, Co. Dublin.

Editors Reply :

These letters make a number of valid points. 'What we think of IS' did make some sweeping statements, and we apologise for factual errors, but the substance was justified — IS membership is falling, and real involvement in **Troops Out Movement** is dropping in most places.

A few quotes from a document produced in November signed by 40 IS members and 15 ex-members shows that at least some members of IS are aware of its failings, although not that they stem partly from Leninist theory:

"We are against a paper that is purely anti-capitalist; and we are for a paper which is revolutionary socialist because its politics and presentation services the needs of those advanced militants, and arms them with the arguments and ideas

which enables them to lead others [sic, not 'involve others' eds.] and which develop the self-confidence and self-reliance of the class."

and:

"the weakness of the revolutionary vanguard and political grip of trade union and social democratic reformism make the rank and file movement the ideal vehicle for the transition from economic to political struggle and from mass reformist politics to revolutionary politics."

and yet they think this is done by making the rank and file movement 'the bridge to to the revolutionary party.'

However, short term economic and long term political solutions to the problems of the working class — and sexism — will come from self-activity not party-building and the election of IS union officials.

We can and do work with members of IS on many issues — including on **Troops Out**. But there is no point in papering over real differences.

Still, criticism of any LS article is always welcome if it's constructive. There is a short article on Ireland in this issue.

What other things do readers think that it would be useful to cover?

Abortion

Dear Libertarian Struggle,

The article on abortion (Feb. **Libertarian Struggle**) raised all the usual points and a few besides but I was glad to see that the meaningless phrase "A Woman's right to Choose" was nowhere in sight.

In my opinion NAC's slogan is as meaningless as **Socialist Worker's** "Right to work". Under capitalism we've no rights or freedom of choice.

If I became pregnant now I would be forced to consider abortion because of the place I live in which is totally inadequate and unsuitable for the child I've already got, let alone another one.

Anyhow, my husband hardly earns enough to keep the three of us: even with welfare state handouts a second child would be a financial burden.

The irony is that I would like another child — it's just within the confines of capitalism I am compelled to "choose" not to have one.

I know other women (and I'm sure that there are many more) in similar circumstances — forced to "choose" abortion, because of impossible social conditions and low incomes.

If NAC really wanted women to have the right to choose they should take a broader view of the way in which our lives are controlled by the ruling class.

As it is NAC are merely fighting for a woman's right to choose what's best for capitalism not necessarily what's best for herself/lover/family.

Of course there should be abortion on demand but let's fight for adequate housing and decent wages too; so that the children we do choose to have aren't bugged from the start.

venceremos,

lorraine robinson, Brighton.

Breasts or Bust

written by a militant in the house-working industry

WHEN THE Department of Health and Social Security published *Present Day Practice in Infant Feeding* in 1974 that worthy department was greatly in favour of breast feeding.

Mothers, they said, should be encouraged to nurse their babies because breast milk contains the correct nutrients in the necessary quantities.

They pointed out that powdered milk formulas could be dangerous to small babies is incorrectly prepared because of high phosphorous, sodium and protein levels contained in concentrated milk mixtures.

As well as a high incidence of 'cot-deaths' and neonatal tetany (which causes convulsions during the first days after birth) other hazards of bottle feeding include obesity, allergies, and gastro-enteritis — from unsterilised bottles and teats.

Hospitals

Right, given the above what has the Government done since 1974 to promote breast feeding? — want to guess or shall I tell you?

It would be easier to say what they haven't done.

They haven't stopped ante-natal clinics giving the names of pregnant women to baby food firms.

They haven't stopped those firms sending out sales literature to those women which — not surprisingly — doesn't explain the benefits of breast feeding with any degree of fervour.

They haven't stopped those firms sending special free sample packs to be distributed by health visitors and midwives in clinics throughout the country.

Failing that they haven't even advised clinic staff to stop giving out those free samples.

Bottle Up & Go

They haven't tried very hard to promote breast feeding in hospitals either.

Maternity wards are still run like any other ward in the hospital, that is, as though its occupants are sick, and consequently routines are kept rigidly.

Nurses just can't spare the time to help mothers get started, and of course it's so much easier to give out ready-mixed bottles of powdered formula that have been

IN AN ANSWER to the question does breast feeding give a baby greater protection against infection than artificial feeding, the *British Medical Journal* (January 10 1976) says that the advantages of breast feeding have been clearly shown.

Immunological factors in human milk prevent bacterial and viral infections. They also protect the child from infections through the stomach, to which the young child is particularly vulnerable at a certain stage of development.

That is when the child does not yet have its own system for preventing such infections.

The fact that the baby takes to human milk more readily than artificial milk probably contributes to the general well being of the child.

Besides which breast feeding can — so some people say — be an immensely sensual experience, other than the fact that you don't have to worry about sterilising all those bottles.

a.r.

thoughtfully prepared by baby-milk firms.

These firms even produce distilled water and dextrose in special baby-sized bottles, complete with large brand-name label, especially for use in hospitals.

The woman who tries to breast feed her baby on demand is made to feel, at best, a time-consuming nuisance, at worst some kind of freak.

Staff in Maternity Wards do little to make

a woman feel that feeding is a natural function anyhow.

Once when I was feeding my daughter in an open ward the sister on duty delegated a student nurse to stand between me and two window cleaners — I've not yet worked out whose embarrassment this was supposed to prevent!

Images

While not doing all this, neither has the Government discouraged the media from continually presenting the image of breasts that are for decoration only.

Countless women refuse to consider breast feeding because they think it's "dirty".

It's o.k. to flash your tits to sell cigars but bad to use them for their intended purpose.

Nor has the Government clamped down on emotive baby-milk advertising — after all cigarettes in excess might kill adults, but too much baby-milk only kills babies.

Another thing the Government hasn't done is extend maternity allowance payments beyond seven weeks after birth so that a woman is able to afford to stay at home to feed her child.

They haven't done much about increasing them either, nor are they paid as a right instead being based on National Insurance contributions.

This means that most women only receive an allowance following the birth of their first child, if they have amassed enough contributions to qualify for any at all, that is.

Perhaps the Government has failed to implement the recommendations of the DHSS report because they don't like babies and they want to get rid of a few?

Maybe they were all weaned too early and are fulfilling aggressive tendencies?

It couldn't have anything to do with the fact that certain MP's have certain financial interests in certain baby-milk firms, could it?

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controversy!

THIS ARTICLE is part of a document presented by an individual comrade to last month's National Conference of the Anarchist Workers Association, where a comprehensive policy on unemployment and the present crisis was hammered out. It is published here to show something of the constant stream of debate going on within the AWA, and in order to throw the paper open to wider arenas of debate

The Crisis & How To Fight It

a contribution to the debate

IT'S BECOMING increasingly evident to the anarchist movement that abstaining on the capitalist crisis and unemployment is an attitude which will do nothing for the growth of revolutionary libertarian ideas.

The Anarchist Workers Association must make a coherent and comprehensive political contribution which will help the working class not only to combat unemployment and the social service cuts but will define a path of self-organisation for the class in the future.

The central point the AWA must make is that the capitalist crisis is not the working class's fault and that in a programme showing the way to fight back this must be the central theme.

Therefore the AWA should support the concept of the sliding scale both in social service expenditure and wages and unemployment benefit; not because it believes that any of these items were adequate before massive inflation but because the working class must fight for a better personal and 'social' wage based on real money.

Advance

In this way the advance is real and not just a phoney one only making up partially for the inroads of inflation.

To counter the arguments that some socialists make that the sliding scale of wages (just one part of the sliding scale concept) buys off the working class I would say this: at the time of the threshold payments — a very inadequate form of the sliding scale — the working class was at its most combative.

For instance, the miners were not deterred by the thresholds, nor were the London teachers or the NUPE health workers.

We must remember that it was the Labour Government which took away thresholds precisely because they thought that the working class's wage levels were continuing to rise at an 'unacceptable level'.

The second central theme that the AWA must take up is unemployment. We must do two things.

First, recognise the genuine voice of the unemployed. Secondly,

try to make the struggle against unemployment a united struggle with those still employed.

I think we should support the claimants unions as the genuine expression of the unemployed and support them in their attempts to build a campaign around the slogan 'Fight to Live — a decent standard of living, work or no work'.

Reject

We must reject attempts to support the various Right to Work campaigns because of their dangerous implications of demanding work of any sort and on any terms.

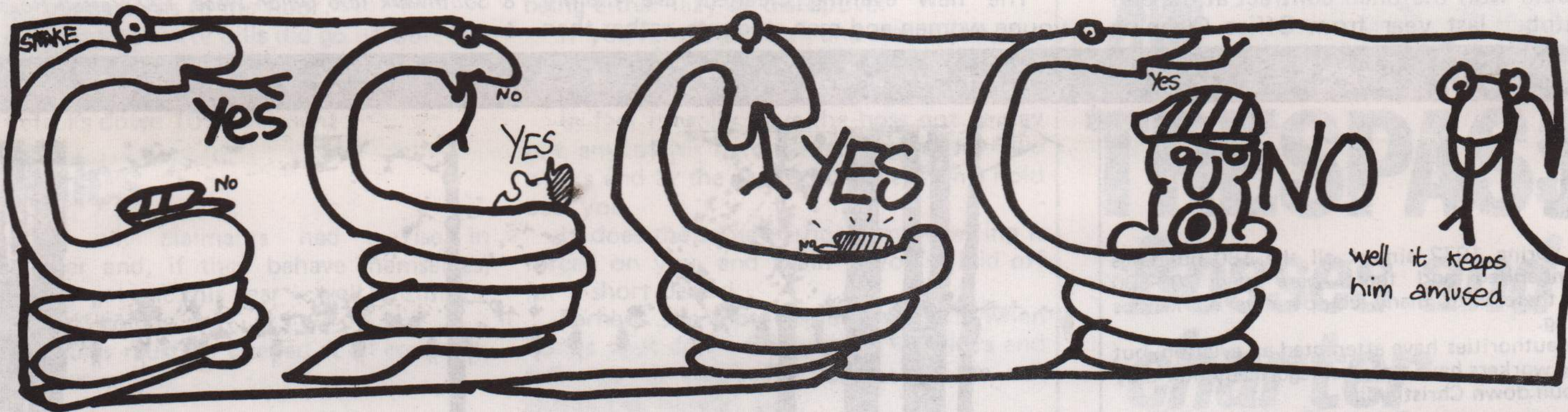
To be a wage slave is not a right. To do a useful job and live decently in relation to the rest of the working class is a battle which ultimately means the overthrow of the capitalist state.

The only way the unemployed will be successful will be if the rest of the working class still employed take industrial action on their behalf. Therefore AWA should make the following points:

- 1 Full trade union rights of their relevant union for unemployed workers and active membership of claimants unions and other unemployed workers committees.
- 2 Factory occupations where there are close downs, to prevent machinery being moved out.
- 3 Ban on overtime with no reduction in the guaranteed wage.
- 4 Slow down in production must be met with industrial action and slow down in working.
- 5 Threatened redundancies must be met with industrial action including strike action and attempts must be made to broaden support for such action with other trade union branches.
- 6 Action committees against unemployment and the cuts should be formed to co-ordinate such action.
- 7 A national federation of such committees should be formed to co-ordinate action nationally.

Although obviously many lines of action could be elaborated, these should be the basis for action.

JB — AWA member in a personal capacity



Aims and Principles

- 1 Capitalism is a class society
- 2 The basic irreconcilable contradiction within it is between the class which owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, the bourgeoisie, and the class who produce the agricultural and industrial wealth, the working class.
- 3 The social enslavement and exploitation of the working class forms the basis upon which modern capitalism stands, without which capitalism could not exist.
- 4 The state is the instrument of the ruling class. To destroy the power of the bourgeoisie, we must destroy the power of the state.
- 5 Russia and China are class societies in each of which a ruling class of administrators collectively owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, and in which a working class, the sole producer of all wealth, is exploited by that class. These states we define as corporate state capitalist in that the ruling class is totally integrated with the state, as is the trade union structure.
- 6 The class nature of society is reflected in all the dominant philosophies: class, race, sexual, social and personal relationships. The class relationships are expressed through all social relationships and generate attitudes such as sexism and racism.
- 7 The conflict of interests between the two classes generates the class struggle. In the history of society, the class struggle has been the primary factor in the determination of the form and structure of society.
- 8 The day to day struggles of the working class reflect the class struggle. The position of the working class as the collective producer of society's wealth

makes it the only force capable of replacing capitalism by a classless society. The existing defensive organisations thrown up by the working class, such as trade unions, whose bureaucracy is increasingly incorporated into capitalism, are not adequate for the smashing of the capitalist system, and the building of a free, classless society. However, the working class rank and file organisations such as democratically controlled shop steward committees, factory committees, strike committees, are developing through the place of work. These organisations are the forerunners of workers councils which are the expression of working class power. Outside of work, the working class has developed other forms of organisation that are potentially revolutionary, such as tenants action committees, rent strike committees, and tenant-worker joint action committees.

- 9 Dual power exists before the power of the bourgeoisie is smashed. If the working class are successful, then the organisation of the needs of society will be firmly based in working class hands. This is the collective working class in power, in which the working class destroys all remnants of bourgeois society, such as racial hatred, the family and hierarchies. This is the period of transition between capitalism and libertarian communism.
- 10 From our analysis we reach the inevitable conclusion that capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way and that the only meaningful transformation of society is through the development of working class organisations and by means of a violent social revolution. Violence becomes inevitable for the

working class to defend themselves against the onslaughts of the dispossessed ruling class.

The role of the AWA

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

organisations.

- 4 The AWA seeks to establish international links with libertarian revolutionary organisations and groups with an aim of establishing an international libertarian communist movement.
 - 5 The AWA seeks to combat attitudes of sexism, racism and national chauvinism as attitudes that help maintain class society.
- The form our organisation takes is a realisation of libertarian perspectives in the current situation. We recognise that it is not a social model of a free society and must itself develop in interaction with the developing liberation of society.
- [1] We are a membership organisation.
 - [2] Membership is open to those who agree with our analysis of society and its transformation, and who work towards this end.
 - [3] The main policy making body will be the National Conference. Between National Conferences there will be held bi-monthly Delegate Conferences to co-ordinate and carry out National Conference decisions, to decide interim policy and to initiate activity. Delegates are mandatable and rotated. Delegate Conference decisions can be revoked by National Conference.
 - [4] We seek to establish AWA groups in all areas, not only geographical but also industrial, educational, etc.. Groups interpret National and Delegate Conference decisions to relate tactics to their local experience.

As agreed at the National Conference in London 31 August - 1 September 1974.

S.S. Axe

CIVIL SERVICE mandarins, as part of a Government-initiated plan to reduce expenditure, have proposed an end to earnings related supplements to national insurance benefits.

Other proposals include an end to the family allowance, an end to non-contributory invalidity pensions and no more exceptional needs payments to go to Supplementary Benefit claimants.

Visits Cut

Furthermore, they propose to cut home visits to Supplementary Benefit claimants except in dire emergency.

They also propose cutting the staff in regional officers and headquarters plus compulsory retirement at 60, and an end to training centres for staff.

Also ready for the axe are maternity and, fittingly, death grants.

Who will fight these cuts?

It's unlikely to be the civil service clerical workers' union, CPSA.

At least, it won't be the union's executive who have just signed a redundancy agreement (Just in case, Lads), have avoided action over cuts in local office staffing levels and are busy trying to ignore national conference decisions of the rank and file by trying to help introduce management systems such as piece work and time and motion study.

They just call them by fancy names to mystify the workers.

Spread The Word

Some of the rank and file will be fighting back but they have to overcome the Broad Left, currently in control of the executive, the right-wing Moderates, waiting and hoping for a comeback, as well as apathy and sheer disbelief among union members.

We must spread the word in claimants' unions, womens' groups, union branches, action committees and trades councils.

Pressure

It will be more difficult to claim SS benefits as office staff come under more pressure and, especially as the mandarins have let slip that there is no benefit increase planned this year, don't blame or attack the office clerks but fight the system that abuses all of us alike.

Official Secrets Act Signatory

Press Fund

LAST MONTH in the Press Fund appeal we said that we would like, among other things, to have a second colour. Well, from this month there will be, thanks mainly to rising sales, a second colour on each issue.

But we think that a revolutionary anarchist paper should be more ambitious than just that.

So we are launching an appeal for £250 for a headliner — which would save us a fortune on letaset — and other vital layout equipment.

Also in February, AWA members meeting at the National Conference made two other important decisions about the newspaper: to aim to go fortnightly as soon as practicable; and from May to change the name to ANARCHIST WORKER.

We take these steps because we believe it is important to get the ideas of libertarian communism to as many people as possible.

Anarchist ideas must be relevant to the everyday life and struggles of working people, and an anarchist paper a forum for militants to exchange experiences and opinions; a tool that can be used in the building and extending of working class democracy and creating a libertarian communist current running through the very fabric of this society.

To do all this takes money. Last month brought in £12.70, which we are starting off the headliner appeal with.

Please send what you can afford, cheques made payable to 'AWA General Fund' to:

AWA
13 Coltman Street
HULL

Libertarian STRUGGLE

Lambeth Fight For Equal Pay

A FIGHT over equal pay is being carried on by a handful of women cleaners working for *Rebate*, cleaning contractors to the Shell Centre, Waterloo.

Ten women and three men are employed all night to clean the restaurant, entrance hall and other areas that can't be cleaned till all the users have gone home.

The women get £27.50 gross, giving them a take-home pay of about £20. If they use a floor polishing machine and do floor 'stripping' they get an extra £2.80 which brings them up to £30.30.

A man doing floor polishing gets HALF AS MUCH AGAIN.

An elderly man who has worked there for a long time gets paid £45 per week for this job.

Even a new student who dropped in is getting £40 a week — a full £10 more than the women who have been at the job for years.

Rejected by management

The women had heard about the Equal

Pay laws, passed a couple of months ago.

Sophie Esmond, backed by the other women, sent a request to the contract manager for parity with the men.

They were called to a meeting on Thursday January 8 — but it turned out to be just to chivy them about 'getting in on time'.

When they brought up equal pay they were told "You won't be getting any more, we think you are very well paid as it is".

But the women aren't taking that for an answer.

"The first thing we have to do," said Sophie Esmond "is to get £45 for those of us who do polishing and stripping work — that job is exactly the same as the men do."

The next stage will be to show that if £2.80 was the supplement for polishing and stripping then all women should get £42.20 for cleaning alone."

We know we should get it

Anne Burnett, who is not on flooring, says "We're all going to fight for what we know we should get. Women night cleaners are badly underpaid."

Rebate won the Shell contract at the end of October last year from Office Cleaning



Sophie Esmond and her daughter Services.

It seems that there has been a price war waging amongst these shark firms.

Most contractors are in cleaning for the very personal profits that individual directors and their families can milk out of them.

OCS is very profitable — it cleared £2m last year.

Rebate's managing director took a personal salary of £600,000 in 1973.

The firms hold down wages fiercely. But under pressure from the women and embarrassed by publicity, OCS gave the Shell Building cleaners an extra £6 a week in the summer.

The cost of cleaning as paid by Shell naturally went up too.

Looking round for a cheaper firm, Shell took on *Rebate* and sacked OCS: next thing that happened was most of the women were made redundant — fifty or more lost their jobs.

The new evening cleaners are mainly young women and men students, rather than

the local women who used to do the all-night shift.

But there are still ten women and three men employed on a night shift, and it is these that are engaging in the struggle for equal pay.

Is your job the same as his?

Many women workers in different industries are looking into their pay and how it compares with the men in their place of work, to see whether the Equal Pay legislation can be used to get them more money.

If any woman wants to write about discrimination they may be experiencing — and how they are going to fight it — please write to Knuckle (or *Libertarian Struggle*).

This article comes, with slight alterations, from *KNUCKLE*, the community paper for Lambeth & Southwark (c/o Union Place, 122 Vassall Road, London SW9).

Environment

IN MAY 1975, the Lucas Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards Committee sent out a letter asking for advice about alternative products that could be made using the equipment and expertise available to them.

They were interested in products that were more socially desirable, less vulnerable to economic cycles and more satisfying to make.

They had begun to think about the nature of work under capitalism, and how we all need to change the system of production from one in which goods are made to earn a profit to one where they are made to fulfil human needs.

All over the world, working people are beginning to question their work role.

Green Bans

In Australia, the Builders Labourers Federation — the building workers union — operates 'green bans', where they refuse to carry out any work if local tenants think it is harmful to their area.

This includes refusal to demolish buildings occupied by squatters.

The 'green bans' have proved very successful. In Denmark, in September 1971, 200 homeless people moved into a deserted barracks area — Christiania.

By Spring 1972 almost all the 180 buildings were inhabited and there were now 700-800 people there with many co-operative workshops operating.

The authorities have attempted an eviction, but building workers have stated categorically that they won't pull down Christiania.

Brum Ban

In Birmingham, the local branch of UCATT, the building workers union, are considering banning work on a proposed new office block on the site of a Victorian post office in the city centre.

The post office is a historic listed building. There is already a large amount of existing office space which is empty, and a long list of homeless people.

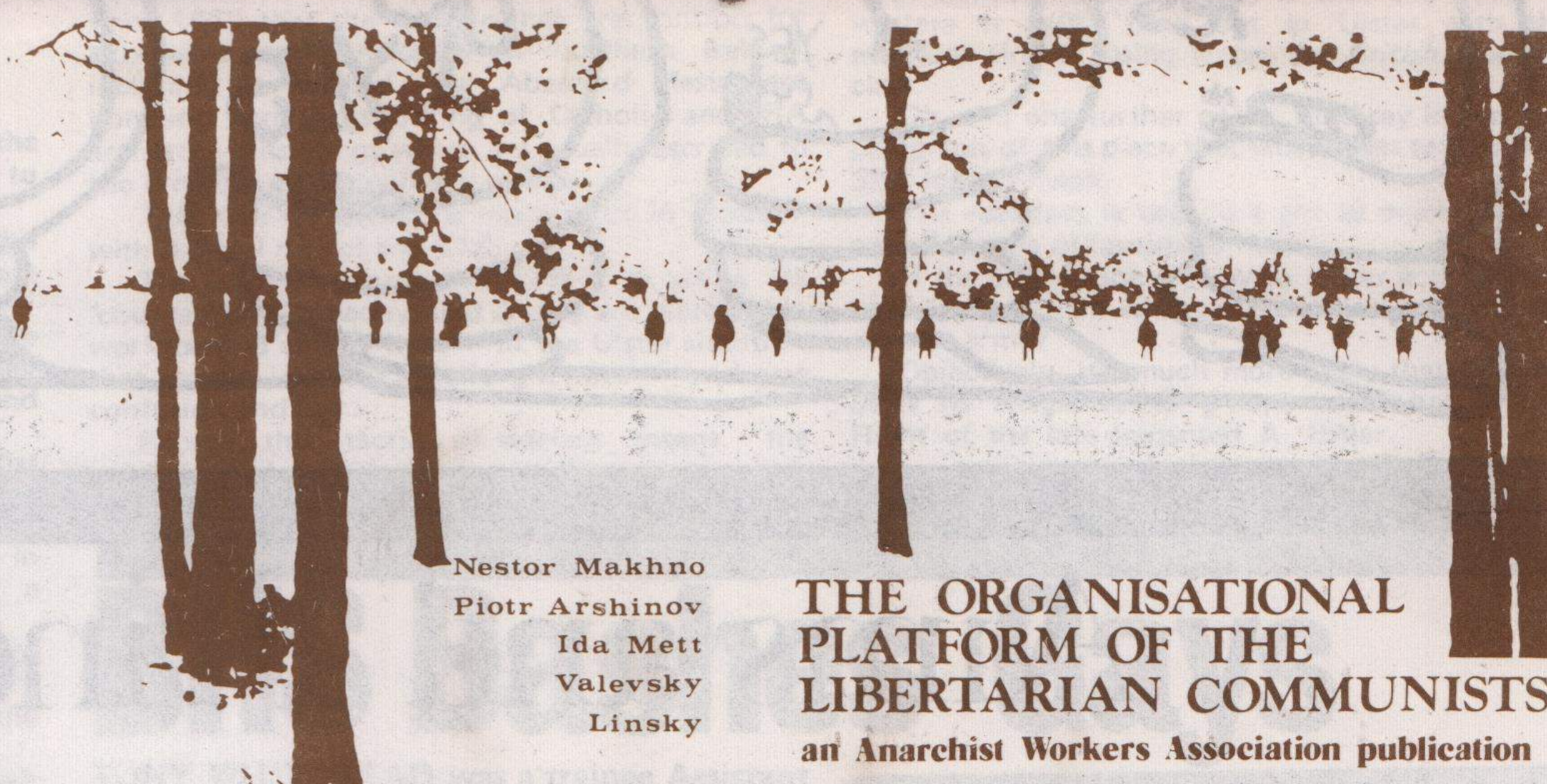
The demolition workers may be persuaded to not start work on the demolition.

In the fight against what the authorities plan, workers begin to question the whole set-up.

Why should far away planners controlled by councils and big business decide; why shouldn't people who live in the districts decide themselves how things need to be?

And why shouldn't workers decide what they build and what they make?

Bill Morris



Nestor Makhno
Piotr Arshinov
Ida Mett
Valevsky
Linsky

THE ORGANISATIONAL PLATFORM OF THE LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISTS

an Anarchist Workers Association publication

The Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists was written by a group of anarchists who had participated in the Russian Revolution and the ensuing civil war.

They attempted to communicate their experiences and what they had learnt to the international anarchist movement, stressing the need for disciplined anarchist organisation, built on and relating to the working class.

The Platform was severely attacked by the anarchist 'celebrities' almost without exception, who saw the formation of a structured anarchist organisation as a threat to the inalienable rights of the individual.

This historical document has been rediscovered, and has been instrumental in the development of organised class anarchism in the 1970's.

To obtain a copy, send a cheque/P.O. for 20p + 7p p&p made out to 'AWA General Fund' to AWA, 13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside.

French Army — Now 120 Soldiers Committees



SINCE last edition's article on the soldiers' committees in the French Army we have more news.

Forty-five people are under indictment, and they consist of both soldiers and civilians. Twenty-five are actually in prison.

They are being held for trial before the State Security Tribunal. This tribunal was originally set up in 1960 to tackle opponents of the Algerian war.

An organiser of the *Comite pour la Defence des Appelles* — Committee for the Defence of Draftees — described the background of the emergence of the soldiers committees.

"During the May Revolution of 1968 the Army was not immediately affected. The effects were felt only a few years later when young people who had been active in the new movement of the high school students in 1971-73 entered the Army, and brought their rebellious spirits with them".

There are now about 120 soldiers committees, many bringing out regular duplicated magazines.

Dave Higgins

