

# The SYNDICALIST

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25P

## WILDCAT VICTORY! N.E. GARMENTWORKERS' DIRECT ACTION

Thousands of clothing workers have been involved in "unofficial" wildcat strikes in the Tyne & Wear area. The action, by members of the NUTGW (National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers) came after a proposal by the union's National Executive to accept a deal offered to them by the British Clothing Industrial Association of a pay increase of just £1.92 per week. The action spread rapidly and the strikers organised from factory to factory on a rank and file basis, having no contact with any full-time officials. They were condemned by the region's full-time official for the NUTGW.

### WIDESPREAD

The action centred around seven of the J&J Fashions factories spanning Tyneside; 2 at South Shields (Wrekendyke & Middlefield Industrial Estates), Howdon (Units 1 & 2), Sunderland, Lemington and Pen St (off the Scotswood Rd, Newcastle). Two thousand workers at Claremont Garments' factories in Peterlee, Stanley, Bishop Auckland and Newton Aycliffe also walked out.

### DISGUSTED

The strikes started after shop stewards met regional NUTGW officials in Sunderland on 10th November. The officials told them to take a 4.5% pay offer to their members to vote on, and then to wait for the outcome of a national vote, expected the following week. The workers were so disgusted by their own union officials' recommendations for them to

take such a small rise in pay that they decided to take immediate action of their own.

### MANAGEMENT FORCED

By November 13th the strike had forced management to offer to meet to discuss an improved offer. This however was dependent upon a return to work, so the workers rejected it.

### FULL-TIME TWIT

The full-time NUTGW officials have been openly on the side of management. They have accepted management's offer and on Nov. 12th Ron Bales, regional "organiser", said, "We wish those people on strike would return to work as normal and await the outcome of the national vote on the pay claim which has been recommended by National Executive."

One striker at Howdon commented,

"What right have our officials got to tell us to take such a small pay rise while they are driving around in £10,000 cars paid for out of our union dues."

### UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT

Union officials were "unavailable for comment," and the National Executive instructed regional officials to attempt to stop any strike action. After the workers walked out officials were told to have no more contact with them, as their action was "unofficial!"



### RANK AND FILE CONTROL

This led to a situation where the rank and file strikers organised picketing rotas, negotiated directly with management and handled any publicity with no interference by union bureaucrats. Strikers visited each others' picket lines and shop stewards were in constant contact. A shop steward outside the 600 strong Howdon factory, which had a picket of nearly 100 on Nov. 17th told us, "At this factory we are solid. We are working closely with strikers at other factories, and although we have never been involved in anything like this before we intend to see it through together."

### BUREAUCRATS' SABOTAGE

The behaviour of the union's full-time officials was predictable considering the non-action and eventual attempted sabotage of the strike at Contracts Ltd, S. Shields, which ended earlier this year. Ron Bales, who condemned the current strikes, fabricated a witch-hunt against the Contracts strikers and their supporters, and used the right-wing local press to spread lies about "trotskyist infiltrators." This backstabbing action by Bales has paid off for him, because many of the current strikers were suspicious of officers of solidarity for fear of what they read

in the press about Contracts. However many of the Contracts workers moved to J&J Fashions after their strike, so were well-prepared for Bales' activities in betraying his class.

### CONTRACTS WATCHING

Meanwhile the management at Contracts Ltd (which is just down the road from one of the J&J factories) kept a close eye on the situation. Although they are not in the British Clothing Industrial Association, and their workers have not officially got union recognition, they have admitted that they are concerned about the outcome. In December the

Contracts workers will be putting in a pay claim for 10%.

### WILDCAT VICTORY

The managements of the companies involved caved in on Nov. 17th and agreed to the strikers demands over pay and annual holidays. The strikers are now back at work, having their own militancy and determination to thank for their success. We can only guess at what the union bureaucrats would have done if they had control of defending and furthering the interests of the workers, but as it turns out the principles of rank and file control have proved once again to be the best instruments in the service of the industrial worker.

## ANARCHO - SYNDICALIST MONTHLY

**inside:**

PUBLIC ORDER BILL, HEALTH SERVICE, CP SCHEMES, NISSAN, TEACHERS, MINERS' CAMPAIGN, HOWARD DORIS, WAPPING, APARTHEID, SPANISH SAILORS, AMERICAN UNIONS, METROCENTRE, HEALTH & SAFETY, REVIEW, DHSS

# T.R.S.

## EDITORIAL

Capitalism in its modern form exploits workers twice, once at the point of production where profit is squeezed out of the labour process, and again at the point of consumption, where workers buy the products they themselves and others' have produced at grossly-inflated prices. The interests of workers are further harmed twice, through unhealthy and dangerous conditions at work and by the effects on people of consumer goods that are produced without any consideration for the needs or well being of the consumer. So modern capitalism entails a many faceted and systematic process which operates to the detriment of the mass of the people in every way. Materially workers are paid far less than the profit to be gained from the products of their labour to secure 'super profits' for the employer. People are deceitfully persuaded to pay over the actual worth (in production terms) for the fulfilment of their needs as dictated by the voracious appetite for profit of the capitalist. Conditions at work, or even when unemployed due to the inability to 'purchase' a healthy existence, mean bad health and severe psychological damage. Consumption is equally unhealthy, firstly because the goods themselves are dangerous to health in many different ways (such as the use of additives and colourings in food on sale etc) but also because we are beguiled by advertising, fashion and the glossy packaging to ignore real needs and instead to buy what the capitalists want to - our interests are not part of their motives. At present capitalists are consolidating their capacity to maximise profits through the use of the state. The increasing use of computers and other means of efficient surveillance and control are combined with tools such as an expanded police force (expanded both in numbers, national co-ordination and areas of responsibility) and the Police and Public Order Bills, try to ensure that resistance is fragmented and unable to grow or achieve anything lasting. Reliance on changing public opinion and superficial passive opposition is a fashion that fits well the psychology of consumerism. We choose among an array of consumer goods (paid for on many occasions through plastic cards and credit) that are more or less the same and equally worthless or unhealthy. Likewise we select issues to be angry about (but not do anything about) from a range of fads presented by experts in the media. In the workplace the same trend is apparent - union bureaucrats protect their position through diverting real issues of the workforce into non-existent causes and through making sure that the boat is not rocked. Non of these tactics make any difference, and in fact fit our rulers' interests perfectly.

To reverse this trend there is a need to convince people of the utter sterility and pointlessness of the consumer society and its illusory attractions. More than this we need to explain how damaging it is to ordinary people from all points of view - physical and mental health, the waste of our lives in the pursuit of fashion, and the progressive erosion of the conditions of our existence. Moreover the entrenchment of consumer society can make the possibility to change things more remote. Partly this is because the real forces controlling society have become more invisible to us as we focus our attention on the surface level of things, on superficial appearances. Once this spell is broken the system can be seen for what it is - a edifice designed to promote the material interests of the rich and the power interests of politicians and bureaucrats. Collective direct action to effect change makes all the difference - by workers in rank and file control of disputes in their workplaces and by communities pressure groups not relinquishing control of their struggles to experts, local government, charity workers or other outsiders. This makes the difference to people involved in small scale struggles and holds out the hope that links will be made between struggles so that rank and file and mass control of social revolution can be worked towards. Those resisting all over the world, can show us the way forward. For example, striking miners realise that their previous existence paying HP for the video etc was not what life was about. Collective action, mutual aid and solidarity made life meaningful for them, not the fantasy fodder of Metrocentres or American soaps. By using positive aspects of human social life, rather than emphasising money, we can begin to challenge the system that denies us our basic material and social dignity.

If you would like to make any comment on the Syndicalist, contact the Tyneside Revolutionary Syndicalists for more information or would like to contribute to the paper both financially and with information please contact;

THE SYNDICALIST,  
c/o Tyneside Free Press,  
5, Charlotte Square,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne,  
NE1 4XF.

If you would like to see the continuation of the Syndicalist we urge you to make a financial donation immediately. The paper is produced on a shoestring and your support is needed. Please make all cheques and Postal Orders out to;

THE SYNDICALIST

The 'Syndicalist' publishes news, reports and information on industrial disputes, rank and file workers organisation and trade union activity and community and social issues on Tyneside and elsewhere.

If there is something happening in your workplace, community or trade union that you feel people should know about please write to us with details if possible an address or telephone number where we can contact you shall be of help. All communications will be treated with complete confidentiality

# Abolishing union & civil rights

The new 'Public Order Bill' is yet another attempt by the present government into illegalising trade union and civil rights. Our right to organise industrially and in our local communities will be all but taken away when the new 'Bill' restrictions are introduced.

## SOCIAL CONTROL

Yet again we see how blatantly obvious the true use of the British Police Force really is - as social control. Demonstrating our feelings on certain subjects through the streets of the towns and cities to gain support for our class in struggle will be criminalised or under the complete influence of the police.

## POLICE DECISION

The intention to hold demonstrations, marches and the like must first be discussed with the police and seven days notice given. They have the right to accept the march or disallow it. Time, route, numbers in attendance and duration can all be decided upon by the police officer in charge, or at the scene at the time - The most senior officer present.

## BANNED DEMOS

The 'Bill' states, "A person who takes part in a public procession the holding of which he knows is prohibited by virtue of an order is guilty of an offence", the 'Bill' goes on to say, "A Constable may arrest without warrant anyone he reasonably

suspects is committing an offence". Spontaneous demonstrations are outlawed and anyone on a public demonstration is potentially breaking the law. We are all individually responsible for taking part in such events. Organisers of demonstrations that have been banned etc are personally subject to 3 months imprisonment and/or a £1,000 fine. Others taking part can be fined up to £400. Obviously and attempt to deter anyone from taking part.

## PUBLIC DISORDER

The most dangerous sections of the 'Bill' refer to the question of riot and so called civil liberties. Obviously the new type of restrictions and actions that can be taken were desperately needed by the government and the police during the 1984/85 miners strike and more recently at Wapping, if workers were to be completely tied. The 'Bill' points out that all gatherings may be stopped, reduced in both duration in time and numbers if, "It may result in serious public disorder, serious damage to property or serious disruption to the life of the community". Of course almost all

workers picket lines and marches have this potential when the police are around. We only have to look back to the police riots at Orgreave, the miners own communities and presently at Wapping to understand that the police will use this law against almost all workers taking strike action.

## BAN ON SOLIDARITY

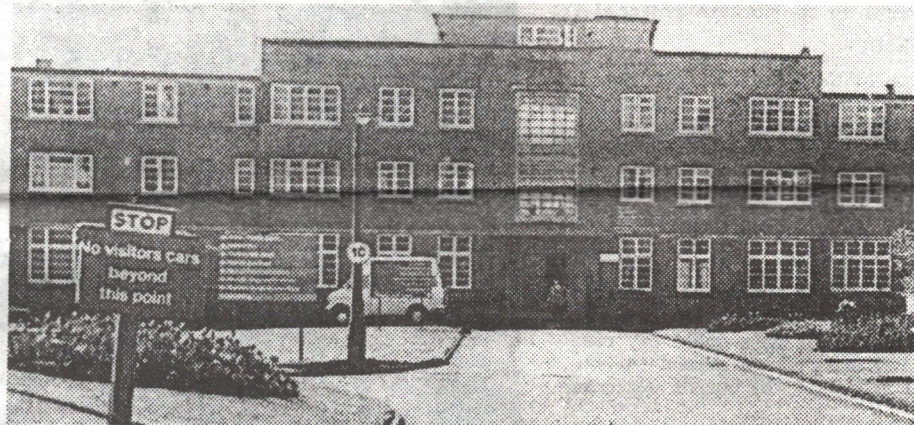
The 'bill' continues to state that if gatherings are called the legality will be determined for "The purpose of the persons organising it is the intimidation of others with a view to compelling them to an act they have the right not to do, or to do an act they have no right to do". As in the case above something the state would have liked to use in many industrial disputes. The basic fact of this section is that not only is secondary picketing outlawed by Anti trade union laws but the actual propogating of workers to unite to beat an employer will become a crime. Pickets of workplaces themselves will become illegal if not done in conjunction with the police demands, ie as ineffective as is possible.

## LIFE FOR 'RIOT'

A whole section in the 'Bill' is devoted to riot. As we will remember miners have been imprisoned for supposedly rioting after and during demonstrations. The new laws state that those found guilty of riot, determined by a group of as little as 12 and threatening violence, will be subject to prison terms up to life. Others found guilty of violent disorder, being in a group of at least 3, can face up to 5 years imprisonment. The state is now making its move to stop all those fighting for their rights. The blatant tightening up of anti trade union legislation through the 'Public Order Bill' must be seen as a direct attack on the working class. Now more than ever we must unite in solidarity to fight the employers and the state to secure our demands.

# TENDER ACTION

Health workers in the area have once again shown the utter contempt of plans for privatisation through industrial action.



QUEEN ELIZABETH

Throughout October action has been taken over catering and cleaning contracts which local health authorities plan to put out to tender. As has been made quite clear in the past, private contractors drive the standards through the floor in pursuit of making a profit from services needed in health care. However, the action over the past weeks has been, not necessarily against the private contractors, but through the intentions of hospital management to drop standards with their in house tenders.

## NOT TOLERATED

Both COHSE and NUPE have made it clear that private operators will not be tolerated in hospitals, nor will the reduced service in 'In House'. As has been seen in the past the solidarity between health workers is very encouraging. Workers in different departments and hospitals have been taking action in support of their fellow comrades.

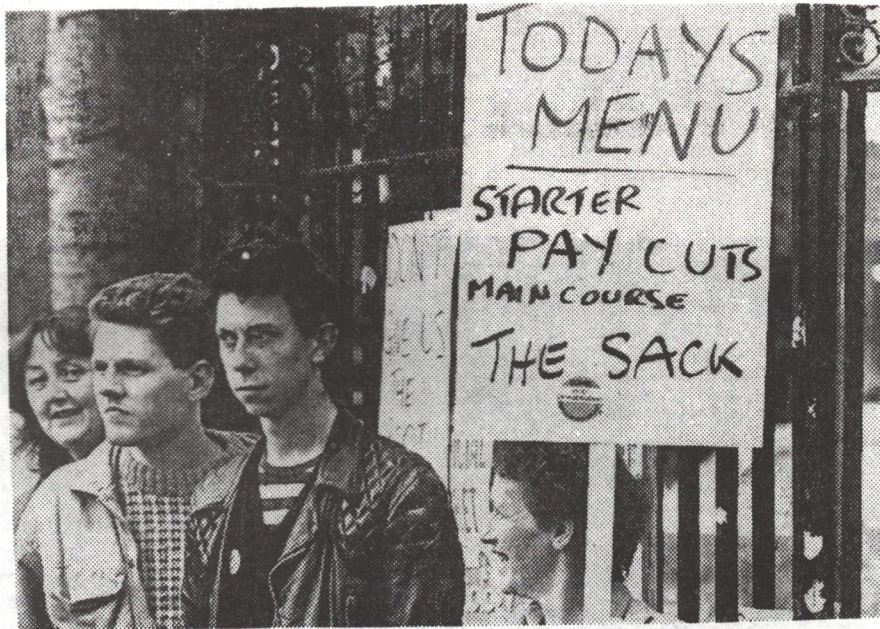
## SUPPORT FOR CLEANERS

The beginning of October saw Gateshead's Queen Elizabeth Hospital hit by cleaners for over six days. As the dispute progressed, support for the striking cleaners grew from strength to strength with first storekeepers, porters and cleaners from

the Health Authority Head Quarters, soon to be followed by telephonists, hospital supply staff, laundry workers and health authority drivers. Two days later action was being taken by catering workers at the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital, Royal Victoria Infirmary and the Wylam hospital all of which are in the RVI group. As in the above case, support for striking catering workers was very forthcoming. Firstly with cleaners coming out in support then the Dental Hospital Catering staff taking action.

## TENDER DELAY

After six days, hospital management agreed to delay plans on tender until further discussion had taken place. However, workers have made it quite clear that strike action has not been abandoned, but rather suspended awaiting further developments. COHSE have stated to hospital management in the region that if private contractors are accepted at hospitals there will be "All out industrial war".



R.V.I. PICKET

# TOP OF THE CLASS

The school-type report shown has been adopted by Community Programme Agencies in the region, supposedly to assess the ability of workers on the schemes in order to provide a reference on completion of their service. The reports are filled in on a monthly basis by heads of individual sections. From my position within one of these agencies I have seen at first hand the absurdities and the deviousness of this system.

## DOWNGRADED

The absurdities are clear when, for example, certain bosses fill in these reports never having seen the staff involved carrying out their work. One particular boss consistently downgraded a person, not because of anything to do with his work, but because he had a

criminal record. This boss, who was an ex-serviceman, saw it as his personal crusade to oust anyone left of hard-right from the establishment, and used marks in the assessment instead of bullets to perform this task. However it is the cunning thought put in by MSC staff and managers which is more worrying. Since the "reporting system" started certain workers have complained about their marks, quoting fellow workers as not being as worthy as themselves. Others have thrown themselves into their tasks with new fervour to gain higher marks while some curry favour with the bosses. The aims of the scheme are patently obvious - to divide the workforce - to encourage the subservience of the workforce - and to reduce any anti-establishment activity

## MONTHLY ASSESSMENT

ASSESSED BY.....DATE.....  
SCHEME TITLE.....  
NAME.....  
JOB TITLE.....  
DATE APPOINTED.....

TIMEKEEPING	
ABILITY	
WILLINGNESS	
INITIATIVE	
ATTITUDE	
CONDUCT	
ATTENDANCE	

Please Rate on a scale of 1-5 items which are applicable. 5 = HIGHEST. 1 = LOWEST.

TRAINING UNDERTAKEN DURING MONTH:-

FURTHER TRAINING REQUIRED:-

GENERAL COMMENTS:-

# Not so new plan at Nissan

The latest developments or trade union restriction at the Washington-based Nissan plant is something that many trade unionists have expected ever since the company decided to move to Tyne & Wear with the help of millions in development grants.

union officials are nothing but thugs paid to keep the workforce in line.

The total control of the unions in the Japanese car factories stretches further to control on an industrial level. Workers have to agree to be a part of the company, and anything felt (by management)

unionism in the long run. The long drawn-out interviews to whittle out anyone thought to be remotely "militant" is standard practice in their factories throughout the world.

## NO UNION INFLUENCE

The lies behind the lucrative payment schemes and offer of thousands of jobs is simply a ploy in a complicated tactic to rid the company of union influence as quietly and quickly as possible, and to ensure that no-one within the factories stands up for the rights of workers - whose interests are not the same as those of the company.

## MANAGEMENT FINAL SAY

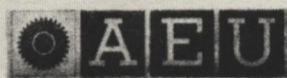
Nissan at Washington plan the introduction of new technology which will in effect reduce the already minimal manning levels in the future. The Company Council will become the order of the day and it alone will have sole negotiating rights. The council will be made up of joint worker and management-appointed representatives. Management will not only have the final say on who has the majority on the Council and the decisions taken, but also in effect will control who actually sits on the Council.

## NO STRIKE AGREEMENTS

Nissan and their ilk have always been in pursuit of "super-profits" and demand the total subordination of the workforce in order to achieve their objectives. They are well on their way now that they have no-strike agreements, complete flexibility and compulsory overtime.

## NO RIGHT

We must learn our lessons from the Nissan fiasco. No union body has the right to negotiate away the hard-won rights of workers to any employer. No-one has the right to sell our right to take industrial action and no-one has the right to sell the future of the working class in the area to capitalists such as Nissan for the "guarantee" of better wages, conditions and extra work.



The trade union bureaucrats such as those of the AEU need to be fought as fervently as we would oppose the bosses of companies like Nissan, so that both are fought, if necessary, when our interests are so blatantly being threatened.

# STAFF ROOM CONFUSION

As negotiations on teachers pay continue, there is much confusion and discontent in the staffrooms. While this is the result of deliberate government policy the biggest union, the National Union of Teachers, is contributing to the chaos. All members receive is circulars with information on the Coventry agreement, but union representatives are kept in ignorance.

## COVENTRY 'PROPOSAL'

In North Tyneside recently a union meeting was held at which a speaker from the National Executive told union members that the Coventry agreement was not, after all, an agreement, but only a "proposal". It seems strange that every NUT circular since the deal was made referred to the Coventry "agreement".

## OPPOSITION

The Executive were forced to change their tune about Coventry after a massive groundswell of opposition from rank and file members, who saw it as a sell-out. Yet ironically, the most influential opposition has been from Heads of schools and departments who see a threat in the form of the proposed reduction in pay differentials between higher and lower paid teachers. Also the agreement proposes a less hierarchical system of duties and responsibilities, many of which would be carried out on a rota basis.

## NEW DEAL

As we go to press, the unions have made a deal following over a week of talks. Predictably, information is scarce. The talks were overshadowed by the threat of government legislation on teachers' pay, causing the unions to be desperate for an agreement. The current mood has generally been in favour of more action in the high schools, and it remains to be seen if Rank and File teachers will accept the deal once information starts to come out.

# DON'T FORGET WAPPING!

This dispute has tended to be ignored or forgotten about by many people - perhaps because it doesn't seem as 'glorious' as the Miner's Strike. However, the fight continues, with the situation changing all the time. Attendance at the marches varies every week, from 200 to 5,000 or more. The marches mainly consist of printers trying to get their jobs back, local residents trying to get their streets back from the police, occasional visitors (such as the Jarrow marchers recently), and the inevitable string of Marxist paper-sellers trying to build their parties before going home early to bed.

## FRICION

There is no obvious or inevitable outcome to this dispute. The strikers face many obstacles to winning however. Not least among these obstacles are their own Trade Union leaders who are continually frustrating effective rank and file action. Friction between the union bureaucrats and the rank and file could be seen on the Nov. 5th march. There, police were attacking pickets because of fireworks being thrown. Instead of bringing up the bulk of the picket to help, the organisers were calling for a compromise with the police. Union officials are also trying to limit publicity about the dispute. This has led to printers organising their own with help from supporters (for example the excellent 'Picket' newsheet).

## SET AN EXAMPLE

Resistance to Murdoch is still strong. Four of his 'final offers' have been overwhelmingly turned down. The feeling on the ground is that they have to set an example to other printers on the Mirror, Telegraph, and the whole of Fleet Street.

## SOLIDARITY & SUPPORT

It is not just News International that is moving to Wapping - Fleet Street is also evacuating to the docklands. Although very little is heard about the strike and, after 10 months, many people feel the printers have lost, support is still essential. The fight is still definitely there, and many printers believe they can still beat Murdoch.

It's our duty to help in any way we can. Support them by attending the marches, or sending messages of support/donations to the strikers. Also, it is essential to raise the issues in union branches, workplaces, and the community.

## SUPPORT SACKED PRINTERS DON'T LET MURDOCH WIN!

Marches every Wed. and Sat. at 8.30pm, meeting at Tower Hill. Donations and messages of support to: 'PICKET', c/o Housmans Books, 5, Caledonian Road, London N1.

The Nissan Bluebird. From those inscrutable chaps in the East. (North East.)



THE FIRST BLUEBIRDS ARE NOW ROLLING OFF THE LINE IN BRITAIN. NISSAN

## DEVIOUS PLANS

The plans of the car company for the Washington plant were a little more devious than operations opened up in Tennessee, USA and in other parts of the world, though many realised that the eventual outcome of the destruction of trade union rights and hard-won conditions would be the same unless the company was stopped industrially. Alas this was not on the cards with the single union contracts and the negotiating away of rights by the AEU.

## "YELLOW UNIONS"

For many years the Japanese labour movement has been dogged by the infamous "yellow unions" - obviously much-favoured by companies such as Nissan and Toyota. The "yellow unions" are completely controlled by management and so-called

to be in contravention of agreements or to be damaging to the company is dealt with severely.

## TREATED AS TRAITORS

Dissent in the militaristic car lines is one such element inside factories that is not tolerated. Those rebelling against the system are harassed, victimised and on occasions physically assaulted - treated as traitors.



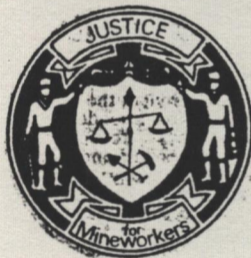
It is easy to see that Nissan planned to rid their Washington factory of trade

# JUSTICE FOR MINERS: Campaign gains momentum

The campaign for the Justice of Miners sacked and jailed during the year long pit strike continues with a big push to build up the 'Solidarity Fund' for over the xmas. The Solidarity fund at present has all but run dry while there are still 468 sacked miners nationally 80 of which are in the area.

## SOLIDARITY FUND

Events to raise cash and appeals for the Solidarity Fund will hopefully take place all over the North East. Saturday November 15th saw the Northern section of the 'Justice for Mineworkers'



campaign holding collections and petitioning at the Monument in Newcastle City Centre, where the response from the public was extremely encouraging, hopefully

more of these events will take place in the near future.

Below we include the text of a leaflet produced by the N.E. Justice Campaign:

The NUM has worked hard to win back the jobs of every single victimised miner. We shall not rest until our remaining victims are back in their jobs. Meanwhile our victimised members have to find enough money on which to live. Many have families. We must support them financially, while we struggle to win back their jobs. For over a year we have managed to support our sacked members. Now, unless we can ensure a large regular supply of money to the Miners Solidarity Fund, it will soon run out. It is completely separate from NUM Funds.

The N.E. Justice Campaign has in the past and will in the future be organising fund raising events and public meetings. For more information please contact:

North East Justice for Mineworkers Campaign, 26, The Avenue, Durham.

Tel: (0385) 61375.

If you wish a sacked miner to address your works committee/branch/organisation contact the above address.

RELEASE THE JAILED MINERS	
<b>DURHAM</b>	<b>YORKSHIRE</b>
JOHN MATTERSON: Murton - Two years and three months youth custody from December 1985.	MARTIN HODGSON: Wakefield - Three year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.
GARY BLACKMORE: 19 - Altray, attempted not guilty, 2 years Youth Custody (not a miner, but arrested during the course of the strike)	MIGEL HODGSON: Wakefield - Three year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.
<b>SOUTH WALES</b>	PAUL WRIGHT: Seville - 18 month sentence. G76424. Kirkham Jail, Frickleton road, Preston Lancs.
DEAN HANCOCK: Oakdale - Eight year sentence. Gairne maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicesters.	CLIVE THOMPSON: Frickley - Three year sentence from April 1985. G79348. Ackington Jail, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 1XF.
RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr - Eight year sentence. Gairne maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicesters.	<b>N. DERBYSHIRE</b>
<b>KENT</b>	DAVID GAUNT: Shirebrook - 2 1/2 year sentence from December 1984. E71037. A Wing, Millers Park Youth Custody Centre, Dordington Road, Wellingborough.
TERRY FRENCH: Bethshanger - Four year sentence from January 1985. B73383, Weald Wing, Maidstone jail, Kent.	

Durham mechanics are continuing their campaign of industrial action over the four issues of cuts at Seaham Colliery, the wage deal (now accepted), conciliation procedures and sacked miners. Action so far has been taken at Murton, Westoe, Tursdale workshops, Wearmouth and Vane Tempest.

# FIT UP AT HOWARD DORIS

## MERGER

Three months before the John Howard group was taken over by the receiver it merged

the river from the Howard Doris yard. This is not at all surprising given that the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ronald Hugh Peet, of the John Howard Group is also on the Board of Directors of AMEC the parent company of William Press

## SCOTLAND

Finally the order was given to a Scottish based company. Obviously this was due to the attitude of workers from Howard Doris who felt that if they could not continue the work on the Conoco order then nobody should have it, the closeness of the two factories and links there may have been between the two workforces would have had a major part in William Press losing to the Scottish firm.

## RESTRAINT

Finally; the added bonus for William Press receiving the work was the fact that the workforce there had just accepted a two year wage restraint..... Another coincidence we suppose!



Research into the company has proved very interesting reading and backs up the view that the actual takeover by the receivers was planned in order to shed the increasingly militant workforce at Howard Doris.

with the P.W.S. International Company, this gave the new company a combined brokerage income in excess of £15,000,000. One of the first companies that showed a major interest in the unfinished Conoco oil platform was William Press just along

As has been reported in past issues of the Syndicalist, the Gateshead Unemployed Action Group along with other Trades Unionists have been raising funds for the South African Trades Unions.

#### BROAD - BASED

Recently GUAG and the Gateshead Trades Council have come together to form a broad based organisation known as the Gateshead Trades Unionists Against Apartheid.

The organisation aims to join together with other workers in the area to raise the issues of the South African regime and combat the Apartheid regime in all its forms.

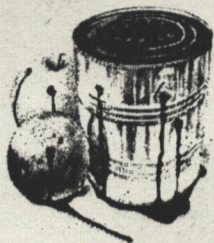
#### TRADE UNION POWER

The group has many demands including the blacking of all South African goods, the imposing of our own Trade union sanctions against South Africa as well as setting up direct links between workers organisations in the country and in South Africa. Mick Donnelly, an unemployed shipyard

## Action on Apartheid

worker told us, "the trade union movement

**THIS IS APARTHEID  
DON'T BUY IT**



**BOYCOTT SOUTH AFRICAN GOODS**

has actually got more power than the

government to impose sanctions. A blockade of the docks and GPO would bring that country to its knees." He went on to say, "Britain imports £40 million worth annually of South African coal alone, which should give you some idea of the scale of British imports."

#### SOLIDARITY MARCH

November 8th saw workers from the Doncaster area raising this valid point. Miners from Hatfield Main colliery joined with local Anti Apartheid campaigners in a march past local coal import wharfs.

G.T.U.A.A. plan to hold public meetings in the near future in the Gateshead area, though as yet no date has been confirmed. It is hoped from such meetings that many workers will come together to fight all aspects of Apartheid in the area. For more information on the future activities of the GTUAA and details of forthcoming public meetings and events please contact:

M. Renwick. Tel: 4771109.

**AMERICAN UNIONS:  
WORKERS  
US  
BUREAUCRATS**

Over a very long period of time American shipyard workers have been faced with an escalating fight with their own union leadership, non moreso with the fight of Local #61 in Pittsburgh. An attempt to smash militancy of the Local branch has gained momentum over the last few months.

#### BARRICADE

Local #61 demand their right to complete local autonomy from the national union and its corrupt officials. They demand that they should always remain controlled by the rank and file of workers, in response to this attitude the President of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America, Arthur Batson, ordered that Local #61 be placed under a trusteeship and the local officers removed. Four days later on September 13th Local #61 rank and file members along with the officers, including their President Darrel Becker, barricaded themselves inside the union hall to prevent the takeover attempt by the national union.

#### ELECTION CHALLENGE

One of the reasons for the haste of this move was in an attempt to prevent Darrel Becker from challenging Arthur Batson for national President, this was to be the first election in twenty years. Becker had been involved in the fight to save Neville Island Shipbuilding yard from closure by Dravo Corporation in 1983. The leadership of the union had acted not unlike the UFCW in the Hormel dispute, withdrawing all support for the strike action and withdrawing benefits. The strike, as in the case at Hormel, continued regardless of the union leaders action.

#### TURNED AWAY

The 11th October saw the trustee appointed by the shipbuilders union being turned away from the occupied union offices. Utilities have been shut off on the orders of the leadership though workers are determined that their Local Branch of the union will not be wound up by bureaucrats and their fight for union democracy, rank and file control and local autonomy will prevail.

#### REFORMIST UNION

The Syndicalist wish to point out that we do not necessarily support workers running for positions such as national President in reformist union organisations. However the fight of workers for their right to control their local branch is a struggle which all workers must support.

#### NAMPU

Meanwhile the dispute at Hormel in Austin Minnesota continues while the move to form an independent rank and file controlled Meatpackers union grows steadily.

The North American Meatpackers Union (NAMPU) was organised when the UFCW pulled out of the Hormel dispute. This organisation is gaining support from all over the country. The shaking off of the bureaucratic structure of the modern trade unions in America has led to the NAMPU demanding several things from this rank and file controlled union body;

1. Officers may only serve 3 years and they must return to work before they can run for another office.
2. Officers will receive equal pay to the average of the rank and file they represent.
3. Officers are subject to immediate recall at any time during their 3 year term.
4. All decisions will be democratically made by the rank and file in autonomous locals.

The Syndicalist will no doubt be carrying further information on the developments of both the NAMPU and shipbuilders Local #61 in future issues.

Letter of support and donations should be sent to:

Local #61,  
Union Defence Fund,  
5087, Elmwood drive,  
Pittsburgh,  
Pa. 15227.  
USA.

Hormel Strikers,  
United Support Group,  
P.O. BOX 396,  
Austin,  
MN 55912.  
USA.

Workers locked out at Hormel still need your support. Boycott all Hormel goods, these include 'SPAM'.

## COLLABORATION WITH APARTHEID



Neatening up: South Africa's first black Defence Force battalion, the 21st Lenasia Battalion, at a city hall parade to receive 'freedom of the right of entry to Johannesburg'

Ever since the nineteenth century wars against the Zulu nation, whites in South Africa have used other blacks to crush their enemies. The modern equivalent can be seen in the various arms and tactics of the SA police today.

#### LAW "ENFORCEMENT"

Recently it was decided to recruit 6,000 special (black) constables to be deployed under the authority of the SA police. A further 6,000 blacks called "law-enforcement officers" are used as council policeman in black townships. Both these groups function as auxiliaries to the "official" SA police, whose present total strength is 48,000. Recent plans forecast a growth to 86,000 by 1994. This is an "upward revision" of the 1984 plans which only talked of 60,000 by that date.

More interesting is the composition of the SAP. At the moment 40% are black, 10% are coloured and indian and the rest white. The increase in recruitment will mean that the proportion of black officers will rise.

#### EXCLUDED

Excluded from these figures are the 12,000 council policeman and special constables, 18-20,000 "homeland" police,

and an unknown number of blacks in the SA Armed Forces. These figures also fail to take into account the support of reactionary groups such as the "elders" in the townships and shanty towns whose actions are aimed at suppressing discontent and the maintenance of traditional influence which in SA today cannot protect the black population.

#### LESS OBVIOUS

The reasons why the SA internal security forces are being strengthened, and in the particular ways that this is being done, are clear. By using blacks to boss blacks, the white SA state hopes to prolong its life-span by making white oppression less obvious. The recent upsurge in struggle caught the state by surprise. It had to use white troops to quell disorders, as the SAP is too weak to control any strong upsurges in black resistance - especially in the townships such as Soweto and Sharpeville.

To suppress resistance in the townships, police are now being recruited from poverty-stricken rural areas - an all too familiar tactic of ruling classes worldwide (combining low costs of employment with the other advantages to the state). The council policemen in South Africa have already gained a "shoot first,

ask questions later" reputation.

#### FIGHTING CAPITALISM

However, this strategy may yet backfire on the Afrikaaners. They hope to be able to last out in their laagers for a long time. But what they are unintentionally doing is forcing the black working class to question not only white oppression, but also any system that allows any oppression, whether by whites or blacks. As reported in previous issues of this paper, many black trades unionists put the problem clearly - that it is capitalism they are fighting - not just the form of capitalism that is called apartheid.

#### INTENSIFYING

The SA state's "upward revision" of the numbers of the internal security forces implies that the fightback is intensifying. In townships and workplaces ordinary people face blunt and brutal repression. This makes it imperative that the working classes in the UK (and Western Europe) make a clear stand. Only by directly challenging apartheid can we hope to achieve anything. We cannot rely on governments or leaderships to boycott trade, we must try to do it ourselves.

and were unable to leave themselves until the Sökkori left its berth.

The SLMM held a demonstration in Madrid protesting the fate of the Sökkori and the attacks on the Merchant Marine by the Socialist government. After four weeks the bank finally agreed to pay the crew's wages and to keep them and the Sökkori in their pay.

Used as we are to long losing strikes it was a pleasure to see these workers win their dispute. On the Sökkori's last night in Hull there was a party held on board for the Hull dockers and Trades Council Disputes Committee. The committee presented the crew with mementoes from the miners strike and the crew gave their supporters in Hull a framed plate of the Sökkori.

## HULL: victory for Spanish sailors

The Sökkori is a 35,000 tonne Spanish ship from the port of Bilbao. On the 4th of October Hull dockers noticed large banners in Spanish, Basque and English hanging from the ship which had docked in Hull, saying "On Strike, no pay for 5 months".

#### BANKRUPT BOSSES

The dockers investigated and found out that the crew of 29 hadn't been paid for 8 months! At the end of their tether they went on strike but only after the ship had loaded up with 10,000 tonnes of grain. The owners of the ship had gone bankrupt and so the officers and sailors, all of whom were in the SLMM (Free Union of the Merchant Marine) put pressure on the bank

who now owned the ship to pay them and their families back in Bilbao who were reduced to living off the charity of parents etc. (since Felipe Gonzales' socialist government has dismantled the Social Security system).

#### SOLIDARITY

Great friendship arose between the crew and the Hull dockers and the Trades Council Disputes Committee. The dockers raised over £300 for the sailors, and since they controlled the port's lock gates there was little chance of the strikers being turfed out by a scab crew. Help was also at hand from a second Spanish ship whose crew were also in the SLMM. They donated food to the strikers

# THE REAL METROCENTRE

## METRO CENTRE MADNESS

The £60 million Metro Centre has opened in Gateshead. A mammoth monolith to mammon sprawling over 115 acres. The U.K.'s largest ever design and construction project, says the 'Building Trades Journal' promising it will be "one of the largest shopping complexes in the world" after the £35m third phase opens next year.

Shop fitting contracts worth millions more have been completed. One store, 'House of Frazers', cost £11m alone for fixtures and displays - the little knick-knacks of soft selling. Soon there will be 200 retail units, a 10 screen cinema, and 'Space City' - a "concept extraordinaire, where computer and space buffs can play all day". And there's 1.3m people living within a 30 minute car drive away. The superlatives in publicity hype never cease.

## DEPRESSED

But yes, it is in Gateshead. Hard along the cold, dark muddy banks of the Tyne. One of the countries hardest hit towns. Unemployment and housing problems hitting everyone. But this is 'Enterprise Zone' territory. No planning restrictions; no rates - just rip off and boom, your fortunes made.

The Cinderella dream world developers are going to turn into queues, like that in the Askew-Riverside area of town where one in two young people are unemployed into buying queues. Don't make me laugh.

The economic gloom in the town is bad. Even when you get a wage packet it's a miserly average £177.50 for a Tyne and Wear worker - nearly £15 below national average. One in three workers are reckoned to be 'low paid'. So it is not surprising that average weekly spending is lower than elsewhere. Households are amongst the least likely to have a telephone, washer etc. Car ownership is the lowest in England. Less is spent on food, fuel, light and power than anywhere in the U.K..

And they built "one of the largest shopping complexes in the world". It has got to be a joke.

## MOANING MINNIES NOT ALLOWED

In the north Metro Centre has joined Nissan as a non-speak. At least a 'non-moan-speak'. If we are to get more jobs, more prosperity, more of everything then a good image is all important!

So if the Metro Centre millions couldn't be spent on housing construction, (with 6,670 households accepted by local authorities as homeless in the north during 1984 and only 2,800 council homes built across the region that year, there are massive housing lists), then was there anything else in it for local workers.

## JOBS, JOBS, JOBS

Well there will be 6,000 shopworkers at the new site. Of course many will just be making others redundant across the river in Newcastle City centre as stores move out of town to the rate free 'Enterprise Zone', or cut back on staff as their trade falls. Already many stores are crying for rate rebates to match the profit falls.

## LIFE ON STRIKE

**REVIEW:** "A Year of Our Lives: Hatfield Main, a colliery in the great coal strike of 1984/85."

Compiled and narrated by David John Douglas - Hooligan Press (BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX). £3.50.

This is the best thing I've read on the miners strike - its disgraceful that David Douglas had such a job finding a publisher (and a shame about the price). However, as a documentary of all aspects of a community's response to the strike, this book is invaluable.

The compiler has added a few pieces of commentary here and there for the sake of continuity, but virtually all of the text was written by the men, women and children of Dunscroft, Stainforth, Thorne and Moorends (near Doncaster).

In a marvellous mixture of matter-of-factness the intense emotion members of the community describe in their own words, their activities and feelings about all aspects of life during the strike. They do not just talk about the picketing and the conflict with the police and scabs but also about what their growing solidarity and support from outside meant

to them. Also the contributors don't hold back from criticising certain tendencies among strikers and others - for example in apathy, complainers who did nothing themselves, the sexism that became more obvious to women sharing their experiences in the support groups. This makes the accounts of the positive things sound much more real, and credible, not like the effects of the rose-coloured spectacles sometimes worn by outsiders. The sense of politicisation and class consciousness emerging stronger than ever from the strike is conspicuous, even among the children, exposed as they were to the insane sadism of the paramilitary police in August and November 1984.

Apart from all this the book gives interesting and useful accounts of the food kitchens, the womens support groups, the experiences of delegates seeking support in Britain and abroad, scab watch squads and logging gangs, the strike committee and the ups and downs of picketing, and much more, including some poems. This is how such events should be recorded, giving deep insight into the nature and possibilities of working class communities in this country today.



One major store, British Homes Stores will be paying nearly £450,000 a year rent for its prestige place. But its rate free until 1992.

It plans to take £10 million through the tills in the first year. Employing 180 on opening day, jobs will first rise by another thirty for the xmas rush before falling back to 160 in the spring. So redundancies are already built in.

## CHECK OUTS - A RISKY BUSINESS

Cashiers at store check-outs live dangerously, and late nights and longer hours will add more hazards, claims the North East workers watchdog, TUSIU.

According to the Newcastle based Trade Union Studies Information Unit there is going to be little comfort for the Metro Centre workers, and they could be joining others who are at risk of serious health problems.

Already a West German social ministry investigation has found more than half of 50,000 cashiers suffering from minor heart and stomach complaints. Nearly all of them sleep badly after concentrating for hours crouched over electronic tills. Weekends are their worst time as dozens of customers queue with loaded trolleys.

One cashier complaining nightly of sharp pains in her shoulder had picked up as much as two tonnes of food with one hand during the day. TUSIU warns, "when price

USDAW, the shopworkers union which has more than a quarter million members in retailing, has already gained compensation for members suffering strain injuries. Tenosynovitis, epicondylitis (tennis elbow), Carpel tunnel syndrome and ganglion are some of the medical names for these repetitive strain injuries. Across British workplaces 2,000 workers every year get benefits for tenosynovitis alone.

"Health reports from across Europe already show, whoever may benefit from the new shopping centres like Gateshead, and the longer hours of opening, it will not be the workers", says the Trade Union Studies Information Unit.

## CAMPAIGNING

The units health and safety workers are planning to lobby the Metro Centre shops about working conditions. Within days complaints were coming in that shop-girls feared the walk to staff car parks, between 800 and 1100 yards from their workplaces along unlit roadways and malls. Taxi drivers are cashing in running them to the car park for 80 pence each.

Once the shops start closing there are no public 'phones to call home on. Nowhere dry to wait for a lift. No cafes for a quick snack except for a late night, rowdy Macdonalds.



recording is computerised, a scanner or wand reads the bar chart. New technology creates new ergonomic problems, and new physical and psychological working conditions. For example, neck and shoulder disorders are increasing".

The solution according to TUSIU, is to take a break once every hour. Presently shop law can leave workers on the job for up to six hours without a break.

And in the daytime there is no post office to cash child benefits and the like within two miles.

Tyne and Wear arguably has the most integrated public transport system in Europe. Fast high speed trains link up to regular buses to all parts...except the Metro Centre. Workers have been crowding onto the occasional early morning bus. Fights even breaking out when it was realised missing the bus would cost half an hours wages for lateness.

TUSIU, together with the Low Pay Unit and the Gateshead Law Centre have been running a mobile advice centre on nearby trading estates this summer. Now they are trying to plan a move for the campaign bus over to the new Metro Centre.

They hope to be able to question the new storeworkers, finding what problems need resolving and how they can come together to tackle them.

The above section was written by William Abberley a health and safety worker in the area.

The Syndicalist will be following the Metro Watch. Who knows, we might soon see a union officer taking an interest...but that's another story.

Meanwhile shopworkers facing hazards at work could usefully call TUSIU on Tyneside (091) 281-6087 for advice. Midlands region contact Birmingham HASAC health and safety centre on Birmingham (021) 236-0801 and for the London area, London Hazards Centre on London (01) 837-5605.

All offices listed above are manned throughout the day and could put you in touch with more local advice centres.

London Hazard plan to publish a booklet on the dangers of shopwork in April 1987.

## PRODUCTION BEFORE SAFETY

There is major cause for concern in Northern workplaces concerning the health and safety of workers. Generally almost all workplaces take for granted the health and safety and many dangers remain unchecked. Obviously a situation that suits employers fine and corners can be cut and running costs reduced. Even well known health hazards remain dangers as well as the more hidden and unnoticed and can in fact be, or become, potential death traps.

## FATALITIES

Every industry has its dangers. During 1985 128 workers died in construction, injuries were into their thousands. Fatalities and injuries continue to rise each year. Since 1981 published figures have grown by a staggering 28%.

Factory inspectors are only able to visit a workplace once every seven or eight years, due to their small numbers and the increasing number of small firms that need to be checked even this figure will soon be outdated.

Almost all workers are at risk in some form or other at work whether they work with VDU's or in a department store.

## CHEMICAL DANGER

One of the most obvious industries that holds dangers for workers is the Chemical industry. On the whole workers very rarely know what substances they are working with or the potential dangers. Workers are kept ignorant of the facts deliberately by the employers. Even under these type of extreme circumstances health and safety leaves a lot to be desired, the right protective clothing etc is not in all cases provided. Many chemicals used in British factories have been banned from use in many other parts of the world because of their extreme dangers to human health, workers seen almost expendable, or at least not worth wasting precious profits on.

## INHALING POISON

Recently, Thomas Swan Chemical Complex in Consett, was found to have had seventeen separate chemical accidents in the space of four weeks. In all cases workers received chemical burns. A short while before these accidents three workers had been detained in hospital after inhaling deadly fumes from the same company. Not only are chemicals a very real danger to those who work with them but also to the wider general public. This has been realised fullwell recently with two chemical accidents in our city streets.

## BAD SMELL AT BARLEY

On the 13th October a lorry carrying Liquid Phenol (a highly dangerous chemical) from ICI in Cleveland to Sterling Organics in Fawden was discovered to have leaked the chemical during part of its journey. The fumes of the chemical were so bad that people in the Barley Mow public house,



## AT THE SCENE OF LEAK

a roadside pub in Gateshead, had to be evacuated. The result of the leakage from the tanker was that over 50 people were taken to hospital after inhaling the chemical and the Tyne and Wear fire Brigade were forced to use 80% of its force. It is a fearful thing to think what would have happened if the spillage had of been bigger or two such accidents happened on the same day.

The other accident on November 8th resulted in 30 people being taken to hospital after a tanker carrying dangerous chemicals was involved in a head on crash. Chemical companies, or those who transport it have no obligation to tell anyone when and where chemicals are going to be transported through built up areas, it is not even known how many chemical lorries pass through our streets each week.

Production for profit, for which we have to pay the cost, really is a danger to our health!

# DHSS: FRAUD DUE AT GOSFORTH

The DHSS has begun a process of updating and refining its information storage and retrieval systems by the introduction of new technology. Computers are being brought into many areas of the Department both at local and central offices, with many repercussions on jobs and conditions as well as on the running of the system from the point of view of staff and claimants.

## COMPUTERISATION

A confidential report on the DHSS programme for the computerisation of its fraud section has come into our possession. This document goes into some detail on the change-over to computers at the national fraud section of the DHSS (RD6B branch) based at State House, Holborn, London. This programme has started already and is due to be in full operation by October 1987. On top of this the Department plans to extend the newly-computerised system into the RFLO's (Regional Fraud Liaison Offices) - among them one based at Arden House in Gosforth's Regent Centre.

So at some point in the next couple of years we can expect to see yet another refinement of the oppressive State apparatus directed against claimants to be installed in Newcastle. These moves are being made as secretly as possible, without any consultation with or even the knowledge of DHSS staff and their unions; and with a complete disregard for the interests of the people the DHSS is supposed to "serve" - the poor, the unemployed, the homeless and the low-paid.

## CENTRALISATION

The amount of money obtained by fraudulent means from the DHSS is a drop in the ocean compared to the tax and other financial fiddles perpetrated by the rich and middle classes, but governments always seem to be hell-bent on harassing and intimidating claimants - who are more vulnerable, defenceless and unorganised, having no access to clever accountants and lawyers in a system weighted anyway to the advantage of the well-off. One purpose of beefing up the DHSS fraud squads is to cause claimants to sign off - this saves money and reduces official unemployment figures. Already millions of pounds are saved because so many people who would be entitled to benefits do not claim. The "Restart" schemes and the deceitful "Are you available for work?" questionnaire reported in "the Syndicalist" nos. 8 & 9 are other sides to the government's strategy. The SCCU (Special Claims Control Units) and RBIT

(Regional Benefits Investigation Teams) and other DHSS fraud investigators have met stiff resistance from unemployed groups aided by DHSS staff around the country, and it was on the cards that a way round this problem would be sought. Now that all records will eventually be computerised it will be possible for fraud officers to gain access to information without so much risk of interference. Direct computer links between regional and central computer memory banks will be possible without the need physically to visit DHSS local offices and leaf through paper files. DHSS local staff have always been kept in ignorance about how information gained from them would be used (for example that it would help build up central files). This situation will now be aggravated as information would be available to central fraud teams by direct computer links unbeknownst to local staff. Although in theory the new system will involve reciprocal flows of information (eg regional offices able to gain access to files held centrally), the control over who has access will be decided centrally. Jealously-guarded central files will inevitably be kept from regional staff by giving them lower security clearance and restricted access.



SURVEILLANCE

## INVESTIGATIONS

The investigations carried out by DHSS branch RD6B fall into two categories. The first is called "Organised Fraud" and concerns stolen order books and giro forms, impersonation to gain payment, the falsification of information as to married status, living arrangements and so on. The second is termed "Itinerant Fraud" covering people who move around, change addresses and make multiple claims for benefits. In theory these categories apply to very specific kinds of people committing fraud. In practice they can apply to more or less anyone, given that there is very strong pressure on fraud officers to achieve higher "arrest rates" - eg by bullying people into admitting frauds; but mainly in higher "put-off" rates - where people sign off on being told that if they don't they may be liable to prosecution for fraud. This pressure is reflected in the fact that a whole DHSS section (RD5) will take over the analysis and production of fraud statistics. The requirements of the computer software demand that it be possible to pinpoint regions, areas or local offices where "successful" fraud cases fall below acceptable levels - so woe be-

tide any DHSS staff whose vigilance is not kept up. The inevitable effect of this pressure will be further to intensify the harassment of claimants - for example young people forced to move from town to town looking for work and having to seek accommodation in each place might fall into both categories of fraud and might therefore receive even worse treatment than they do now.

## POLICE ACCESS

What kinds of information is kept in the files of the fraud squads, and how will computerisation affect its use? The basic software to be used will be the so-called "Holmes" program (ie read "Sherlock"). The computers and programs used will be very similar to those used by the police and it is difficult to see how the police will not have, in practice, free access to the DHSS files. The similarities between police and DHSS computers do not end there. The structure of the database to be kept by the DHSS is also remarkably similar. Apart from separate files on names, addresses, vehicle registration numbers, criminal records etc., there will also be files of so-called "free text". These contain general and background information to be used to build up profiles of individuals, and to give clues on where investigations could lead.

The basic data files will enable fraud officers to co-ordinate information, track people around the country and build cases against them much more rapidly and efficiently than before. But the files of "free text" are more sinister. If the Police National Computer is anything to go by (and there is no reason to suppose that the DHSS system will be different in this regard) the free text gradually takes on more and more significance, until in effect the entire databanks revolve around it. Information involved is gossip, rumours, tit-bits, the reflections and prejudices of officers and informants, and anything that anyone decides might be remotely relevant. It's not uncommon to whole sections of information to be fabricated, either with malicious intent, or simply so that some thing can be put on file. This is bad enough, but because the information is on a computer file, it tends to be treated as absolute fact. As has become obvious from many well-publicised cases most of the information is in fact meaningless garbage, but it is still used as the basis for whole cases and even networks of related cases. It takes little imagination to predict a similar pattern developing of DHSS fraud conspiracies, involving large numbers of completely innocent claimants and their families (perhaps included in free text because an investigator didn't like them) with all of the surveillance, harassment, intimidation, victimisation and frame-ups that used to be so common only in, say, the RUC or the Metropolitan Police.

## MISUSE

The implications of this abuse and misuse of information are many. Completely irrelevant and/or mistaken information may bring individuals to the attention of the fraud officers through pointless mentions in free text. The cross-referencing facilities demanded for the software would allow mind-boggling combinations of error and stupidity to be given full rein. Personal profiles can be selected and combined with names, addresses and descriptions of people who "look a bit similar" and with outlines of people's other activities, political affiliations, beliefs, friends and acquaintances, what pubs they go to and so on. "Evidence" can therefore be bolstered up with authoritative-sounding detail, so that cases which would otherwise be very obviously shaky can be pursued even more vigorously than they are now. The safeguards against misuse contained in the document are pathetic and the possibility of deleting faulty information are negligible - not even as "comprehensive" as the safeguards were supposed to be for police databanks (and even they were a complete failure). Even when cases are "closed" files will be kept at the officer's whim and put in archives for resuscitation whenever desired. Again the experience from other systems is that people are terrified of getting rid of data, and keep everything.

## UNHAMPERED PROSECUTIONS

Whatever else is clear from this document it is certain that no lessons have been learned from the debacle of police computerisation programmes, and that the DHSS is no more interested in questions of rights or confidentiality, access or accuracy than are the police. In fact there is no evidence that they are interested in the truth either - just so long as the new system will enable them to carry through investigations and prosecutions unhampered by accountability. They would be free from interference from DHSS staff concerned for the rights and welfare of those they think



they should be serving (ie claimants) and from unemployed and claimants' groups and organisations trying to resist the onslaught of the State.

The computerisation underway at the DHSS brings together many issues - some applying to DHSS staff and some affecting claimants. The most appropriate way for the implications of these changes to be publicised and fought against is jointly - by DHSS unions and unemployed groups each supporting the others' initiatives. In the long-term this can broaden the struggle to take into account the links between conditions at work and conditions for those out of work - job and pay levels and benefit levels; and the reasons for these factors implicit in capitalism and social democracy in their modern form. Separate and isolated pockets of resistance (such as are usually the case) can make little headway compared to a more general cross-sector campaign.

## WHERE WE STAND

1. We believe in independent, non-hierarchical working class organisation independent of all political parties and bureaucratic trade union structures, none of which represent the true interests of the majority of people, i.e. the people who create the wealth by manual or intellectual means.
2. We believe that under the present system of capitalism support should be given to the struggle for short-term gains, such as better pay and conditions, but these should always be seen for what they are - limited interim reforms which are no substitute for the total reorganisation of society necessary to ensure true freedom, equality and democracy.
3. We believe that the parliamentary system does not serve the interests of the working class. The solution to the problems that we the working class face do not lie in the election of a new leadership, but in the creation of new structures both in the workplace and the community which allows for us all to have total control over the decisions which affect our lives.
4. As revolutionary syndicalists we believe that only by a general strike accompanied by mass occupations and the implementation of workers control, can capitalism be finally removed and a free self-managed society where production and labour is geared towards need and not profit. be created.
5. We are opposed to all forms of racism, fascism, nationalism and sexism - indeed any ideology which sets out to divide the working class.

## PAMPHLETS AVAILABLE

The following publications are available from the TRS.

The Spanish Revolution 1936-1939. History of workers organisation.....	TRS...15p.
Libertarian Labor Review. New technology, working week, Bolivia.....	IWW...80p.
Strike strategy. Early National Rank and File publication.....	NRFM...10p.
I.W.A. Aims and Principles. Aims of International Workers Association....	IWA...40p.
Strike action. Tactics and way to organise during disputes.....	DAM...20p.
Miguel Garcia story. Militant in Spanish civil war and after.....	MGM...11p.
Anarchism and feminism. Women workers and trade unions.....	DAM...35p.
Tell us lies about the miners. Media coverage of '84-'85 strike...D.	Douglass...60p.
Come wet this truncheon. Police role and actions in '84-'85 strike...D.	Douglass...80p.
Bulgaria - A New Spain. Bulgarian revolution of 1944.....	ABAF...60p.
Libertarian Communism. Ideas of libertarian structure and organisation...P.	Puente...60p.
My Social Credo. The belief of Anarcho-Syndicalism.....	Maximoff...50p.
Program of Anarcho-Syndicalism.....	Maximoff...11p.
Syndicalists in Russian revolution.....	Maximoff...45p.
The Tragedy of Spain. A look at the revolution of 1936-1939.....	R. Rocker...11.20p.
Syndicalism in practice No1. Spanish revolution.....	Rebel Worker...20p.
Syndicalism in practice No2. Argentine organisation, FORA.....	Rebel Worker...20p.
Syndicalism in practice No3. Syndicalist organisations of Chile.....	Rebel Worker...20p.
Syndicalism in practice No4. Syndicalist organisations of Poland.....	Rebel Worker...20p.

Please add 24p for orders under £2 and 10% for those over, to cover postage cost.

We wish to point out that TRS do not necessarily hold all views contained in the literature above.

Support the  
**SILENTNIGHT**  
Strikers,  
Picket the Co-op  
Newgate St., Newcastle -  
11am, Sat. 6th, 13th & 20th  
December