

SUBVERSIVE GRAFFITI

FREE NEWS SHEET
PRODUCED IN ABERDEEN

No 4
FEB/MARCH '82

Social Security snoopers from the new Specialist Claims Control Unit are meeting strong opposition in Aberdeen. Workers at the Greyfriars House D.H.S.S. office refused to work with the special investigators, accusing them of "harassment, bullying, and lying in order to ensure people withdraw their claims for benefit". Grampian Unemployment Union members are distributing leaflets informing claimants of their rights.

YOU GET POORER WHILE WE GET RICHER. BUT DONT DESPAIR 'COS WHEN WE'RE REALLY STINKING RICH WE'LL THINK ABOUT THINKING ABOUT YOU.



of crisis.

STOP THE SNOOPERS

No evidence of fraud is needed for a claimant to be investigated. If you're a single parent or have a skill, eg painting, the snoopers could watch you secretly. They could question your neighbours. Single mothers could be interrogated about their personal lives by investigators looking for evidence of them 'living as husband and wife'.

Union rep. Steve Armstrong told us that when the Specialist Claims Control Unit was first set up, virtually no civil Servants volunteered to work in it. So the management threatened staff with the ending of all promotion prospects unless they agreed to join the Unit.

The Supplementary Benefit levels are barely adequate for survival. Who can live on £23.25 plus rent per week? Thus Subversive Graffiti believes that if some claimants are 'fiddling' the Social Security system, then there's nothing wrong with their actions.

The establishment of the Specialist Claims Control Unit is part of the general attack on people's living standards, as the government tries to boost profits and get the system out

However action like that taken by the Greyfriars House staff shows how workers can fight back. When the investigators arrived on 1st February for a planned 3 weeks in Aberdeen the workers in Greyfriars House refused to provide them with information about claimants. Management then threatened to suspend 3 workers if they didn't co-operate with the snoopers. Immediately workers at Greyfriars House, the Dee St. office, and 62 other offices throughout Scotland walked out for the day. Earlier, when the snoopers had operated in other areas, Cumbernauld workers walked out and Stirling staff refused to assist them.

But these positive actions by D.H.S.S. workers have now been undermined by an agreement reached on 9th February between national union negotiators and Civil Service management. Under this deal the Civil and

Public Services Association and the Society of Civil and Public Servants agreed to work with the investigators while an Inquiry examines their working methods. Management have lifted the threat of suspensions.

Local C.P.S.A. Branch Secretary Steve Armstrong told Subversive Graffiti he was satisfied with the agreement, describing it as "a compromise". However another Greyfriars House worker told us "This agreement is shocking. Its just another sell-out as far as the staff are concerned. It just re-affirms that the only way to take action is from the shop floor, and not relying on bureaucrats.." She pointed out that the Inquiry was only to review the Specialist Claims Controllers tactics, and nothing more. It wouldn't question the existence of the Unit. "At no time were the 3 suspended members or the Greyfriars House staff consulted at all about this agreement by the people negotiating on our behalf."

The special investigators, after some days absence, are expected to be in Aberdeen from 15-19th February. What can be done to stop them, in Aberdeen and nationally?

The Greyfriars House workers could take unofficial action and continue to refuse to co-operate with the snoopers, though this wouldn't be easy. The excellent action by DHSS staff needs wider support if the snoopers are to be stopped. Non-cooperation by DHSS workers hinders the special investigators, but it seems they can still do their dirty work with the aid of local management.

Claimants could step up action against the snoopers. Other Civil Servants could join the struggle. In fact this affects all workers and claimants. The more people acting against the Specialist Claims Control Unit, the quicker we'll get rid of this obnoxious Government Dirty Tricks Department.

POLAND

Piotr Kozlowski and Marek Garzteki, members of the Polish trade union Solidarnosc, spoke in Aberdeen in January. They described how workers in Poland were still resisting the vicious repression of the authorities. Piotr and Marek urged workers in Britain to help Polish workers by refusing to handle goods being imported from, and exported to, Poland and the Soviet Union (except food and medical supplies going to Poland). This will hit the Polish and Soviet rulers by depriving them of foreign currency.

Workers at Massey-Ferguson in Coventry are now refusing to co-operate with their firm's exchange of components with the Ursus tractor factory in Poland. We hope workers in Aberdeen in a position to do so will seriously consider blacking Polish & Soviet goods.

WHAT IS THIS RAG ANYWAY ?

This news-sheet is published by the Subversive Graffiti Collective. 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 elite of businessmen, politicians, and bureaucrats. This includes activities at the workplace, by the unemployed, by tenants, against oppression on the grounds of sex or sexual orientation.

2) To urge that all involved control these actions, not leaders such as Union officials or political parties.

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

We welcome readers' letters and would like people to write to us about struggles they've been involved in, at work or wherever. We need people to distribute Subversive Graffiti. Contributions to printing costs would be a great help. Anyone who shares our ideas and would like to join the Collective, please write. Our other activities include holding regular informal discussions. The next ones are on 18th Feb. and 18th March, both at 8pm in Summer St. Community Centre.

P&P SUBVERSIVE GRAFFITI, C/O
163 KING ST, ABERDEEN. (11.2.82)

Against male violence

In recent controversial rape cases a judge let a convicted rapist off with only a fine, youths who allegedly made a horrific attack on a woman in Glasgow were not prosecuted, a TV documentary showed police bullying a woman who reported she had been raped. Male violence against women is widespread. Attacks by men against their wives or girlfriends are commonplace. Women are often harassed in the street, and sexual harassment occurs at many workplaces.

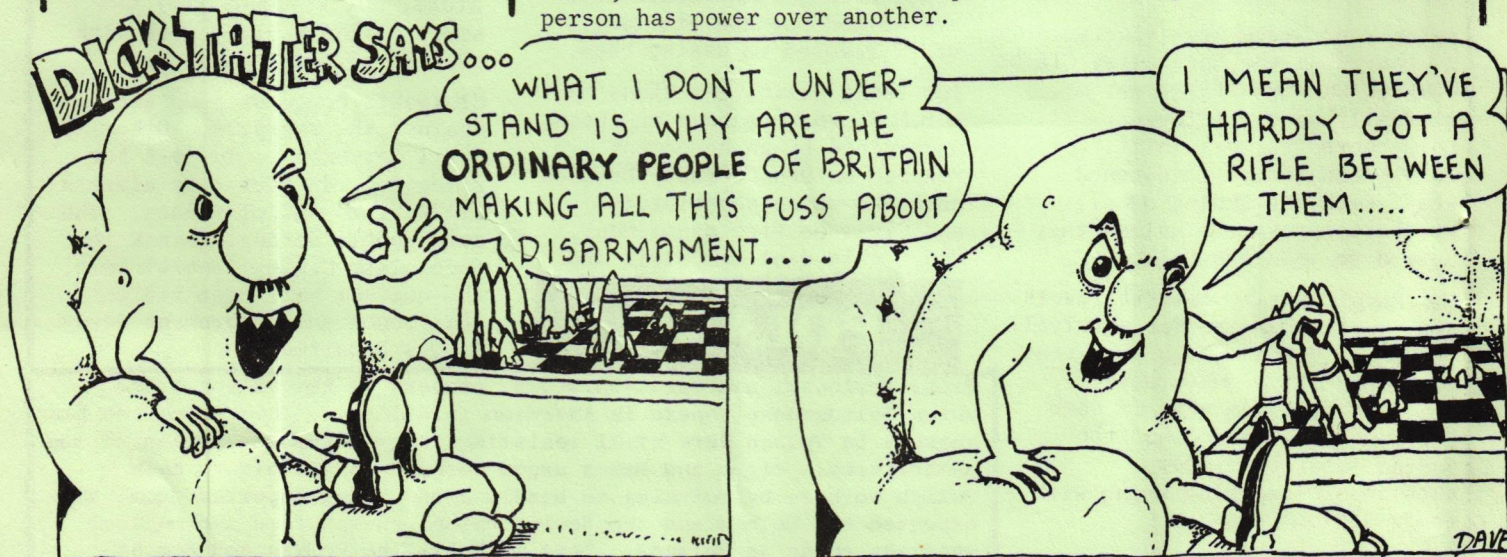
The normal court defence in rape cases is that the woman consented to sex - even though she emphatically states she did not. This reflects the fact that there is an element of coercion involved in many 'normal' sexual relationships. Conventionally the man 'pursues' the woman, and 'persuades' her to have sex. There is the absurd belief that when a woman says 'no' she means 'yes'.

Rape is an extreme form of the common everyday violence and coercion used by many men against women. To oppose rape people need to oppose all the ways in which men dominate women. We need to create relationships between women and men based on equality and mutual respect. This applies to both personal relationships, and in all areas of society, from the factory floor to the dance floor.

Many women are acting to resist men's violence. Women are learning self-defence. In some places groups of women patrol at night to prevent attacks. Many women's 'Reclaim the Night' marches have been held. Battered women's refuges exist throughout the country. It is equally men's responsibility to oppose violence against women. If possible, people should intervene if they see a woman being attacked or hit - and if it is a husband and wife that in no way justifies the violence.

It is useless to rely on the law to stop violence against women. The police are frequently reluctant to do anything when a man attacks the woman he is living with. Rape victims are often subjected to bullying and humiliating interrogations by the police and in court, including totally irrelevant questions about their past sexual relationships. The law upholds male domination over women, eg rape does not legally exist within marriage.

Sending rapists to prison is no solution. Prisons are so brutal that the rapist usually emerges just as likely to attack a woman again. An alternative is shown by a group of men in Boston, U.S.A. who, working along with Battered Women's Shelters, have been counselling men who have attacked their partners. Of 200 men they have counselled, all except 6 have stopped their violence. However the overwhelming need is to remove the cause of rape and other violence against women. We need a totally different society where, in women-men relationships and in all aspects of life, no person has power over another.



*Free leaflet on your rights if investigated by the Specialist Claims Controllers, from St. Katherine's Welfare Rights Office, 5 West North St.. Tel.28247. Open 9.30 - 12.30 & 2 - 4.30.
*Grampian Unemployment Union, 21 Adelphi. Office open 2 - 5pm Mon.-Fri.. Mon. - Fri..
*Next meetings on 22nd Feb. and 8th March, both at 7.30pm.
