

Red Action

THE

ISSUE NO. 13

BURNING FLAME



THE MINERS SHOW US ALL THE WAY FOWARD. MAKE SURE THAT YOU DO ...

The miners' strike drags on into its fifth month. Every passing day brings then nearer to the time when victory becomes a real possibility. Nearer to the day when the massive stocks of coal reserves built up since the introduction of productivity deals (see article inside) begin to run out. Nearer to the longer chilly evenings of Autumn when the demand for those depleted stocks will begin to rise and rise. If the miners can stick it out until then, and so far there is every indication that they can, then they can win this strike, make no mistake about that. Such a victory would probably be the most far reaching working class victory of this century.

INFLUENCE

However even if the strike were to end tomorrow, an occurrence of this nature with all of the events that have surrounded it, it may well have had an effect and influence in places, and in circumstances, that on the face of it have no connection at all with the strike.

MILITANCY

In the last week, two Red Action contacts, both of whom are employed in workplaces with no tradition of any militancy, have experienced unprecedented occurrences of militant trade union activity, including overtime bans, walkouts, right up to threats of strike action. Both of them strongly suspect that it is the effect of the constant influence of what is happening in the coal fields that has prompted their workmates to begin to try and flex their own industrial muscles.

EFFECT

Is this such an unreasonable theory? Night after night for the past five months, people have been sitting in their homes, watching a large section of other

working class people, involved in what basically amounts to open conflict with the state. They have seen the miners stand solid and defiant in the face of all of the many forms of harassment and intimidation that the state has inflicted upon them. Even if these people do not directly identify with the miners, they know that they are just the same as them inasmuch as they have to get up on a Monday morn - when they would rather stay in bed, and they have to drag themselves out to somewhere they would rather not go, and work for a boss that they don't like.

Events such as the miners strike cannot help but have some effect upon their way of thinking, even if they are not openly aware of it.

BURNING FLAME

The miners action is a burning flame that lights up the way forward for all the working class. It is a flame that the ruling class, and their hired lackeys, have tried to stamp out in various brutal and spiteful ways, all of which have floundered on the heroic resistance of the miners. They would be well advised to beware that this flame does not begin to spread.

The determination of the miners to stick it out until victory, appears to be unabated. The one thing that could force them to give in is the massive financial hardship that they are suffering. Every miner's family is having fifteen pounds deducted from their social security, supposedly for strike pay which they are not in fact receiving. Anyone with any experience of social security will know just how hard it is to exist on it at the best of times, never mind with deductions. Single miners have not recieved a single penny since the strike started.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Thankfully it appears that quite a few unions and Labour Party branches have now got their weekly levies off the ground. Miners support groups have now sprung up in many towns and cities and are organising weekly public collections. Predictably, there are also reports coming in that these are coming in for some police harassment.

All of these things are encouraging but there is still much that needs to be done. Remember that with nearly 120,000 miners on strike, it needs well over a million pounds a week just to give them a tenner each. If you are not at a workplace involved in a levy, then you can join in the Red Action weekly levy. This was launched in our last paper, and aimed specifically at those that want to help the

... YOUR BIT NOW!

miners, but do not work in an organised work place. This has now managed to help us raise several hundred pounds.

DO YOUR BIT

Get down to your local miners' support group and find out what's going on. If you don't know the address of it, then you can get it for the London area at the Agricultural Workers Union, 308 Grays Inn Road, London NW1. Remember the miners are fighting for all of us. WE MUST DO OUR BIT FOR THEM.

TRIP TO BELFAST

On the weekend of 11/12 of August, Red Action members along with members of the Troops Out Movement and other socialist groups, will be making the annual trip to Belfast, to attend the anti-internment demonstration. These are held every year to commemorate the events of the 9th of August 1971 when in the early hours of the morning thousands of British soldiers and police descended upon nationalist areas of Belfast and Derry, and arrested over 400 men. They were taken and held without any form of trial, and in the following weeks were subjected to some of the various forms of intimidation, and plain torture that the British army has become so adept at through its past colonial experiences (Aden Cyprus Kenya etc).

TORTURE

These include forcing prisoners to sit for long hours in painfully uncomfortable positions, making them run barefoot over broken glass, and taking prisoners blindfolded into helicopters hovering a few

feet off the ground, telling them that they were hundreds of feet up before pushing them out.

RESISTENCE

For us, the trip to Belfast is always one of the highlights of the political calender. For us that have grown up amongst the liberal freedoms of post war Britain, it is a quite unique experience to see just how savage the British state can be when it feels threatened. It is also remarkable and humbling to witness the unbelievable spirit of resistance to it, and to feel part of that resistance, even if only for one weekend.

Quite simply, a trip to the North of Ireland is one of the most profound experiences that anyone from this country could have. We urge anyone reading this to make the effort to come with us. We will be leaving from Euston station on the evening of Thursday the 9th August, and arriving back on Monday. The approximate cost will be 45 pounds. It will be money very well spent.



STATE REPRESSION

NO LONGER JUST AN IRISH PROBLEM!

APOLOGY TO SUBSCRIBERS

Due to a cock up you may not have recieved your papers.

If not please send your address again.

TURNING THE SCREW

A team of RA art-experts whose own handiwork can be seen all over the streets of London attended the recent auction at Sothebys for a chance to bid for a painting by that well-known artist Turner, who is dead. We all reckoned the bidding might go a bit high so we took a tenner just in case. To our horror we discovered that when the auctioneer said 5,6,7 he meant MILLIONS. Seven million for a painting for christ's sake! Some of us could not stop ourselves from vomiting all over the decor and were asked to leave. There's only one thing to do with this sick system smash it!

THE PRESS GANG

Recently a Government minister, Kenneth Baker attacked the Fleet St print unions because of their refusal to print newspapers that wouldn't carry an article by them in support of the striking Miners. He called it 'an insidious form of censorship' and an interference with the working of the free press, one of the central platforms of Democracy. He went on to say that if they wished to comment they should buy their own newspaper.

OPERATE

How does the press operate in this country and what kind of people own their own newspaper? Newspapers are published daily, owned and financed independently, they report on political, criminal, cultural and sporting events. Nobody would deny that not only do they reflect public opinion they also help create it and as such have a great influence in determining the outcome of, say, an election, through to the eventual membership of The World Cup Squad. Technically anybody can own a newspaper, the one necessary requirement is that they are extremely rich, for instance if you had eighty million lying around the house, you could make a useful bid for The Mirror group of newspapers.

VIEWS

To the owner the most important person he will hire is The Editor. Naturally he will select someone who shares his Political and Personal views and who is competent enough to get them across to the type of audience the paper is aimed at. The Editor then decides what goes in, what is featured, highlighted or ignored. For instance to print, or not, photos of mounted police attacking miners, stories of scab villages where miners and families are subjected to the type of intimidation usually attributed to their striking colleagues. 'The Editor is free to make any comments on any subject or on any person' according to Mr Baker, that is unless he is reckless enough to publish something the owner doesn't like and put his job in jeopardy. Recently the Editor of The Sunday Observer was imprudent enough to publish a report alleging the existence of mass graves in Zimbabwe. Normally that would be O.K. but the owner Mr Rowlands happened to be in the country doing business with the Government at the time. He was very embarrassed and ordered the Editor to retract. He kept his job so presumably he promised not to do it again.

Of course if you don't like the Editorial line of your National Daily you are perfectly free to go out and buy another as Mr Baker is quick to point out. They are all in competition, have different

owners so presumably cover all shades of political opinion. Not so, some people like Rupert Murdoch own more than one, The Times, and The Sun and as has been pointed out you have to be extremely wealthy to own a newspaper. The interests of the class to which they belong would be reflected in the editorial line. Of the eight National dailies six are open admirers of the Government and in the miners dispute only the Mirror and the Guardian disapproved of the Tories, though neither supports the miners.

PRACTICAL

The collusion is such that some weeks ago three daily newspapers carried identical editorials, practically word for word (like coppers notes) denouncing the 'lies' of Arthur Scargill. It might be more practical if there was one large newspaper sponsored by the Government, but of course that wouldn't be Democratic. If a Mori Poll published in their Economist magazine is correct it stated that 35% of those questioned supported the miners against the Police and the Government. What paper does Mr Baker suggest they read that doesn't make them gag, Red Action perhaps?

SUBVERSION

'It is the central right of people to dissent' Mr Baker claims grandly, unless its the Print workers who were roundly condemned by him for their subversion. 'Throughout our History brave men have fought for this right against the prevailing power of the government of today. It is clear that this must be resisted'. Though Mr Baker has been quoted correctly the last sentence is out of context, but judging from the general content of his speech it serves as a perfect summary. A fine example of editorial freedom.

LOST IN THE POST

The house of Lords has recently given it's blessing to a proposed bill to make "secret" postal ballots compulsory in all trade union elections. The argument about how trade unions should make their decisions about the election of officials, proposed industrial action etc. is an old one. On one side you have various pro-establishment groups, government, media employers organisations etc. calling for these postal ballots. On the other side you have the vast majority of unions, and all active trade unionists, favouring the show of hands at union meetings.

AFFAIRS

Personally speaking, I can't help thinking that the internal affairs of any trade union, or any organisation come to that, are the business of that organisation alone, and it has got nothing to do with anyone else as to how they conduct those affairs. However, it appears that the government are determined to make the internal affairs of trade unions very much their business, even to the point of offering to pay for the extra cost involved in postal ballots. For a Tory government to be wanting to give money to trade unions must be something of a milestone in history. It certainly makes this issue worth looking at a bit more closely.

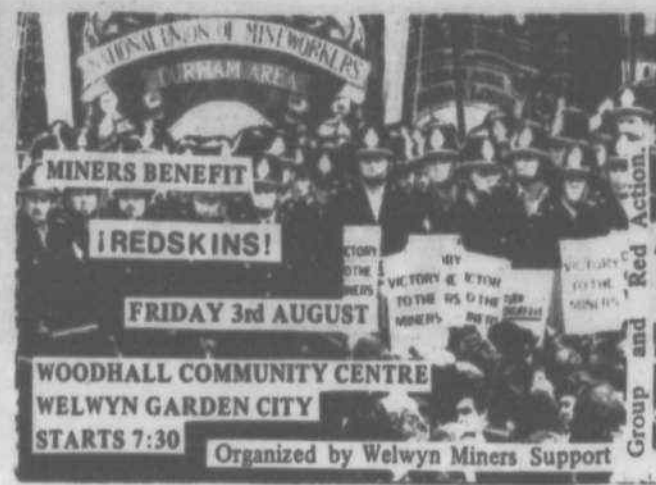
EXTREMISTS

Those that support the compulsory imposition of postal ballots upon unions, are often telling us that they want this because it will mean greater democracy. The show of hands method, they tell us, leads to the small

extremist minority, that regularly attend branch meetings, dominating the decision making process. It allows them to elect their own "extremist" candidates to union positions. Open meetings also, so they maintain, leave those that disagree with this extremist minority, open to the threat of intimidation. Postal ballots will solve this problem. They will bring the great "moderate" majority into the decision making process, and this will stop the tiny unrepresentative minority having it all their own way.

MODERATES

What this argument seems to forget is that union branch meetings are open to all and any member of that union who wants to come and register his or her democratic opinion. If it were true that the great majority of union members were unhappy with how that union were conducting affairs, then surely nothing could be simpler for them than to go to the next branch meeting and



make their opinions known. If they think that a candidate for a union position is an unrepresentative extremist, then all that this great "moderate majority" has to do is attend the election and vote for someone else. As for accusations of intimidation, how can an "unrepresentative minority" possibly intimidate this majority?

There is a very simple reason why Tories, employers, and all manner of anti-work-

ing class figures seek to impose postal ballots, and take the decision making process away from the meeting place. They know that many workers are unaware of, or apathetic to, their true interests. They know that these people sitting at home alone, are easy prey to manipulation by the pro-establishment message in the media and in the television. They know that they can use these to blacken the "extremists" with all sorts of smears, innuendo and lies, and prompt many who have not taken the trouble to find out any of the real facts, to register their

convenient postal vote (paid for by courtesy of the Tory Party).

REASONABLE

They also know that at open meetings, those workers that are interested enough to take part in the running of the union's affairs, and acquaint themselves with the issues involved, have the chance to articulate their views. Anyone, whatever their political stance, has the opportunity to express their views and attempt to win others over to their point of view. In this way, the correct and most sensible argument will ultimately win. This is true democracy in action. It is far far more democratic than the manipulated postal ballot system, where you cannot be sure who is voting or why. I have a friend who left the AUEW 8 years ago and still receives his voting form for every election. There is absolutely nothing unreasonable in a Union asking that if its members wish to influence the course it takes, then they at least present themselves to vote.

The articles in Red Action are written by individual members, friends and contacts. They are the sole responsibility of the author or authors and while we would obviously not print anything that was obviously anti-socialist we would not refuse an article just because we didn't agree with every part of it. The views expressed are those of the writer, and it should not be assumed that they are the views of every Red Action member.



above: PICTURES FLEET ST. DONT PRINT

Jack London's definition of a Scab.

'After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad and vampire, He had some awful substance left with which he made a scab.

'A scab is a two-legged animal with a cork-screw soul, a water-logged brain, a combination backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have a heart, he carries a tumour of rotten principles.

'When a scab comes down the street, men turn their backs, the angels weep in heaven, and the Devil shuts the gates of Hell to keep him out.

'No man has a right to scab so long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in, or a rope long enough to hang his body with. Judas Iscariot was a gentleman compared with a scab, for after betraying his Master he had character enough to hang himself. A scab has not.

'Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas Iscariot sold his Saviour for 30 pieces of silver. Benedict Arnold sold his country for the promise of a commission in the British Army. The modern strike-breaker sells his birthright, his country, his wife, his children and his fellow-men for an unfilled promise from his employer.

'Esau was a traitor to himself; Judas Iscariot was a traitor to his God; Benedict Arnold was a traitor to his country. A STRIKE-BREAKER IS A TRAITOR to his God, his country, his wife, his family and his class. A REAL MAN NEVER BECOMES A STRIKE-BREAKER . . .'

ALIEN-NATION

The publication of the annual Commission for Racial Equality Report which announced that the murder of blacks through arson and stabbings by neo-nazi groups are on the increase. This provoked Mr Nicholas Tolstoy, grandson of the author of War and Peace, to appear on Channel 4. He stated that though his family fled Russia in 1920 and that he himself was born in Kent and holds a British passport he still considers himself an immigrant. He claimed that 'real' British people have a mystical quality derived from their intimate knowledge and their ancestral association with the myths and legends of OLDE ENGLAND, King Arthur, Robin Hood, Lorna Doone etc. It is something that the Asian and West Indians born in this country couldn't attain even if they had the inclination. (Some members of the Royal family will feel slightly miffed, eh, Phil?).

ALIEN

He went on to say that if he were an Englishman (which he isn't, only being born in Kent) and some alien (his word) was given his house or job the traditional English trait of tolerance and fair play would be quickly eroded and he would be obliged to take some retaliatory action. He aligns himself with some dubious people here.

SUFFER

A report by The Policies Studies Institute published in The Daily Mirror, Friday July 7th, shows that blacks suffer higher unemployment and worse housing and those at work in private industry earn on average about £20 a week less than their white counterparts.

Mr. Tolstoy's main objection was to the policy of positive discrimination favoured by the Commission for Racial Equality and the GLC to counteract this disadvantage. Unfortunately I'm afraid I agree with Mr Tolstoy on this issue, this policy is largely a cosmetic exercise and is implemented to appease Liberal consciences

and does nothing for disadvantaged blacks as a whole. More importantly it's designed to provide a safety valve for the system by allowing some blacks to escape the economic trap and so create a black middle class which will serve as a model example for the rest to try and emulate.

Promoting Racism in reverse is at best misguided, and suggesting that blacks should have a natural advantage in housing and jobs does nothing for Race Relations and is in fact counterproductive. It alienates large sections of white working class people and it provides terrific propaganda for the slugs in the NF.

ENEMY

Blacks and Whites have one thing in common, they share their oppressor. All working class people are discriminated against and victimised by the same institutions, Social Security, Police, Judiciary and the solution is only in their hands. It would probably help to remember this quote from an anonymous source "My enemies' enemy is my friend".

P.S. Mr Tolstoy, GO BACK TO RUSSIA!

BEATING THE FASCISTS

Anyone who has been around the left in this country for the past couple of years or so, may well be aware that one of the central planks of Red Action's political platform, is physical opposition when possible, to all and any fascist activity. They will probably also be aware that we have on occasion come in for some criticism for this, from some of our more genteel friends upon the left. We are, so the story goes, really no better than the fascists ourselves. We are only involved in political activity to engage in mindless and gratuitous violence.

REWARDING

In actual fact, we can think of many far more politically rewarding things to be doing, than risking our freedom chasing after fascists, and indeed spend much of our time doing them. At the same time, we make absolutely no apologies whatsoever for our anti-fascist position. It is our firm conviction that fascism, whether it be the small embryonic type movements that exist in this country today, or whether it be the mass movements in Europe in the thirties, grows and thrives on the weakness and indecision of its opponents. It is our firm conviction that to effectively oppose any form of fascism, you must be determined and when necessary ruthless. We have a recent example to explain this a bit further.

On Saturday the 16th June, Red Action members were amongst those attending the GLC 'Jobs for a Change' festival at the Jubilee Gardens. We were positioned, as is often our wont, around the beer tent, when a group of skinheads wearing union jacks and skrewdriver (NF band) tee shirts passed us. Several of our number were all for giving them the business there and then. Others of us argued that we shouldn't be too ready to jump to conclusions. Most of the skinheads were young we argued. Their shirts may have been for fashion rather than as a political affiliation. Why would they be here if they were fascists. Besides this was a family occasion with many small children around. It would be wrong to start trouble in these circumstances. This argument eventually

won through.

About an hour later, we began getting confused reports that there was some sort of trouble in the stage area. By the time we got there it was too late. A group of skinheads, no doubt our friends included had stormed the stage sieg heiling, smashed up some of the bands equipment, and started a fight in which at least one socialist was slashed - fortunately not seriously, and one had his jaw broken.

ARROGANT

Fortunately many of the fascists were arrogant or stupid enough to hang around in the area, and before too long there were a few more of them helping the doctors to keep their hand in than there were of ours.

However this cannot hide the fact that they had pulled off a major propaganda victory, by coming into, and disrupting, a major event attended by thousands of people, many of whom may well have been asking themselves, if we can't feel safe here where can we?

It left Red Action members cursing ourselves for our reasonableness and moderation. If we had followed our

normal traditions and just battered the first fascists that we had seen, there is every possibility that this debacle would have been avoided.

COWARDS

The vast majority of fascist skinheads are cowards and braggarts. To pull off something such as this, they need to wind themselves up into a tribalistic frenzy. If one lot of them had already had a kicking, and they knew that there was effective opposition about, they would all have been looking over their shoulders and it is quite likely that their agitators would have found it much harder, and maybe impossible, to get them going.

We will certainly not be found wanting again. In future, anyone we see at any socialist event wearing any form of fascist, NF, or anti-socialist emblems will be assumed to be there for disruptive reasons, and will be taken out at the first opportunity.

If this should mean that we disrupt someone's Sunday afternoon for a while then we apologise in advance, but there it is. There are far more important things at stake here, than sandwiches on the lawn.

DEMOCRACY OR HYPOCRISY?

One of the most repeated choruses that we have heard since the beginning of the miners strike, is the one about how it is not right that any of them should be on strike, because there has not been a national ballot upon it. This is one of the favourite excuses trotted out by the scabs to explain their not supporting the strike, and day after day the press and government remind us of how this is proof of Arthur Scargill's and the NUM's lack of respect for the "rules".

SHORT MEMORIES

It would seem that these people must have very short memories. Four years ago, the National Coal Board announced it's intention to begin productivity deals in the pits. A national ballot of the sort that the government now call for, was held in the NUM and much to many people's surprise, the miners overwhelmingly rejected the offer of any productivity deals.

Now you may think that with a government so committed to and respectful of the concept of national ballots, that this would be the end of the matter. You may think this but you would be wrong.

What happened in fact was that the government and the Coal Board, in total defiance of the result of the national ballot, they started to ballot areas separately. They knew that once they had got one area to accept productivity deals then this would bring greater pressure

on other areas to accept them. And which area did they choose to start the ball rolling. Yes good old Nottingham where some 20,000 scabs try and tell us that of course they'd be willing to strike if a national ballot voted for it. You didn't pay much attention to the result of a national ballot last time did you lads.

RESERVES

The government, the Coal Board and the scabs all have great respect for national ballots OK, but only when they get the result that they want. The great tragedy about it all is that it is the effect of these productivity deals on the level of production over the last four years that has enabled the Coal Board to build up the massive coal reserves that have enabled them to sit the strike out so far without any real great effect on industry and society. Fortunately these reserves are not inexhaustable. ROLL ON WINTER.

CULTURE



CORNER

SKIN-FLICKS

The Redskins are definitely one of the hottest 'political' bands around. The music is hard and fast, they've got one of the best horn sections in the business, and on top of that their lyrics actually say something positive, "If we fail to organize/ We'll waste our lives on protest songs." (Unionize.)

So when the video "Beating the Blues - Redskins" came through the post I thought things were looking up. The cover is a good start, linking rock 'n' roll and real life with pictures of workers on strike and Elvis Presley. On the back are the words of Paul Robeson's song "Joe Hill", a union organiser in the USA who was framed by the police and then executed.

It should be said at the start that this video was not made by the band themselves. There are 5 songs on the video - "Lean On Me", "Kick Over The Statues", "Red Strike The Blues", "Unionize" and "Keep On Keeping On". Without doubt this gives a good impression of what they're like live - although the picture quality is not good.

POLITICS

It seems to me that a video about a socialist band is an ideal opportunity to emphasise and expand on their politics. Unfortunately the first half of the video is just the band on stage and does tend to drag a bit. Then it definitely improves. Shots of

workers striking, marching, picketing etc. are mixed in with them playing live and with the music linking it all together it becomes much more interesting and draws attention to the lyrics. As the singer says at one point, "fuck the personalities, listen to the lyrics." In between songs there are also snatches of interviews with the band and they emphasise their belief in the importance of workers organising and fighting back.

AGITATION

By the end of the video I think a successful mixture of music and politics has been achieved and the result is an entertaining bit of political agitation. Without doubt, though, the lyrics should have been written out and included. When you compare a video like this with some pretentious 'arty' Duran Duran video I think you can safely say that "Beating the Blues" is a step in the right direction.

(Available from F.A.W., 1A, Terrace Rd, London E9 7ES. £8 + p&p.)



...AND HOW!

The Anti-Nazi League was formed in 1977 to alert the public to the growing electoral threat of the NF. Its successful expose of the Neo-Nazi past of its leaders and the mobilization of huge numbers to prevent the fascists marching led to the decline of the Front. The election of the Tory government in 1979 was another damaging body blow. Their policies on immigration and law and order were extreme enough to satisfy the right-wing nationalists on which the Front had previously relied for their support. Since then there have been significant changes in the Far-Right. The old 'constitutional' nazis like Tyndall have gone and the NF is now dominated by a new group. They believe that "controlling the streets" (ie. smashing all potential opposition) is vital if they are to regain political credibility. They rely for their political and intellectual guidance on an Italian fascist terrorist group called the Third Position. They recognize that as 'race warriors' the average NF member leaves a lot to be desired, hence the formation of the Instant Response Group. In the 9 months since its formation the IRG has been building the morale and experience of its members by attacking a series of 'soft' targets, student discos, Troops Out meetings, paper sales, and savage attacks on individual Asians, culminating in the well organized assault on June 9th. And they intend to continue these attacks throughout the summer. By operating in this way they are aware that it will not have any electoral appeal, but consider it necessary to 'clear the way' if they are goint to re-emerge as a political force. In the meantime they present an immediate and personal threat to all left-wing activities. They must be stopped.

APPEAL

Red Action has a credible record in dealing with fascists but for obvious reasons we are not prepared to be the police force for the Left. We do however regard this 'new' initiative as sufficiently serious to launch this appeal to all un-aligned anti-fascists and individual members of other groups to contact us through this leaflet. Our aim is to help form a mobile combat squad who would be on call to defend public meetings, gigs, paper, sales, etc., of any left-wing organization under threat of imminent attack. And to take the offensive when necessary. We are convinced that at the moment this tactic is the best response and the most effective way of preventing the fascists achieving their ultimate aim, "controlling the streets".



SUBSCRIBE TO RED ACTION

Red Action is an organisation founded and run by working class people. As such, we have no wealthy sympathisers. Everything we produce is paid for by our members. Each issue of this paper costs us nearly £200 to produce and we get back under £100 in sales. If you agree with our aims or are sympathetic to us, we would welcome your support. You could give us this in two ways.

1. By buying extra papers to resell to friends. This would help us to increase our circulation and reduce our deficit.
2. By taking out a subscription to Red Action. This costs £3 for the next ten issues posted to you and if you wished to send us an extra pound or two, rest assured that we will not be offended.

BOX 5, % HOUSMANS BOOKSHOP
5 CALEDONIAN RD LONDON N1

RED ACTION IN ACTION THE FLYING SQUAD

On June 10th there was a 'Jobs for a Change' festival at the Jubilee Gardens, London. A gathering of Red Action flying Aces were quietly basking in the sun when about 40 fascists attacked the Redskins on the Stage and smashed up their gear. After the initial confusion, a determined counter-attack by Miners, 'red' skins, and assorted anti-nazis had the Front on the run. By now, a full RA contingent was bravely guarding the Beer Tent from marauding fascists, looters and other degenerates when another nazi gang attacked the Hank Wankford band. This time RA, in their famous flying warthog formation, played a prominent role in 'dispatching' the bastards.

CONTD.....

Meanwhile, later that day . . . angered at the fascists initial success in disrupting the Redskins a small RA task force visited an NF pub in North London where the 'culprits' often drink. While the main force waited nearby an RA mole went for a drink in their pub. A leading NF skin came in and was proudly showing his admiring followers his battle scars and explaining how one commie attacked him screaming 'kill the nazi' - little did he know that the same commie was sitting next to him at the bar. RA then proceeded to demonstrate that we do not share the exaggerated 'respect' that lefties have for the nazis. However, a combination of hot-sun and cold beer was too much for some of RA and led to an outbreak of violence and vandalism. Dearie, dearie, dearie me.

ACTIVE SERVICE UNIT

A Sinn Fein paper-seller was recently getting some trouble in a North-London pub and asked RA for assistance. A battalion of RA front-line troops was dispatched to the war-zone. Our war-correspondent reports that, without a shot being fired, a favourable peace-treaty was signed and Republican News is available every Friday night . . .

WE ARE RED ACTION

Red Action was formed in 1981 when a number of working class socialists were expelled from the organisation that they had belonged to. Various reasons were given for this, but it all seemed to boil down to the intellectual leadership showing their distaste for the raucous manners, and undisciplined behaviour of their working class members. We believe that we can organise ourselves as red workers on our own, without any interference from middle class intellectuals. We intend to avoid at all costs, becoming like so many other left groups, with their patronizing attitude towards the working class. We reject the idea that a socialist organisation, has the right to demand unquestioning obedience from its members at all times. Discipline when necessary must be based on respect for, and trust in, those making the decisions, and not blind servile obedience. We believe that socialism belongs to the working class, and that a socialist organisation, while it must be able to give a lead to the class, must also be able to reflect the spirit and consciousness of the class. We in Red Action will strive to this end. To justify our existence before the most cynical audience of all - the working class - and present socialist politics in a way that they can identify with, in their life, their work, and their leisure. We draw great inspiration from the Republican movement in Ireland, from the courageous and principled manner in which they conduct their struggle, and from the way that they have integrated class and cultural expression into their political movement. We unconditionally support the right of their revolutionary armies, the Irish Republican Army, and the Irish National Liberation Army, to engage in armed struggle to free their country from British Rule. We will work in co-operation with all and any groups that support the same aims as us. We do not reject any ideas tactics or strategies just because we did not think of them ourselves.

WE ARE FOR

1. A working class organisation inspired and directed by working class people
2. United action between socialist groups FOR THE CLASS NOT THE PARTY
3. The Irish National liberation struggle against our own British ruling class
4. Total opposition to fascist organisations
5. Union strength - we support any picket line - in defence of workers living standards. . .
6. Opposition to all prejudice which divides workers, white against black, men against women.
7. Killing the lie that the "Communist states" are socialist.
8. Young peoples fight to determine their own future.

RED ACTION IS AGAINST

1. Anything read in

THE
Sun

SHEER PLEASURE

A recent attack on a Red Action member outside a fascist boozier by a dozen nazis resulted in Red Action making a positive response. The initial physical exchanges between RA combatants and some crop-haired youth in full view of the nazi squatting outside the pub provoked an immediate reaction. The nazis gesticulated, made animal noises, some even removed their T-shirts to exhibit their 'manly' tattoos and flabby guts. Very frightening! Intimidated by this display we stroled to their pub, where the less sober ones greeted us with a cheerful chorus of an old Nazi hymn. This performance was ended abruptly by a large volley of bricks and bottles. When Plod arrived we dispersed in good order. The local glazier claims that business has never been so good, and has suggested we work on a commission basis. We declined as our motive is sheer pleasure. We wonder what they made of the immaculately dressed young man who was seen screaming down the road at them with a large section of railing. We don't know who he was either!

SEA SICK

Strange goings-on around town in early June as Red Action members were spotted dusting off their blazers and yachting caps, and buying large quantities of sea-sickness pills. It had to be for the boating event of the year, and no we don't mean The Henley Regatta. We took to the water for the worthwhile cause of raising money for The Miners. On board the hired river-boat disco we danced a merry horn pipe, shouted yo-ho-ho and drank (lots of) rum. The two young Kent miners slumped in the corner were obviously tired from early morning picketing. Anyway, we raised £300.00. Life on the ocean wave, eh?

CONFERENCE

Despite malicious rumours to the contrary, RA is a serious socialist organisation. What proves this is the fact that we held our first national conference recently which RA members from all over the world attended and . . . (stop this nonsense - Ed.) We decided to organise on a federal basis (co-ordinated groups around the country but no concentration of power at any "Centre") elected people to various positions and planned future activities. All very necessary and democratic but you may think this contradicts our claim to be different from the rest of the Left. Not at all. Everyone had to speak in Ancient Greek and sit around stark naked . . . keep taking the tablets.

R.A.G. TRADE
(Red Action Goodies)

T-SHIRTS . . . £3.50 (large, medium, small)
BADGES . . . 30p
STICKERS . . . 1p. (minimum order 20)



IN COMPARISON JUDAS WAS A GENTLEMAN

If you think back a couple of weeks you'll remember Miners from all over the country marched through London as part of their strike action against the coal board's proposed 'cuts' in coal output and closure of over 30 pits they consider 'not worthwhile'. If you work in a unionised job you would probably have been asked to donate money to the strike fund, or asked to take strike action yourselves. As far as I can see, in a situation like this there are two kinds of people.

STRIKE

People that can be reasoned with, who are far-sighted enough to know that this is the most important action taken by working class people for many years, people who know that if the miners lose it will have severe repercussions on the rest of working class society. People who will strike to support their fellow workers.

SCAB

Then you come up against a potential scab, they're the ones who always lower their heads or look away when you take a collection bucket around your workplace. When they bother to go to

union meetings they always argue that we shouldn't get involved in other people's disputes, that Arthur Scargill is a Communist agitator, that they believe in Democracy, and they always want to believe what they read in the newspapers.

If you actually set up a picket line where you work, you then get a barrage of pathetic excuses from scabs crossing the picket line such as:

REALISM

"I've had no instruction from the union". It's as if they're waiting for some command from christ almighty and as soon as that

REDSKINS

Because the Redskins got ransacked at the GLC festival, Red Action agreed to steward their next London gig on June 27th. There was no trouble at the gig but the team-handed turnout made a good impression on the punters. One rather pathetic (but known) fronter did try to get into the gig but he was stopped on the door and politely told to remove himself, despite his claims that we had mistaken him for his cousin. Yeah, yeah, yeah!

DONT START WITHOUT US

Armed with strictly non-nuclear weaponry, Red Action went on the massive CND demo in London on June 9th. An intense discussion on the Post-Imperialist stage of Capitalism in a local refreshment parlour meant we missed the main march, but determined to play our part we headed off to Lancaster Gate, where there was meant to be a lively picket of Thatcher, Reagan and co. at The Economic Summit Meeting. We had a very lively picket of Lancaster Gate. Unfortunately everyone else was 4 miles away at Lancaster HOUSE. Undaunted we eventually arrived at the rally in Trafalgar Square where we fed the pigeons and sold 24,000 papers.

BLUE GATE ROWDIES

While some Red Action members went to Manchester, other Red Action women, with children and friends went to Greenham Common. Everyone had a great day out and we plan to return later in the summer to spend a weekend with the Blue Gate Rowdies, who are ace.



A MINERS MISERY INFLICTED BY
POLICE-CAUSED BY SCABS

happens they will come out fighting with the rest of us. Bullshit, even though they are happy enough with the benefits being in a union gives them they're not prepared to fight to make unions strong. For instance in the 1920s after the general strike, scab miners in Nottingham, with the help of a Labour MP Edward Spencer, set up their own union. This contradictory effort was doomed to failure simply because the most 'militant' supporter of a scab union is likely to be the biggest scab himself (as useful as a bunch of Atheists setting up their own church). After some lessons on realism from management after about 10 years, they drifted back to the NUM.

DEFENCE

Another excuse is "I've got a mortgage, a wife, and two kids to support".

Nobody wants to go hungry or get into debt, but where do you draw the line

when your bosses are carving up your job, you may not even have a job in a year or so, so why not fight now while you have a chance of winning rather than finding yourself on the scrap heap later on. If you help to weaken the union, who is going to defend you when its your turn?

PRINCIPLES

"Why should I lose money to support a strike?" If it wasn't for people taking this sort of action through the years for better wages, yes, you would lose less money, but you'd earn a lot less as well and while we're on that subject I never hear scabs moan when their union negotiates a good pay deal or solves a grievance for them (ever heard of one refusing to take the rise the strikers won?)

WHERE ARE THEIR PRINCIPLES THEN?