

Who are the Unions for: THE MEMBERS - OR THE GOVERNMENT?

IN THIS EDITION

Exclusive report from Zimbabwe STARVATION



Smith regime's final solution

First of new series WORK SAFETY

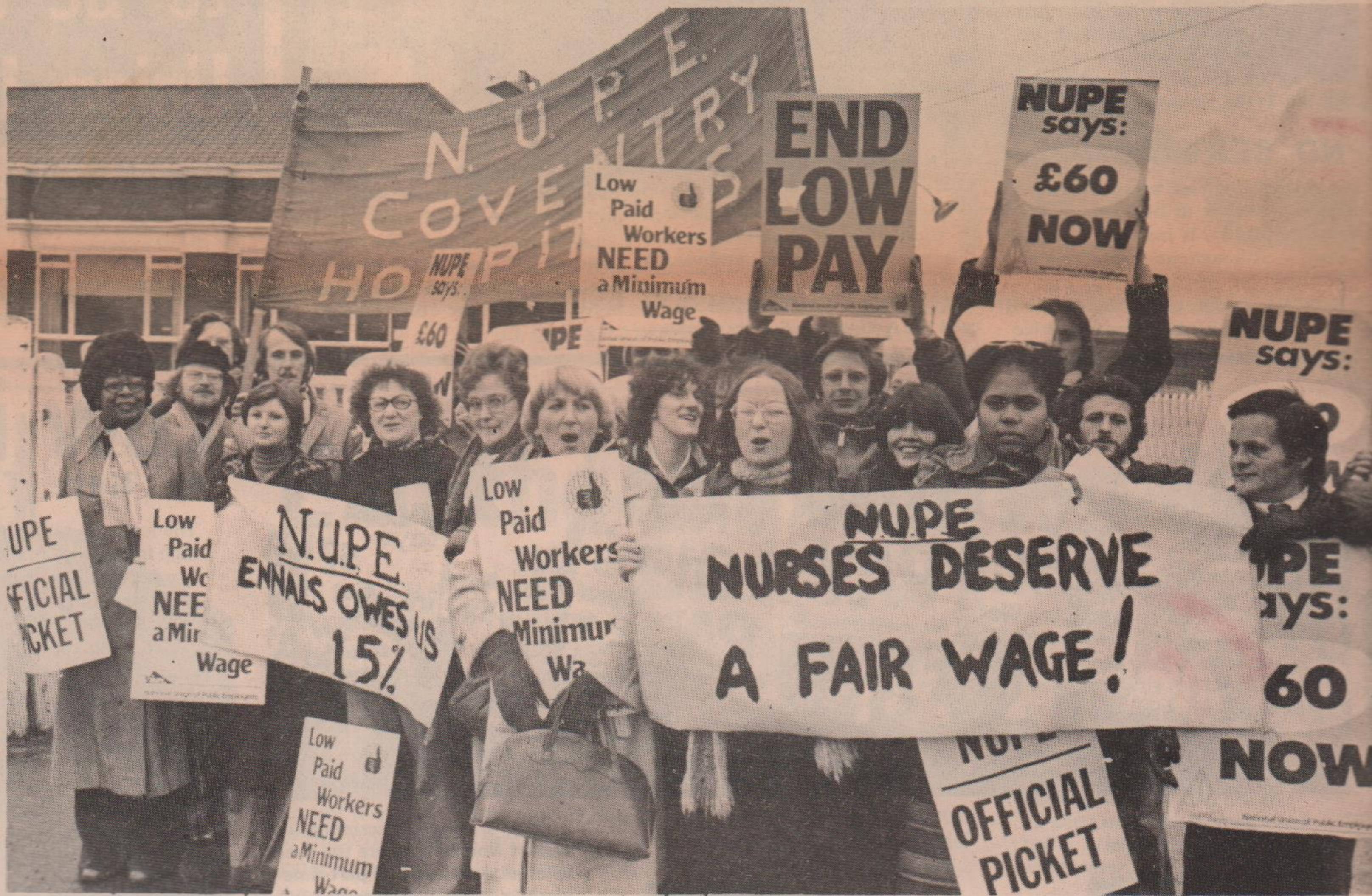


Oil rig workers suffer a higher death rate than World War 2 soldiers. What can be done?

Interview with Fred Halliday IRAN



— the looming conflict between Khomeini and the left.



JAMES CALLAGHAN, Sussex landowner and friend of banker **Julian Hodge**, lectures workers who take home £40 a week on the principles of trade unionism.

Needless to say, the principles he refers to are all about how not to win a strike, like crossing picket lines — he calls that the right to work. He wants power taken away from the members, the people who pay the dues, and given to union leaders.

LEADERS

Leaders like Frank Chapple — the man who calls public sector strikers "terrorists".

Both of them should be grate-

ful that the strikers, despite their frustration, have refused to be goaded into burning down the houses of the arrogant rich who claim to speak for the working class.

To be called a terrorist by someone like Chapple means that you're on the right track. He says it because he knows that the public sympathises with the workers who keep our public services running — all for a miserable pittance.

WAITING

More and more people have been seeing what's been happening in this country these last few months —

- 1½m people on the dole who can't cross a picket line because they're unemployed. Where's their right to work Mr Callaghan?

- people dying because there's no money to pay for kidney machines and because waiting lists are too long while private health booms — thanks to Mr Callaghan's cuts.

- no-one killed by the 'terrorist' strikers but:
 - 3 railwaymen killed trying to keep the lines open.
 - a lorry driver killed on picket duty in Aberdeen when he stepped forward to speak to a driver.

PRINCIPLES

We'd like to end with a very short lecture on trade unionism. It's this: the only people qualified to talk about trade union principles are the rank and file. Because without them, there wouldn't be any trade unions.

International Women's Day • 8 March • centre pages

AMBULANCE DRIVERS STRIKE

(from Islington Gutter Press)

Half of the workers in the London Ambulance service went on unofficial strike on Wednesday 21st February.

The ambulance station which serves the Islington and Camden area is in Cressy Road, near to the New Royal Free Hospital. The station has 60 ambulances and 102 men (in the Greater London area as a whole there are about 1,000 vehicles and 2,300 workers).

We talked to Terry Pettifer, Deputy Chair of the North West Division of NUPE Shop Stewards Committee.

TOTAL

"This is the first time that we have come out on total strike, that is including the emergency services as well, since January 22nd.

We have taken different industrial actions since then, but have maintained the emergency services. We didn't do the ordinary ferrying between hospitals, but we *did* maintain the 999 service, and other

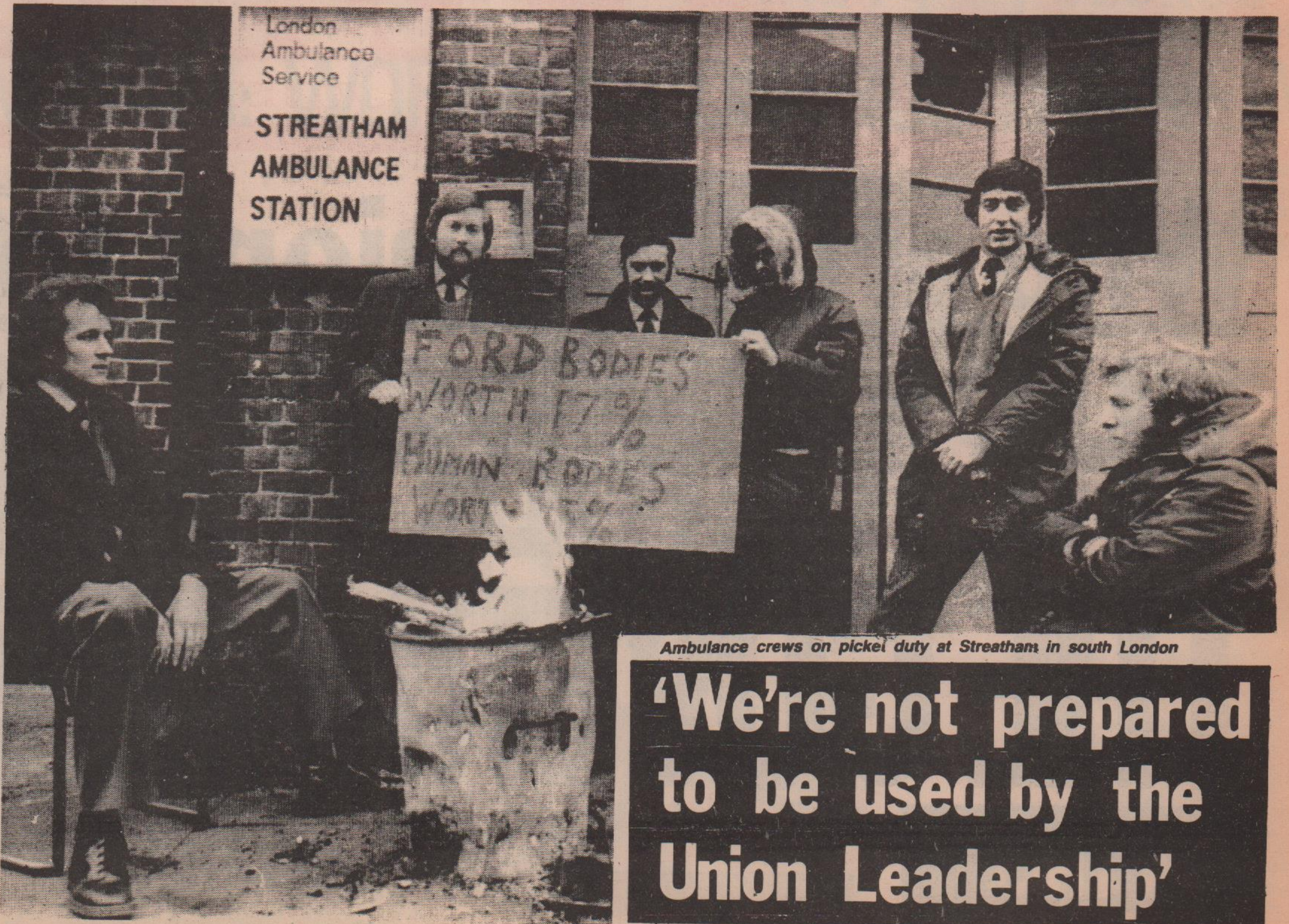
DISGUSTED

urgent cases such as dialysis patients, people undergoing radiotherapy treatment and so on.

Today we are on a total 24-hour strike. The men are disgusted with the latest 9% offer — we consider it is ridiculous. We believe that the Trade Union leadership of the public service unions has been just playing a political game with us. One of the messages of this strike is that we are not prepared to be used by the Trade Union leadership like that.

NO SERVICE

I think the case we are making is far too serious to be used by anyone politically. It isn't just a wages issue — although we mustn't underestimate the importance of that — but is also a strike about the concern over the way the Ambulance Service



Ambulance crews on picket duty at Streatham in south London

'We're not prepared to be used by the Union Leadership'

has been run down over the last five years. We get an increasing turnover of staff, and an increasing shortage of equipment. If it carries on like this we won't have an Ambulance Service in five years time.

The Trade Union leadership have used the Ambulance Service workers

as the cutting edge of their blade. They knew that if they could get us out then we would take all the headlines in the papers, be the lead item on TV. And that's what happened on the 22nd. But what it meant was that the other workers —

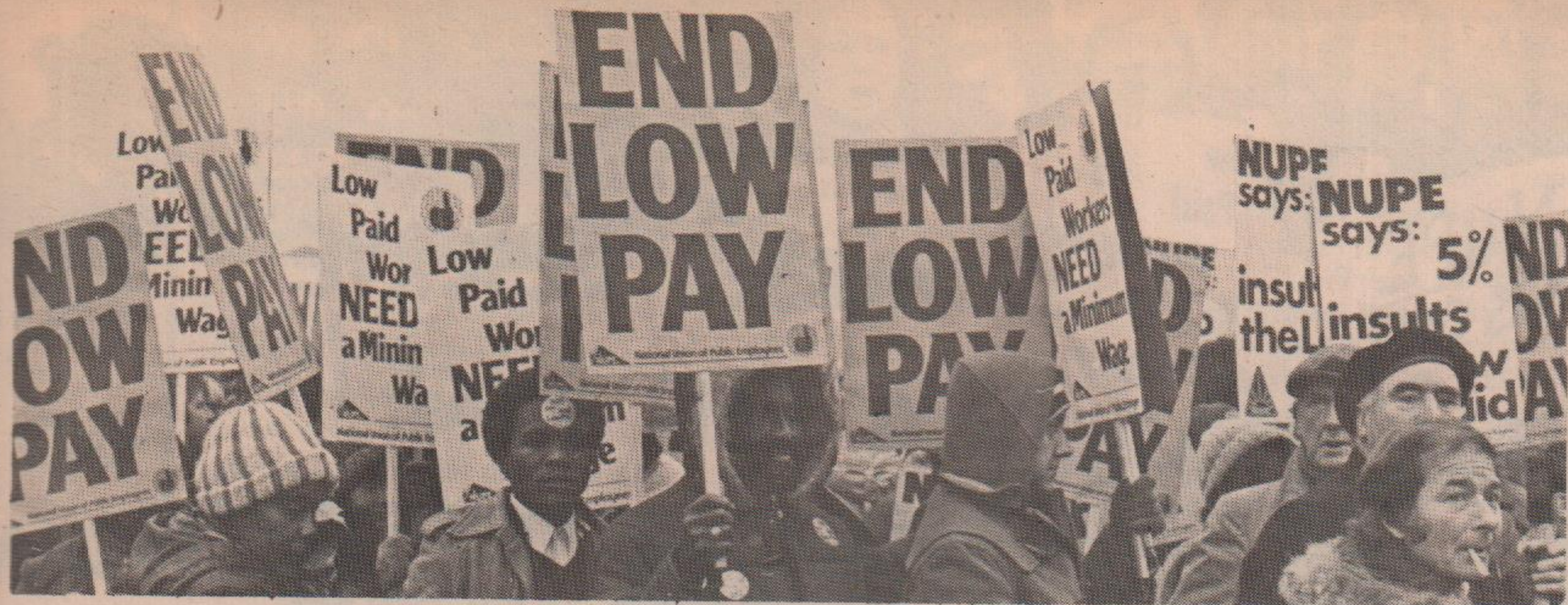
the dustmen, the caretakers, the ancillary workers in the hospitals, got pushed away into some tiny corner of the newspaper.

WAGE

The wage issue is also important.

The papers tell you that an ambulance man takes home on average £83 a week. What they don't tell you is that to take home money like that you have to work 7 days a week, and that the basic pay is £44.80! We want a basic £60."

(Newslime Photo)



Low in socialism

by Kate Truscott 'Fightback'

The low pay campaign has been high in trade unionism and rather low in socialism. It is no wonder that public meetings organised by socialists outside the workplaces have been so poorly attended. We have not shown ourselves to be consistent in addressing and co-ordinating a socialist class perspective on the background to low pay ie. cash limits, the cuts in public spending, the Social Contract, the significance of public and health services in our society, who controls them as they are run. We have also, clearly not built up the kind of local and national co-ordination and organisation which could begin to offer a basis of struggle against this wider political backdrop.

It is not enough for socialists to simply pop up at wage claim time. We have to organise against and analyse all the main ways public service workers have been attacked in the last few years through closures, staff shortages, increased workload, and now victimisations and the impending threat to our right to strike.

And come the end of this dispute we face further serious problems. One is that many people will feel that the money they've got does not match up to the efforts of the strike. And, as after the '73 ancillary strike, many workers, including good militants will want to just pack in their jobs. Secondly, the effect of the media's hate campaign will start to get at people who no longer feel the solidarity of the wider campaign around them.

Management could easily use this period of aftermath to force through pending local cuts (a new round of which begins in April) and

to victimise militants as they did in West London after the disputes of the summer. On top of that we face a serious threat to our right to strike which could be signed and settled (if the new 'Concordat' is anything to go by) by the time the 9% is in your pocket.

The settling of the claim cannot be the end of action and organisation against low pay, cuts and closures and all the other effects of the cash limits, which have not been broken and will continue well into the mid-1980s.

A whole new layer of workers has now had a taste of working class strength and solidarity during this dispute, and this must be built on. Without it, local managements, authorities and the Government will walk all over us.

1. We must now take seriously and begin to fight other cuts, closures, staff shortages etc.

2. We must build on the inter-union support and support from all sections of staff which has been so strong in this dispute, and not slide back to the divisions of before.

3. We must build on the support of all public sector workers that has been so strong in areas like Newcastle and Merseyside and Glasgow. And to transform any low pay committees against further cuts and for better services.

4. We must build up left alternatives in the unions to co-ordinate activity within the union structures.

5. And as so many of the low paid have said, better paid workers and an end to cuts also means fighting for a better service for all.

For more information about 'Fightback' contact the Fightback office, 30 Camden Rd., London NW1.

editorial

MAKE NO mistake about it — the ruling class is very worried about trade union leaders losing control over their rank and file. The lorry drivers' victorious strike was a bad blow to them and now they face the prospect of NUPE members giving a resounding thumbs down to the offer cobbled together by their negotiators and the employers.

Callaghan's statement "Too much responsibility has been devolved from the centre on to local shop stewards who do not follow the basic tenets of trade unionism. And the sooner more responsibility has been gathered back into the hands of officers who do have that understanding, the better it will be for the rest of us" reflects the Government's fear.

The Concordat, with its restrictions on picketing and the closed shop is a desperate attempt to get union leaders to 'put their house in order.'

MILITANCY

In fact everybody knows that it is militancy and organisation at the base that wins strikes. Recent examples are the Warrington lorry drivers control of what was carried or the 17 day strike by NUPE workers in Camden which won a 35 hour week and £60 minimum.

It's grass roots militancy that has forced the Government to up the original 5% offer and will do so again if the present offer is rejected by the membership.

● It should be rejected. Apart from coming nowhere near the 35 hours/£60 demand, it:

● discriminates against part timers, many of whom will not get the £1

'top up' — vicious discrimination against women who are the overwhelming majority of part-time workers in the public sector.

● gives no guarantee that a new government will implement the findings of the commission on 'comparability'

● in no way clarifies what 'comparability' means. In some cases public sector workers are better paid than similar workers in the private sector — in some cases worse. The public sector unions want members' wages pegged to average earnings in the private sector — not what the comparability commission will have in mind.

The offer is so full of holes that right from the start union negotiators said they would have difficulty selling it to their members.

There's one more problem: the public spending cuts which the government promises in return for any rise above 9%. This is sheer blackmail. It's the old threat of redundancy for workers who demand too much.

None of this happens automatically. The laws of economics answer to the pressures of the class struggle. Just as the government has given way on the 5% limit, only workers' struggle will prevent them cutting the public services. It's as simple — and as difficult — as that.

FIGHT THE CLOSURES-MERSEYSIDE AND TYNESIDE

DUNLOPS- 'WE WON'T LET IT CLOSE!'

A WAVE of shock ran through Speke on January 19th when Dunlops announced the closure of the tyre plant in April, with 2,300 redundancies. There have been 6,500 jobs lost in Speke over the last year, including 3,000 at Standards, and excepting Ford Halewood, Dunlops is the last good job left in the area.

The closure has to mean a drastic loss of income — as one man said "no more presents for the grandchildren now", with little future hope of more work, when one family in four is living on Social Security in Speke already. A third of the workers at Speke are over 50 and so will probably never work again.

GOLD

Dunlops is so well established in Speke that it's become a "family firm". Husbands wives, brothers, sons all work there, so the effects on the community will be devastating. The recent closure of the Standards factory — only a mile down the road — has left a vivid impression locally. People know that this one has to be fought. The tales of redundancy gold have faded, everyone knows ex-Standards workers who're still on the dole and finding it hard to adjust.

The Dunlops Action Committee has thought a lot about the Standards closure, which the stewards there feel was allowed to happen partly through over-reliance on trade union officials. The Dunlops stewards have made it clear from the start that they will resist in every way, and called weekly mass meetings during the recent lay-off.

MUSEUM

The white collar unions have put forward suggestions — although very different from "workers alternative plans" to cut the workforce by a third and get government money to finance investment. They've also succeeded in blocking a £50 National Enterprise Board loan for investment in Fort Dunlop, Birmingham.

Investment in Speke has hardly ever overtaken loss through depreciation. Parts of the factory would do justice

to a museum for machinery — some of it dating back to 1911.

The rubber companies — all multinationals — are all doing badly in tyres, Goodyear and Firestone as well, partly because of the crisis in spending, partly due to the new safer longer-lasting radials which are replaced less often. Dunlop themselves are importing tyres, especially from Ireland and distributing them through their subsidiary, National Tyre Services — at the same time complaining about cheap imports. Their investment in Britain is on the same level as third world countries — though of course the labour here is not so cheap, which is their main problem.

It seems as if Dunlop workers are fighting against the odds. It's too easy for multinationals to switch production from one side of the world to the other.

SUPPORT

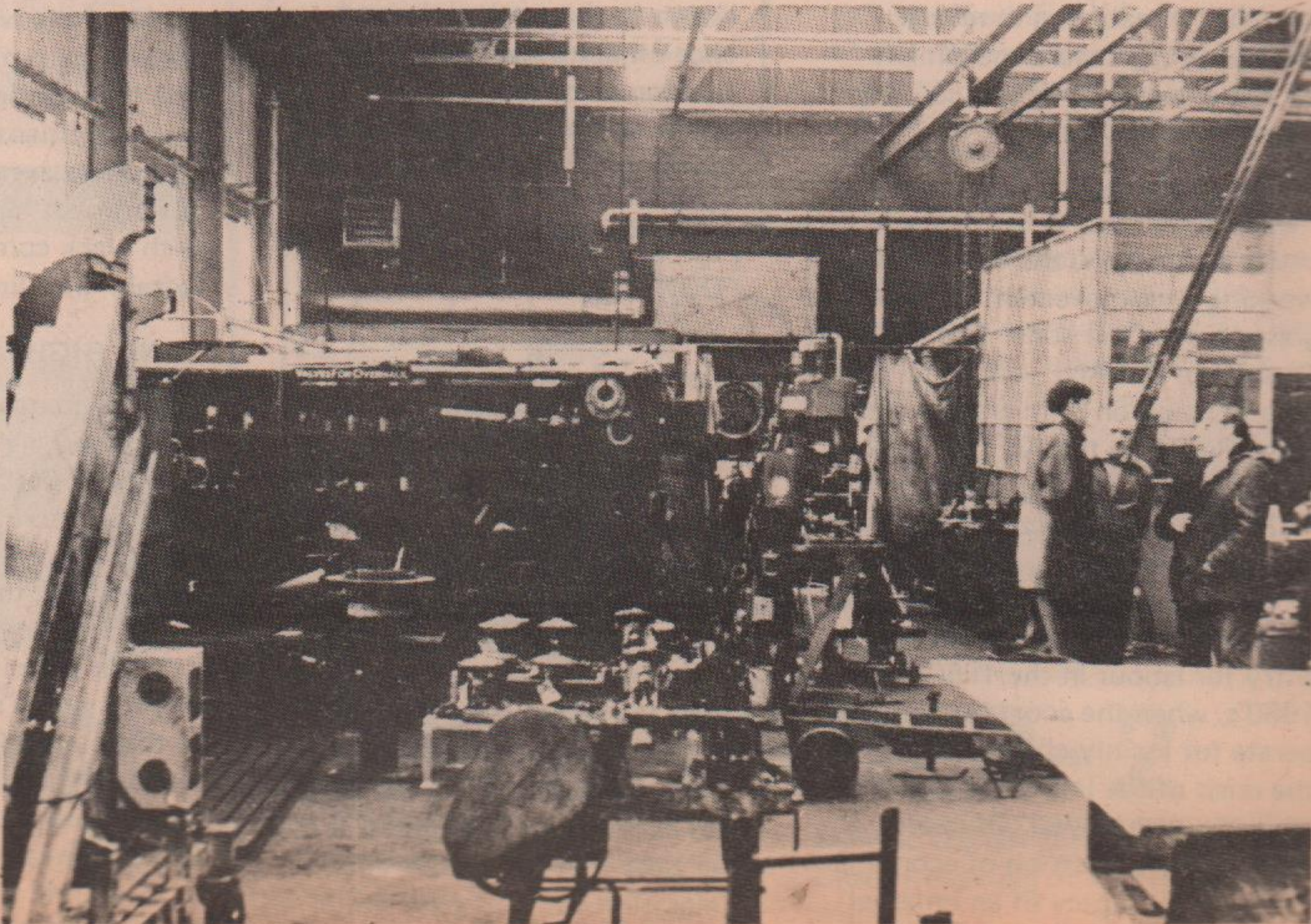
Nonetheless the Dunlop workers and their families have a good chance. They have the total support of the other British Dunlop factories, who will refuse to take Speke's work. French and Italian Pirelli-Dunlop workers have also announced that they won't touch anything transferred from Speke.

There's another point of strength for the workforce: Dunlops needs money for investment, but with suspicion from stock-brokers, would pay dearly in interest rates on the open market, and so will probably be forced to go to the Government. The Government is in a good position to twist Dunlops arm and save Speke — if enough fuss is made there.

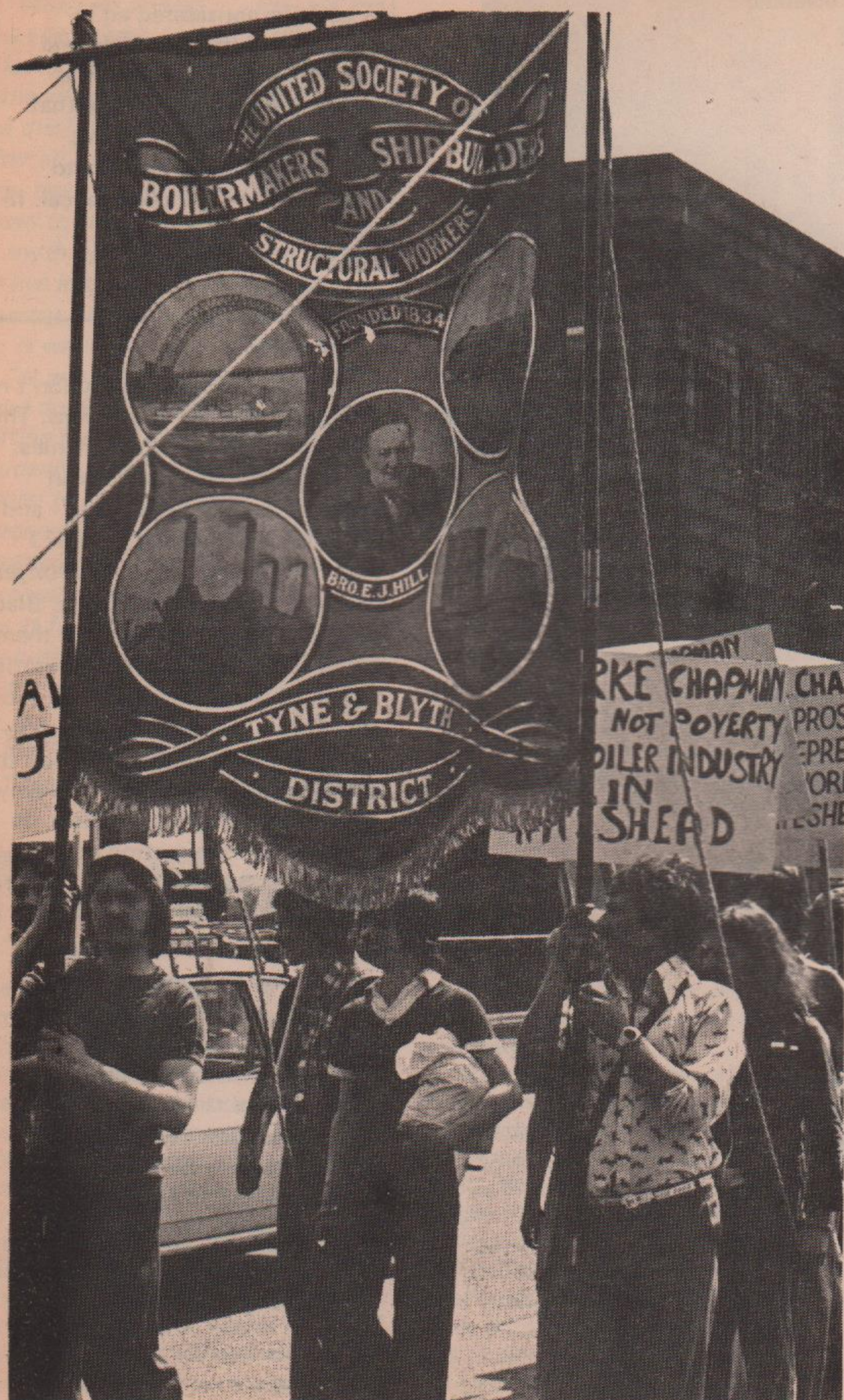
The victory would not be entirely on the workers terms by any means, but in the present climate, forcing the Government to step in could mean a turn for the better in the fight against redundancies everywhere.



Dunlop's Speke factory, Merseyside: a monument to decades of under-investment. Some machinery dates back to 1911.



DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE CLOSURE, MARCH 10th ASSEMBLE 11 am. SHAW STREET, LIVERPOOL.



Newcastle: Clarke Chapman engineering workers demonstrate against redundancies.

Exit the Multinationals

THE NORTH-EAST, like Merseyside, is rapidly emerging as a region devastated by unemployment. In 1945 the economy of the region was based upon the 'traditional' industries of coal, steel, shipbuilding and heavy engineering. These industries have all been severely affected by 'rationalisation'. Today only twenty coal mines still operate: in 1945 there were almost ten times that many. At the end of the war the Vickers armaments company on the Tyne employed over 20,000 workers in two establishments. Today it employs less than 6,000 in six plants. The rationalisation of the North East (the rundown and nationalisation of the traditional industries) was supported in the 1960s by financial incentives to new industry. In that decade many of the multinational corporations came into the area — Dunlop-Pirelli, Thorn, Caterpillar, Black and Decker, Courtaulds... in the 1970s they decided to leave.

It is in this context (and with the threat of future redundancies and closures in the mines and on the shipyards) three further 'ninety day notices' have taken on considerable importance over the last two months. Vickers have announced the closure of its Scotswood works employing 800 people; Courtaulds have announced the closure of its plant in Spennymoor, employing 1,500 people and Head Wrightson, the engineering firm on Teesside, have announced 200 redundancies. Campaign committees have been set up in each and are attempting to co-ordinate action between themselves. To date this has only extended to information and a joint lobby on Parliament every Wednesday.

There is tremendous bitterness amongst working class people — they talk of 'hating Vickers' and 'Courtaulds ruining people's lives'. With this bitterness goes a sense of hopelessness: hopelessness about the impossibility of fighting multi-

national corporations who decide to leave.

Central to the 'Save Scotswood Campaign' is a regular bulletin, circulated to other local work-places, in which Scotswood workers and their kids write about what closure will mean to their lives.

BULLETIN

"I started at Scotswood as a lad of 14. I began serving my time at 16. There are about 100 more like me who've really put a lifetime into Vickers and who are now being thrown onto the streets. I have another ten years to do. At the age of 56, it will be very hard to get a job in the trade. And 10 years is a long time even with your redundancy money; if you don't get a job within a year, it's a mere nothing. It's not just the older ones like me who will suffer. I feel sorry for the young ones with families, who've taken on

commitments. With unemployment like it is up here, they've little hope of a job.

And we who work at Scotswood won't be the only ones to suffer. I think the effect on the whole of Benwell will be very hard. With more men on the dole, traders, general dealers, schools, club life and all parts of the community will suffer. Vickers have no feelings whatsoever."

RESISTANCE

At the same time there is a growing feeling that an alternative is needed to fight closures. To this end, the Tyneside Socialist Centre has produced a 'Case for Workers' Plans' which has sections on 'The Way it Works Now', 'Workers' Plans on Tyneside' and 'How to Fight for Workers' Plans'. The pamphlet makes the point that 'just as the demands of the workers plans go beyond the traditional defensive concerns of trade unionism, so the organisation needed to back them up will have to unite rank and file workers across different companies, different industries and the community.'

The network of resistance that is developing in the North East is an important step forward in the struggle against closures.

For further information: contact Save Scotswood Campaign, 12 St. Albans Terrace, Gateshead, NE8 4HA 4HA and Socialist Centre Workers Plan c/o John Darwin, 16 Windsor Terrace, Newcastle.

Immigration Controls:

A SPLIT IN CLASS UNITY

OVER 100 Million white people are free to enter Britain at any time - from the Common Market and Rhodesia, a country legally in rebellion against the Crown. Black people - thanks to the controls created by the 1971 Immigration Act - are subject to humiliating virginity tests on entry and can be deported if they become an in-patient of a mental hospital. But this is more than a moral question. The unity of the whole working class is undermined by this racist contract labour system.

The campaign against racism - unofficial and official - is growing in Britain's black communities. Self-defence organisations are springing up against fascist assaults. The Immigration authorities use of virginity tests at Heathrow has been pinpointed by last month's demonstration at the airport. The campaign to repeal the immigration and nationality laws is gathering strength, threatening to reverse the steady right-ward movement on these questions in this country for the last 15 years.

CONTROLS

Unfortunately, the white left and working class movement still hasn't grasped what's at stake. The National Council of the ANL refuses to take up a position on immigration controls. Racism is the Achilles heel of the British working class and the 1971 immigration act is the poison dart embedded in it.

The Act with its later tough controls marks the change from free entry for labour in the 1950's and 1960's, when the economy was desperate for mainly cheap labour, to the crisis of the late 1970's with 1½ million unemployed. Of course, it isn't simply a question of economics. Racism - the legacy of an imperial past - has undermined the relations between the white and black working class from the beginning. White workers have preferred to accuse black workers of stealing jobs than in helping them to win equal pay and conditions.

'If immigrant labour had not been available for textiles or clothing, both of which are highly labour intensive and offer relatively low earnings, they might have found it even harder to withstand international competition with consequent adverse effects on the trade balance in textile and clothing products. Attention is also drawn to the marked dependence on immigrant labour in London in certain essential public services and in hotels and catering.' Dept of Employment 1977

CONTRACT LABOUR

The government has put its own seal on this racism by talking about the immigrant problem, bearing out what the fascists have always said is the real cause of unemployment, bad housing, crime and urban decline. Misguided liberals, ignoring how Immigration Controls come to mean controls against immigrants, pretend that keeping others out enables the state to do 'the right thing' by the ones who are here.

Since anyone walking the streets could be an illegal immigrant, it is quite clear that the existence of immigration controls gives the forces of law and order an excellent excuse for spying on and harassing the black community. Immigration officers and the police have the power to search any premises without a warrant if they suspect that an illegal immigrant

is living there and they do not need a warrant to make an arrest. As the anti-racist/anti-fascist newspaper 'Carf' points out, this increasing tendency towards internal control is the direct result of the racist nature of the debate about immigration. It undermines the ability of black people to struggle against their oppressors, whether by going on strike, campaigning over housing or resisting state harassment itself and that in turn undermines the ability of the whole working class to answer the capitalists' offensive. The Immigration Acts stand as an encouragement to the NF and others.

No-one ever says it, but the government has replaced free entry with black contract labour, bringing Britain into line with the EEC.

NO RIGHTS

Immigrant workers in Germany - 'guest workers' - have no rights however long they remain there. They are recruited in boom times and sent back to Turkey, Greece, Italy and Spain in times of recession; if they strike they may be repatriated.

Work-permits are now the only way by which non-whites can migrate to this country but only 6100 (excluding the catering industry) were issued in 1977 whereas white Commonwealth citizens, can come in as 'working holiday-makers' stay for five years and take whatever job they want! And even those dependents of non-whites who by right can come and join their families have to face long delays in their country of origin (waiting time for an interview in Islamabad



Women demonstrate in India against virginity tests at Heathrow.

in India is 22 months) and humiliating medical examinations when they arrive in this country.

And, of course, once they get here non-patrials (which more-or-less means, 'non-white') have to watch it since under the 1971 Immigration Act, they can be deported if they become in-patients at mental hospitals or if they are convicted of a crime and recommended for deportation by a magistrate. And if a non-patrial head of household is deported, the Home Secretary has power to deport his wife and dependent children, even if they have committed no offence.

In recent years, deportation orders have been signed by the Home Secretary for trivial offences like shop-lifting (first time) and failure to pay a bus fare. In 1976, 400 black people were deported - immigrants facing deportation usually spend months in jail before their case comes up; they do not have the right to be present at any appeal they make and not surprisingly 85% of appeals fail.

A Home Office immigration appeals adjudicator, Mr Malcolm Hurwitt, resigned on 20 November because he no longer wanted to be involved in what he considered an inherently unjust system. He said that 'the appeal machinery is against natural justice' and that people refused entry to this country should be allowed to be present at their own appeal. In 1977 15% of immigration appeals were successful (Guardian 21/11/78)

URGENT

The black communities don't need to be told what all this means. The problem is for the whites. Unless the terms of the debate about immigration can be changed - and that means abolishing the 1971 Act - the racists will grow stronger, with the support of the state. Black people believe they can look themselves - they are making preparations today. But what about white socialists? Can we stem the nazi tide if the racists deepen their hold on the working class? No, and that's why the ANL will have to re-think its position on immigration control. You can't oppose the NF if you're silent on the 1971 ACT.

● The Action Group on Immigration and Nationality - its members include the National Union of Students and the National Council for Civil Liberties and the British Council for Churches - was formed in 1976 to provide a focus for campaigns on immigration and nationality law. Send for their pamphlets - Immigration Control: how it works. British Nationality Law: a briefing paper on the Government's Green paper (25p) from AGIN c/o JCWI, 44 Theobalds Road, London WC1 8SP.

THE MYTHS-AND THE FACTS

MYTH
White people are leaving Britain and being replaced by blacks.

FACT
Two white people come to Britain for every black.

MYTH
The black population is many millions.

FACT
The black population is estimated to be 11 million. Only 3.3% of the population.

MYTH
Immigration is making Britain overcrowded.

FACT
* Since 1964 more people have left Britain each year than have entered. Holland, Belgium and West Germany have more people per square mile than the U.K.

MYTH
They come here and take our jobs.

FACT
Many vital services would grind to a halt without their black employees.

MYTH
Immigrants are running down our inner city areas.

FACT
Bad housing conditions existed long before black immigrants. Urban decay has existed in Britain since the Industrial Revolution.

MYTH
The blacks can all be sent back home!

FACT
40% of our black population were born here. Home is Britain!

'FEMALE CYCLES'- not a book on bikes

I was coming back from a visit to London, and had the misfortune to sit in a compartment of the train with an idiotic bloke who persisted in asking me stupid questions about "life in the provinces" and generally making a nuisance of himself. I tried reading. He kept interrupting so finally I went to sleep. When I woke up he continued to chat me up. "Have you been on a cycling holiday?" "What?"

"Well I saw you're reading a book about cycles." Silence.

"Oh that. No, it's actually a book on Menstruation. Do you want to have a look?" There was a stunned silence and then he excused himself, saying he was going to the bar.

It was nice that for a change the menstrual taboo worked to a woman's advantage. I was left in peace to continue reading "Female Cycles"

by Paula Weideger, a highly informative feminist account of every aspect of menstruation

Paula Weideger has taught on various women's health courses in America, and draws on her and other women's experiences to reclaim menstruation and menopause as areas of our lives which should be discussed and made open, not laughed about or feared.

She explains how the menstrual cycle works - in so far as it's known - and discusses different theories about the cause of pre-menstrual tension, and ways of dealing with it. She details various cultures menstrual taboos and examines our own cultures disgust and indifference to menstruation. She criticises modern medical practice for ignoring and dismissing women's discomfort during menopause or menstruation as nothing more than a psychological

inability to come to terms with being female. As one gynaecologist wrote "Menstruation is the "badge of femininity" Whether it is worn in misery, pain or pride depends on a woman's attitude to herself as a female, and her biological destiny - marriage and motherhood."

A woman answering one of Paula Weideger's questionnaires wrote, "I was going to a psychoanalyst once, and I told him I didn't enjoy getting my period because I usually got a lot of cramps. He said the real reason for my dislike of menstruation was the fact that I wanted to be a boy and hated to be reminded I wasn't."

Thousands of women have been fobbed off by medical 'experts' who don't believe that cramps and depression are real medical problems for women. Thousands more have never bothered to find medical help, believing that it's women's lot to suffer every month.

The good thing about Paula Weideger's book is that she doesn't see menstruation as a problem but society's attitudes to it and particularly men's.

Paula Weideger, *Female Cycles*, *The Women's Press* £2.95

"Finding a Voice" - Asian Women in Britain - Amrit Wilson (Virago 1978)

"I felt that Asian women had so much to tell... There have been things written about Asian women which show them always as a group just treated as object - nothing more. That they have any feelings about their own lives or that they can analyse their own lives never comes up".

Asian women in Britain have certainly found a voice in Amrit Wilson's new book. In it they tell of their lives and struggles in this country. Their words speak powerfully of their isolation, family life, work experience, immigration, racism, school life, adolescence and marriage and of their struggle to control their lives:

VERY HARD

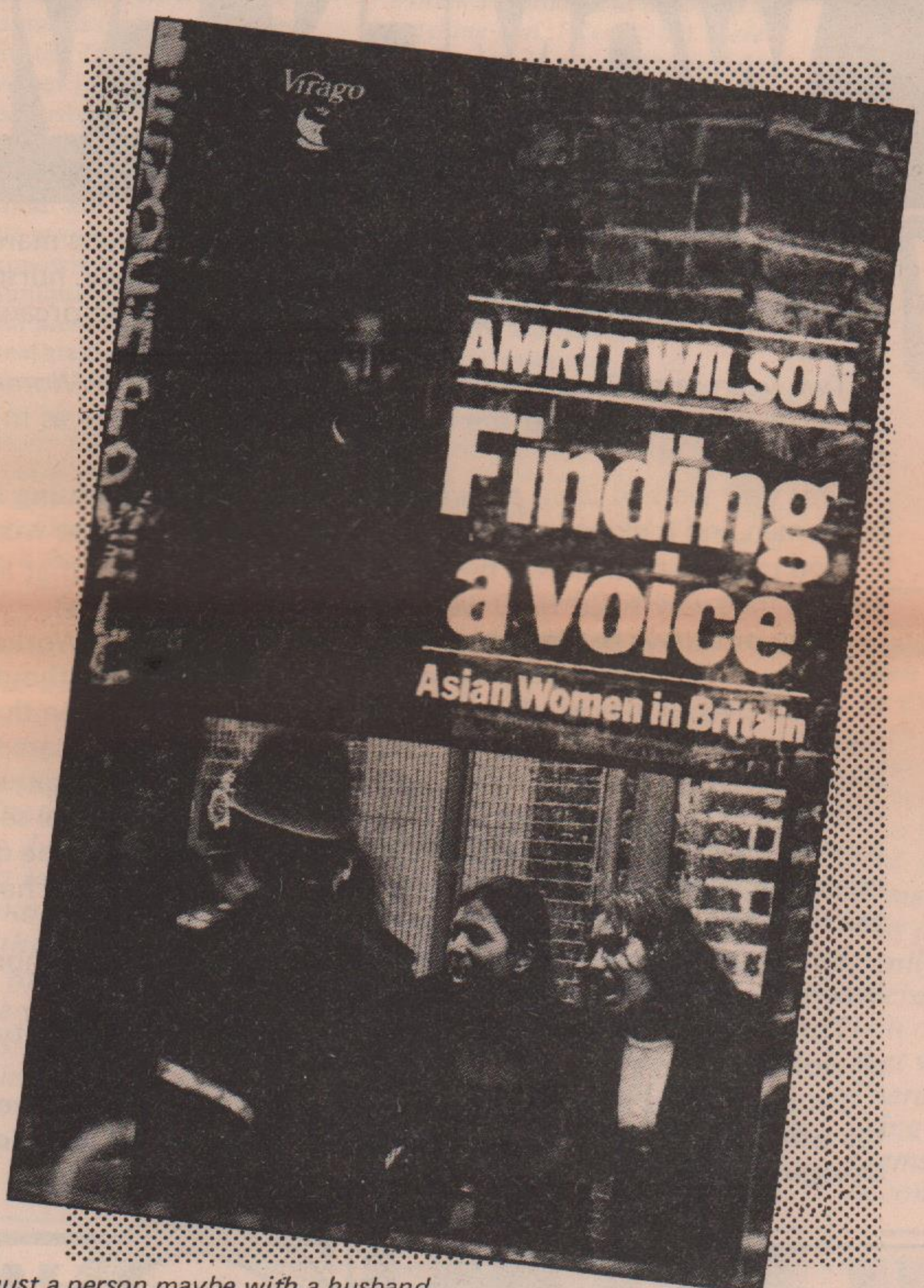
"When we arrived... you ask me how I felt sister... bad, I felt bad to leave them all, everyone back in the village. Did I expect it to be like this? No, tell me how could I? After all, I had never been here before, there was no means of knowing, I used to cry, not knowing anyone or anything, missing my own home. To live in one room after living in a country where houses are so open... It was hard, very hard".

"It was just an ordinary evening I had done all the cooking and was waiting for my husband to come home. Suddenly I heard a loud scream and rushed to the front door. Half a dozen white teenagers were beating someone up. There was blood on the pavement. I couldn't see who it was at first, then I realised it was my husband. He was unconscious on the ground".

BLACK WOMEN

"You might think of yourself as

REVIEWS



just a person maybe with a husband or parent or children. But when you step out of your door you know that you will be looked at by people as just an Asian woman - a black woman".

It is impossible to do the book justice in a short review. It has to be read. The chapter on immigration is particularly telling. It shows quite clearly the brutal and wide-ranging racism that occurs day after

day under the guise of immigration control.

UNITED

The picture that emerges throughout the book is not of weak defenceless Asian women but women, united by the racism they face in Britain, struggling to change and control their lives.

Workers at Aldermaston had plutonium in their lungs...

So nuclear power is expensive, secret, and unsafe to work in. The pamphlet has little to explain why we don't need nuclear power: that coal stocks will last 250 years that energy could be conserved through heating schemes, insulation etc.; that alternative technology could be developed, employing workers in the very industries which claim they need nuclear power to survive.

Finally, the pamphlet needed more on the anti-nuclear movement. Why is it that so much of the organised labour movement supports nuclear power in Britain? Why has the opposition concentrated on Public Enquiries? What strategies can be used to intervene against the development of fast breeders, enrichment plants etc?

LAW & ORDER-1

Dear Big Flame,

At last a socialist paper has begun to tackle the question of crime. Austin McKechnie's article in last month's Big Flame actually dared to talk about the cause of misery for millions of ordinary people - petty crime.

Rape, vandalism, burglary, street theft - you name it, it's the working class people who suffer from it most.

Sure, it's obvious that much of this crime is highest in areas of high unemployment, bad housing etc. So a fairer society - where these ills are eliminated - would go a long way towards ending crime. But what about now?

If the working class begins to really use its power in this country would petty offenders be treated leniently?

Has there been any revolution or popular uprising anywhere in the world in which criminals who attack working people have been let off?

Take the case of Ireland. For ten years an entire community - the northern Catholics - have been

in revolt against British rule. The brutal police force - the RUC - hardly dares enter the working class republican areas without massive Army support. In this situation traditional values break down. Unfortunately, while thousands of people are fighting for their freedom, their self-confidence is sapped by increasing vandalism and robbery within their own communities. Even when whole districts seem united in their hatred of British occupation, some people go their own selfish individual way - landlords, burglars, police informers, local politicians - all profit at the expense of those around them.....

Punishment for offenders was - and is - rough and ready.

Only the secret organisations like the IRA could survive the repression and it fell to them to dispense necessarily rapid forms of justice. It has to be realised that there is little choice. Many people in the Republican areas demand that the IRA take action. The Provisional Sinn Fein Advice Centres constantly receive complaints about crime.

To their credit the Provisionals themselves recognise that the situation is far from adequate. The subject of community policing has been discussed at length in their paper "Republican News." But in the circumstances of having to hold the fort until new forces can become involved to seize state power, they have little choice. I don't believe that we in Britain will be much different when our time comes.

O.A., Liverpool.*



LAW & ORDER-2

Dear Big Flame

In response to your article about the left's silence on law and order I wish to pose further questions in order to get this issue into the open.

Does the left still have a Robin Hood attitude to crime? Hasn't the whole sociology of deviance side-tracked the issue away from the basic question of socially acceptable behaviour/ethics

I note that your article on reclaim the night put the blame on the porn profiteers; do you blame the NF for the endemic racism of the working class?

I have also noticed an SWP article comparing the virginity tests on immigrant asian women (how would you test a man's virginity?) with the era of the slave trade when 'upper class' women touched the pricks of black slaves and laughed at their erections. Well, what did white men do to black female slaves?

How do the left feel about Eldridge Cleaver boasting of his raping white women?

A follow up to the letter you reprinted from Spare Rib was a letter voicing concern for rapist's wives threatened by direct action. What does the rapist think of his wife? Would she be the one to re-educate him, or can men re-educate themselves?

Does a woman have to take the full responsibility of prison etc. once she decides to report a sexual crime to the police? How do we overcome our dependence on men/state to protect us? How do we stop men leching? Is counter violence an answer? Is the sexism of the working class going to change after the revolution?

What about the 'superstructure'? What about anti-women attitudes for a start?

An angry woman.

Need for International Party

Dear Big Flame,

Your piece in BF 71 entitled "Unity Sprouts in Brussels"(!) worried me. You obviously believe in "Internationalism", both in terms of giving it space (viz the coverage of Iran); and also in seeing the necessity of linking up the struggles of people across the globe as an essential ingredient of revolutionary practice. Indeed, these are probably the minimum ways in which practical meaning can be given to the stated belief of revolutionary socialists that true socialism is inherently international or it is nothing.

if) socialism can be achieved on a world scale and of the relationship between 'national' and 'international' in the course of this achievement.

In the former, the creation of an international revolutionary organisation gives political and structural recognition to the global nature of capitalism, and hence of the necessary internationalism of socialist transformation. The latter places (wongly in my view) the national factor to the forefront.

This is not to deny that different national conditions, political situations etc exist, or the possibility that a group such as BF may feel so far distanced on points of basic political belief from groups in other countries that it cannot participate in an international. But being a section of a larger, international party does not (or should not) preclude the varying characteristics of different nation states governing the political practice of a particular section; it is a matter of applying common principles as befits different national conditions.

Yours fraternally, Jerry Lockspeiser, Leeds *

The Nuclear Disaster

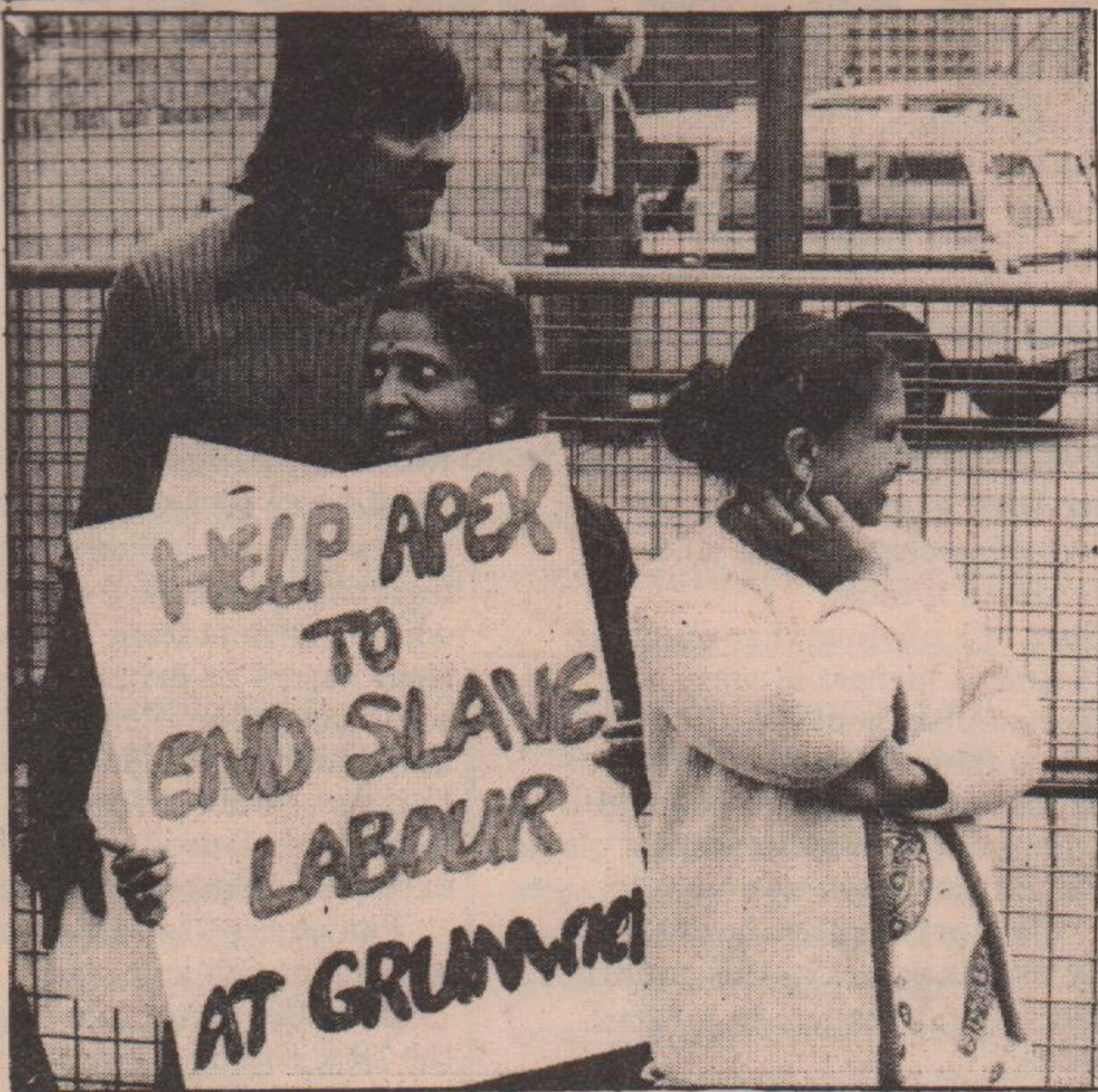
The Nuclear Disaster a new CIS pamphlet, exposes the history of Britain's nuclear power programme. From the formation of the Atomic Energy Authority, it's been a story of false promises, cover ups, and expensive official secrets. The pamphlet includes company profiles of GEC, Babcock and Wilcox (boilers) and NEI (turbogenerators) and explains the accounting tricks used by the CEBG to claim that nuclear power is cheap. The CEBG prefers nuclear power because the Uranium miners are in Namibia and Australia, not Yorkshire. Far from providing jobs, nuclear

power is designed to cut wages while drawing ever larger Government subsidies.

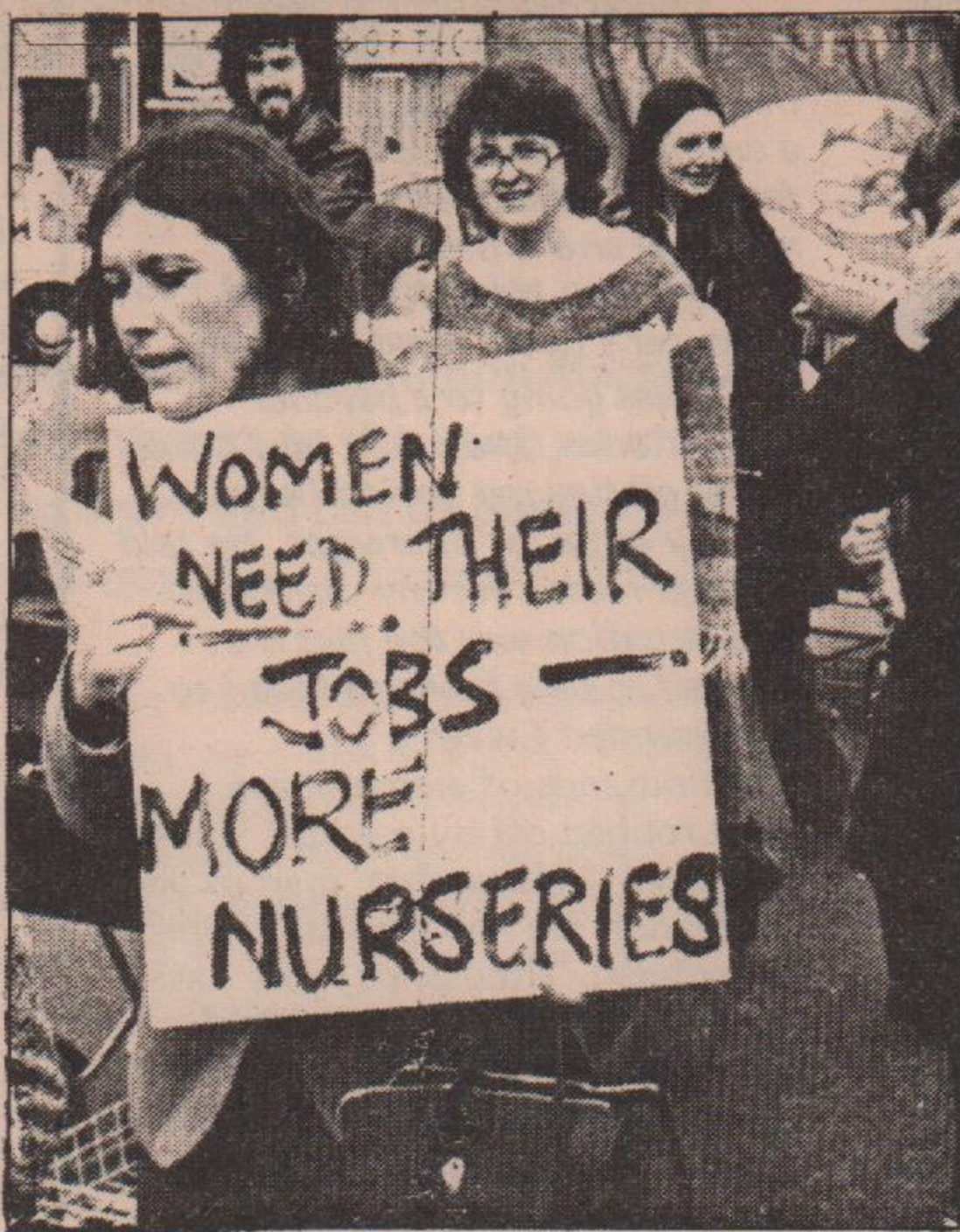
The pamphlet also describes the health risks to people working in or living near the reactors, enrichment and reprocessing plants. When a plutonium fuel rod caught fire at Windscale, burning for four days, they had to dump two million litres of milk from local cows. The official report was never published. Workers in noisy and smelly nuclear power stations are given ear plugs and respirators. When an alarm goes, they either can't hear it or else ignore it because they've heard it so often.

* These letters have been cut. 400 words max. please. Ed.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Women still fighting ... for the right to organise in trade unions



... for nurseries



... against violence on a 'Reclaim the Night' demo.

Angela Phillips IFL



... for battered women's refuges

A DAY FOR WOMEN EVERYWHERE

ON MARCH 8th 1908, 15,000 women garment workers marched through the streets of New York. They were demanding equal pay, nurseries for working mothers, an end to sweatshop conditions and the right to organise into trade unions.

Two years later Clara Zetkin, a member of the German Womens' Movement called on socialists all over the world to celebrate that day as International Women's Day.

This year women from all over the world will be celebrating the achievement of women and looking at the struggles which have yet to be won

You might wonder what there is to celebrate - it's true that although we've come a long way since 1908 we've still got a long way to go.

Many of today's battles are the same ones the Garment Workers were fighting then. We might have equal pay on the Statute book but without a battle it's hard to get it. Even in places where women are supposed to be on the same rate as men they are put on different grades so get less money. We are far from the time when women can put their children in nurseries as a right and the nurseries which do exist are being cut back. So are hospitals and social services so that women are forced to stay at home to care for the sick and the old. Women especially immigrants, work in sweatshop conditions and are having to fight for the right to belong to trade unions.

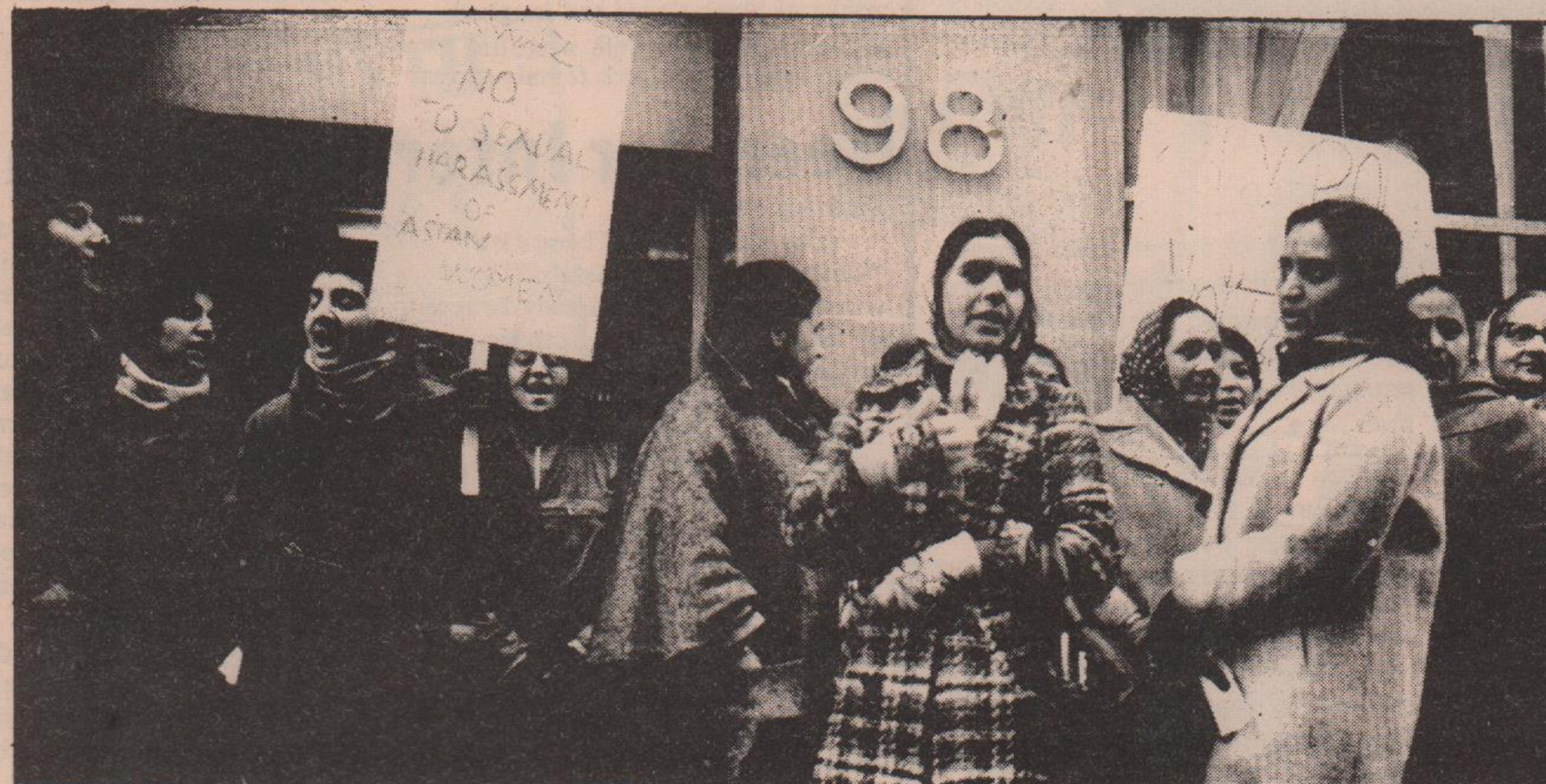
But it's not all gloom. Things are changing and more and more women are becoming involved and some battles are won.

This year the women in Britain are holding a week of activity on the theme of violence against women.

On these pages we look at some examples of the way that women around the world are subjected to violence in their lives and the ways in which they struggle against it.



... for equal pay



"AN END to sexual harrassment, No to immigration controls" - That was the chant outside the Home Office. The picket had been called to protest against the virginity tests which young Asian women have been forced to undergo on entry into Britain. The tests were being used to verify whether the women were bona fide fiancees.

Although there have been pleas made to the Home Secretary in the past to put a stop to these tests it was not until there was a public outcry that Merlyn Rees said that they would be stopped. The Home Office say that these examinations are rare but there are at least 8 documented cases since 1968 and there must be women who were too shocked or embarrassed to report what had happened to them.

These tests are just one example of the way Immigration Laws are used to discriminate against blacks. That Merlyn Rees has been forced to put an end to them does not mean that black men and women will not be subjected to racism in the name of the Immigrations Laws in the future.



Week of Action Diary

Thursday March 8th

- Liverpool International Women's Day Meeting & Social 7.30 Yoruba Club, Croxteth Road, speakers films, food, music and bar.
- Manchester, International NAC Rally, 8pm Basement Theatre Townhall

Saturday March 10th

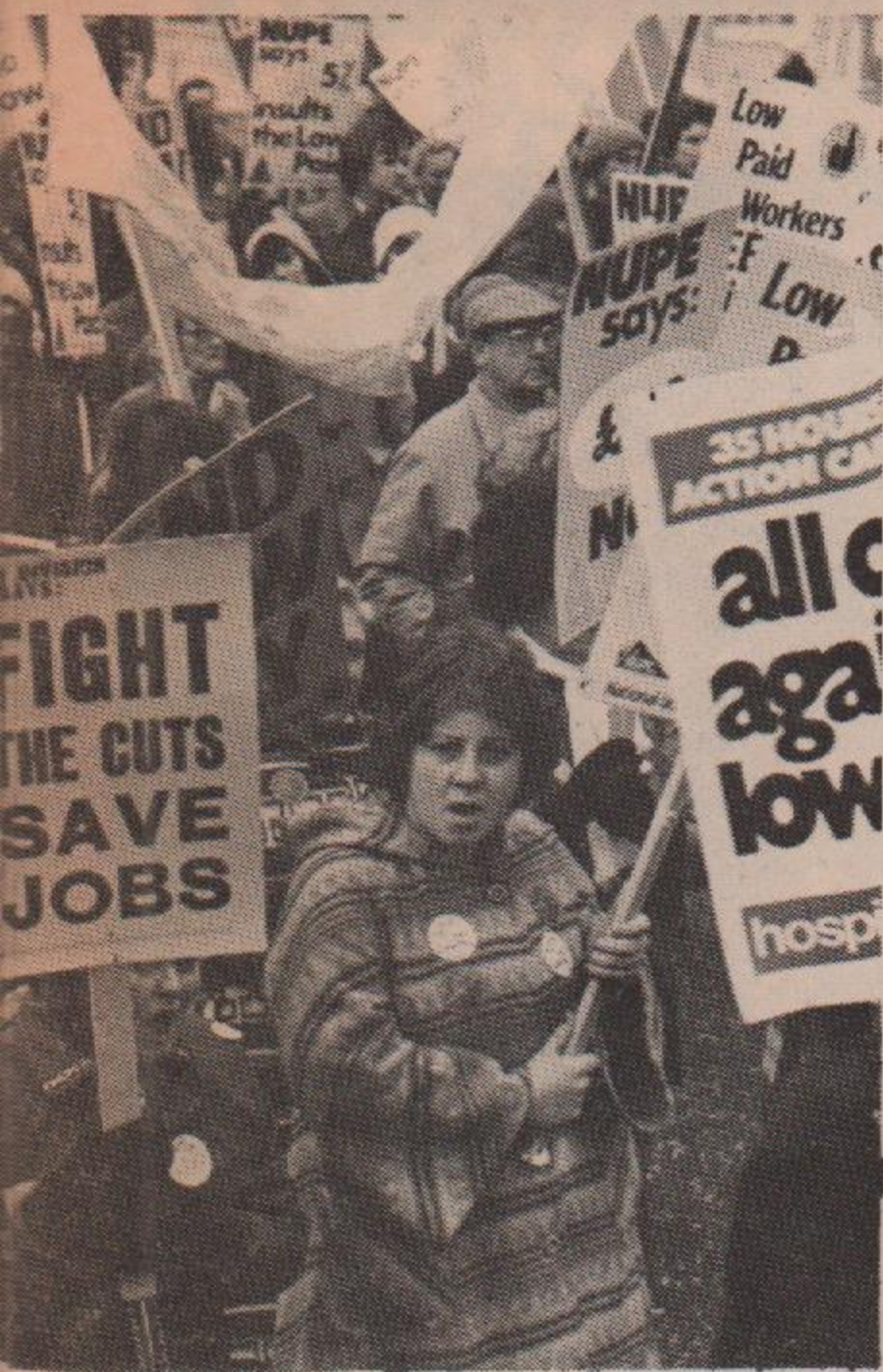
- National Demo Against Violence Against Women in Leeds. Assemble 2.00 Woodhouse Moor (nr Leeds University) creche and kiddies bus plus Womens Social in evening.
 - Liverpool: International Women's Day March, waste ground opposite Rialto Community Centre 11.30am to Radio Merseyside plus Women's Social Rialto Community Centre, Upper Parliament St.
- Tuesday March 13th
- Liverpool, Reclaim the Night Demo.
 - Rape Crisis Centre (London) 01.340.6913

Saturday March 3rd

- Sheffield Women's Fayre 10 -4pm Victoria Hall (off Chapel Walk) Women's Social 8pm, Mount Pleasant.
- Manchester: 'Reclaim the Night' Demo - assemble 6.45 The Precinct and Granada Studios bring torches and dress up plus Women's Social at St Georges Community Centre, Oldham Rd - bring a bottle.
- London: Reclaim the Night in the Wood Green/Turnpike Lane area. Starting 10pm. Details 01-348 6689.

National Women's Aid Federation (also for local refuges for battered women) 01.837.9316

Rights of Women 01.278.6349



... against low pay

RE



RADIO DONNA ATTACK

EVERY LARGE Italian city has a left-wing radio station— some have two or three. Rome has a women's station called Radio Donna (Radio Woman). One of the most popular programmes is a weekly phone-in for working class housewives edited by the Housewives Collective of Radio Donna. Formed in June '77 the Collective now has more than 50 members, most of them housewives. The oldest member of the collective is 66 and the majority are over 50.

Over the last 18 months, the growth of the Housewives Collective has been amazing — it has developed a regular audience of over 50,000 listeners and it continues to involve more and more working class women in its phone-in debates on abortion, contraception, cooking, the family, rape and violence. For the women involved in the collective, it has brought a sense of solidarity and sisterhood that is an important weapon against the isolation and loneliness that many housewives feel.

FASCIST ATTACK

On Tuesday, January 9th, Fascists attacked the radio-studio during the weekly phone-in of the Housewives Collective. They machine-gunned the six members of the collective who were doing the programme and destroyed the transmitter. One woman who had to have her intestine removed is still seriously ill in hospital. All fascist attacks are barbarous acts but what made this one especially unpleasant are the reasons the Fascists gave for their attack on the Housewives Collective. The communique sent to the national press after the attack was breathtakingly opportunistic. "We choose this particular target because we are fed up that it is always young lads, red or black, (communist or fascist), who are on the receiving end of the system's blows. We do not like to attack those who, like us, are seriously committed to changing society, even if they

It was 1976, Radio Donna was just beginning. I listened to it and felt excluded — I was too old. The programmes were directed at younger women. I phoned and was invited to take part in the programme. That same day, I joined the Collective. Together we put together a weekly programme with the help of our listeners. It lasted an hour and was called 'Women come out of the kitchen'.

Many women became involved. They came from all

do it in a stupid way. They are stupid, but still colleagues..."

The response of the women's movement to this horrendous attack was immediate — massive demonstrations in all the major Italian cities and within a week the £15,000 needed for a new transmitter was raised.

Encouraged by the anti-woman campaign led by the Church, fascist attacks on feminist bookshops and family planning centres have been growing in frequency and intensity. Caught between the violence of the right and the left wing, Red Brigades, the women's movement is forced to talk about self-defence.

A member of the Housewives Collective said in a debate on the radio "I am against violence but if Anna had died from her injuries, I think I would have taken up a machine-gun. I know that there are fascists in my neighbourhood. Last year, they beat up my son. Yes, if Anna had died, I would have shot them...."

FIGHTING OPPRESSION

At a time of crisis and demoralisation for the women's movement and the whole of the Italian left, the Collective's enthusiasm has been an attractive example.

"... on the air and in the streets. Their banner is regularly seen on demonstrations 'We used to be locked up. Now we're active fighting oppression.' Through the radio they've been able to start off mass campaigns for a maternity clinic, for a nursery and for a battered wives centre."

parts of the city, from the far out suburbs, from squats, some came with kids. Many phoned in.

LEAVING THE KITCHEN

It is not difficult to leave the kitchen, but it is difficult to stay out of it.

Some of us, though we know that we have the right to our own time, would like it to be with the agreement of our husbands and kids. This contradiction between the collective and our family can sometimes

Women the target of fascist attack



BASTA VOGLIAMO IL REFERENDUM CON L'ABORTO

Italian women demonstrate for abortion rights

be extremely painful — it can lead to a 'double militancy' which feels like a loss of your identity. Coping with these two sides of life (collective and family) is often difficult, sometimes impossible... The fear of being alone and without family ties causes some painful decisions. But once you begin, you cannot go back. It is true that we are all housewives. There are different ways of being one. Some women give themselves totally to it. They become slaves of endless work

— harassed by time that is not their own, oppressed by the problems of others, excluded from life, totally dependent. Since they cannot give a name to their uneasiness, they blame themselves for not being happy. In 1976, through the radio station, women began to talk to other women... The support of our comrades is not always enough, and it can not always be found: but it is an essential weapon which our struggle relies on.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRES

FOR WOMEN who have been raped or sexually assaulted, talking about what has happened to them is often far from easy. It is often difficult also to find sympathetic professionals who can offer advice, about VD or pregnancy testing, about legal questions or how to make a complaint against the police.

Around the country women have been setting up Rape Crisis Counselling Centres to offer a service to women who have been raped.

Now a newspaper has been set up for women interested or involved in Rape Crisis groups. Subscription £2 a year. Contact address is FAST (Feminists Against Sexual Terrorism) 68 Bentley Lane, Leeds 6.

There are Rape Crisis Centres or groups in the following towns: Leeds, Nottingham, Bristol, Birmingham, Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Brighton, and London. Contact London for phone numbers: 01.340.6145 (24 hour service) Office 01.340.6913.

'Learning to smile while hating'

VIOLENCE IS an everyday business in Chile, as a Chilean woman refugee shows:

"Since that cold September morning in 1973 when all our hopes and dreams collapsed under the fascists, under the military power of the fascists, we have learned to live with counter-revolutionary violence - to live with it, not to accept it.

Violence surrounds us every day, when we go shopping, or go to see friends, or, for some when they go to Church, it's in the horror of the concentration camps, in the faces of the children, in the sub-human conditions in the shanty-towns, in the hunger and misery of the peasants and Indians, in the

high unemployment, in the cultural, economic and political "invasion" by the USA.

Women have always been oppressed in Chile. It was not until Allendes's government that we could see a new life. A new future ahead of us. We became actively involved in politics and a ministry was created especially to protect women's rights and to cater for our particular needs.

By the time of the coup we had gained in consciousness, organisation and solidarity among ourselves. After the coup some of us went into the concentration camps, others were of re-organising the movement, taking care of our families and



Chilean children in a shanty town

the prisoners, denouncing the disappearance of our comrades. In short we had to keep the struggle going.

We have had to learn to smile while hating, to fight back in a new and horrifying environment. This is what fascism does, its violence permeates all things, even the most intimate aspects of life.

International Women's Day is a good opportunity to write about my sisters in Chile; heroic women fighting an everyday battle for survival, against torture, death, hunger and poverty. One day we too will use violence - Revolutionary violence to bring social justice and freedom to the Chilean people" Venceremos

IRAN

■ We Interview Fred Halliday

REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENTS in Iran are making divisions clearer. On one side, capitalist interests are represented by Khomeini and his supporters: whilst the Fedayeen guerillas act as a reference point for those forces that want to go beyond the setting up of a parliamentary democracy.

Fred Halliday's book "Iran: Dictatorship and Development" (Penguin £1.50) is an excellent Marxist analysis of the events that brought about the fall of the Shah. As well as being extremely knowledgeable about the area, Fred has for many years been the person responsible for keeping the left in this country informed about the heroic struggle of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman. As he points out in this interview, the fall of the Shah is a great boost to the struggle throughout the Gulf.

BF: How do you see the relationship between the working class and the new regime developing?

FH: This is of course a central question. The working class has played a major role in the revolution. Its legions packed the demonstrations and its strikes - in particular the oil workers strike - dealt the final body blow to the old regime. Until recently, the working class in general went along with the call for an Islamic Republic, partly because of the lack of an alternative and partly because of the need to avoid a split in the opposition to the Shah. But recently there have been indications of growing division between the new regime and the working class. For example, Bazargan has failed to persuade many workers to go back to work, and in the oilfields splits have developed between mullahs and workers' representatives on strike committees. In addition, the clergy has opposed the representation of workers from strike committees on Khomeini's Islamic Council, and there was the clash over Khomeini's appointee to the director for radio and TV, when the radio workers made their opposition to the choice very clear.

So, it seems that many organised workers would like to play a major role in the running of the country, and so far this is being denied them. But the extent to which workers can exert their influence against that of the clergy and the merchants will depend on whether they can develop combative forms of organisation, as they have long been denied these. This could take some time.

One further point. There is no way that Shi'a Islam is inherently radical or democratic. It is true that it has often played an oppositional role, but is also has been used as a vehicle for brutal forms of oppression. And the lack of democracy it is displaying today in its attitude to the Left has a long history.

WOMEN

BF: The tension in Islam between its oppositional role and its reactionary nature is especially reflected in the situation of Iranian women. Having begun to shed the chador (the black veil) as the symbol of oppression, they have begun to wear it again as a symbol, it seems, of unity in opposition. Is this a bad sign?

FH: This must remain unclear for some time. What is clear is that the Shah in no way liberated women. He merely carried out a few very limited reforms. It must also be said that Iranian women have never been as oppressed as, for example,

Saudi Arabian women, and they will not regress that far. This is still more true because they have never in their history played such a major political role as they have played in the last year.

But where they are mainly threatened - as regards the vote, segregation in schools, job discrimination, they really need the support of the Left, as they are unlikely to be allowed to form their own autonomous organisations. Unfortunately, in the past, the Left organisations have not had a progressive position on women - far from it.

BF: You see a regression in the position of women as being quite likely, then?

FH: Unfortunately, yes, unless the Left changes its line.

LEFT ORGANISATIONS

BF: Could you talk about the role of the Left organisations, especially the Fedayeen and the Mujahedeen guerillas, and also about their prospects in the immediate future.

FH: These organisations came out of the student milieu around 1970. They saw all other politics blocked except the politics of armed struggle and committed themselves to this. And though they were not able to play a significant role in developing mass opposition against the Shah, they did gain considerable credibility because of their resistance to the regime.

In the recent events, they played an important role in the defeat of the army, which won them not only greater prestige but also many arms. But it is a little worrying the way the clash between the Left and the regime is developing. It is quite possible that the regime is contemplating using the (Moslem) Mujahedeen as a sort of National Guard against the more secular Fedayeen. Mind you, I very much doubt that that would work.

BF: But, as yet, the Fedayeen have not generally been openly challenging the regime. It seems that they have been more concerned to put pressure on the regime on such central questions as the (re) constitution of the armed forces, the role of the media and of education, the extent of worker participation in decision-making, etc.

FH: Yes, and they have been right to do this, and they have also made what is, from their point of view, a very intelligent move in using working



Women supporters of Islam - will it be in their interests?

THE STRUGGLE WORLDWIDE

class committees to challenge the regime.

As regards their future prospects, much will depend on the form constitution takes. A British 'winner takes all' system would make sure they are not represented in Parliament, while they could well benefit from proportional representation - assuming, that is, they form a political Party, which they surely must do.

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

BF: What do you think is the significance of Khomeini's choice of essentially bourgeois, technocratic people - many of them the National Front - for the Provisional Government? What does it say about Khomeini's politics?

FH: It shows Khomeini's lack of conception of what an Islamic Republic means at a political level. Consequently, we may see it resorting - if it is allowed to - to old institutions like the civil service and the army.

We would, then, see a tragic situation developing. We have witnessed a great revolution, which has developed with staggering speed and which ranks as one of the great events of world history. But of the wide coalition of forces that made it all possible, the dominant ones are right-wing, anti-socialist traditionalists. And now, lacking a viable political programme, they appear to be falling back on institutions that were central to the old regime.

BF: But the Left in particular is fighting this, and it seems very unlikely that the army - and perhaps also the civil service - can be reconstituted in anything like its old form.

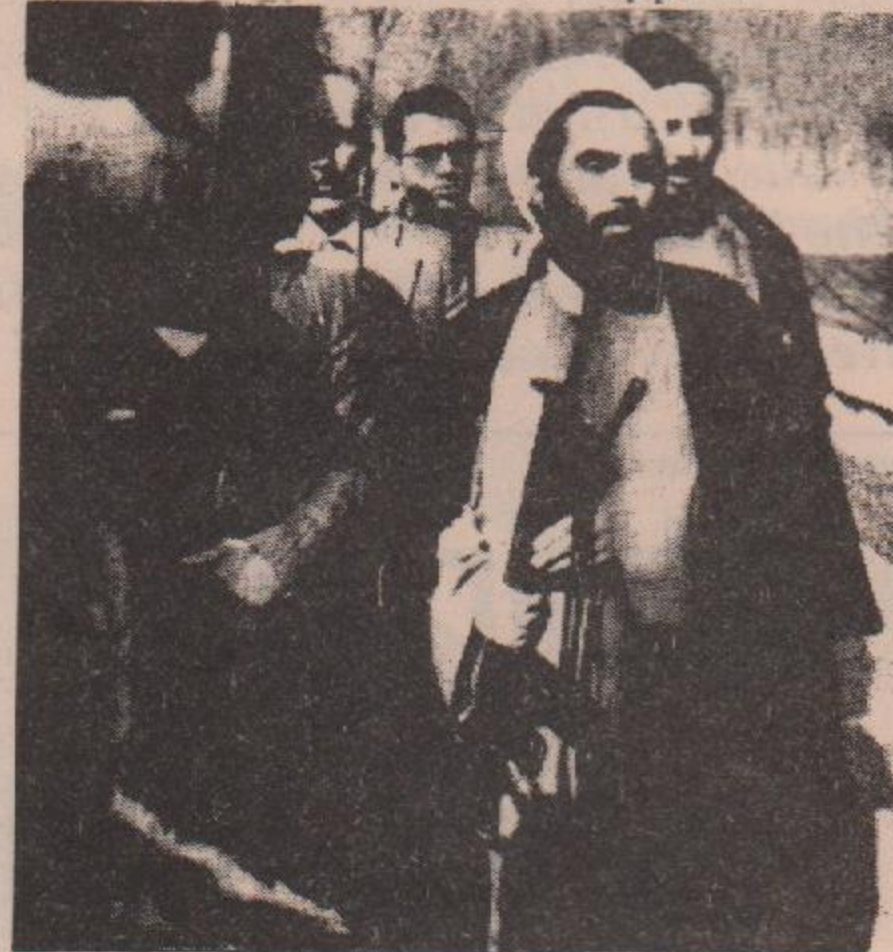
FH: Yes, that is true. And it is here that there are possibilities for a real break from capitalism in Iran,

though it must be said that a second socialist revolution, would be some time in coming.

BF: The new regime is also threatened by growing separatist movements among some of the nationalities in Iran. How serious is this threat?

FH: The nationalities question is a time-bomb, without any doubt. But as yet there is no real separatist movement. Rather, there are the possibilities for the development of political consciousness should concessions not be made to the nationalities - which incidentally comprise 50% of the population. Lacking real concessions, certain nationalities could develop political organisations as important in their political effects as, for example, the IRA.

BF: The nationalities question leads on to the international ramifications of the Iranian revolution. For example, the Kurds are not only a significant minority in Iran but also in Iraq, and the Shah's regime provided the main support



Machine gun-toting Mullah.

for the smashing of the Kurdish liberation movement in Iraq in the early 70's. Other Middle Eastern regimes are clearly worried by the Iranian revolution also.

FH: Yes, Iraq is the country that is most exposed by the Iran events in the short term, not only because of the Kurdish question, but also because it has a Shi'ite Islam majority that plays no role in Iraqi politics and which is not a little annoyed about the removal of Khomeini from Iraq last year. It is possible that the moves to Iraqi-Syrian unity recently initiated by Iraq have something to do with this, though there are also reasons going further back.

As for the region as a whole, the US is no doubt very concerned about the loss of its Middle Eastern Policemen, and the recent trip of Defence Secretary Brown is obviously designed to reassure allies. But, the main concern of the Americans is not the threat to the Saudis or the Emirates, but the threat to North Yemen, where a liberation movement claims to have liberated a third of the country. Also, the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Oman, which the Shah's troops helped defeat 3 years ago, has been revitalised. Both Oman and North Yemen border on Saudi Arabia, which largely explains the recent arms sales to North Yemen by the Saudis.

But the international ramifications extend wider - as far as Britain in fact. Because of Britain's important imperialist role in Iran, there will inevitably be effects felt in this country. For the Left the main concern must be the loss of jobs as a result of cancelled contracts. The Right will no doubt make great play of this and it is important that the Left challenge the Right-wing propaganda.

CHRYSLER SHOP STEWARD INTERVIEW

ONE OF the companies with most to lose from a decline in economic activity in Iran is Chrysler UK, which was recently taken over by the French French Peugeot company. Chrysler had an exclusive contract to supply the Iran National Car Company with kits of the Hunter model.

What part of Chrysler UK production was the Iran contract?

It accounted for almost 20% of total UK turnover. But that was spread unevenly - it accounted for 50-60% of production at the Stoke engine plant.

What is the situation with the contract now?

Well, since the kits cannot get through to the plant in Iran, production has been stopped. 1,300 workers (1/3 of the workforce at Stoke) have been laid off since Jan 24 and it seems the layoffs will continue till May. In the meantime, the company has given the required 90 days notice for redundancies; though they have not made clear how many it will involve.

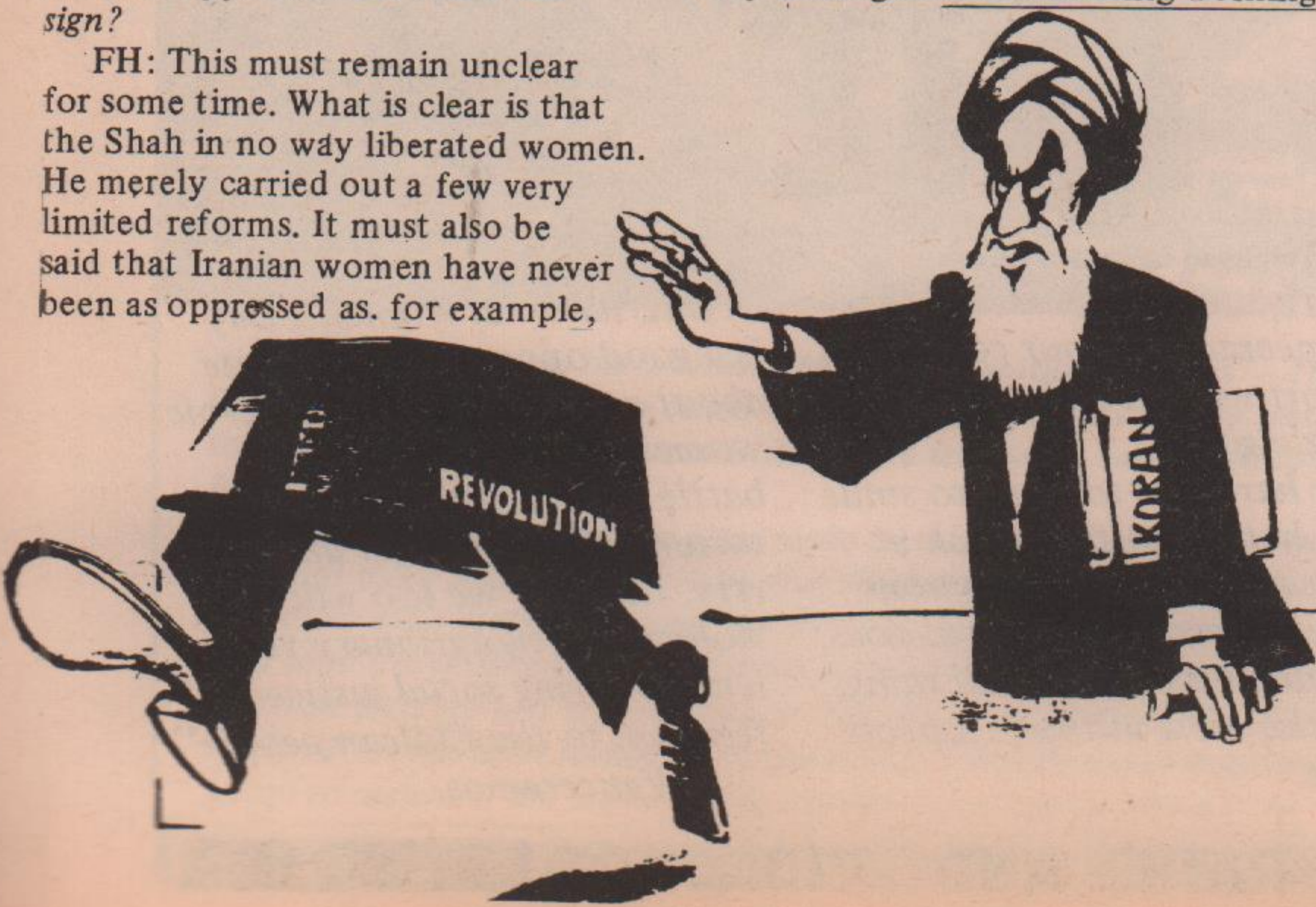
Are you getting lay-off pay?

We got lay-off pay (85% of the basic) for 4 weeks until the lay-off fund ran out. Some of the workers will go back to 3 days work a week, others on the dole. Management has

of course used the current situation to get tough. They are hoping many workers will leave of their own accord before they announce the redundancies. - the more that do, the more the company saves on redundancy payments.

Is there much interest amongst the workers about what's happening in Iran and how it's affecting production at Stoke?

When I tell people about the things SAVAK (the secret police) got up to, they just don't believe it's possible such things happened. By now, there's a realisation that some pretty amazing things are going on in Iran.



EXCLUSIVE ZIMBABWE SMITH REGIME GUILTY OF MASS STARVATION AND GENOCIDE

A RECENT document by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe is entitled "THE PROSPECT OF STARVATION FACING PEOPLE IN CERTAIN OF THE WAR ZONES AND GOVERNMENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS DENYING FOOD TO THE GUERRILLAS". Its explicit title makes it clear that the Smith Government is implementing a deliberate policy of genocide towards black people. The report also says "it appears certain that the food situation will become critical in six to eight weeks time is exhausted".

No doubt the mass starvation of black people will be given little coverage in 'our' National press: their pages are reserved for what happens to white people. The following report from a comrade just returned from Zimbabwe confirms the findings of the Catholic Commission that the starvation is deliberate government policy.

"What most strikes you when you go to Rhodesia today — and this is very inadequately covered in the press here — is how grim the situation has become. The brutality the deprivation, the inhumanity have become horrific in the extreme, and the only way one can come to terms with it is to realise that it primarily reflects the desperation of the present regime in the face of the liberation of struggle, and the consequent prospects of radical change.

MARTIAL LAW

Martial Law extends over vast areas now. Martial Law means a mandatory nine year prison sentence for those arrested for anti-Government activities.

Several executions are carried out to save time and expense. But most people are simply detained without trial, and even if there is a trial, it is held in an area that is inaccessible for the defence lawyer. If the sentence is execution, people are given a choice of joining one of the private armies instead.

The brutalisation of people in the rural areas takes two forms. There are the curfew regulations — from 6pm to 9am in most areas, but some places have a 22 hour curfew, including the "protective villages.", which are essentially concentration camps. Anybody and anything that moves — including animals — during curfew hours is liable to be shot on sight. Of course most people don't have

watches, so enforcement of curfew can be both arbitrary and brutal. The legal aid office in Bulawayo gets 100 cases a week of people complaining about violation of the curfew laws.

STARVATION POLICY

Brutalisation also takes the form of starvation, which is Government policy for the villages and is carried out simply by preventing supplies reaching the village and township shops — most of which are consequently shut. Individuals are allowed to take a limited amount of mealy meal into the rural areas, but most maize and tobacco is stockpiled by the regime and exchanged for arms.

Diseases have reached epidemic levels in most areas. And if people are not wracked with disease they may suffer from one of the regime's many terrorist attacks in the countryside. These take the form of helicopters swooping down to shoot up a village, convoys of trucks moving through an area wreaking havoc, or the regular burning down of kraals.

And while it is true that the Patriotic Front is doing a lot to counteract the regime's brutal policies, there are clear limitations on what it can achieve. To take just the food situation, there was a

50-75% crop failure this year because of late rains, so it is hard enough for the guerillas to get food for themselves.

URBAN AREAS

With all the problems and hardships in the rural areas it is hardly surprising that people flock to the towns, and huge squatted areas have grown up around the bigger cities, especially Bulawayo and Salisbury. These areas are the hardest for the regime to control, and are full of either members or sympathisers of the Patriotic Front. But there is severe destitution here too and crime and violence are widespread.

ZAPU in particular operates quite successfully in the towns. While I was in Bulawayo there was an explosion in a power station and on a railway track — neither of them reported, incidentally. And black people still talk very enthusiastically about the oil depot explosions, which were almost certainly carried out by ZAPU and which were a serious blow to white morale.

APRIL ELECTIONS

It is not yet clear whether the April elections will go ahead. But certainly the regime could borrow a few tactics from the Namibia elections in order to make them seem legitimate. For example, it will no doubt

take mobile polling booths around the townships and herd people in, perhaps with a carrot rather than a stick. In workplaces, black people will no doubt be threatened with the sack if they refuse to vote.

And, there will be considerable intimidation. But the big problem the regime will have will be with the mass of unemployed in the squatted areas, and it is probably with these people in mind that Smith has said that he will be satisfied with a low poll, even 25%

Victory soon? It's hard to tell. Certainly, white morale is very low, their numbers are declining all the time, the economy is in ruins. But the Patriotic Front seems a long way from military success, and the people in the townships, while they seem to have no sympathy for the present regime — mainly because nothing has changed for them — are not generally very political either.

That is to say, while the Patriotic Front clearly have widespread support in the urban areas, this seems likely to remain relatively passive.

Because of this, the present regime may be able to hold the towns for some time to come, and the people will have to undergo tremendous hardship before victory is secured; even to the point of starvation.

IRELAND

THE PEACE MOVEMENT. FROM TRAGEDY TO FARCE

DELIRIOUS JOY in Loyalist areas. Despair and isolation amongst Catholics. That was the result of the 1974 Loyalist strike, as described in last month's Big Flame. With British Army help, the Protestant-Loyalists had more or less shut down the Northern Irish economy in which they held the bulk of the important jobs in power supply, transport, public services and heavy industry. The strike put an end to the British government's attempts to undermine the Catholic revolt with minor reforms. Even these reforms were unacceptable to the Loyalist strikers.

The war went on of course. The British Army and the Police continued to be hit hard in IRA attacks through 1975 and into '76. But there seemed to be no end to the violence. The Catholic ghettos, as always, suffered the worst — from house raids by the army, sudden arrests and beatings or the tension caused by armed warfare on the streets.

During the Loyalist strike there had been no real movement in Britain et alone the rest of Ireland, to help the beleaguered Catholic ghettos of the north. For some people, the long war began to produce only despair.

TRAGEDY

This despair in the ghettos was one of the few rays of hope the British state had in its desire to suppress the revolt. If only a desire for peace through surrender would be created in the Republican strongholds. If only the mass of Catholics would VOLUNTARILY give up their struggle, for civil rights and Irish independence.

The tragic deaths of the three Maguire children in August 1976 seemed to be the spark to create such a movement.

SPONTANEOUS

What happened was simple. British troops shot dead a Provisional volunteer at the wheel of a car. The car went out of control and killed the three children as they were passing with their mother. Once again the lives of innocent people living in the front line, in this case the Catholic estate of Andersonstown in Belfast.

Crowds of people, mostly women, gathered in horror at the spot. The "Peace Movement" that grew out

of the incident was largely spontaneous. The British state had little part in it ... at first.

The movement seemed to grow overnight, with Marches of thousands calling simply for "peace". in Belfast, Derry, Dublin and other Irish towns.

ONE-SIDED

Thousands of people from both communities marched in support of the "non-political" Peace Movement. But almost immediately the TV and papers, as well as the media-appointed Peace leaders, began to interpret "Peace" as something that would arrive only if the Irish Republican Army ceased hostilities. In the middle of a war, they only blamed one side.

SILENCE

Even as the Press continued to rave about the numbers of people (often absurdly exaggerated) marching for peace, a deep suspicion began to grow in the Catholic areas of the north. They, far more even than the people of southern Ireland, knew from their own experience that the IRA wasn't the only army fighting the war. They all knew the abuse and violence they got from the troops and police. They had lived for too long in the fear of the no-warning loyalist bomb or assassins bullet to ignore the UDA or UVF. Yet the Press and the Peace Leaders, Betty Williams, Mairead Corrigan and Ciaran McKeown, said nothing about them.

MURDER

The one-sided attitude of the Peace leaders was glaringly exposed by a series of incidents which happened within a few days of the first Peace march.

In the village of Whitecross, in south Armagh, a British paratrooper shot dead a 13 year old girl, Majella O'Hare, on her way to church in broad daylight. The Peace leaders blamed the IRA. When the truth came out, they went silent. Thousands of local people attended a Provisional Republican protest meeting in Whitecross, angry at the murder of an innocent child and at the hypocritical silence of the Press and Peace leaders. There was no place for the Peace Movement in S Armagh. No soldier was charged with the killing.

BOMB

Soon after this a Loyalist gang threw a petrol bomb into the home of the Catholic Dempsey family in Belfast's New Lodge Rd. district. Mr and Mrs Dempsey and their baby child were burned to death!

Once again the Peace Movement did nothing.

ANOTHER CHILD

Matters came to a head in the Catholic estate of Turf Lodge. British troops, feeling that the IRA was weakened by the groundswell of support for "peace", had stepped up their aggression towards the people of the Catholic ghettos. The result was the death of 13 year old Brian Stewart, killed when a soldier put a rubber bullet gun against his head and fired.

Hundreds of Mothers gathered in the local community centre to protect their children from the marauding troops. Suddenly Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan appeared trying to make dramatic, film-star type entrances. But they were angrily attacked by the Mothers who threw them out of the hall. Only the prompt action of the local Provisionals saved them from injury.

DOWNHILL

From then on it was all downhill for the Peace Movement, Catholic people were angry because the Movement said nothing about violence unless the IRA was responsible. Similarly, support fell away amongst Protestant-Loyalists because certain local branches of the Movement in Catholic areas had been forced to criticise British Army attacks. The Loyalists were not prepared to see "their" Army criticised.

Only the flow of money from abroad (not much from Ireland) as well as the continued estatic support of the Press kept the Peace leaders (they had no "Movement" left) in the public eye.

WHY?

Why did the Peace Movement fail when it seemed to attract such massive support from all kinds of Irish people?

They failed because the war in Ireland is not between two sets of religious fanatics who can be ignored



Mairead Corrigan one of the leaders of the peace movement.

DEREK BOWIE

by the decent, peace-loving majority on both sides. That is a myth spread by Press and politicians.

The people of Ireland, north of the border, are divided over whether Britain should continue to occupy the area. The war is between the Republican, mainly Catholic population, who want the troops out, versus the British army and its local allies.

Campaigns like the Peace Movement which want to unite people by ignoring what really divides them, are doomed to failure. Like the Trade Union "Better Life for All Campaign" or the "Students for Peace, Jobs and Progress" or even the new "Rock against Sectarianism" such Movements end up as isolated committees of individuals with no support on either side. Worse still, by appealing for immediate "peace" and "unity" they end up calling for an end to the fight against the corrupt and violent system in northern Ireland. They become defenders of the establishment.

That's what happened to the Peace Movement.

Next month. From the Peace Movement to today ... a war of attrition.

TEN YEARS ON

Telling Tales: Class and Control

TIME OFF rarely reviews the films which you can only see if you go to film clubs and have a strong stomach for subtitles. We concentrate on the good films which can be seen by everyone. But there is a small number of socialist independent film makers, making low budget films without the backing of the big distributors, whose work is of enormous political significance. RICHARD WOOLEY is one of these film makers, and he explains his work below.

THE FILM

The story of the film 'Telling Tales' is easily told, and it may sound banal. It's about two couples, one upper-middle class, and one working class. Their lives are intertwined because the working class woman does housework for the upper-middle class couple, and because the working class man is a shop steward running a strike in a factory which the upper class man wants to do a deal with. The plot centres around the upper class couple trying to manipulate the shop steward into calling off the strike, making him feel sorry for the boss of the factory.

CHALLENGING

So the film is about class - we are given a detailed portrait of how the upper class live - and about class conflict and manipulation. Not much new there to socialists, perhaps, but very effective on those who believe that "class is dead". The content of the film is more challenging over the issue of relationships between working class men and women. The houseworker sympathises with the women in the factory, particularly the women shop steward who she went to school with, when they demand that the strike includes 'equal pay' as a major part of the strike. Her husband, expecting service from his wife and a back seat from the women at work, has to be pushed very hard to support the women.

But the major point of interest of the film is the method by which it has been made. It is the most effective visual expose of the class bias of film that I've ever seen. Basically it employs a very simple technique: when the upper class are talking, all film conventions are obeyed. The camera cuts quickly from face to gesture, from long shot to close up, and you are never bored or distracted by extraneous noise. When they are telling their tale about their factory owner friend, the story is shot in colour, in full 'Love Story' gloss. When the working class are talking, it is all in black and white, the woman talks straight to the camera without any cuts or close ups, there is all kind of noise coming from the other flats and the street. Every moment of the film shows you how the camera in bourgeois films flies, plays tricks and numbs your brain.

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD WOOLEY

"My films stand somewhere between a number of camps occupied by socialists involved in film. The "extreme formalists", some of whom claim to be marxists, say that you have to make the viewer totally aware of the act of viewing. So they'll make a film which is purely a piece of scratched celluloid. They say that content is fascist because it manipulates you - people have to be made to look at everything afresh.

SECOND SCHOOL

On the other hand you have the "socialist fiction" film makers, who say you have to use the conventional film methods - imitating them completely and making the content as exciting as possible - but convey socialist messages, about strikes, or ruling class corruption or whatever, this can lead you into films like BLUE COLLAR which go so far as to include totally gratuitous sex scenes.

THIRD SCHOOL

There's another important school - the socialist "agitprop documentary" makers, who want to make films which are as good as the BBC's but which show workers' struggles from the left point of view, or who try to incorporate some film methods as well.

The problem I'm trying to deal with is how to make my films as understandable by the widest possible number of people - which means using conventional film techniques at least some of the time - while at the same time demonstrating that those very techniques make cinema so powerful and engrossing, make it so effective at manipulating your emotions, that you are reduced to a passive object, who can't think for yourself. You have far less opportunity when reading a book, or even when watching a play. So I use some techniques which are different from the usual ones.

There are much longer shots, without quick cuts, so that the viewer is made to feel a bit tense, wondering what's going to happen next, and thinking more about what he or she is watching. Long shots also allow the viewer to look more carefully, and select what he or she wants to see in the picture.



'We have to make people aware how they are manipulated then they can

involve themselves in creating & changing things'

TIME OFF

EXPERTS

I'm following Brecht's idea that people are interested in the aesthetics of football, because they are experts in football. People could be experts in film too, if films helped people see behind them, to see how they were being made, to become involved and interested in what the camera is doing and what it's going to do next.

The trouble is that all this can be too difficult for people to understand. My involvement in Big Flame made me see how elitist my earlier 'experimental' films were. People aren't stupid, but obviously a lot of these ideas are difficult, especially when you have a daily diet of Hollywood.

So my next film will be more conventional, and will use a thriller device - in this case, the murder of a prostitute.

Making films takes up so much time, and demands such specialisation that it's difficult to be involved as an activist in the sense of picket lines and demos and left meetings. But there is a lot of 'workplace' politics in film - fighting for union rates on independent films, for union membership, trying to get more money from the government and stopping redundancy.

BATTLE OF IDEAS

I see my films as being part of the battle of ideas. We know that the media are a major weapon of the state, and we need alternative films, just like we need alternative newspapers, books and magazines. We have to make people aware of how they are being manipulated. And if people can understand how our alternative media are produced, and become interested in the creat-

ive process itself, then they are more likely to involve themselves in creating and changing things. In my films, I'm also looking at my own class background, not in 'psychological terms, but in its material form, in the way it exerted control over the working class. I try and follow the advice of an East German friend, who told me to make films "through the eyes of the working class".

WHERE TO SEE IT

LEIGH: Derby Room, Leigh Library 8pm March 16th
SHEFFIELD (Unconfirmed): Polytechnic Students Union 7.30pm March 21st. Also showing "Controlling Interest"

The film is available for hire from the Other Cinema, 12/13 Little Newport St., London. W.C.2 (01.734.4131)

LEEDS BIG FLAME PUBLIC MEETING "Huntley St Eviction and the Strong State" Friday 9th March at Harehills Housing Aid, 188 Roundhay Rd., Leeds 8.

LONDON BIG FLAME PUBLIC MEETING. "The Current Economic Crisis" Speaker Pete Burgess, Tues 13th March, New Inn, Tottenham Court Rd., W.C.1.
(This is the first of a series of meetings organised by the Big Flame Community Commission on the theme of "Understanding the State". For more information contact 01.735.6123]

COVENTRY: BIG FLAME EDUCATIONAL MEETING "Politics and Personal Relations" Tues 27th March 7.30pm Swanswell Tavern (opposite Old Fire Station), Pool Meadow

TRADE UNION CAMPAIGN AGAINST REPRESSION
IRISH TRADE UNION SPEAKER TOUR Glasgow Mar 11; Manchester Mar 12; Liverpool Mar 13; Birmingham Mar 14; Sheffield, Mar 15; London Mar 16/17

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE Phil Asquith from Lucas Aerospace Combine Cte speaks on Friday 16th March at 7.30pm Friends Meeting House, Hartshead, SHEFFIELD.

ADS

WOMEN AND SPACE Feminist Anthropology, Architecture and Community. Weekend School March 10th and 11th 10am to 5.30 each day. Admission \$2.0 for weekend (food and creche facilities included) Caxton House, 129 St Johns Way, London N.19 (Archway tube). Organised by the New Architecture Movement Feminist Group. Enquiries to 9 Poland Street, London W.1. (or phone 01.697.3670 before 6 pm)

ANTI-APARTHEID/TRADE UNION North West Tour. "South Africa, the Workers View" with speakers from SACTU, ANC, SWAPO, ZANU, ZAPU.
MANCHESTER: March 29th 7.30pm Town Hall Basement Theatre.
ASHTON: April 3rd Provisional Venue AUEW offices.

BLACKBURN: April 7th Venue to be announced.

PRESTON: April 8th venue to be announced.

LIVERPOOL: April 10th Provisional venue, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant. For more information, contact Frances Kelly, 59 Tintern Avenue, Manchester M20 8 ND.

COLLEGE RANK AND FILE annual conference with discussions on salaries, merger of scales, Government training policy and more. Sat 24th March 11am-4pm at Polytechnic of Central London, New Cavendish St, W.1.

DEMONSTRATION by International Campaign for Abortion Rights as part of International Day of Action on Abortion Rights. ICAR is sponsored by NAC and calls for safe contraception, free abortion and no forced sterilisation.
Assemble Speakers Corner, Hyde Park. 1.30. March 31. Rally Trafalgar Sq.

The second Socialist Feminist National Conference will take place at City University, London, March 24/25. Workshops will focus on the following areas: social policies (education, health, welfare, taxation, legal changes etc.), economic conditions (employment, low pay, training etc.), reproduction and sexuality (lesbianism, rape, pornography etc.) and struggles in communication (media, art etc.)
If you would like to write a paper, run a workshop or give practical help,

please contact the planning group at 27 Villa Rd., Brixton, London SW9.
Registration forms available in advance from 39 Parkholme Rd., London E8.

A new publication 'An Introduction to Big Flame' is available for 20p including postage. To find out more about Big Flame, send off the form on the back page.

'REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM No.3' NOW OUT.
Includes: 'Barcelona Tenants Up In Arms'; 'Italy - a New Politics'; 'Shop Stewards as Full-Timers'.

From: BF Journal, Room 265, 27 Clerkwell Close, London EC 1.
40p (+ 15p postage) and from all good left wing bookshops.

'SEXUALITY AND FASCISM'
Documents from Big Flame, including: 'Women and Nazi Germany', 'Women and the NF', 'Men and Fascism'. Price 20p (inc. p&p) from 217 Wavertree Rd., Liverpool 7.

A CLOSE LOOK AT FASCISM AND RACISM: a BF pamphlet. * 30p (including postage) from 217 Wavertree Rd., Liverpool 7

CHARTIST new magazine format (incorporating CHARTIST INTERNATIONAL) bi-monthly. First issue contains articles on the Labour left, socialist feminism, immigration controls, Bolshevism, Rosa Luxembourg, the economy, local government. Price 35p plus 15p post and packing. Available from Chartist Publications (BF) 60 Loughborough Rd., London SW9.

OUT NOW! IRELAND SOCIALIST Review Number 4. Includes articles on the media and current British security policies. Price 30p & 15p p 4p (subscription \$1 for three issues) Available from ISR, 60 Loughborough Rd., London S.W.9.

"BLACKROSE PRESS" is a collective of Socialist and Feminist printers. We are looking for a fifth - worker with similar politics and (preferably) experience in any area of Litho Printing. Ring 01.251.3043

COPY DATES FOR APRIL BIG FLAME:
Features: Thurs 15 March
News: Weds 21 March

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

Only because we need the money, we have decided to introduce a charge for adverts of 3p a word. Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to Big Flame Newspaper.

SAFETY AT WORK

the power
to stop
the job is
the only real
protection



This is a new regular spot in Big Flame each month. We hope it is used to bring together information that will be useful in organising or arguing. Suggestions for future articles are very welcome, not to mention offers to write them.

This first article on health and safety at work is by a safety rep, who is also active on his local health and safety committee.

THE DEATH rate for workers on North Sea oil rigs is higher than it was for serving soldiers in the Second World War.

This is the tip of the health and safety iceberg. The death and maiming that working people suffer at work has in the past been taken for granted and goes on unpunished:

At Appleby in 1975 eleven workers were fried alive by molten metal. British Steel were fined £700 £64 per death.

Cancer

At Acre Mill, a whole generation of workers and their families suffered cancer which killed not just the workers but even those washing work clothes at home. For 30 years the factory Inspectorate knew the Asbestos Regulations were being broken but never once prosecuted.

The dangers to health from work increase all the time. The growth of chemicals in use, of shiftwork, of work speed up, of huge complexes and technology amount to warfare against workers on a growing scale. "Self-financing" productivity deals are a further health risk.

For example, there are over 12,000 chemicals in regular use in British industry. Of these only 500 have been tested at all. Of these, there are almost none whose full effects are known. Dr K Duncan, director of medical services for the Employment Medical advisory service says (February 1978) that animal tests on new chemicals before they are used are "too time consuming" and "too costly". At the same time the industry spends hundreds of millions annually on advertising.

The explosions at Seveso in Italy and Bantry Bay in Ireland are a warning of the industrial time bombs

whose numbers grow every year. The 1974 Flixborough explosion blew up the Lincolnshire Nypro plant in "an explosion of warlike dimensions" due to botched cheap engineering. This will be peanuts compared to the effects of a major disaster in somewhere like Canvey Island in Essex which may eventually happen.

The ulcers, lost fingers and eyes, chest and heart diseases, not to mention mental strain have been taken for granted. Companies, Factory Inspectors and the Government launder the statistics every year.

Out of over 12,000 chemicals in regular use only 500 have been tested.

Despite the growing dangers, there are now less factory inspectors per factory than 14 years ago when the Factory Inspectorate was founded.

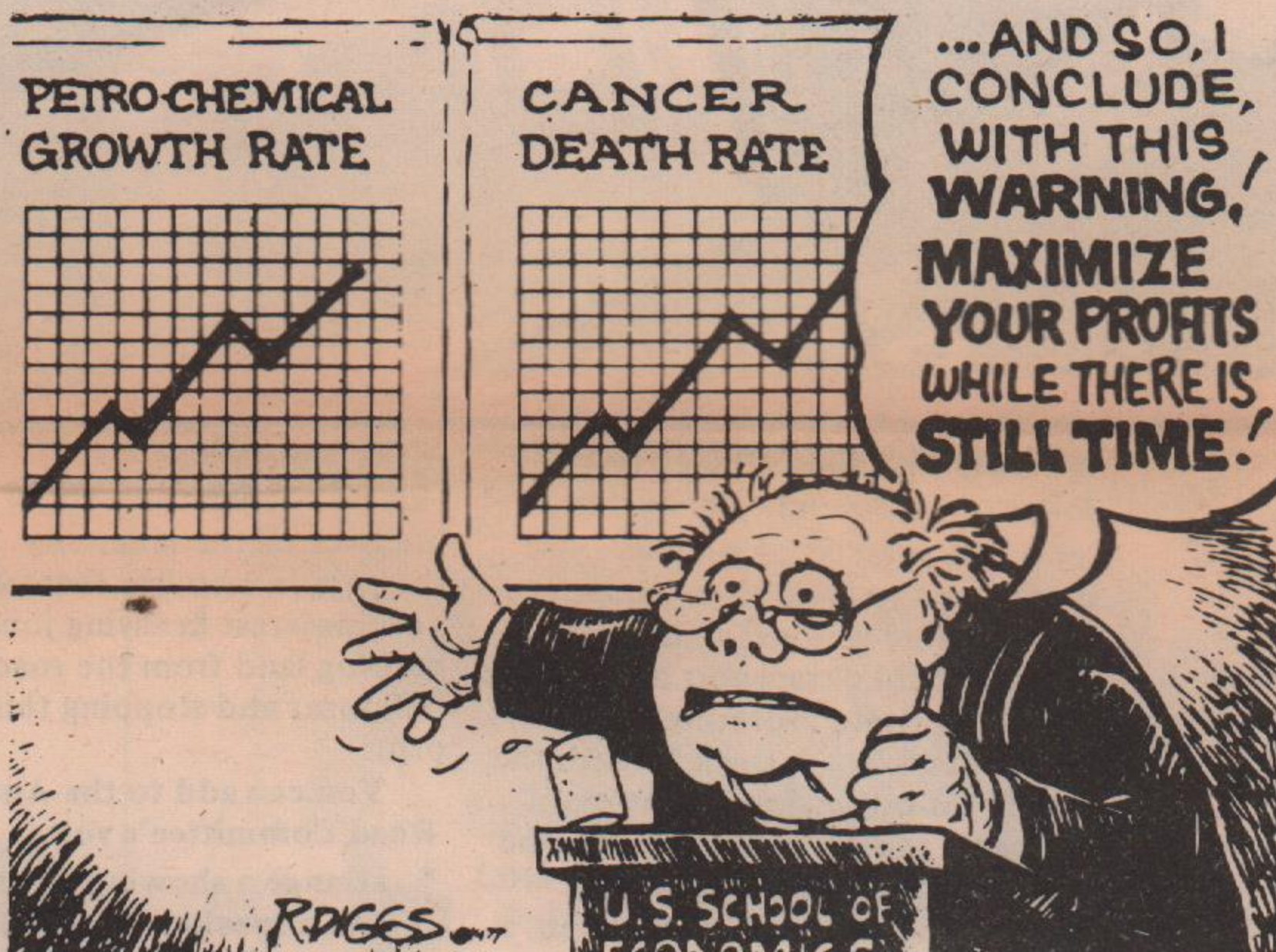
Anyone who doubts the dangers and some of the causes should

listen to the leading American scientist Dr Richard Glasser who says that cancer has replaced cholera as the modern plague and 85% of cancer cases result from the environment. As for industry's attitude to research into this question scientists and physicians are portrayed by today's vested interests as meddlers and trouble makers. There are no rewards for what they accomplish, no Nobel Prizes have been given out for studies of environmental carcinogenicity (causes of cancer).

For years, workers have relied on two methods to fight workplace hazards. They tried to use the factory Inspectorate, this method became discredited since the numbers were too few, the fines too small, warnings were preferred to prosecutions and in any case the legal standards were often only a bare minimum.

Compensation

The other approach was to claim compensation against employers.



YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS

YOU SHOULDN'T rely on the law or on the inspectors to enforce it.

The bare minimum provided can however, be useful.

Everyone has two basic rights: 1. Section 7 (a) of the Health and Safety Act (1974) says: "It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself (!) and of other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work."

This is increasingly being used to stop dangerous jobs. 2. Everyone has the right to call in the Inspector. By law the name and address of the inspector must be publicly displayed in your workplace. If you want you can ask that your name be kept secret. Under section 28 (8), if you require, you are entitled to see the Inspectors on their visit and see a copy of any report or analysis. Normally the Safety Reps call in the Inspector, but any individual can do so.

Safety reps have a whole range of functions too long to summarise here. The full details will be found in the Regulations (see below). The rights include regular inspections of the whole section,

investigations into particular problems or accidents, and access to Company information on health and safety, not to mention facilities and training.

INVESTIGATING A POSSIBLE DANGEROUS CHEMICAL

Every job from photocopying to foundries involves chemicals. Use the following system:

1. You need the chemical name, not the trade name. Through your safety rep point out that under Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, the manufacturer must provide the user with the information about substances supplied. Section 7 of the Regulations gives the safety rep access to all such information the Company has.
2. If your employer still won't provide you with the chemicals present you can do one of three things:
 - a) Stop the job until assurances of safety are given in writing.
 - b) Get the inspector in (don't rely too much on this one)
 - c) Enquire through the workers health and safety network (e.g. Hazards Bulletin or your local group) as to any dangers.

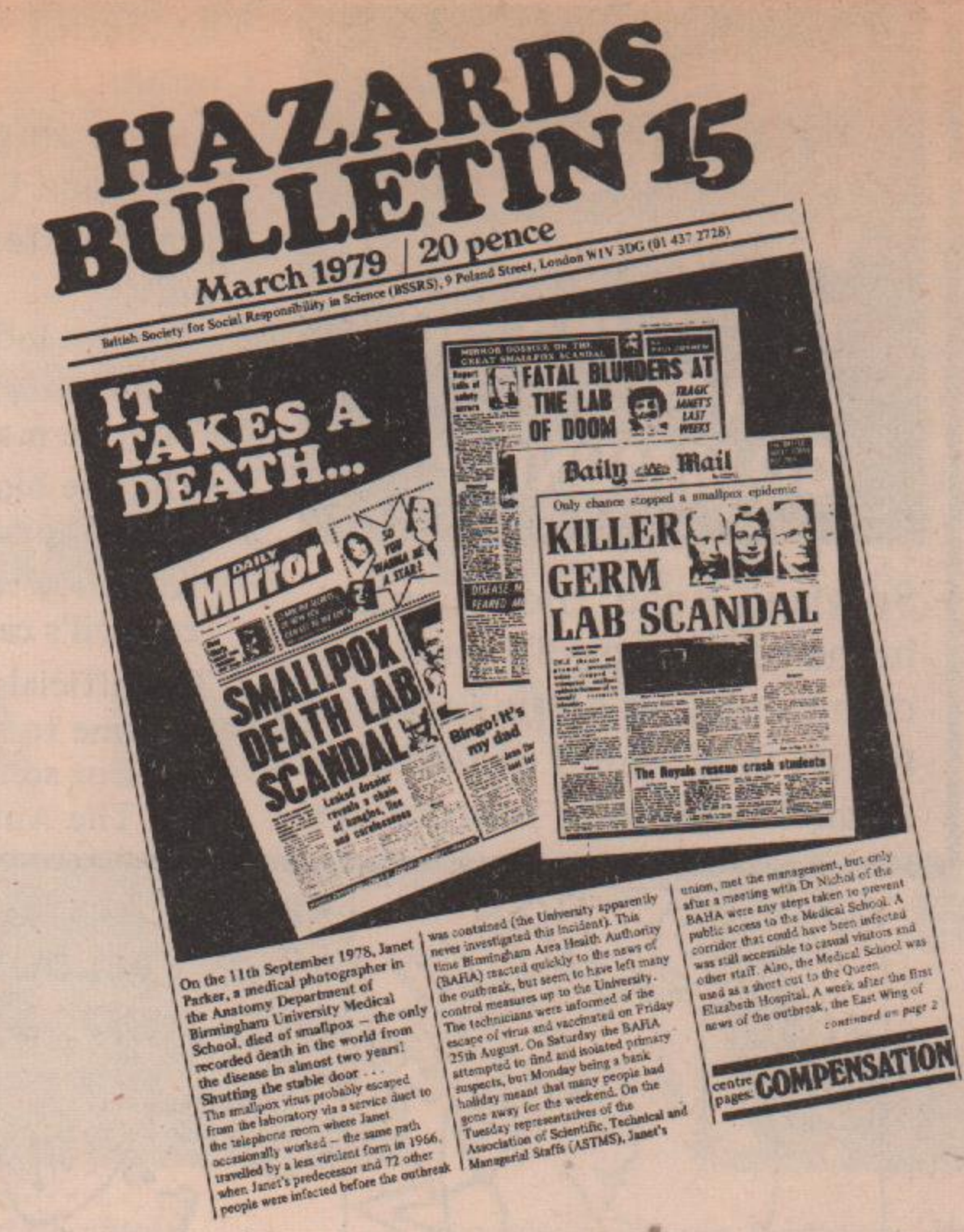
3. If you do get the chemical name check out its dangers with a chemical Dictionary (e.g. Irving Sax: Dangerous Properties of Industrial Chemicals), or your local safety group. Act accordingly.
4. Don't rely on Threshold Limit Values (so-called safe levels). Use TLV's only as a last resort. If measurements are made make sure you are present and get them before they are doctored (Section 6 (d) of the Safety Reps Code of Practice). TLV's are not a scientific safe level.
5. As a last resort you may use the Factory Acts Section 4 provide for em-

ployers to have ventilation when harmful fumes or dusts exist, whilst Section 63 insists on all practicable measures being taken to remove fumes or dusts which are harmful or offensive. Thus unpleasant "safe" oil mist concentrations have been tackled even where the TLV was not reached.

6. Once identified, replacement by a safe substitute, or changing the process should be the priorities, with ventilation as a second best. Protective clothing should only be used as a short-term last resort whilst the danger is eliminated. If you have to accept it only do it on this basis.

how
to find
out
more

1. The Factory or office Inspector. The name, address and telephone number of the one for your workplace must be displayed at work. Use them but don't rely on them. Make sure they see you and send you copies of any documents. Any worker, not just safety reps can call them in, anonymously if need be.
2. Your trade union. Your union probably has a pamphlet and policy on safety. Some unions (e.g. ASTMS,



Certainly we cannot rely on the TUC whose Centenary Institute spends 50% of its time answering management inquiries. Now can we rely on full time officials who are still mainly affected by the "compensation" approach, not to mention the "take it through procedure" approach.

Eleven workers were fried alive by molten metal. British Steel were fined £700 - £64 per death.

Future issues of Big Flame newspaper will deal in more detail with the progress of Safety Reps in organising at work and in avoiding the dangers of either increasing frustration or becoming sucked into the Company's safety office.

As on other issues, legal rights, safety committees, information and training may all be useful. But it is still the power to stop the job which must remain as the ultimate weapon.

The Shooter Report into the outbreak of smallpox in Birmingham University has just been published. It makes clear that the labs were substandard and that it was thought that it would not have been worth spending the money needed to bring them up to standard. As the report says, additional expense would have been 'quite unjustified' in view of our projected halt to the smallpox/whitepox work at the end of the year. So, a lab worker dies to save money.

The remaining official smallpox lab in this country is in the centre of London - obviously a crazy place to locate it. Ennals, the Minister responsible, has said that he 'hopes that the laboratory might be relocated away from London'. Hopefully, it won't take a city-wide epidemic to shift it!

GMWU, TGWU) have produced some pamphlets of general use to all workers. 3. Literature The following together with others referred to in this page are a good introduction: Pat Kinnersley: the Hazards of Work (90p) A marvellous if slightly dated book. A bible for Trade unionists. Health and Safety at Work (TUC) Has some useful information but with the expected limitations, worth using as an "authority" and to complement Kinnersley but follow Kinnersley where they disagree. Hazards Bulletin (20p) This bi-monthly bulletin put out by socialists is excellent. This group also publishes various pamphlets, especially ones in on Noise, Vibration and Oils. Subscribe via BSSRS, 9 Poland St., London W.1. Local Health and Safety Groups. A growing movement of local trade union health and safety groups has started. These are listed in the Hazards Bulletin.

BIG FLAME

'When I sack people they stay sacked'

Nottingham Post Managing Director

NOTTINGHAM: WORKERS CONTROL THE NEWS

Pickets block the entrance to the Evening Post offices. Big Flame photo.



THE DISPUTE between management and 28 victimised journalists on the Nottingham Evening Post (EP) [which dates back to the recent national journalists strike], is escalating.

The EP management has taken out eviction orders against those of the 28 journalists who live in EP-owned houses. And SLADE and NGA workers have started a programme of boycotting advertising that goes in the Post.

Letters have been written to all advertisers that use the Post telling them that their advertising will be boycotted in all other newspapers. Major ad. agencies and Discourt Houses are among those who have already withdrawn their copy.

ALTERNATIVE NEWS-PAPER

The victimised journalists have started a successful alternative paper, the Nottingham News. It has printed exclusive articles by Brian Clough and Peter Taylor, who manage Nottingham Forest.

Unlike the Post which often uses Tory party statements for headlines, the News claims to be unbiased politically. Greater informality and more job control exists amongst its journalists. An ad for the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) which was refused by the Post was accepted by the News and the paper reported CHE's meeting. There is no doubt that trade union and other stories are dealt with much more fairly.

PAGE THREE

A controversial issue has been the News' Page 3 'News Girl'. Many of the supporters of the paper made their opposition to this sexist feature heard loud and clear — but still the journalists of the News refused to drop it. Their compromise was to have a poll amongst their readers as to whether News Girl should or should not go — the poll voted for an end to News Girl.

Circulation of the (weekly) News has now risen to 20,000 and it is getting in over £1,000 in ads.

The next mass picket to support the sacked journalists is outside the Nottingham Post offices at 11am on Saturday 3rd March. It'll be worth a trip — BE THERE.

MERSEYSIDE RING ROAD: A WEDGE THROUGH THE WORKING CLASS COMMUNITY

Scotland Road, the original home of Liverpool's Irish community, is getting ready for its final round of battle against commuter motorways.

The Merseyside County Council is determined to build an inner ring road: the Anti-Ring Road Committee is equally determined that they won't.

- * They've lobbied the Transport Minister
- * They've made a film
- * They've blocked the Merseys tunnel approaches
- * And they've hacked holes in the council's case.

The officials argue that Liverpool will come to a standstill in the next decade or so unless this ring road is built. The Anti-Ring Road Commit-

tee reply that the £40m estimate will grow astronomically by the time the road is completed. Besides, why spend so much money when a more rational solution is to improve public transport at the expense of private motoring?

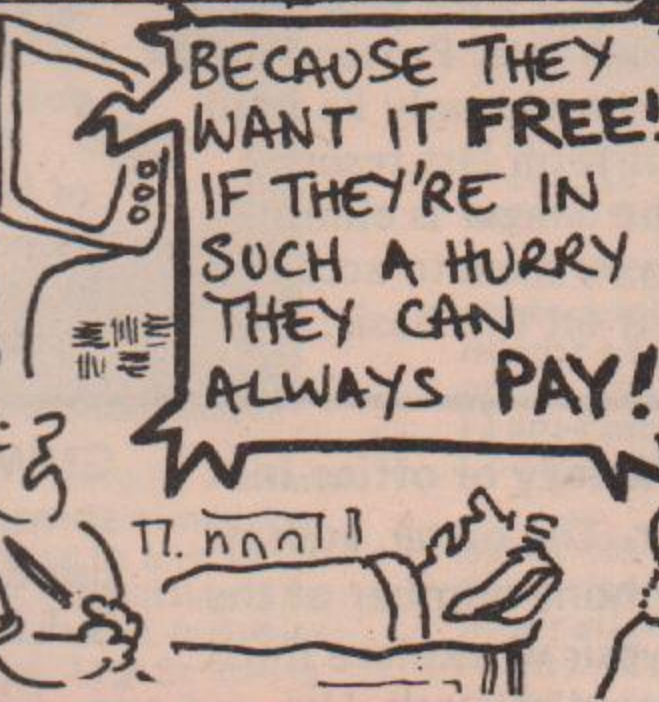
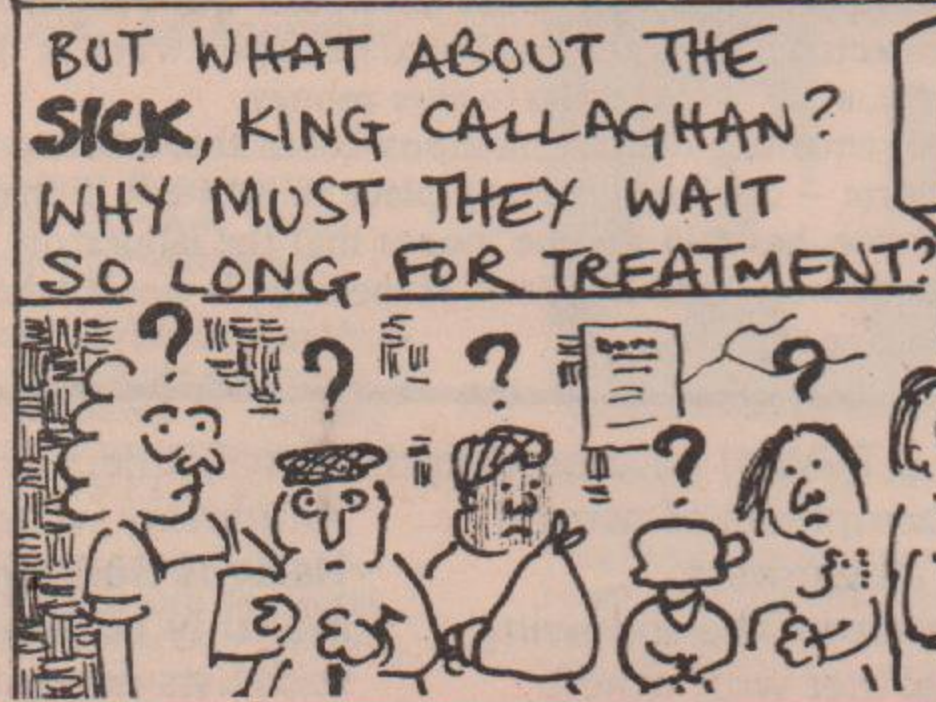
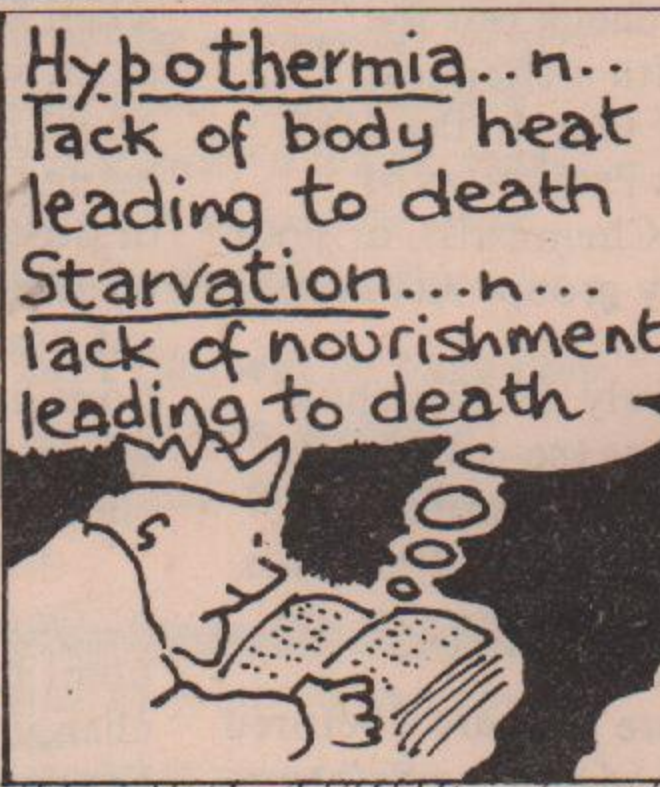
Scotland Road, the area with the lowest car-ownership in Liverpool, has never recovered from the 6-lane tunnel approach road. The ring road, as the campaign committee say, will drive another wedge through this working class community and leave many people completely isolated. Children and old people will have to cross an urban motorway or use an underpass. Use the money to build homes, not

roads, they argue.

The council talks about bringing life back to the inner city. But it's the people who live there who have a real interest in saving jobs and housing land from the road builders' bulldozer and stopping this crazy plan.

You can add to the Anti-Ring Road Committee's voice:

- * arrange a showing of their film and a speaker. Ring them at Byrom St. Community Centre 051-236 7476
- * write to Transport Minister, William Rogers and Peter Shore, Minister of State for the Environment, House of Commons, London SW1.



BIG FLAME

I want to subscribe to the paper
I want more information about Big Flame

Sub. rates: £2.25 per year Britain & Ireland; £1.10 for 6 months. Abroad: £3.00 & £1.50

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GOOD KING CALLAGHAN PLAYS HIS TRUMP CARD!

