

**FREE!**

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# **NHS - EVERYONE'S FIGHT!**

The Health Workers' dispute drags on and on. Why? Because the government are not prepared to increase their offer, and because the workers are not prepared to accept a pittance for a day's work

The government constantly claim that 'there is no more money' without explaining why. The reason why there is no more money is simply that the government refuse to make more money available. Money will be made available where spending is approved of by the government, areas such as armaments, police pay rises, judges pay rises, the royal family's pay rises etc., etc. This is one of the things that is wrong with the world today, money is controlled by the rich few and used in any way that will produce more money, to make the rich richer. People's needs either for health care or wages are only considered when necessary to maintain a workforce, or a market, with which the rich can speculate and gain more money.

Without doubt the government would claim public support for their policy on the NHS dispute. If the people march in the streets in support of the health workers, they are dismissed as extremists, and the government claims the support of a silent majority, just how the government know what the majority feel is never explained. The only thing that will worry the government is the possibility of losing votes through bad publicity - why then do they continue the dispute.

## **EASY TARGET**

The Health Workers are an easy target, split between the Royal College of Nursing, NALGO, COHSE and NUPE and torn between the need for money and the needs of their patients. This means that their ability to take industrial action is weakened, and provides the gov-

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ernment with the chance to fight a long depressing dispute. The fact that industry is not directly effected by action in the hospitals means that any financial hardship created by the dispute will fall on workers themselves. The wealthy and those in power won't even have to bother about the damage done to the NHS or the waiting list for operations.

### DISRUPTION

The government will use the NHS dispute to dissuade other workers from the struggle for much needed cash. A long drawn out costly dispute is exactly what the government needs to keep everyone under the heel.

Support for the Health Workers and action by them must be disruptive, like occupations of government buildings, or picketing and closure of Nuffield and BUPA hospitals. The NHS dispute must not end in success for the government or it will be a sad day for the workers in this country.

## GOING DOWN FIGHTING

The Health Workers' dispute has now reached a critical stage. On the one hand, the government is trying to split the workers by giving the nurses a phoney deal which looks like 12% at a very quick glance. On the other hand, the TUC Health Services Committee seems to be finally giving into the pressure from workers for an all-out strike.

### DIVIDE AND RULE

The government's offer to the nurses is particularly dangerous for the Health Workers. Pickets we spoke to on the Day of 'Action' in September were particularly worried about this possibility. They felt that many of the public supported the nurses rather than the Health Workers in general, and feared that an offer to the nurses might well split the fight - and lead to their defeat.

The TUC's strike call is another case of too-little-too-late - as long

as Health Workers let themselves follow the strategy of the Union bosses. They clearly see the strike as yet another way of getting the government back to the negotiating table. Their whole handling of this dispute has reflected this attitude. Pathetic 'Days of Action', nationally and then locally - publicity stunts to gain support which already existed in the first place. What they want now is to have the government offer another one or two percent, so they can claim to have made a deal and save some face.

### LEEK DEMO

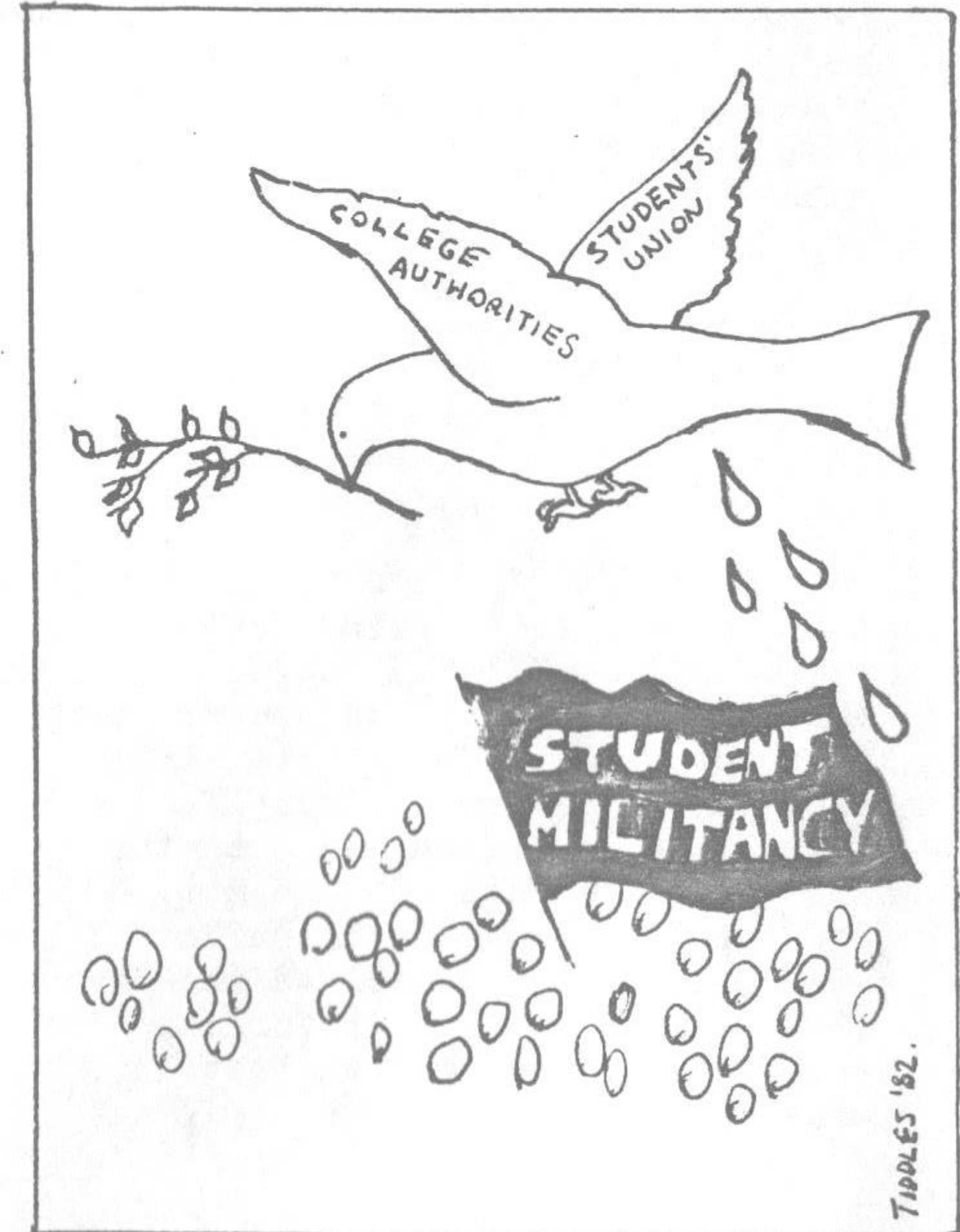
Meanwhile, their tactics have exhausted many of their members. During the last series of 'regional days of action', support even from some of those in dispute was patchy, and the demonstration organised in Leek was only able to get 400 marchers. With such inept tactics, can the Health Workers afford to follow the lead of the

TUC - their record shows that their's is the road to defeat, or as one of the organisers of the Leek march said, "going down fighting".

Clearly the only way forward is to go beyond the TUC's tactics - even those for an all-out strike. If all of us in the public sector got together - miners, teachers, social workers, civil servants, DHSS workers and the rest - and press our pay claims together, then we might stand a chance. Anything less will probably mean that we will all be beaten separately.

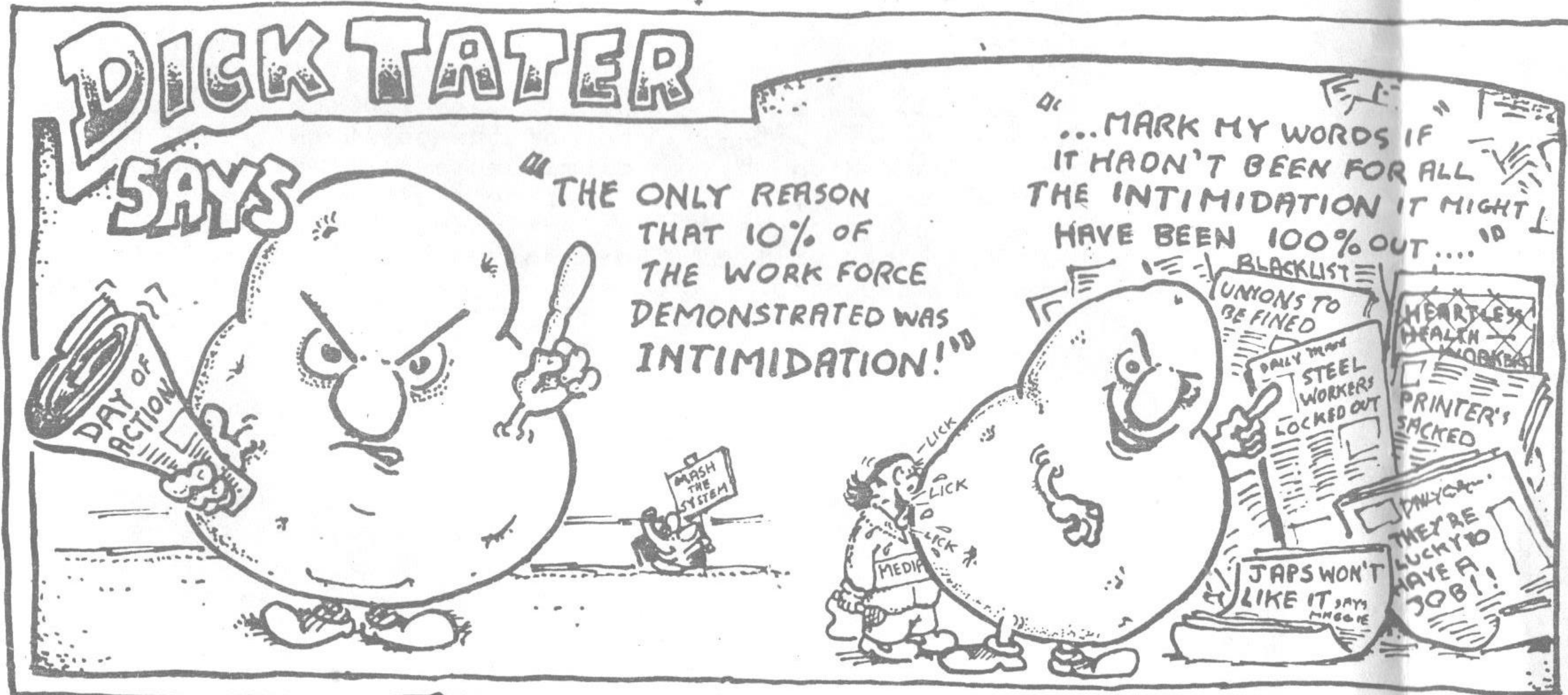
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## JARROLD BETRAYS HEALTH WORKERS



The turnout for the TUC's 'Day of Action' on 22nd September may have been on the small side in North Staffs, but many groups of people were willing to organise in Solidarity. One such group was Newcastle College students.

The college lecturers had decided to scab on the 22nd and some students decided to take the initiative to join the picket lines. The ineffectual Students' Union contributed nothing to the growing activism in the college, and on the eve of the Day of Action a meeting was called to vote on a walkout in support of the health workers. It was badly publicised and took place out of college hours (a classic example of the Students' Union toeing the line of the college authorities - one of the tricks of trade unionism) and after an estimation that 250 were ready to take action, about 50 - 60 turned up for the meeting.



"DICK TATER" REPRINTED FROM "SUBVERSIVE GRAFFITI"

The motion was opposed by Martin Jarrold, ex-area convenor of the Stoke-on-Trent Area Association of Colleges (STAAC). Apart from being one of the National Union of Students salaried officials, he is also an ex-Keele student and one-time member of Militant Tendency—thus showing his very left-wing roots (sic). Mr Jarrold came across as the seasoned bureaucrat who knows his business and whose older and wiser head has seen all this lefty-activist stuff before. His general themes were, don't annoy the college authorities and health workers have nothing to do with students (try telling that to the many pre-nursing students at the college).

The motion was amended to 'students who take action will have students' union protection'. Jarrold opposed this, his rhetoric enabled him to appear as The Voice of Experience whilst painting his opponent as a 'commie trouble maker'. The 'Voice of Reason' won over the undecided students and the motion fell. For fear of being victimised by scabbing staff, few students joined the pickets. It was one step further for union bureaucracy in the fight against left-wing activism.

This paper has been put together by the CARELESS TALK COLLECTIVE. We meet every Tuesday night, to discuss politics, and things to put in this paper and other leaflets that we produce from time to time. If you would like to meet us, why not drop us a line at our contact address.

Our aims are:-

- 1) To support, seek solidarity for and be involved in struggles for the needs of the vast majority of people against the ruling class of business men, politicians and bureaucrats.
- 2) To urge that struggles be directly controlled by those involved in them, not by leaders such as trades union officials or political parties.

## CANT PAY? WONT EAT

You may not have noticed, but Saturday 16th October was World Food Day. A day called by the United Nations to commemorate the fact that of the world's 4½ billion people, one billion go hungry every day. That one person dies of hunger every second. That these people are, according to the UN, too poor to buy the food they need, even if the massive surpluses of the industrialised world could be shipped to them.

And that of course is the crux of it. The world is fertile enough to feed its population. But food is not produced to feed people. It is a commodity, produced to be sold at a profit. To ensure that profitability, the governments of the USA and EEC spend millions buying up so-called 'excess production' to either stockpile it in beef, butter and wheat mountains, destroy it altogether or pay farmers not to produce it at all. To simply give it to the starving would mean that it could not be sold to them at a profit.

Be sure, there is food there, its just that money comes before human lives. Profit before people. Isn't it time we did something to correct this crazy situation.

- 3) To aim for the overthrow of all governments, bosses and leaders by conscious action of the majority of people. We want a world without relationships of domination and submission, where all people have an equal say in how things are run, and where production is for human need not profit.

We welcome information and articles for the news-sheet and help with distribution. Anyone who shares our ideas and would like to join the collective, please get in touch.

