Rank & File Health-workers Show The Way

IN THE RESISTANCE

Escalate the Fightback

Paper of the Direct Action Movement - International Workers Association
However, the form of action to date has been selective. In the long run this will prove to be demoralising and ineffective. Previous NHS disputes (1972, 1979, 1982) failed because of the lack of effective strike action. A more recent example was last year's civil service pay dispute in which selective, one-day actions achieved absolutely nothing and members soon became demoralised. We must learn these lessons - if we are to strike then it has to be over the whole of the union with the leadership and the RCN having some sort of "special" case and "deserving" more money. The truth is that when nurses suffer from low pay, cuts in staff, and so on. We must therefore organise all health workers in united action if we are to succeed in defeating the Tories.

NUPE and COHSE union leaders have assured us that any strike action would be backed up by emergency cover. Of course we don't want to see patients suffer but we all know who the real culprits are - those who are compiling budgets,-setting ward closures, and shutting hospitals.

Current mostly wards are running below the emergency levels set by the 1982 dispute. Clearly we must determine our own levels of emergency cover and if management do not accept, then we must be prepared to walk out with no cover. In the USA when nurses were faced with the same choice, they opted to walk out with no cover, and they won their strike in a matter of days. We need effective action that will lead to a quick victory.

Cuts in the NHS must be seen as part of a general offensive against public services. We must build links here with other workers who are fighting cuts in education, and DHSS workers who are facing similar attacks. It is working class people who use the NHS and who suffer from its run-down. It is not public sympathy that will win our dispute but real solidarity from other working class people. We need to build the links now - in 1973 striking nurses picketed out 1500 miners to join their picket lines last year in Coventry, miners and other workers had a half day strike in support of striking healthworkers.

Strikes so far have been initiated by rank and file activists. Union leaders will do nothing to win our dispute, already the NUPE leadership has persuaded ambulance drivers not to strike, on February 3rd. It is essential that joint union meetings are held to cut through union divisions. We must elect strike committees with recallable delegates to organise future action. We cannot depend on union bureaucrats to escalate action - only rank and file workers can organise this. The one-day strikes so far must be seen as only the start of this dispute. We must use every meeting, rally and demonstration to build for all out action for a decent living wage, more jobs and a decent health service.

The NHS is crumbling due to lack of money but still it is not willing to let the strike work. The manager of Burton's department store in Edinburgh has been quoted as saying that "the picketing is just a pity" and that it is causing inconvenience to the public. He also said that he is happy to see the workers go on strike.

The extent of the strike is already evident in the thoroughhouse of work by the picketers. The picket line at Burton's has been going well and the picket is well supported by the rank and file. The health authority says she won't rehire Tricia Jennings and that she has been sacked. The workers are demanding that she be rehired and that she be compensated for the period she was on strike.

The working class needs to be vigilant in this time of mass unemployment because the bosses feel that they can ride roughshod over the clock back centuries, not just to the '30's.
Community Care: That's Doublespeak

Community Care began as an ideal to end institutionalisation and integrate mentally ill people back into society. Unfortunately, where it was felt they could belong and function, except in crisis, with adequate services, to the Tories it is cost effective but they don't consider that most psychiatric patients are too poor to pay for private care or that there is an 80% rate of re-admission to psychiatric hospitals. Unfortunately, however, the ideals of the proponents of community care do not continue with the Tories whose rhetoric is a great gloss-over for "cheap care". There is plenty such "doublespeak".

The Community Treatment Order is an example - sounds innocent? - it's actually a right to break into users' homes and forcibly drug them. There are now psychiatric units and their right to salute (section) people will remain. OT's may help them treat someone if there isn't a bed to push them in as an involuntary patient or it may lead to a section.

I wonder what community care means when a group of residents oppose a hostel being sited near them? There is no stigma and hostility towards the mentally ill. Consider how abuse in the street, never mind assault, may seem to ex locomote a group. Some do make the transition into the community, except their home may be staffed, they may not choose who they live with and they won't be working. Many more will never make that transition. There is now a category called the New Long-stay - those expected to live all their lives in the hostel. Of those discharged into the community - when all the planned services aren't ready - some do move on to independence (not without a struggle and support); 10% commit suicide; and numbers in prisons. Psychiatric wings are already 80%.

Despite all the gloom and doom, there is some evidence that community care is possible with more services and choice. It means homes, non-medical refuges, help-lines, home therapists, care workers 24 hours and weekends, therapy and counselling widely and freely available, a real service for "neurotics" as well as for "psychotics" and personality disorders. Some centres must be user-run and some must be drop-in centres. There needs to be up-to-date information; patients' councils on wards; a variety of hostels, some staffed where appropriate and some owned by resident housing cover. Employment opportunities like medical shops and equal opportunities for the ex-patient support groups for users coming out of psychiatric drugs are already BR.

There is now a national network of psychiatric users groups called Survivors Speak Out (SSO) whose names were chosen in September last year. They produced the following chart of needs and demands:

1. That mental health service providers recognise and use people's first hand experience of emotional distress for the betterment of society. They should be ready to change philosophy as they see it. It was in one group, the New Long-stay group, that the Community Treatment Order was rejected.
2. Provision of refuge, planned and under the control of survivors of psychiatry, especially in the home. Besides, many ex-stay patients go into bed and breakfast, the Salvation Army or private hostels where they are kicked out during the day and landlords make huge profits from DHSS money. The whole thing's already a mess.

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PSYCHIATRIC USERS' ORGANISE

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Poison darts and electrical cattle prods could soon be part of an increasingly deadly arsenal of weapons used by the British police. We’ve already seen the use of plastic bullets and CS (tear) gas by police, first in the north of Ireland and now in Britain. These are, however, just the tip of an iceberg which includes weapons that seem to come out of the realm of science fiction.

Electrical shock weapons have been used in the USA for years. Developed from cattle prod, they give a massive electrical charge of 45,000–50,000 volts (the mains at home are only 250 volts) so the victim is literally too shocked to move. At present 2 types - the Nova and Taser - are being tested by British police. The Nova must be used at arm’s length but the Taser can be used at a distance as it fires 2 darts at the victim, the shock passing down the wires, but is incredibly inaccurate. The Nova has been banned in the US since - surprise - cops were using them to torture detainees. Such weapons are “ideal” for this as they leave no marks and are very painful but then “good old” British bobbies would never torture, but then “good old” British police claim these new shock weapons can kill people - too little might, could kill.

SELF DEFENCE

The police claim these new weapons would only be used in hostage situations but exactly the same was said of tear gas. In 1968 Mr Buchan, Secretary of State for Scotland, said CS gas would only be used to deal with armed criminals or violently insane persons in buildings from which they cannot be dislodged - without danger of loss of life, or as a means of self defence in a desperate situation - that in no circumstance should it be used to help disturbmances. A year later in the 6 counties it was being used in massive amounts on the streets against rioters.

The justification for police weapons has always been that they for self-defence are harmless - or at least better than “real guns” and are used to control dangerous situations. The facts show all this to be untrue. In practice it’s impossible to tell the difference between agressive and defensive weapons - the police are trained to use defensive shields as dangerous clubs and other weapons are used aggressive-ly. These weapons are not harmless. In the 6 counties plastic bullets have killed 18 people and malformed more and tear gas has killed in South Africa. In fact it has been said that to be effective they must be potentially lethal and, besides, they aren’t used instead of real guns but as well as them. Far from controlling dangerous situations it has been shown that in fact they make them worse. A study at Lancaster University sponsored by the Ministry of Defence showed that in the 6 counties contours weapons to the 6 counties dependent - so shock were the MoD by the findings they had them check it out. The result was exactly the same.

So why do the police use dangerous weapons that don’t even work? In the first place with the companies that make them there is a lot of demand and high pressure sales are used by arms firms to sell their very expensive goods. Secondly, using killer weapons is a cheap way to intimidate people and control a situation. As an army brigadier put it: "Three or four times as many troops might be required if they were only allowed to use persuasion, which would need if they were to use batons and gas, and 2 to 4 times as many troops might be needed if they were restricted to using batons and rubber bullets as would be required if they were allowed to use "real guns". It is clear that the government becomes more and more repressive weapons are used to crush any resistance against even peaceful demonstrators and strikers.

In 1973 the London Bureau of Newswave was informed that photographing the Shoreforth employment office accompanied by any story, on unemployment constituted a breach of the Official Secrets Act.

In 1979 Yorkshire Television was making a programme on Ramblerman and the government considered it prudent to charge the Official Secrets Act to discourage them from participating in the documentary.

Ludovic Kennedy’s daughter, Aliisa, had to sign the Official Secrets forms and was told she could not travel to Ramblerman on a holiday job picking out mermaids at Hamiton Court. Thamis Homes said: "You must sign the Official Secrets Act to discourage you from participating in the documentary."

Extracts from David Hooper’s book, Official Secrets (Secker and Warburg).

IN OCTOBER 1985, Charlton Athletic Football Club left their old ground, Valley Parade, and moved across South London to Cryst al Palace Park. This is over an hour away by train and, since Charlton were promoted to the 1st division their attendance fell by more than expected. Meanwhile the Valley has been rotting away in the middle of a working class area. The owners want to turn it into a hotel or if that fails yuppy flats. As yet they’ve not had planning permission for either idea.

Not prepared to let club officials sort the matter out a group of fans produce the “Voice of the Valley” fanzine and have launched a boycott of the March 26th game against Oxford United, instead going to Selhurst Park they want fans to demonstrate outside the ground. They hope people will join them as they do not want to see a club which was part of a community vanish. Charlton Athletic was moved to benefit from being dug business success and a slow death. Meanwhile The Valley will eventually be used as the starting point to move working class residents away from another part of London in the continued up- positioning of the city. This will be opposed by fans and the people living nearby.

The Economic League was founded in 1919 and has since been carried on a notorious “labour-screening” scheme. This is the vetting of the political persuasion or affiliation of potential employees for subscriber companies notably banks and breweries but many others are on the list for such vetting are trade unions, strike support and political activists. Anyone who saw “World in Action” on February 1st will be aware the Economic League is the vetting of the political persuasion or affiliation of potential employees whose livelihoods are threatened by their names appearing on the lists.

VIOLATION

Such secret files are a violation to civil rights and a menace to all class activists. However it must be said that the Economic League is closely a tool of the paymasters - the capitalists. Italy, Germany and Portugal all had such lists to intimidate ordinary workers from organising in their own defence. The same mentality exists in Britain. The banks, breweries multinational and so on are determined to use every hand on their workforces.

Martin Foran Update

LEEDS BLACK CROSS has been authorised by Martin Foran (see DA 45) to open and handle a campaign bank account as follows: "What I plan to do is set up two funds - one with a solicitor to cover legal defence, one with your money, to pay for printing bills and postage. Thought you would best be able to sort money out, cover all costs, and if possible help my wife out...To start the defence fund will you split the cash? I have raised, send half to the solicitor, you keep half for your funds."

We have opened a bank account in the name of "Martin Foran Support Fund" to which donations should be sent. Send cheques payables to Martin Foran, 15 North Clarence St, London W1. We will then send a greetings card to all comrades who support the fund. We have an address for Martin’s solicitor - Roger Merry of Wilkes Solicitors, 9 Garfield Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight. This will pay for his legal costs in suing the police, etc. Please let us know how much is payable to Martin Foran Defence Fund Trust.

At present although over £2000 was raised for the East London DAM, Oxford Black Cross and Plymouth Anarchists, it was all sent to Valerie Foran for Christmas, so more monies need to be sent to keep the Support Fund going. It is suggested that if people raise money, etc, they split it 50/50 and send half to each solicitor. Usually Martin sends thanks and greeting to all comrades who have been supporting him in his struggle for justice and freedom.
DA: With massive pit closures and increasing unemployment, smaller now - also there is the UDM. Hatchen/Nremained militant and how can it continue to function against the industry and its leadership?

DD: This is the crux of the problem which the self-styled revolutionary left, by and large, doesn't understand and, I dare suggest, doesn't care about. You can't keep shouting "Charge" without a modicum of the costs, the enemy and adverse situation. It may be glamorous for someone selling "Socialist Worker" at the top of the docks. It may shake the miners battered again but I can assure you they're in no mood to be anybody else's martyrs. So it's a question of whether leadership should be getting their hands on the fabric of the union and lives of people in mining communities - whether leadership whilst offering the maximum resistance possible should, I think we have sufficient edge to confront the Board but not for an all-out assault although it would be nice. It's like the general political situation. It seems a little more than that. My perspective would be that if the Board want coal - for whatever reason, as they'll have to pay to get it back, and that of course means we are really talking about a last ditch stand.

**STRIKE**

Most mining families still haven't recovered from the last strike. With the best will in the world they wouldn't get the response for an all-out strike - it isn't going to work. It's like the leakage from the fabric of the union is lives of people in mining communities - whether leadership whilst offering the maximum resistance possible should, I think we have sufficient edge to confront the Board but not for an all-out assault although it would be nice. It's like the general political situation. It seems a little more than that. My perspective would be that if the Board want coal - for whatever reason, as they'll have to pay to get it back, and that of course means we are really talking about a last ditch stand.

**STRATEGIES**

It also gives Arthur and the union the opportunity to campaign around all the issues. We've hosted 2 international conferences on S African coal arguments for miners to support S African coal imports but I strongly oppose calls for generalised support for the exploitation of coal from South Africa it's a solidarity question not one of protectionism.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

DA: On the question of South Africa, our union has done as much and more than any other. We've hosted 2 international conferences on S African coal. But I strongly oppose calls for generalised support for the exploitation of coal from South Africa.
Rudolph Rocker's "Anarcho-Syndicalism" written in 1938 and recently re-printed by Phoenix Press, is a classic introduction to the subject. Rocker, a prominent anarcho-syndicalist himself, gives an account of the origins of the labour movement, the forerunners of syndicalism and the evolution, objectives and methods of anarcho-syndicalism.

Martin Everett's introduction describes Rocker's background, anarcho-syndicalism in Britain up to the present day and relates this to the world: "The world is in crisis, and the overthrow of capitalism, in all its many varied forms is now essential in order to ensure the survival of the planet...anarcho-syndicalism is not a narrow ideal with limited goals, but rather a programme for the destruction of capitalism and the regeneration of human community based on the concept of social self-management."

The book starts with a chapter that defines anarchism - "In place of the present capitalistic system of private property, with its exploitation of stock and labour, an ideal society would have a free association of all productive forces, based upon co-operation and self-activity, which would have as its sole purpose the satisfaction of all human needs without the interference of the necessary restraints of the State."

RUDOLPH ROCKER

ideologically with the demands of liberalism, leading him to the idea that anarchism is a sort of merger between social and individualist thinkers, take on flesh and blood and acquire that peculiar character that makes them a mass movement, the embodiment of a new cultural ideal for the future.

Socialism must be free, or it won't be socialism. Rocker appeals to a kind of "anarchists" and links them into the Social Fund - it's essential that claims will be dealt with by Supplementary Benefit will be replaced by the Social Fund. Claims will be dealt with and low-paid. Even on government benefit will be assessedin the same way. This ignores the effects the unemployed will be defeated.

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The single payment system, for items like furniture, beds and clothes on flats and so on, will be replaced by the Social Fund. For rumour has it that claims after 15th March won't be dealt with. Besides, maternity needs and funeral costs which will still be covered by grants (though payment for funerals is recoverable from the deceased's estate), other claims will be dealt with by discretionary loans with no right to appeal. If the Social Fund Officer doesn't like the look of you or doesn't think you can repay the loan they can refuse to give you anything. The NHS is so worried about this measure that it's decided to have a national service of health visitors who will have floor to ceiling screens to protect their officers. If the money in the Social Fund runs out there is nothing the claimant can do. Officers, however, will give you guidance to "other sources of help" (friends, relatives, clothing clubs, mail order catalogues, overdraft facilities, bank accounts, charities and benevolent funds etc).

Dairy under workers' control, Spain 1936

Marc in the 1st International is dealt with and, by the disasterous consequences of Bolshevism in Russia which Rocker labels "state capital-

We then come to the objectives of anarcho-syndicalism using the ideas and practice of the SpanishCNT. The book then covers the methods of anarcho-syndicalism and the emphasis of direct action as opposed to "perpetuated parasitism" and the bourgeois parliaments: "Even the freest ballot cannot do away with the glaring contras between the possessing and non-possessing classes in society. It can only serve to impart to a system of social injustice the charget of legalized theft and to induce the slaves to set the stamp of legality on their own miseries."

The idea of the social general strike is described and Rocker explains how the state would be powerless to intervene due to the scattering of its forces leading to the relaxing of military discipline, which would be "won over" by a determination to return to the working class. "The local point of the political struggle lies, then, not in the political parties, but in the economic fighting organisations of the workers. It was the recognition of this which impelled the anarcho-syndicalists to centre all their activity on the socialist education of the masses and on the utilisation of their economic and social power."

EXPERIENCE

Rocker goes on to show how the evolution of anarcho-syndicalism, with emphasis on the French CGT, the founding of the SpanishCNT in 1891, the...
SLAVERY DIDN'T END with the American Civil War or in 1853 when the 885,088 slaves in the British Empire were liberated. The Anti-Slavery Society, founded in 1823, continues to fight against the scourge of present day slavery - "chattel slavery", where one person is owned by another; "debt bondage" where someone is in debt to an employer that they cannot pay - and is therefore forced to work. In 1977, the United Nations declared a decade for the eradication of all forms of slavery and slave-like status.

SLAVERY

At 16 they are considered too old and all that's left for them is begging, crime and pushing drugs. Child labour in the Third World is a desperate problem which must be eradicated. There are over 80 million children under 15 working throughout the world. This is about 11% of the world's children between 10 and 14 years old. Child labour is linked to poverty, which is also true of deprived children in the West as in the Third World. To alleviate the constant threat of starvation children are put to work, too. They are too old before their time. The hope of escaping malnutrition is empty - child labour is counterproductive as it undercuts adults' rights to employment. This is why children are preferred to adults.

THE FOLLOWING is a statement from "Tierra y Libertad," organ of the Iberian Anarchist Federation on the latest ruling by the Spanish court against the CNT-AIT (Spanish Anarchist Trade Union and section of the AIT/IWLA).

On December 2nd the Territorial Court in Madrid, dealing with the dispute over the ownership of the name and symbols of the CNT, declared in favour of the split group of "anti-striker" anarchists and against the CNT-AIT, which was founded by Vladimir Klebanov. This is an unfortunate decision and we hope that the CNT-AIT will not accept it as a final one.

FORWARD COMRADES!

There is little point at this stage in analysing the judgment which is surrounded by the CNT-AIT's attempt to find legal grounds for separating from the CNT. However, the court's decision does not necessarily mean that the CNT-AIT will be able to keep its name and symbols. It is likely that the CNT-AIT will continue to use its own name and symbols and perhaps even form a new organisation, the "anti-striker" group has already begun. This means that the CNT-AIT will be isolated from the rest of the world and its future is uncertain. In any case, we should support the CNT-AIT in its struggle against the "anti-striker" group and help it to continue its work.
Dear Comrades,

I am writing as a rank and file member of NUPE. As a nurse in Leicester, February 3rd is almost our local day; a day when at last a huge number of NUPE members have decided to collect in enough and cut through the emotional blackmail imposed on them by their 'leaders' and to decide that the rank and file of NUPE must fight to defend the National Health Service. Nurses participate in the 'new realism' and are even larger and more militant in trade unionism that's syndicalism and even large something more calculated? - being in a union means you can buy a shop steward you can talk to for advice and it's turn to for advice and it's political and social matters. We certainly don't talk to failure - Bolshevism, reforms - liberal or Bolshevist, trade union leaders can be won through the creativity, the organisation isn't something that was in the development. But "Attack" was just a liberation, the act that the activity. If I started talking about building barricades. The DAM members and everyone else saying the opposite, to the Media. The others talk of the picket line that has banners that read "We're Brits Not Ni-Pas". Even if this was the very small section of the picket line, others should have ripped it down, just as they would an NF flag.

I was really pleased that the Ford workers came out. I hope it puts Ford out of business, but I'll say my picket line that has banners that has nothing to do with sector in the long term.

I agree that there is a sense of hopelessness about modern life, and animal liberationists are following aphilosophy which is as old as time and has none of the contradictions of human made systems. It is based on the simple premise that everything has a right to life and that being is a right to life and that this knowledge gives us strength to fight for a world where all industries in the world with relatively small numbers of people.

Thatcher and her hatcheck- men and hired thugs are now on the verge of destroying the NHS. For March 5th for all - this dispute is not even over, for there is about rich versus poor; it is our last chance to defend the NHS.

February 3rd was the beginning of the rank and file and file action which showed all over the country the anger felt towards the cuts, short staffing and general management of the NHS. It showed the possible strength of a united rank and file in both sectors the fight and also to undermine the union bureaucracy (at local and national level) and ignore their patronising attitude. We need to be led. We have had enough and now it's time to fight back.

As you may already be aware shop stewards' councils, committees and networks are now taking the initiative, following the February 3rd action. With a little more effort we are building the rank and file union set up will grow very quickly. For on March 5th (Saturday) there is to be a big! demonstration in London. In protest at the erosion of the NHS. We feel that this is such an opportunity to demonstrate our unity - both as NHS workers and with the industrial working class in general - before declaring all out attack on the ruling class that threatens not just our jobs and livelihood but our health as well.

Talk is growing among the militant groups a direct action and rank and file of attempting to build the rank and file action in our defence by trying to call a general strike" on perhaps March 15th (budget day), as Thatcher will be looking to the mountains of proof that their case can be won through the rule of law.

On unionism, "Attack" may not explicitly say: "Don't be a leader, but if the old leftists' whine that "if only the leadership was changed." - the old leftists' whine that "if only the leadership was changed." Finally you say that you're a part of the general impression of the article is that "the whole of the leadership is to blame." For your final claim that you are actually a marginalisation of anarchist ideas, as far as I'm concerned, the sooner these are labelled as marginalised the better. Anarchist ideology is the most useful of the ideas and - let's hurry up and bury it. In solidarity, Chris.

REPLY

Firstly, apologies for not including an address. I certainly intended to but it somehow got left out.

The reason why the review appears to be "picking holes" compared to "The Heavy Stuff" is that they were reviewed by different people. Personally, I think a review should be critical so I criticised elements that I found odd or wrong: as a class and eventually go on the offensive to abolish capitalism and enable us to take the running of society into our own hands. Regarding the "marginalisation" of anarchist ideas you say, although you're trying to say that some of those ideas are marginalised the better. I'd be interested to know which ideas you want to see marginalised and why you think anarchist ideology is dead. Anarchist ideology isn't something that was written in stone a hundred years ago by the likes of Proudhon or Bakunin, who in fact had some dodgy ideas. It evolves through a combination of thought and action. The thoughts of those who want to see an end to domination and exploitation. One thing we cease to think about the present and the future, and cease to argue for a revolutionary change will anarchism ideology be dead.

In solidarity, PH.
CONTINUING with our occasional series of working class protest songs, we include here a sad but defiant song first sung in 1933 by the inmates of Nazi concentration camps. It is believed to have originated in Borgermoor or Dachau where those camps contained large numbers of political prisoners. The song is a cry from the past reminding us that we must never again allow fascism and racism to gain the upper hand. If you have a song and music to go with it that you would like to see included in this series, please send a copy to SRR, c/o Doncaster DAM, PO Box 96, Doncaster, South Yorkshire.

Up and down the guards are pacing; No one, no one can go through. Flight would mean a sure death, Sevilla, in the arms of fascists.

Guns and barbed wire greet our view.

Chorus

We are the peat bog soldiers; We're marching with our spades To the moor.

But for us there's no complaining, Work will in time be past. One day we shall cry rejoicing, Homestead, dear you're mine at last.

Final chorus:

Then will the peat bog soldiers March no more with their spades To the moor.
March Against the Alton Bill 19th March, London. Contact your local FAB group

WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENT?

Over recent years there has been a growing interest in green or environmental issues ranging from conservationism to the current concern about acid rain. In the process "environment" has become one of those trendy buzzwords and the softer issues raised by the "greens" have been hijacked by all the major political parties. However, they have all typically shown a reluctance to confront the real problems of this country and the world as a whole.

Environmental problems are usually perceived as things to do with the countryside, pollution of the atmosphere, destruction of the ozone layer and so on. These are to be given to newly environmental issues but the list doesn't end there. The environment isn't just the green rolling hills of Albion or our other mythical nonsense and is inseparable from the urban dereliction in which most of us have to live. So when we live on Broadwater Farm or Emmerdale Farm, the environment is of prime importance to us all. The provision of housing, one of our most basic needs, which is currently coming under a massive state onslaught, is an environmental issue; so is the transport network and the destruction of traditional working class communities by re-development and yuppification.

SENTIMENTALITY

However, most environmental campaigns are usually addressed to and will succeed by middle class people. The reasons for this are pretty obvious - most working class people don't have the time or resources to campaign. But half of seals and whales and don't see any advantage to themselves in such campaigns. Middle class types can argue that species must be saved from extinction so our children can enjoy them, but how many of you have ever seen a whale in its natural setting? Issues like this don't affect "nature", as it is idealised by some, but only bother humankind. There didn't miss the dinosaurs or the dodo. This is not to say that whales should be hunted to extinction but that priority be given to more immediate priorities and the destruction of traditional working class communities by re-development and yuppification.

IN DECEMBER Flats Fight Back - an Edinburgh tenants organisation that fights for better housing and non-tenant participation in the community - issued a report on the effectiveness of a code of conduct drawn up by them, which was adopted by the council some months earlier. Flats Fight Back has the support of all high rise tenants groups in Edinburgh. The report shows little has changed but the council's acceptance of the code does mark an important victory for tenants, not only in Edinburgh but all tenants and those who believe freedom can only be achieved through working class action and the natural coming together of people demanding control of their own lives.

Tenants in Edinburgh have shown by constant pressure they can, bit by bit, break through the system and start to impress demands more successfully on the twisted corridors of state power. Flats Fight Back have had many successes in pit villages, where even some shopkeepers extended credit to workers. But some "greens" were lukewarm...