

BULLETIN No 3
of the
LONDON WORK

group.
(all contributions
letters etc, welcome)

Workers claim takeover at mental hospital

AUTHOR

Tate militants told:
'No hard feelings...'

The students are confident they will be able to hold a secret ballot on their future.

"There is no change of the
view changing. The view
will be the same as the
view."

WHAT SORT OF GAME IS THIS?

1977 is an insult - our standard of living is cut every year.

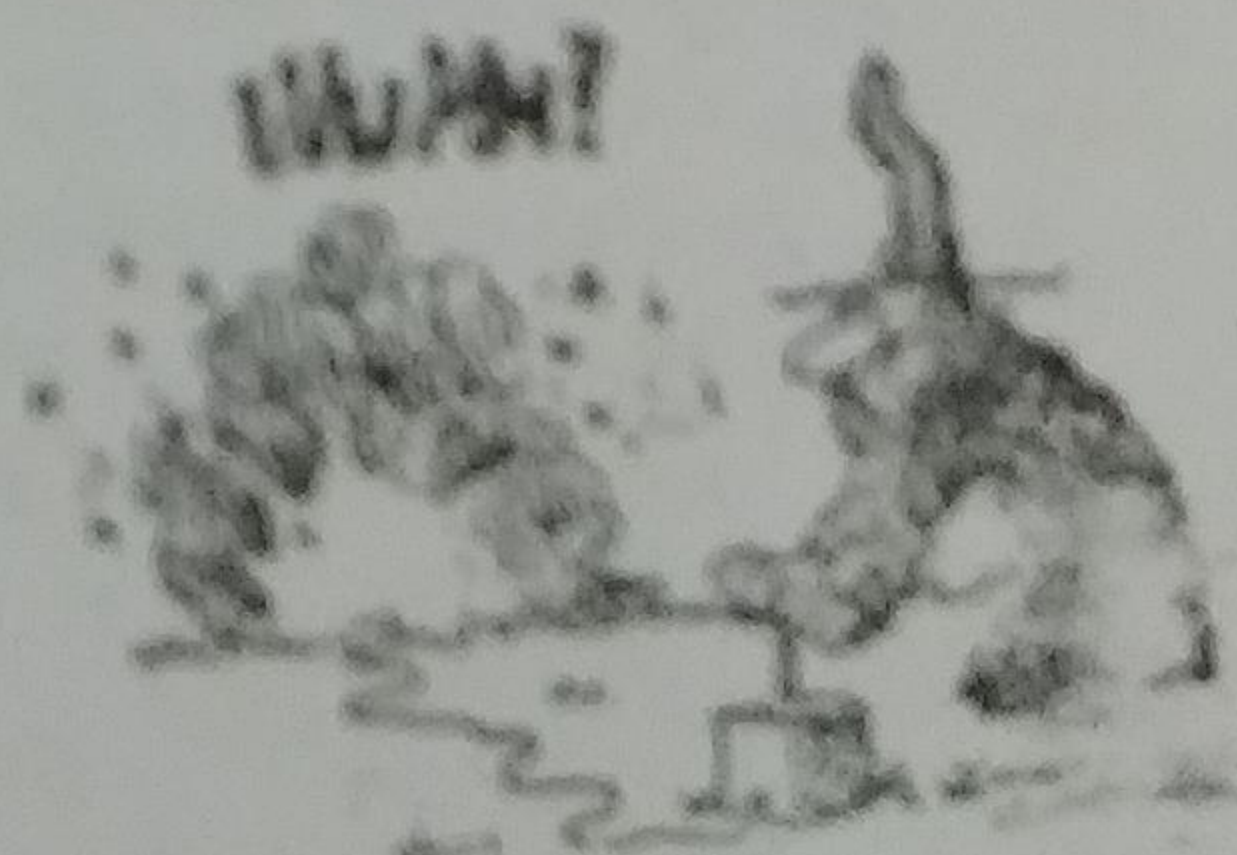
negotiate the firmness, the power workers, etc

WANT TO HELP US FOR A BETTER

every player can fight back.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Post Office...



Apr 74

I've been 4 yrs in the GPO now and the excitement has worn off - they say the first 15 yrs are worst! It has become a dull repetitive job to be done as quickly and painlessly as possible. My enthusiasm for organising within the GPO has also waned when faced with the reality of GPO life - the difficulties of being in a small office, a bureaucratic Union branch submerged in a giant Union machine, and at a time of confusion, fear, little solidarity and nihilism leading to virtual no confrontations with the GPO at all in my region. (N. London.)

INSIDE MY WORKPLACE.

70 of us - all male, except the canteen staff. Although there are conflicts with the management these are usually individuals or a particular section of us (drivers, sorters etc.) and general solidarity has only flowered on one major occasion when a day strike was advocated (but we bottled out later on?). I'm pissed-off with the Union branch because it acts as a mouthpiece of the Union hierarchy to such an extent that my fellow workers don't bother, or don't see any point to go to meetings. We have about 3 or 4 a year only and any useful decisions made are usually glossed over or deliberately suppressed by the branch sec. who is in firm control. He has been repeatedly voted in for the last 16 yrs, even though I stood against him last year in desperation. I will stand again next year but I am confused as to the correctness of this tactic. Still, ANY change must be for the better! For the first 2 years I tried to group together 5 or 6 people to go in solidarity to meetings and challenge the situation, but the general attitude of the other members of the branch of 'what's the point of meetings?' got to us too. All attempts to discuss contentious issues (standing up to management, supporting victimised colleagues, Grunwicks etc) met with hostility or disbelief! Although a committee member for 3 years, it still made little difference. I hope as sec., to possibly act as a barrier to Union officialdom and propaganda... to see if we might perk up a bit.

On a personal level.

In general, it's the everyday discussions and actions that count, gaining respect, countering the rubbish of press, TV and management. The magazines I read (mostly anarchist and alternative news) are flicked through and occasionally I'm asked for literature on specific things - like how to tag. Hm - I have been to demonstrations with a couple of workmates, and in general there are 5 or 6 people consistently interested, but none committed to revolutionary activity. My biggest success was the 1976 Graffiti Campaign on the bog walls, which, despite orders to the cleaners to keep them scrubbed, has led to a rash of cynical, bitter, humorous scrawls complete with drawings, about politics, sex, the Union and GPO, NF, personal attacks etc., but a thousand times more interesting than 'Arsenal are shit' etc. A valuable means of communication.

As far as myself is concerned, I've tried to get as much freedom as possible on the job - long breaks, bad work, absenteeism... but the GPO has disciplined me pretty heavily. I try to get everyone else to be as degenerate as possible, while stressing solidarity, as this is a training ground for any future opportunities we get for work-to-rules etc.

N.B. I recommend any day-release courses you can fiddle, like First Aid.

ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN THE GPO.

I haven't done all I could to build up contacts and spread anarchist ideas, but I spent over 2 yrs trying to help create a 'rank and file' network, helping to produce 5 issues of Post Office Worker paper selling 500 or so copies. It never really took off, although well received as a source of information and analysis. It COULD have been the beginnings of a useful and vital caucus in the GPO, but the other 6 or 7 workers in London most committed (and the 15 or 20 supporters) were unable to see the possibilities except in using the movement as a recruiting ground for their Political Parties - SWP, LP, Chartist - or just as a pressure group to be used by low-level radical officials at conferences. Rhetoric was often substituted for analysis, and 'lines' such as

confessions....cont...

'10 pounds NOW!' or 'Smash the Social Contract!' instead of it being a forum for the desires of the workers. SWP attempted to dominate by using their resources - printing, meeting space, newspapers and national contacts, to create dependancy on their Party machine for our success. They constantly used our paper to push their Right to Work campaigns etc although the majority in the group tried to stop this. Most of the others were opposed because their Party had different lines and campaigns (all irrelevant to workers of course) but some were genuinely non-sectarian. Together we tried to keep the paper as an open collective and forum for differing opinions, and succeeded to some extent. But people conned by Left-Wing ideas have no understanding of the mechanisms of Authority, where the strongest end up on top, i.e. the SWP. I worked hard, contributed many articles, shared in the production of the paper, but failed to prevent it's collapse. It's possible the SWP will start their own 'Bank and File' in the GPO. With more libertarian influence and organising amongst postal workers we may have succeeded in setting off the movement we need, and this goes for all industries. For leaving this sort of activity to Left organisations, is to abdicate our responsibility, and to leave no alternative for workers except to join these groups and be used as fodder in their reformist campaigns.

After all this, I began to start from scratch, keeping up previously useful contacts, and looked around for other libertarian and independant postworkers, even abroad (Denmark, Canada, France, Australia) but was not consistant so I lost touch. But when the Cricklewood workers blacked Grunwicks mail I produced 500 leaflets to spread around in the GPO, of a very militant and clear nature. I have repeated this about wage 'negotiations'. Apart from this I try and keep people outside the GPO informed through writing for Alternative papers, and by organising with other workers.....

OUTSIDE THE GPO...AND CONCLUSIONS.

This is the big moment - conclusions....er.....um. Well at the age of 24 it would be presumptuous to lay down my verdict on the ancient workers movement, but it is obvious that fuck all is going to change by carrying on the same way...the same OLD way'. The independance, imagination and effectiveness of the workers seems to have died long ago, suffocated by reformism, and bureaucracy, manipulated by Parties, disillusioned by failures and useless strategies, frustrated by outmoded tactics (passive demonstrations, strikes, negotiations, conferences) and most crucial - STARVED OF AN ALTERNATIVE.

Lets look at what I've been doing. Well, I eat, sleep, breathe and organise with other anarchists to get our ideas widely spread. I help make a magazine, posters, stickers, get involved in campaigns, etc., etc. Anarchism is a world-view which says true freedom is possible if we fight for it against all forms of domination. Influence amongst workers is painfully inadequate. Last year, Greenwich Steel workers occupied their factory against closure, but the Left was so busy selling their papers on the huge and ineffective picket-lines at Grunwicks, that this opportunity was ignored. We tried to lend some support, but in the wake of this, decided to form the London Workers group for all workers, as an alternative to Parties and Unions which can never act in our interests. Our aims include spreading solidarity amongst workers, giving each other support, showing by example the way that workers can organise, and to try and sort out what is going on in this system.

Looking back over my experiences, the most effective way we educate each other is in day today discussions and common work and action. For this, revolutionaries have to listen to what their fellow workers are saying, in order to gain respect for their own ideas. This is the groundwork but it's not enough - for to CHANGE the world we have to confront the Institutions of power with our imagination, strength and solidarity, and our vision of the future. These have to be built up and require organised activity to be effective against the violence, subtle and repressive, of the Ruling Class, and the manipulations of Parties amongst us.

(cont.)

confessions....cont.

Same history.

Workers have constantly struggled to get 'their' organisations (Unions, Labour party etc.) back under their control - but they never were. OUR task is to seize control of our working lives in all workplaces - production and distribution of all goods and services, and NOT to negotiate or participate. Probably the closest we came was in the period around the 1st world war when syndicalist ideas and strategies were rooted in the struggles of the time. (Reading Bob Holton's book - 'British Syndicalism' is a must.) A huge attempt was made to bring the Unions under our control and thereby to confront the Ruling Class industry by industry, while taking on the Army and Police when necessary. It seemed a winning strategy, but failed in the face of the violent resistance of the State, the manoeuvrings and collaboration of the Union leaders, and the event of the War. But the State had been shaken to its foundations. Marxists who had previously denounced industrial struggle as worthless, were irrelevant, the movement growing out of 5 or 10 years of Anarchist and syndicalist educational activity. Since then the Marxists have cynically taken up the strategy as a recruiting ground, while the genuine revolutionaries have been searching around for an alternative strategy - a successful one.

The most successful anarcho-syndicalists were in Spain where they established their own confederation of workers' unions (CNT) which in 1936, with 2 million members, was the guiding force leading to the take over of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the land and industry in Spain, by the workers. But here, where reformist Unions are already deeply rooted in our workplaces, to advocate a new Union is likely to cut ourselves off from the majority of workers.

My feeling is that we need independent workers' groups in every workplace, across each industry, and in every locality, plus ad hoc groups supporting strikes, occupations, and all sorts of related activity. They must be useful, and they must be consistent, to be taken seriously.

We don't need leaders, and we must be positively against all Political Parties.

We have to reach and draw in thousands of workers with our ideas, influence and support, including those mistakenly believing in reforms or Parties., but we have to realise this takes intelligent work which we will only see the benefit of when our ideas are taken up in the mass struggles of the future. We cannot attack the State alone, nor can we wait around for people to rise up or they (and us) will be the glorious losers again.

Isolated, I would just be drawn into the lower levels of the Union, or become totally disillusioned but by creating our own groups we can help each other be more effective.

Workers have attempted to seize control through shop assemblies and workers councils, and by anarcho-syndicalist unions, and we can certainly learn from them. In this country today are similar attempts - amongst power-workers, during strikes and occupations, and the revolt against work itself - sabotage and indiscipline. This is our sea in which to swim. At the moment we are on dry land. Don't wait for things to be changed - do it yourself. Produce your own leaflets. form your own groups, come along and link-up with us. I need a London group before I feel I have the strength to form a postal group.

Let me finish with one thing - the Cricklewood postworkers held mass meetings every 2 days during their solidarity action. The Assist. Gen. Sec. of the Union came down to oppose this 'breach of rules', but they told him to fuck off. This was a dual power situation inside the Union and they were threatened with expulsion (and hence the sack). This bluff blackmailed them back to work, but they have shown us the way.

A postal-worker.

PRINT GUERRILLA BATTLES

by Nathaniel Soper.

In the aftermath of the national wages and conditions settlement which was settled within the government's pay guidelines of 10%, nearly every chapel (basic shop floor organisation) has been in to see newspaper managements for additional payments on one issue or another. All this despite national ballots in such unions as the NGA and Natsopa finally gave an overwhelming majority to accept the offer of 10%.

Print unions traditionally place more importance on "house" agreements negotiated by the chapels than they do on the all-in national agreement. Naturally, those papers with the higher circulations and higher profits come in for greater pressure than those with lower profit margins. In some cases the extra payments based on self-financing productivity agreements enhance existing service pay, holidays, etc., while in others there are extra payments based on circulation, pagination and other formulas. The NPA and the individual newspapers associated with it know full well that any guidelines laid down by the government will be fought by the printworkers and hope to keep their papers running by making concessions, even though in their editorials and news coverage they all back the holding down of wages and generally defend the capitalist system.

Shop floor organisation is probably stronger in the printing industry than in any other. The chapels have had a strong shop floor organisation from time immemorial. Indeed, long before the engineers and other sections of workers had shop floor organisation (which mainly dates from the so-called syndicalist period of trade unionism in 1908-1914) the printworkers already had tightly-knit shop floor organisation and, as a result of this, they generally headed the list of skilled workers in terms of pay.

However, the technological revolution has recently begun to hit the printing industry - its introduction has been largely delayed over the past 15 years. Indeed, of the 30,000 -odd national newspaper workers working on papers associated with the NPA, some 7,000 are due for redundancy within the next 5 to 10 years. In every newspaper a thousand and one problems are arising in the various areas where traditional printing skills are used. Entirely new processes are now beginning to be introduced and one basic craft, - that of compositing - will completely disappear. It is no wonder therefore that the compositors, knowing full well that their ancient craft is going to disappear and that there is no future for them as compositors, must insist on entirely new rates of pay for the new processes that are being introduced, on the basis of training schemes in the new processes. This was what the long protracted struggle at the Daily Mirror was all about. The original demands for working the new technology ranged from £200 to £250 a week. (Printworkers are traditionally late evening and night workers.) A settlement was finally reached for a basic of £174, rising to £250 over 3 years. This settlement was accepted by the Ministry of Employment as being within the government's 10% guidelines, since it was a self-financing productivity deal. In other words, included in the complicated general agreement agreed upon, there were provisions for redundancy pay for workers over 60 (what is called natural wastage) and restrictions on new entrants. Thus the new technology achieves, in the long run, considerable savings both in the number of personnel employed and in the considerable improvement in the speed with which this vital process is carried out. In terms of profits, therefore, the introduction of the new technology provides enormously enhanced profitability for the future.

What happens in those craft areas and non-craft areas, such as press minding publishing (packing, transport), photo-processing, editorial and administration? As soon as one chapel is involved in a dispute on a big issue of this kind, then all other chapels move into action to "get a piece of the cake". And why not? They are part of the total productive unit producing the profit and without their co-operation technologically changed sectors cannot operate.

Print guerilla battles continued

The current print guerilla battles are therefore taking place around these questions and this explains the spate of work stoppages going on in practically all the national newspapers. If the differentials between the new enhanced rates of the compositors become expanded, then the other sections of workers will automatically move in to close them. Any realistic appraisal of differentials in the printing industry, as in most industries, shows that they cannot be abolished so long as the capitalist system lasts. Only with the abolition of the wages system (not necessarily money as such) can usher in a more equitable system of valuation of labour power. Indeed, in terms of the class struggle, the existence of differentials keeps workers in permanent action. And it is in the process of struggle itself that workers learn the lessons of collective action (which so irritates the individualists), gather strength and grow, for the future class task of abolishing the wages system and introducing real socialism.

Whilst printworkers are concerned about the contraction of the total labour force in print - now approximately 360,000 workers - and the knowledge that when the new technological processes have been adopted the total will drop to about 250,000 (at a conservative estimate) in the next 10 years, they see no solution to the unemployment question as a whole. Nor is there even a strong incentive for even a partial amelioration of this situation - such as a reduction of the working week to four days, shorter hours, longer holidays and a firm check on overtime. The industry is notorious for its high overtime working. Where the opportunity for overtime is available, then most workers will grab at it. Those who refuse to work overtime, even in emergencies, are few and far between. The "reserve army" of the unemployed is a valuable asset to the capitalists in their struggle with the working class and there is no solution to social problem within the context of capitalism, whether it be private capitalism, mixed economy or total state capitalism.

Against the background of the world economic crises, the print industry is facing a similar crisis, even though the bulk of its products are sold on the home market - only in book publishing is there an export commodity of any substance. Prices of newsprint have increased dramatically over the past 5 years, leading to increased cover charges, which in turn have meant falling circulations. To win increased circulations is a real competitive process and each major newspaper group is fighting for its corner of the market and hoping to capture that of its rivals. regroupments are taking place, as well as restructuring within each group. monopolisation is growing and the traditional reformist trade union attitudes pose no threat to the employers.

Movements towards amalgamation of existing print unions are dragging on. The slowness can be largely attributed to the failure of the reformist union officials to reach agreement on who shall be the bosses of the amalgamated unions and what salary they will get. On the other hand, the rank and file chapels also fail to take positive steps to initiate amalgamation on a shop floor basis largely because they do not want to share their existing rates of pay with lower paid sections of the industry, e.g. clerical, unskilled or semi-skilled assistants the production and maintenance sectors. To complicate matters still further, the employers themselves advocate amalgamation and the formation of "one big industrial union" in the hope that this will lead to savings over differentials, through the elimination of the distinctions between skilled and unskilled workers.

In the face of all these problems, neither the reformist social democrats, the Labour Party, nor the centrists - Communist Party, Trotskyists, etc., have any

strategic policy for the printing industry, going beyond obvious wage demands shorter hours, etc. Each broad political grouping has its supporters in print,

but anarchists, syndicalists and libertarians generally are nowhere. The libertarian "ultra-left" has completely failed to build a viable alternative. Indeed, declared libertarians are few and far between. Given the inability of the ultra-left even to reach agreement among themselves, this situation is unlikely to change for a very long time. It is a sad fact, that few so-called libertarians play any serious part in the industrial struggle in this country.

AUTHORITY IN THE WORKPLACE.

At one of our public meetings (April 17th) we discussed the nature of work and why it is so depressing. Although the people present were involved in different types of work - warehouse, office, service, manual etc - our experiences were similar.

Work conditions are bad. The worst thing is the existence of Authority over us, supervising, ordering, watching and threatening us. In a paternalistic way, we are treated like children, when in effect we run every workplace despite the management. We have to conform to timetables, and sometimes to archaic forms of dress (uniforms). The atmosphere is either a hectic rat-race, get-finished-as-soon-as-possible thing, or just boredom due to doing repetitive work.

And as automation creeps in, some work becomes even more monotonous.

Mixed up with all this is the fact that our work DOMINATES our lives - more than 8hrs daily, 5 days weekly, 49 wks yearly and 40 years of our life! (not counting 13 yrs of schooling which is much the same - a preparation for 'adult' life). All this we do, selling ourselves to the rich and powerful for the right to live. And this work is 9 times out of 10, useless anyway, producing little that we really need for a better life. Someone once calculated that if everyone did 4 hrs USEFUL work a week, it would be enough to provide all our needs.

Then, also, are all the things which divide us - division of labour, sexual segregation, differentials, unemployment, and the separation of where we live and work.**

So work in this society is a very destructive experience, but which, because of our everyday resistance individually or together, can be a source of solidarity and education. But although we struggle to wrest as much control as possible over our working lives and may glimpse a better way of organising the future, we mustn't underestimate the strength of authoritarian and bourgeois ideas amongst us, which Capitalism is constantly shoving down our throats. Sexual frustration, economic divide and rule through differentials and trade (not Industrial) unionism, the minimum satisfaction of our basic needs through commodities and services, all serve to keep us in a state of slavery. For the most important issue is that of CONTROL. While both capitalists and socialists are shrewdly trying to buy off workers with 'participation', control of production and distribution always lies with the State and the Ruling Class.

The question we have to ask is how can we overcome our divisions and rise up as a class to take control of all industry? The discussion described above leads me to the conclusion that the struggle against Authority and against work itself as presently organised, is as important as the economic struggles over wages and redundancies. That is why we must encourage and spread any anti-authoritarian workers' activity - it is not irrelevant, immature or only 'partial', but is a widespread resistance to alienation and the work ethic, with a great deal of revolutionary promise.

A postal worker.

**Footnote - The most serious divisions are surely those within the family - not only divisions, but DOMINATION of women by men, children by adults, sexually, psychologically, socially and physically. Therefore unity is all but impossible and authoritarian ways of living are bred into the next generation of workers. New ways of collective living are spreading and are CRUCIAL to the success of libertarian change.

THE GARNERS STEAK HOUSES STRIKE

The Garners dispute came at the end of a year-long deterioration of relations between workers and management. During the period the management indulged in a psychological warfare to try and bring to heel the workers who were organising to express their discontent (to put it mildly) at the appalling working conditions. A waiter for example had a weekly take-home pay of £28 for a 50 hr week, and a 70 hr week was quite common. 80% of the workforce joined the TGWU and the management were threatening closure rather than recognise the Union. On 28th Jan 1978, after a demonstration outside the company's head office all who participated were sacked some of whom had been with the company for 11 yrs. The picketing and demands for blacking began.

Many parallels can be drawn with Grunwicks and previous catering workers strikes over the last 3 yrs., all initiated by the workers, mostly immigrant, to improve their wages and conditions, and with the issue of Union membership, turning into an overtly political issue. The financial considerations recede into the background. This is a fact underlined by the rise given at Grunwicks and Garners to the remaining scab labour well in excess of the 10% they would have been allowed normally. It is clear that the management is making this reactionary stance on purely political grounds. Using this tactic the Claridges strike was broken, the shop-steward sacked.

The Garners workers were quickly disillusioned by the TGWU machinery who didn't lift a finger during the first 5 weeks. A politically naive but determined group of workers have been shown by their personal experiences in the dispute, the antagonisms of the owners and the anti-worker mechanisms of the so-called representatives of the workers... the TGWU and the TUC.

Pickets were attacked a few weeks ago in homicidal fashion by the owner Margolis, attacking with an axe an unsuspecting striker in full view of the customers. In court he was Unconditionally discharged on the grounds that 'there is no such thing as a peaceful picket'. More recently his wife punched and partially blinded a picket. The police saw but did nothing. This assaulting coupled with the constant police harassment and arrests (over 20 pickets), plus the total lack of commitment by the T&G, must surely have demonstrated that the bargaining power of cutting down the custom in the restaurants, has been the key to keeping this strike alive. Many fellow-workers are now coming regularly to the picket-line and the company was in such disarray that the General Manager resigned after only one month.

However, the company is getting more confident - 4 mths of constant picketing outside of the 8 busiest restaurants (there are 16) is an exhausting experience, and most of the strikers have given up. Garners are constantly changing their suppliers because of the strike and are attempting to use non-unionised firms. This, and the scabs, is keeping Garners open. The TGWU is only paying a pathetic £6 pw to each striker.

On May 20th, a demonstration in solidarity sponsored by the TGWU, TUC (SE) and the Assoc. of Trades Councils, led to the massive turn-out of 200 or so people - mostly dedicated Left-wingers - and hardly a TGWU member in sight except the mandatory Official or two. These specimens made fine speeches at the rally at the end. They needn't have bothered. The march had been a tiny, passive show of weakness, which to many of the activists was the end of any illusions we may have had about Trade Unionism. It is dead - as far as benefitting us is concerned. Later on, 20 marchers returned to the picket-line, being forced to leave under threat of arrest under the police law of '6 max.'. A couple of us spent a few hours outside the Picadilly branch, helping to turn away most customers. It was no surprise to be sneered at by the rich tourists, but the reactionary attitudes of a few working class people was depressing. Many though, wished us luck. The Garners strikers need a lot more than that.

STEVE and DAVE.

The strikers need your support - money, picketing, blacking, imagination and actions.
Contact the Strike Committee 240 1056, or John Bruce (Pank and File catering workers)

935 1236.....

B. TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (CONT.) - OF ONE OF OUR GROUP-A HOTEL WORKER

6. Accommodation:

Should your employment be terminated for whatever reason you will immediately vacate any accommodation that is provided.

7. Holidays:

The date of any holiday to which you may be entitled must be agreed by your Manager.

8. Sick Pay:

You are not entitled to payment during periods of sickness as of right. However, the Directors are prepared to consider such payments on the following basis providing that you have completed 2 years service and that you produce a medical certificate after any absence in excess of two days.

1 week until completion of 3 yrs continuous service

Thereafter, a week's pay for each additional year's service up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

You must inform your Manager on the first day of any absence. Any abuse of these provisions will result in them being withdrawn.

9. Pension:

The company does not provide a pension scheme.

10. Right of Search:

This appointment is subject to your acceptance of the company's right of search. You may be searched at any time by a suitable person authorised by the management.

11. Uniforms or Protective Clothing:

You may be required to wear a uniform or protective clothing in connection with your duties. These items where supplied remain the property of the company and must be returned upon request or termination of your employment.

The company will replace any item which, through fair wear and tear, is no longer serviceable.

The company reserves the right to ask for payment of any item lost or damaged due to the negligence of the employee or not returned on request.

12. Termination:

If you wish to terminate this engagement after completing 4 week's continuous service, you should do so by serving one week's notice in writing at or before 12 noon on any Saturday to expire at the end of business on a subsequent Saturday.

The company may terminate this engagement by serving notice as follows:

Length of Service

Over 4 wks, but less than 2 yrs continuous service

After completion of 2 yrs continuous service

3 yrs
4 yrs

Period of Notice

1 week

2 weeks

3 weeks

4 weeks

(etc. at the rate of one extra week's notice for each additional year of continuous service up to the maximum.)

After completion of 12 yrs continuous service

12 weeks

The company reserves the right to pay salary in lieu of notice and to terminate your employment without notice (or payment in lieu of notice) in cases of misconduct or dishonesty.

13. Maternity Leave:

Any woman employee who intends to return after leaving because of pregnancy is required to indicate this intention (in writing) to the House Manager before the start of 11th week before the expected date of confinement.

14. Grievance Procedure:

Any grievance regarding your employment should be referred initially to your House Manager. If he/she is unable to resolve the matter within one week you may refer it (in writing) to your Operations Manager. Should he/she not be able to resolve the grievance within two weeks you may refer it to your Area Director (in writing).

15. Disciplinary Procedure:

Copies of company disciplinary procedure can be seen on display in the House in the Manager's office on request. Any grievance you may have regarding any disciplinary action taken against you should be referred to your Operations Manager. Should he/she not be able to resolve the grievance within one week you may refer it (in writing) to your Area Director.

16. Basis of Agreement:

These terms of Employment, together with the company's house rules and regulations and procedures, copies of which are held in the Manager's office, form the sole basis of agreement between you and the company.

NOTES FROM THE DOLE-QUEUE.

At a time when there are 1.4m unemployed it is still common to hear the bosses of nationalised industries talking about laying people off to increase efficiency, while the Govt. gnashes it's teeth and claims that lack of investment in industry by the capitalists, is the reason for the present economic slump and therefore responsible for the length of the dole queues. But if British Steel or Leylands lay a person off, then the State stops paying them wages and starts paying dole. The saving is minimal. And in the private sector, it has been obvious since the Industrial Revolution that investment means automation which means fewer jobs, not more (Or masses of people involved in non-productive service work).

British Leyland is an interesting case. Successive managing directors have threatened closure unless the strike record is improved (and he doesn't mean more strikes folks!) but at the same time the company is losing it's share of the car market even when cars are available - so presumably people prefer Datsuns and Toyotas. In factories in Sweden where cars are put together by teams of mechanics, rather than on conveyor belt systems, they have much 'better' industrial relations than Leyland or Ford UK. It would be interesting to know whether they have better cars as well. It surely can't be coincidental that, while Leyland have a backlog of cars they can't sell, firms like Morgan and Rolls Royce who hand-build their cars, have long waiting lists of prospective buyers. It's not just the prestige of these cars either - there's a small firm in the Midlands which makes Morris 1000's (declared obsolete by Leylands 10 years ago) and they also have a 2yr waiting list. How much would it cost Leyland to throw out some of it's expensive machinery (think of the saving on electricity bills) and to employ more people to build their cars properly, subsidised by the Dept. of Employment to the amount of Dole and SS money saved? Car manufacture may be a bad example - I'd rather we had a comprehensive and reliable public transport service than for everyone to own a car - but the principle is surely generally applicable.

Automation has reduced the number of people required to do a certain job, and it has very often reduced the skill necessary to do the job. Mass-produced goods are generally inferior in quality, while profits are kept high 'to finance more investment'. The economics of all this are obvious - more product per person means less money paid out in wages, while the inferior quality of mass-produced goods ensures that the consumer has to buy the product more often - and this artificially high demand, in turn justifies more mass-production and more profit. Moreover, it seems to me that besides the economic attractiveness of this system, there is also a political aspect.

Small workforces in relation to the amount of goods produced means that firms can afford to pay relatively high wages, so there will be fewer industrial disputes. High unemployment will on the one hand advance the workers standard of living in comparison, and on the other make those in work less likely to step out of line for fear of getting the sack. Finally, in the event of a strike, a small unskilled workforce is easy to replace by scab labour (which could be drawn from the dole-queues). In the fire strike, the soldier scabs were gratifyingly inept using fire-fighting equipment. They'd have little trouble running a factory production line of pushing buttons and shifting boxes.

The moral is clear: the unemployed are politically and industrially feeble, and unemployment is an excellent stick for the ruling classes to beat us with. We should call for an end to investment in capital-intensive machinery as long as there are people around to do the work.

Mod Ludd.

Comment from the group: less work around justifies a MASSIVE cut in the working week.

UNEMPLOYMENT CREATION.

An interesting article in the May issue of The Leveller magazine, discusses Govt. grants available to industry, supposedly to counteract unemployment by preventing lay-offs and encouraging firms to take on extra workers. In fact it turns out to be just another way of taking money out of the taxpayer's pocket and putting it in the Capitalist's. The Govt. claims it's schemes are keeping $\frac{1}{2}$ m people in employment they wouldn't otherwise have - at a cost of something like 1,000,000,000 pounds a year.

There are various excuses for giving money away, a few of which are: any firm operating in a development area can have a grant, apparently without making any specific promises on job-creation. The Govt. has built factories in these areas - most of which are lying idle, although companies can occupy them for a certain period rent-free. Grants are also given for buying land to build factories on. Various grants are available for investment in new plant machinery. Other pay-outs are the Temporary Employment Scheme - designed to help (to the extent of £20 pw per worker) firms to pay people they would otherwise lay-off, and the Youth Opportunities/Work Experience programmes, whereby firms get a free school-leaver who is paid £19 - £50 by HM Govt.

Needless to say, all these schemes are wide open to abuse, and Company bosses being far more astute than Labour politicians, are well aware of it. Courtaulds deserve a mention for their special efforts in this field. Between 1970-3, they conned the State out of £28m of Job-Creation money and still laid-off 17,000 workers. Another sharp operator was Bear Brand, who manufactured tights. In 1975 they borrowed £350,000, and for a year operated at full capacity selling their tights at a loss to Benson-Tanwood, who just happened to be Bear Brand's largest shareholders. When the money was spent Bear Brand went bankrupt and the factory closed. On a larger scale TES was a godsend to firms who want to 'rationalise' their workforces. To qualify for a TES grant which pays £20pw. per worker for a year, a joint application is made by the employers and the Unions - who also have to sign a redundancy agreement. At the end of the year the firm is free to lay-off its surplus workers with the Union's blessing. Union officials may be signing away more than 300,000 jobs a year in this way. Employers taking on school-leavers under the YOP are supposed to provide training in a career but in fact can use youngsters as cheap labour, while those providing work-experience can, in non-unionised workplaces at least, take on a free school-leaver and sack a paid worker.

Finally, since all this money is being splashed about by a Labour Govt., a few words about Workers' Co-ops. The Manpower Services Commission has so far funded 29 of these at a total cost of just over £1m (compared with the annual £1,000m to private industry). The MSC imposes strict conditions on funding which make it all but impossible for Co-ops to function at a profit - none of which applies to grants to private firms. The money lasts for one year and all Co-ops funded must have a ratio of 8 trainees to every skilled worker. The MSC insists on wide pay differentials between the two. At least one Co-op has been vetoed by a Union, which claimed it would take work away from Union members working in other firms in the area.

It seems obvious that the Labour Govt. is providing money to private industry to keep Capitalism healthy while doing a cosmetic job on unemployment. Money is being wasted which could be used for socially useful and creative projects. It is clear then that the only answer to Labour's policy on unemployment - which is to finance Capital - is to get rid of both Capitalism and Governments (so there!).

Led Nudd.

The Garners Steak House workers strike for the right to organise, continues into its 5th month. 70 or so workers from the dozen London restaurants are picketing as many of them as possible each day. Every Sat. there is a mass picket in the Oxford St one opposite Selfridges, nr Bond St tube, 12-3pm. On Sat. 20th May there will be a march in solidarity past some of the restaurants starting at 2pm at Speakers Corner to Trafalgar Sq. They need as much support as you can give - money, picketing, and other more imaginative things (we've heard that some of the restaurants' front doors were gummed up with metal-filler one Friday night....good stuff!). Ph 240-1056.