

DIRECT ACTION

No 1

15p



ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Unemployment rises as more and more redundancies are announced - rises to a level unknown since the dark days of the 1930's, remembered only by older workers. At the same time thousands are on short time and may soon be plunged into the pit of unemployment, creating the highest level of unemployment ever.

In human terms this means a drastic cut in living standards for more and more people, either directly through unemployment and short-time working or indirectly as wage rises fail to keep up with the rate of inflation. Make no mistake, no high unemployment

doesn't just affect the unemployed, it is used as a threat to discipline normally militant workers, such as the car workers, and to intimidate workers into accepting ridiculously low wage rises.

fight back

We must fight back - fight tooth and nail to save every job. Not because we like work; far from it. Those of us lucky enough to have jobs usually spend our days wishing we were doing something else.

No, we must fight back because, apart from the need to preserve something approaching a decent standard of living, the power of the working class lies in industry.

This power is weakened as unemployment increases. Unemployment acts as threat to those in work - a threat to behave or join the dole queue. In totalitarian countries this function is provided by concentration camps; in the so-called free world we have the Concentration Camp of unemployment.

We must fight back, but how? First, whenever redundancies are threatened we must occupy our workplaces - take them over and place

Cont'd on p.2

Direct Action Movement

Aims and principles of the Direct Action Movement.

- (1) The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisation.
- (2) Our aim is the creation of a free and classless society.
- (3) We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery in all their forms and replace them by self-managed production for need not profit.
- (4) In order to bring about the new social order, the workers must take over the means of production and distribution. We are the sworn enemies of those who would take over 'on behalf of' the workers.
- (5) We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is for independent organisation in the work place and community and federated with others in the same industry and locality, independent of, and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers organisations must be controlled by the workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all delegates and representatives of such workers organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.
- (6) We are opposed to all States and State institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all States do not exist to protect the workers of those States, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.
- (7) We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and the environment.

The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism; a system where the workers alone control industry and the community without the dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called 'experts'. Rather than diplomacy and endless political debate we believe in Direct Action.

JOIN!

I would like to join/know more about the Direct Action Movement.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

POSTCODE.....

Cut out and send to DAM, 164/166

Send to:- DAM, 164/166 Corn Exchange Bldgs, Manchester M4 3BN.

Cont'd from p.1

them under Workers Control. If this fails at least we will be in a better position to demand higher redundancy pay because we will be holding valuable plant and buildings to ransom.



On top of this, we must fight to reduce the working week - after all its stupid and wasteful for many of us to work a 40 hour week when 2½ million have no work and others are on short time. Where practicable we must immediately ban overtime, and to improve things further, we must fight to cut our working hours.

unity

Above all we must support one another. Individual workplaces can be picked off with ease, but the strength given by unity can often make the difference between victory and defeat. We must link up with other workers to fight redundancies. Remember their fight is our fight.

A start has already been made towards unity; redundancy action groups have been set up in some places like Rochdale, and the Miners, Railwaymen and Steelworkers have set up a triple alliance.

Let's improve on this!

slaves

Like the Luddites of old, we must not be frightened of ensuring that the new technology is introduced for our benefit and no-one else's. Even the slaves of old had the guts to rebel - men such as Spartacus preferring death to slavery.

We need not risk our lives, but let's follow the example given by Luddism and show that the wage-slaves of today have as much guts as the slaves of old.



HOOOLIGANS

Whenever stories are heard about the youthful high spirits of ordinary kids getting out of hand, the papers are full of letters from the hang 'em and flog 'em brigade ('disgusted' 'old soldier', 'ratepayer' etc;)

Tory MP's froth at the mouth; and experts pontificate. Even worse, the Juvenile Courts are full of Kids arrested for the most petty of reasons.

However, none of this happened when it was revealed that Kids at one school were swinging from lampshades, holding milk-bottle smashing contest, and were kicking or throwing balls at old people, windows, lights and furniture. They also played darts - without a dart board! The school in question? That bastion of the ruling class, ETON.

Who says there isn't one law for the rich and one for the rest of us.

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HEALTH SERVICE

The Health Service is on the brink of collapse. More and more hospitals are being closed as the result of savage cuts. Waiting list grow longer and longer. Even worse, staffing levels have now reached nightmarish proportions as 17 year old student nurses are left in charge of wards all night.

There is much worse to come, the Tories are smashing the NHS budget even further. antiquated hospitals are left in service, many of which first started out as workhouses. It has now got to the stage where badly needed, newly built modern hospitals such as Charing Cross remain empty because there is no money to pay staff.

it. Beven was forced to concede and allowed consultants to work part time for the Health Service and to allow Health Service facilities to be used for private practice.

fight

That is how the situation stands today and there are only two groups who can benefit from it; the consultants and the private patient. A good example can be seen in the in the operating theatre where I work. We only perform six operations a week and at least one of these operations is a private patient. These private operations take place in a NHS theatre. The theatre staff from porter junior doctor will have been trained by the Health Service, which also pays for all drugs and equipment. The only person receiving extra payment is the consul-

before they receive treatment. However, whilst we must fight against this attack on working-class standards it would be foolish to see the state run National Health as providing any permanent solution. Health is not just a question of money isolated from other aspects of life.

education

Improvements in health standards can only come through better working conditions, better housing and health education. These things can only come about when workers are able to control all aspects of their lives. This includes the Health Service which must be taken over and run for the benefit of the community.

Our health is too important to be left in the hands of bureaucrats and politicians.

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Did you know?

Since October unemployment has been rising at 20,000 a week. Redundancies have been running at 30,000 a day.

By 1985 21,000 typing and secretarial jobs will have been replaced by word processors. By 1990 the maximum displacement is expected to be 170,000, or 17% of the secretarial workforce.

A mentally handicapped couple have been without electricity for over a year because they're unable to pay a £13 electricity bill.

Sick!

A weekly newspaper in Zimbabwe, 'MOTO', published by the Roman Catholic Church and edited by priests, recently praised the Yorkshire Ripper. The paper's 23 January issue contained an article headlined 'I love the Yorkshire Ripper' which stated, 'If a single man had nearly succeeded in ridding Britain of her prostitutes, that man must be seen as a hero, not a villain. How Sick Can You Get?



Cynically

The government the only solution is to have a massive increase in private medicine. They have cynically set about this task by systematically running down the Health Service. Even though many people will die as a result she intends to force people to turn to private medicine. The Tories have now started to close hospitals and offer them up for cheap rent in the hope to attract more pay bed organisations.

This abuse of the NHS is not new. It dates back to 1948 when Beven first set up the Health Service. Beven was given an ultimatum by the consultants. either he found a way for them to make money out of the Health Service or they would sabotage

tant, who has already been paid once by the Health Service. It is private medicine that enables the rich to queue jump whilst at the same time only paying the consultant rather than for the full cost of the treatment, such as drugs, wages and the cost of staff training plus administration costs. But it is not just the money, the biggest scandal of all is the time taken up by private patients when there is a six year waiting list for some operations.

If we allow the government to go further along the road to private practice, the Health Service will turn into an American type health service, where the sick and injured are asked about their credit worthiness

B.M. N.F. N.N.F.

FROM WHERE WILL BRITAINS FUEHRER ARISE?

Nazi Resurgance

Last year saw the resurgence in Britain and other parts of Europe of Nazi activity. It was the year the British Movement hit the streets and the NF split into three parts. In Europe bombs exploded in Bologna, Munich and Paris and their 'strategy of tension' was put into practice.

From internal reports of British Nazis, it looks like they are being push into more 'militant' action by their European comrades. The British Movement, Column 88 and Viking Youth (a sort of Nazi boy-scouts) are the advocates of physical force and are recruiting a young skin-head street force.

strategy

Perhaps more worrying though is the Leicester based British Democratic Party led by the lawyer Anthony Reed-Herbet. This boy is a bit of a phenomenon on the extreme right, he's almost intelligent. He has plans to form a Patriotic Pincer Strategy with the head banging loonies of the B.M.

He'll lead the nice B.D.P., winning votes and friends while their allies in the BM try to get people to see the joys of fascism by beating them up. A nice, cosy arrangement that Reed-Herbert hopes the Strategy will be the way forward in 1981, but will the B.M. co-operate?

ains would be Fuehlers' are in mutual contempt of each other.

Tyndall hates Webster, Webster hates McLaughlin etc, etc. Hopefully it will stay that way and it'll make the task of keeping them in the gutter a bit easier.

Watch this space for further developments in the Wonderful World of British Nazism.

A BITTER TONIC

On December 1st 1980 prescription charges rose from 70p to £1.00. Most people grumbled about this but tended to forget about the previous rises over the last two years. The latest is the third in two years - from 20p to £1.00.

The governments motive for these increases is to reduce the number of prescriptions issued by the health service by 12 million, as part of its policy to cut its drug expenditure.

In the past two years the number of prescriptions issued has dropped by 6 million due mainly to the increased impoverishment of the working class to pay the increased charges.

These increases reflect the extent and seriousness of the States offensive against the working class. Making the sick pay for the States crisis is an insult to every man, woman and child in this country.



Martin - The Slob - Webster tries to reason with racial comrades Brons and Verrall.

stalwarts

The three NF factions are all in disarray with Martin (the slob) Webster keeping the name NF (lucky him!) and most of the wonderful stalwarts of British Nazism.

John Tyndall has formed the New National Front (Washes even Whiter) with his faithful sycophants. Odds and sods are in the NF Constitutional Movement but aren't expected to last long--fingers crossed.

gutter

The main reason it won't work is that the B.M. Fuehrer Michael McLaughlin has illusions of grandeur for himself and its doubtful he'll link up with the slimy Reed-Herbert.

If the Nazis are to make a serious comeback in 1981 a few of the rifts amongst them will have to be patched up. At present though it seems all of Brit-



Death Cuts

Who says the cuts in house building don't hurt. Not only do they hurt--they kill!

So far 2 babies that we know of have died because local councils are unable to house the homeless. They were Terence Alexander, 8 months, who died of pneumonia in Northallerton, Yorkshire last October and 14 month old Stella North who died of bronchitis in Aldershot, Hants.

Both had been housed in totally inadequate housing Terence

Both had been housed in totally inadequate temporary housing--Terence in a caravan and Stella in a ex-army barracks.

Both places were damp. Of course it can never be proved that they died because of damp, inadequate accommodation but their chances of survival must have been greater if they had lived in warm dry homes.

As yet the Housing Minister hasn't been arrested for manslaughter--We doubt if this Tory criminal ever will.

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Britain Bottom

Britain is at the bottom of the pay league of all industrial nations, according to a report on hourly paid workers by an American bank.

The report says that last year Britain was last in the table of industrialised countries, paying on average £2.47 an hour in manufacturing industry, compared with £4.29 in the USA.

The Netherlands, Sweden, West Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Japan, Italy, Canada and France were all well ahead of Britain.



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GOLDEN HANDSHAKE!

For those of our readers who've just been made redundant, clutching their redundancy payments, the following will be of interest. When Dalgety took over Spillers, Spillers Board of Directors were given the elbow. In compensation all 9 of benifited from a share-out totalling £1.7 millions.

They weren't the only ones. Remember Peter Cadbury of Westward TV fame? He recieved a golden handshake of £75,000, plus the waiving of certain financial claims against him. A lot of money isn't it?

Not for Mr Cadbury though he's reported as saying that, "If anybody thinks that £75,000 is a lot of money then we must be living in different worlds." He's not kidding is he.

BOSS TAPED

A tape recording did the trick at a Birmingham industrial tribunal when an employer sacked a man for belonging to the TGWU.

Kevin Round hid a little tape recorder under his jacket when he was called in to face company executives at Guest Motors, West Bromwich. Sales manager John Westwood was heard to saying that union members were not wanted.

The tribunal made an interim relief order that Kevin, a car salesman, must be reinstated and his company car returned to him. This order, under the Employment Protection Act, gives protection for those who can show that it is most probable they were dismissed for trade union activity.

A further meeting of the tribunal will hear the full claim by Kevin against unfair dismissal.



TPR 1/9/73



WOMEN'S WORK -

WOMEN'S ILL-HEALTH

REASONS

There are three main reasons why women's health and safety should be considered separately from men's. Firstly, the predominance of women in particular occupations and industries makes them more open to risks from certain hazards. Thirdly, women occupy a different and lesser place in society where housework and motherhood is not yet recognised as additional and excess labour.

WOMEN'S WORK

Women are concentrated in certain industries and certain jobs. Three quarters of all women employed work in the service sector. Over half the women employed in manufacturing industries work in food, drink and tobacco; electrical engineering; textiles; and clothing and footwear.

traditional

They also work in traditional "female jobs", that is unskilled and semi-skilled factory work, as typist, secretaries, kitchen workers, cleaners, hairdressers and laundry workers.

The hazards faced by women workers are not well documented, as there has been little research into the effects of hazardous substances and working conditions on them.

Official government statistics of mortality still list married women under their husband's not their own occupation.

hazards

The sort of hazards women are likely to face are, for instance Trichloroethylene (Trike) and chloroform in electrical manufacturing; trike, carbontetrachloride and benzene in laundering and dry cleaning; anaesthetic gases in hospital operating

rooms. These various chemicals affect the vital organs, liver, lungs, kidney and can have an effect on the foetus if the woman is pregnant.

Even the most modern office contains hidden hazards. Bad seating can cause backache and varicose veins. Duplicators create methanol fumes which can cause eye irritation, headaches, giddiness and vision problems. The potential hazards of visual display units (VDUs) are suspected but are not yet known.

Currently two New York Times copy editors are being backed by their union in their claim that their cataracts were caused by excessive exposure to the radiations emitted from a VDU.

hormones

Cleaners are prone to skin diseases from exposure to cleaning materials as are kitchen workers whose hands may be permanently wet. This condition is often made worse by further exposure in the domestic environment.

Women working in the chemical industry, eg in pill manufacture, can inadvertently be exposed to large quantities of artificial hormones. Women packing cosmetics on an assembly line can be exposed to different chemicals and fine dust, for instance talcum dust, which is known to often contain asbestos.

PREGNANCY

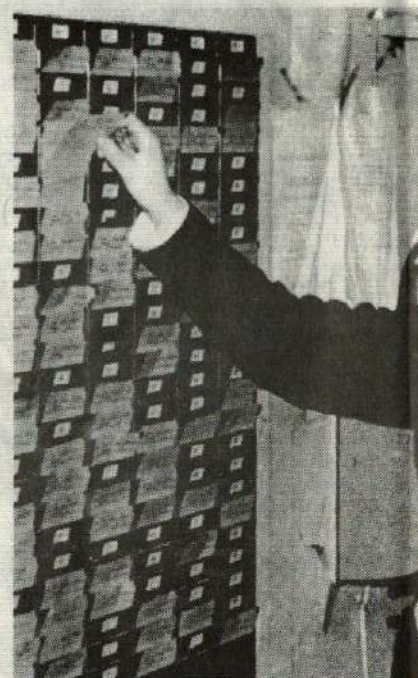
Women have rights both to work and bear children; it should be a recognised social responsibility to protect their dual role. But it is the reproductive organs and pregnancy itself which are biologically the areas which make women most at risk from industrial hazards.

foetus

A major problem for women becoming pregnant or intending to become pregnant is that the foetus grows fastest within the first five weeks after conception, when the nervous system and the brain are at their most vulnerable stage. But, it is also the period when few women can do more than suspect that they are pregnant. Therefore the most dangerous period of exposure to toxic chemicals and substances occurs before the pregnancy is confirmed. This means that transferring a pregnant worker to a safer environment, when it happens, usually happens too late.

toxic

There are three basic categories of agents which can affect the foetus: physical, such as ionising radiation (from X-rays); chemical, such as pharmaceutical and other industrial toxic chemicals, and biological, such as infectious bacteria and viruses (eg German measles).



Nurses and hospital workers are particularly at risk from the last of these. Toxic substances can have potential effects on the foetus which stretch beyond the actual period of conception. The DHSS have now advised all health authorities to withdraw pregnant women and those planning families from operating theatres after research showed that anaesthetic gases caused above average risk of miscarriages and birth defects.

miscarriages

This applied not only among women exposed while pregnant but also among those who had worked in operating theatres up to a year before conception. When a child is born, industrial hazards can also take their toll.

Accumulations of chemicals in the mothers body can be passed on to a child through breast feeding.

There are no official statistics on the rates of miscarriages still births, premature births, death soon after birth, childhood cancer or congenital defects according to the mothers work during pregnancy. Yet clearly such statistics if collected and published would enable us to have a clearer picture of industrial hazards on future generations.

One out of every 25 children is born with a defect of some sort and some form of cancer is the single largest killer of

children up to age of fourteen years (barring accidents).

lead

However, reproductive hazards are not just confined to women. The male reproductive system is also vulnerable and increasingly research shows that more and more industrial chemicals affect the testes and alter sperm production and sperm strength. There is also the likelihood of transmitting potential birth defects to succeeding generations.

The effects of lead is a case in point. In Britain women are "protected" by legislation from working in lead production. But lead also affects male reproduction in all the ways cited above.

How can you "protect" a woman from her husbands job if he brings back its effects on his clothes. It is less costly for them to bar childbearing age women from the work place than to take action if men are also found to be in danger.

SAFER ENVIRONMENT

General ill-health in women is also linked to the problem of constant tiredness. Where women have to cook, launder and clean at the end of a working day and then often spend a disturbed night looking after a child, sleep is lost which is never regained. This can mean she becomes generally "run-down" it can mean an increase in the number of accidents and near misses at work.

The answer to women's overload, is of course not to restrict their employment (as Patrick Jenkin would) but to develop the the social facilities, such as making work less repetitive and tiring, which would reduce general fatigue.

accidents

Shorter working hours, longer weekends and holidays and improved household provision would benefit all women workers and by definition, all workers.

It is however necessary to realise that the occupational health problems of women are not basically different from those

of men, and the same preventive measures against occupational hazards should be applied to men as well as women.

With certain clearly defined exceptions, usually to do with pregnancy, the answer to a recognised hazard to women's health is not to prevent women from working in certain industries and occupations but to make sure that the general conditions in industry are such that both men and women can work in them safely.

important

The International Labour Organisation considers it "realistic and important to envisage an evolution of social policy directed towards obtaining similar protective standards for men and women, with as few differentials as possible".

British workers have begun the battle to make the working environment safe, but there can be no room for complacency until all workers are ensured a safe and protected working environment.

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LENINGRADS LEFT

One of the peculiarities of Leningrad is that there as existed for some years, in spite of successive "dismantlings" at least one Left group.

The latest (after the crushing of the Anarcho-communist Group of Skobov-Tsourkov in 1978)—the Revolutionary Communards, known also under the name "Anarcho-Hippies"—exists entirely in secret and tries to evade police investigation.

Three of its members were sentenced December 25th 1979: Vladimir Mikhailov and Alexei Stassevitch to three years and Alevtina Kotcherov to one year.

(The group seeks to establish contacts with Western anarchist organisations. Write to their international secretary Andrei Okoulov, c/o Lev Routkevitch, Rasumowokigasse 9-II/23, VIENNA A-1030, Austria, who will forward.)

From "AGORA" (quarterly international libertarian review—published Toulouse) No. 3.



SMOT RUSSIA'S FREE TRADE UNION

SMOT ("Free Interprofessional Union of Workers") was formed on 28th October 1978. It was the second independent union to appear in Russia.

The first, created in November 1977, and known as the Association of Free Trade Unions (A.S.L.), was completely destroyed by the KGB and ceased to exist in February 1979. Its founder, Vladimir Klebanov, a former mineworker, has been in the psychiatric prison at Dnepropetrovsk since May 1978.

SMOT can be considered in some ways as the Klebanov union's successor, (it took in one of the groups which survived), but in contrast with the latter, which concentrated its activities on the defence of the professional rights of workers, SMOT is dedicated to defending all those rights violated by the authorities, whether professional, social, economic, cultural, religious or political.

legal

SMOT considers that the guarantee of each one of these rights is an indispensable condition for the exercise of all the others.

A working group of SMOT, appointed by election, inquires into the complaints of workers and takes legal proceedings to ensure their defence. It produces a duplicated "Information Bulletin".

SMOT is a legal organisation and works within the framework of the Soviet constitution and international law. Its structure is determined by the specifications prevailing in the USSR. Autonomous groups of workers elect a council of delegates on the basis of one delegate for each group.

The members of the council take all responsibility for the work of SMOT, their names and addresses being made public. Each one is backed by a substitute delegate elected in advance who can replace him/her in case of arrest.



VLADIMIR BORISSOV

security

Today SMOT is composed of ten groups, in Moscow and Leningrad, with 200 members whose names are not divulged outside for security reasons.

In the course of a press conference in October 1979 the council of delegates announced its interest in the possibility of affiliation to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the World Confederation of Labour. It also asked the International Labour Organisation for an assurance of protection. It has not obtained any official response.

* * * * *

A decisive role in the organisation of SMOT has been played by a 35 year old electrician, Vladimir Borissov, a dissident well known for his activities in support of Human Rights. He has already spent nine years in different prisons and psychiatric institutions.

Among the founder members of SMOT are:

Valeria Novodrovskaya, 28, librarian, confined in the Moscow No. 15 psychiatric hospital from 24th November 1978 to 7th February 1979. Member of SMOT'S council and working group, Novodrovskaya organised the union's library and gave courses in literature, history and history of art to a group of 40 workers, members of SMOT.

clinics

Valeria—who has already spent three years in Kazan psychiatric prison (1969-1972) was confined in cell 26, reserved for particularly violent prisoners. She was released following numerous telegrams sent from England to the Health Ministry. The decisive intervention was that of John Boyd, general secretary of the AUEW.

YEVGENY NIOLAYEV, 40 zoologist, was dismissed from his post in 1970 for having refused to take part in a "socialist competition" in honour of the XXIVth Party Congress. Following this he was "treated" at various times in psychiatric clinics because of his activities in support of human rights. Yevgeny Nikolayev was one of the founder members of the Klebanov union, which cost him his last hospitalisation finishing on 12th September 1978.

detention

Several other members or sympathisers of SMOT are manual or non-manual workers who have also been spiritually and intellectually prepared in the "Gulag University", are the apprentice baker, Yuri Grimm (SMOT member) and Vladimir Gerohumy (also a SMOT member).

cont. p11

The Day The Army Mutinied

history

At school history is usually taught as if the only people who ever did anything were the high and mighty; Kings and Queens Prime Ministers, Generals. Ordinary people are treated as minions who did as they were told and always accepting whatever was dished up to them.

One of the most striking aspects of the First World War was that there were not more mutinies by British troops. There were of course mutinies in other armies such as the French or the Russian and near the end of the war in the British army itself.

In Britain itself, in early 1918, Guards Machine Gunners at Pirbright mutinied, refusing duty for three days. Two days after the Armistice men at Shoreham mutinied, demanding to be demobbed, their demand being granted.

Men were sick of the war and army life, wanting to return home, yet had to wait months in barracks for demobilisation. Even worse, there was the possibility that some of them would be sent to Russia to put down the Bolsheviks. Because of this many other mutinies followed, such as that by 400 men who refused to board a troop train in London after being told that they were being sent to Russia.



That view is totally false. Since the beginning of time ordinary people have rebelled against their exploiters and fought for their rights. Whenever any politician tries to claim that the workers today are too militant, not like the old days when people used to respect authority, knew their place and other such rubbish, he's lying.

In order to put right this false view of working class history 'Direct Action' is running a series on working class history, beginning with British Army Mutinies at the end of the First World War.

gunned down

The mutinies began with Etaples, a base camp in France, when demonstrations by soldiers took place against the arrest of a New Zealander. Further trouble occurred when one of the demonstrators was shot and killed by the Military Police. A few days before 23 men in a Labour Company, mainly Egyptians and Chinese had been gunned down after they had gone on strike.

conscripts

The army was in disarray; Soldiers and Sailors Councils were set up and troops sent to intimidate Civilian Strikes could not be trusted as they were fraternising with their civilian brothers. Clearly the wave of Syndicalist inspired strikes at the end of the war had affected the troops; fresh conscripts sent to intimidate mutineers in Calais joined the mutiny, which was being supported by French workers.

The importance of these events is that they show that the British Squaddie is no different from anyone else and that the British Army is not the all powerful force it is imagined to be by many working class radicals.



GARDNERS

Last year was a pretty bleak picture on the industrial front. On the whole the bosses did what they wanted, when they wanted and there seemed little sign of anyone willing to fight back.

To keep cheerful militants had to switch on there T.V. sets and watch events hundreds of miles away in Poland.

But one event in this country gave a glimmer of hope that workers had had enough.

The Gardners factory in the Lancashire town of Eccles management decided to sack some workers, just a few more hundred for the scrapheap. Except these workers said nay, stuck two fingers up at the management and took control of their factory.



inside the occupation

Redundancy notices were ignored or burnt and battle lines drawn up. 1,800 workers versus Gardners Ltd, subsidiary of the mighty Hawker-Siddley. The workers, mainly AUEW, toured the country winning support and raising thousands of pounds for the strike fund.

Protest marches were held through Eccles and leafletting and collections taken in the shopping precinct. They didn't wait for the union bureaucracy to grind into 'action' but took the initiatives themselves.

Gardners management were dumb-struck and realised that they had bitten off more than they could chew. Poor souls had to back down and withdraw all compulsory redundancies, the proles had won.

The bosses are not unbeatable, if the workers are organised, united and determined they're unstoppable. The Gardners workers showed that.

'Gardners' a little bit of Poland here in dull old Britain.

JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE

On May 19, 1979, after over two and half years in the federal court system of the United States, a jury awarded the family of Karen Silkwood \$10.5 million, after finding the Kerr-McGee Corporation (KM) guilty of negligence in the plutonium contamination of Karen, who worked at a KM nuclear facility.

This verdict marks the first time anywhere that a nuclear corporation has been held criminally liable for off-site contamination. The jury found that KM allowed plutonium to "escape" from its plant near Crescent, Oklahoma, and showed up in Karen's apartment some 40 miles away, contaminating her clothing, bed, toilet and even the bologna and cheese she was eating in her refrigerator.

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While KM alleged that Karen deliberately stole the plutonium to embarrass the company---even hinting that she may have taken it in order to sexually abuse herself---evidence gathered by lawyers and investigators, strongly indicates that the actual facts point to KM being the culprit, not Karen Silkwood.

Karen had begun work at the plant in 1972 and had become aware that KM was violating numerous worker health and safety standards as well as quality control standards for the plutonium fuel rods they were contracted to make. She complained to both her union, the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW), and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC).

AT KAREN'S REQUEST A TEAM OF K.M. INSPECTORS TEST HER APT. FOR RADIATION



IN THE REFRIGERATOR?



KAREN CALLS WASHINGTON

STEVE WOODKA? OH STEVE SOMETHING VERY WEIRD IS GOING ON HERE



AND LATER AT DREW'S APT



## TYNE AND WEAR

On November 24th last year a picket was held at the DHSS offices in Newcastle and the premises occupied. Protesting against increasing attacks on living standards of people forced to live on the states meagre benefits, was a large contingent of pensioners, unemployed, one parent families and those too sick to work.

On behalf of the pickets a speaker pointed out that on that very day the government was cutting benefits and that the cabinet were discussing even further cuts to attack the working class with. Also mentioned was the fact that benefits were only increasing by 11% - over 5% less than the rate of inflation and that in January 1981 Earnings Related Supplement is to be reduced and eventually abolished in 1981.

## angry mood

The speaker ended by calling for unity in the struggle against escalating attacks upon the working class.

In an angry mood the picket decided to occupy the building. During the occupation social security staff and customers listened intently to what the protesters had to say. After a

cont. page 12



## SMOT

Vladimir Skvirsky, 48, geologist and member of SMOT's council of delegates was placed under preventive detention on 13th October 1978 in a Moscow prison. Before the examining magistrate, Skvirsky pleaded not guilty and refused to answer questions about SMOT. The "public" trial lasted two days (15th and 16th May 1979) before the Peoples Tribunal in Moscow's Moskvoretsky district. Skvirsky, whose complete innocence was demonstrated by his counsel, was sentenced to five years internal exile.

A number of telegrams had been sent to the judge, notably including those from NALGO, Force Ouvrière, the National Education Federation of France and the British Parliamentary Group for Human Rights.

Mark Morozov, 47, an engineer, was incarcerated on 1st November 1978 in the Leforto prison. He is actually awaiting trial charged under Article 70 of the Penal Code ("Anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation"). Thanks to experience and courage of these people, to the sympathy of workmates and the solidly-built structure of the union SMOT has managed to survive in spite of the continual persecutions, the provocations, the silence of the Western press and the feeble support of free unions abroad.

From: Workers Solidarity  
Monthly organ of the French Revolutionary Syndicalist and Anarcho-syndicalist Alliance. (ASRA)

Extract from an article by Victor Fineburg

(Russian dissident- representative abroad of SMOT, the only free trade union remaining in the USSR).

## ERICCA~

a women's right to cues!

### no vote

Working Men's Clubs are not exactly known for their enlightened attitude towards women.

Only a handful of CIU affiliated clubs treat women as equal members, most relegating women to the position of 'Lady Members' who are join by their husbands membership and have no say in club management.

Women have no vote, cannot stand for office, bring guest into the club or use the 'Men Only' rooms. On top of this, as women cannot affiliate to the CIU, they cannot obtain the pass-card which entitles members to enter any CIU club.



Sheila Capstick with her poster

### fight

This discrimination can be taken to ludicrous levels. One of the few clubs which has equal rights, the AEU club in Eccles, Manchester, was faced with the prospect of sending it's snook-team, which includes a women, to play a fixture at a nearby club. This club has a white line painted over the gamesroom floor over which women aren't allowed to cross.

To fight against this, ERICCA the Equal Rights in Clubs Campaign for Action—was formed. The campaign began just a year ago when Sheila Capstick, a long standing member of Wakefield City Working Men's Club, was banned from playing Snooker.

Since its formation, ERICCA has been building up support in Trades Councils and other working class organisations which have strong links with Working Men's Clubs. They are hoping to get motions through Unions, Clubs and onto the CIU's agenda next year.

## THE DAM

The Direct Action Movement is an organisation of active militants. We aim to offer an alternative for those who do not wish to be organised from above but who nevertheless appreciate the need for organisation, and for action.

Since its founding in March 1979 the D.A.M. has grown rapidly. It now has branches in most large towns active in a variety of fields and working to establish grass roots organisation that does not depend on careerists and self seeking leaders to get things done.

We have no central committee to tell us what to do or think and no tin gods whose sacred words give us all the answers.

We aim to grow by sharing our skills, resources and understanding. We ask people to work with us rather than submit to our instructions.

The world has too many power crazed leaders already. We believe in complete workers control (not the bogus socialism of the so-called 'communist' countries). We believe in genuine democracy (not that represented by professional politicians). If you just leave it to us we aren't going to change the world for you. We'll work with you as equals but we won't lead you. It's up to all of us.

Membership fees (to pay expenses only, all work for the D.A.M. is unpaid) are £1.50 per month (for waged) and 10p (unwaged). Membership is open to all who agree with the aims and principles.

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## tyne & wear

while the managment called in the police. Who on arrival promptly cleared the premises. No arrests were made.

Afterwards all taking part in the demo enthusiastically pledged continuing action against attacks on their living standards.

A month after this demonstration the state confronted us with the latest unemployment figures, 2,244,229, a staggering increase of 888,771 in the year. This means a national unemployment percentage rate of 9.3%. In simple terms that means nearly one worker in ten is on the dole!

## redundancies

In the Wearside area unemployed workers number 22,675. With more redundancies predicted for 1981 the prospect of finding work is practically impossible. Faced with this gloomy future unemployed workers are planning action based on the Newcastle model.

As the speaker in Newcastle stressed - unity is the only answer to fight the states attacks or our standard of living. Whether the the state is run by Conservative or Labour it must be smashed, as both represent the same interests and its not that of the working class.

.....

## Maternity Rights

Women's right to paid leave to have a child is completely undermined by the Government's three proposals to change the system of maternity funding.

Women earning about £35 a week or more will lose out if the changes go through. The three options laid out in the consultative document attack the rights in the Employment Protection Act which are worse than those in most EEC countries. Women who do not work will gain but their gain will be small.

The right to maternity pay has only been in existence for three years. It is yet to get going as women fulfil the two years' service requirements, the Equal Opportunities Commission points out.

The first option would involve pay-outs so small that the sum of £161 million, envisaged as total National Insurance spending in 1980-81, under the present system, would not be spent, the government admits in the document published by the Department of Health Social Security.

## options

Indeed this option would be so low that subsistence payments, in the form of either supplementary benefit or sickness benefits would have to be made to women "who would not be able to cope financially".

Under the first option, maternity allowance and maternity pay would be abolished. The maternity grant, to which women who had paid National Insurance contributions in the appropriate tax year would be entitled, would be increased to £200 for the first birth and £80 for subsequent births.

Under option two, the maternity grant would remain at £25 (having not been increased since 1969). Maternity pay and maternity allowance would be combined to form a single allowance payable by the employer at the flat rate of £30 for 13 weeks or £22 for 18 weeks. A living wage? The DHSS would still pay an allowance to certain women who fulfilled National Insurance contribution conditions.

## money

The third option would also keep the £25 maternity allowance.

The Maternity Pay Fund - which has been financed by an increase in employers' National Insurance contributions since being set up under the Employment Protection Act - would be abolished.

The money released would be used to increase the maternity allowance to either £24.50 for 18 weeks or £30 for 14 weeks. Alternatively the grant would be increased to £80 and the allowance fixed at £18.50, the third option suggests.

There is a fourth option which is the only one offered that is worth taking - and that is to leave things as they are.

Under the first three options a women would get £140, or £200 on the first birth and £80 on later ones (option one), up to

£415 (option two if a women has paid full NI contribution) or £466 (option three if you are currently entitled to maternity allowance)

## reduced

But at the present time a working women on just £35 a week would get £416.80. If on £60 a week she would get £596.80. These sums include the maternity grant, the £20.65 a week maternity allowance for 18 weeks, plus pay at 90% of normal earnings for six weeks minus the maternity allowance payment for those weeks.

The Equal Opportunities Commission considers that it is not appropriate to change the present system of cash benefits without making more money available.

It points out that women's maternity allowance - to which they are entitled by their National Insurance contributions - is already being reduced by the government with decisions from 1982 to make it taxable, abolish the earnings-related supplement and drop it 5 per cent behind the inflation rate, in line with certain other benefits.

Under the Employment Act, the government has already discriminated against pregnant women by amending the Employment Protection Act so that they can be offered an inferior job on returning to work.

## THE PROPOSALS

The government proposals do not just rearrange funding for maternity payments. They will save money. The Maternity Pay Fund financed from employers' National Insurance contributions, has a surplus of £47.7 million. The implication is that this surplus would be used elsewhere with maternity pay axed.

It has already decided to cut £47.7 million between 1981 and 1983 by phasing out earnings-related supplement on maternity allowance.

These points are made by the Child Poverty Action Group which has rejected the three options. It described the proposal to raise the maternity grant from £25 to £140 by scrapping maternity allowance and maternity pay as 'shabby'.