

échanges

69

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ECHANGES ET MOUVEMENT, BM Box 91, London WC1 N3 XX United Kingdom

F R A N C E

La nouvelle gauche - L'unisme (Le Frondeur, BP 105, 94402 Vitry sur Seine Cedex - in French) No 3/April, May, June: Against racism yes. SOS racisme, no - Chronique of the running time - How to make the new with the old.

Theorie Communiste - Notes (C.Charrier, BP 2318, Marseille Cedex 02 - in French) This file contains five distinct texts more or less linked to the rising of the COBAS in Italy and the coordinating committees in France. This matter was discussed with the Italian group 'Maelstrom' at a meeting in June 88 and can be summed up with the question "What could be a participation in the present struggles?".

HS

Le Communiste Central paper in French of the GCI (B.P. 54, BXL 31, Bruxelles, Belgium) No 28/Dec 88: On Counter-revolution and capitalist development in Russia, with several chapters: - Presentation (our contribution to a balance of revolution and counter-revolution - The social democratic concept of a transition to socialism - The bolsheviks' economic and social politics - Revolution and counter-revolution.

Courant Alternatif (OCL/Egrogore, BP 1213, 51058 Reims Cedex) No 81/Dec 88: The Paris of Chirac (on the distribution of council flats - Coordinating committees: a new cycle of struggles? - A discussion on the nurses struggle and their coordinating committee - Post strike in Paris - National Front: the end of the opening - Tibet. No 83/Feb 89: After the eviction from the CFDT, how to regroup in factories? - The present struggles: social fight or political alliance with the bourgeoisie - Armenia: earthquake and repression.

n° 82 - January 89-On the sanctions inside the CFDT-The left government and the nationalisms in France -Interview with the Basque committee for amnesty-The days of action against the FMI in Berlin , - The struggle of the Sécurité Sociale employees in Caen

n° 84 - The protest of teachers-Immigration -The strike at Rufa (building and road works -Caen)-Discussion on the nature of the social movements in France to day -ETA and the Spanish government between the 'dialogue ' and the 'negotiation'-The minorities revolt in USSR

n° 85-For an Europe of struggles-Is there still political refugees - The Rushdie affair ; the West with all its States-Against the dam of Serre de la Fare -Switzerland ;popular initiative for a country without army , -Quo Vadis Yugoslavia ?

n° 86-Boom with the greens- Corsica ; the break -ETA -government, negotiations?-China and its national minorities- Teachers 'struggles - The long strike of the tube cleaners in Paris

Le Brise Glace

BP 214 - 75623 Paris Cedex 13 (in french)

n°2/3 - Spring 89 - The implosion point of the democracy ideology - Sionism , the runt of the workers movement -Why prisons are burning? (a letter to Kyou) - Letter from Algier ,

Interrogations pour la communauté humaine

c/o I S , BP 243 , 75564 Paris Cedex 12 (in french)

April 89 -Against civilisation -Some words on the fight on the future of earth

L'Aube Internationaliste

Duchemin , Librairie l'Herbe Rouge , 1 bis rue d'Alésia , 75014 Paris

n°11 January -February 1989 -(in french) Tertiary in struggle ; from mai 68 up to 1974 -(the consequences of mai 68 ,banks and insurance 1972 ,the European turn 1973,1974 ; the big strike in the banks and post offices , 1979 strikes in may in insurance companies ,1982 banks; strike at the Société Générale , 1987 ;strike at the Banque de France ,tertiary and the third kind of rationalising-The electronic money as a mean of accelerating the rotation of capital-Some thoughts of the strike during the two last terms of 1988,

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Cash -Journal des chômeurs et des précaires

ACP - Cash -BP 222 , 75634 Paris Cedex 13 (in french)

n° 11- March -April 1989 -discussion on the guaranteed income - Unemployed or precarious workers-A complete file on the Guaranteed minimum income(RMI)-The unemployed and precarious workers movement ; empty shell or hard boiled egg ?

A contre courant syndical et politique

Renouveau syndical 68 , BP 2133 , 68060 Mulhouse Cedex (in french)
n° 3 -April 89 - The french political schizophrenia -Why strikes are
not coming in education ?

3

Le conseil d'entreprise en quête de légitimité -

L'Usine Nouvelle 20/4/89 - This article describe a new experiment to
have a new council (different of the legal ones) to help the
management in the contractual policy and the 'social dialogue'.
Another article in the same review gives another example of such a
politics in a well known firm -Merlin Gerin (electrical equipment)-
but this time with the agreement of the unions. Another article of
Usine Nouvelle (28/1/89) about 'Quality circles 'that are now fully
integrated in the whole managing of labour after a period of
experiment.-There are a lot of discussions about the flexibility of
working time in many branches of industries but very few agreements
(L'usine Nouvelle 23/3/89) (all articles in french-copies at
Echanges)

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The firm against the private life ;what is the limit for a boss to
oblige his staff to conform to the firm moral standards of behaviour?
(L'Expansion 3/15 february 1989) (in french , copy at Echanges)

Some leaflets in french (copies at Echanges or at the given address) ;

-The slippers of Pierre Héritier ;how left union leaders can find a
job in boss organisations (from Politis -february 89).An article from
Usine Nouvelle 2/2/89 gives more details about 'These ex-syndicalists
employed by firms ' (copy at Echanges)

-Prisons : something could break ;leaflet and the text of a communiqué
on the mutinies in Poissy and Toul prisons (april 89).(Commission
Prison Répression , BP 163 , Paris Cedex 10 ,)

-To commemorate the French Revolution ;organisation of the 'March of
people without ties' ,(A D C Initiative 89 735/37 , avenue de la
Résistance , 93100 Montreuil

-Acratie - BP 23 -64130 Mauléon - List of books already published or
to be published in 89.

U K

Internationalist Perspective (External Fraction of the ICC.
English edition from PO Box 1748, Mont-Clair, NJ 07042, USA
or BM Box 8154, London WC1N 3XX, UK) No 12/Autumn 88: Russian
imperialism looking for a new life - In Poland, distrust
growing for Solidarnosc - Hunger strikes in "socialist"
Algeria - France: Why a new victory for the left? - Crisis
and regression in the present revolutionary milieu - Discus-
sion on state capitalism: the ICC and the ostrich game - Docu-
ment on the transition period (from Bilan 1936-7).

The Red Menace (Address letter only as follows: BM Wild, London WC1N 3XX) This new journal, distributed for free, is published by a person/persons who left the Wildcat group before its dissolution. No 1/Feb 89: Demolish Fortress Britain (protest against deporting Viraj Mendis) - Change the bosses' smugness into fear (on the French SNECMA strike) - Review of 'anti-parliamentary communist' books and pamphlets - Tottenham 3 denied "right to appeal" - Acid comment. RH

n° 2 - Down with the first world war- Education ; the future of an illusion- Jamaica ; another two party state- Review of books ; 'Non market socialism in the nineteenth and twentieth century (M. Rubel and John Crump- MacMillan)

n° 3 - Up against the poll tax- Bread , blood and circuses-Letters from Algeria (translation from Le Brise Glace)

Counter Information

Pigeonhole, c/o 11 Forth St ,Edinburgh (in english)

n° 23 - a lot of informations of the actions against the poll tax and the tenants action against the government's plan for Housing Action Trusts (HATS) and other forms of housing privatisation. Various short news of struggles all over the world. A supplement to this issue contains an appeal for any support to cover the costs of the news-sheet.

Class War - The Heavy Stuff (London Class War, PO Box 467, London E8 3QX) No 2: The Kensington by-election (trying to justify the standing of a Class War candidate in a by-election as a 'tactic in undermining the ruling classes' hold on society') - What do we do when the cops fuck off? - The end of anarchism - Why we hate yuppies? (The article sees class struggle only in communities where the yuppies are 'an invading army of the ruling class, bent on the elimination of our class and our culture'. From this point the text is developing a strategy for the working class to 'create situations of dual power' in council estates and then 'the working class controlled areas will prefigure the forms of workers and community councils which will form the basis of a society with the working class firmly in control.') - Culture, class and politics - The police - The crash and recession - Class War's rough guide to the left (Useful to know the positions of the various leftist groups in England, but not complete because limited to the stalinist and trotskyist groups, and with a surprising conclusion to be 'better organised, more coherent, better based in the working class...')

HS

Organise for class struggle anarchism (formerly Virus)

Magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation - PO Box 125 , Coventry CV3 5QT (in english)

Feb. April 1989 , n° 14 _Will Bush be uprooted ? -Fighting the bigots - Out of reaction and into compromise ?- From imperialist war to class war - What is the potential of rank and file action- The myth of Labour 'socialism ' - Review of books : 'History of the Makhnovist movement (1918-1921) Peter Arshinov -Freedom Press - What lies behind the poll tax ?

The anarchist communist federation published a small pamphlet 'Anarchism - as we see it - ' outlining the theory , politics and direction of the ACF and several other pamphlets (n°1 Basic Bakunin n°2 The Poll Tax and How to fight it , n°3 The Libertarian Communist Manifesto , n°4 (forthcoming) Housework from a class struggle perspective).

HS

No reservations , housing , space and class struggle

pamphlet from News from everywhere , Box 14 , 136 Kingsland High Street , London E 8 or B M CRL London WC1 N 3XX - 1,00 £ - (in english)

'This magazine is a collection of articles which, will shed some light on the escalating crisis of housing and social space and the forces involved in the struggle over that space' ; House mix (some effects of the Housing Act and other current housing changes -Spatial deconcentration (on the murder in Washington DC of Yulanda Ward , a black community activist , who unveiled US plans of spatial deconcentration aiming at removing the threat posed to concentrated capital by concentrated masses of urban poor)(from Midnight Notes - see in the USA section)- The occupation of art and gentrification -- Fire and ice ; space wars in Zurich -Squatters resist ; notes on the Stamford Hill estate eviction -Om sweet om (a cautionary tale of Stonehenge , convoys , mutants ,etc...)- Rebuilding workers - Short-life housing- Notes on the city -

At the same address the pamphlets some already quoted in Echanges : 'Towards a history of workers 'resistance to work ; Paris and Barcelona during the French Popular Front and the Spanish Revolution , 1936-1938 ,(60 p)- None shall escape (radical perspectives in the Carribean) (90 p)- The future of a rebellion (from Le Brise-Glace concerning the Intifada youth revolt and the ideology of israeli zionism) (30 p) -Unwaged fightback (a history of Islington Action Group of the Unwaged)(50 p) .

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Direct Action

The voice of anarcho-syndicalism (in english) PO Box 761, Camberwell
SDD, London SE 5 9JH ,

n° 57 -may 1989 -On the water front (on the present dockers'fight
around the abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme)- Off the
rails (on train craches in UK)- Poles apart (on recent events in
Poland)- Nazi in action (about a gay paper 'Action ')

Here and now

PO Box 109 , Leeds , LS 5 3 AA -(in english)

issued a letter 'invitation to read , write for , or distribute this
publication' and as well to send 'welcomed contributions '.The best
way to follow this invitation is to reproduce this comment published
in the 'Bulletin of Anarchist Research' n° 15,

HS

This review covers the following editions of HERE & NOW : No. 1 (1985); No. 2 (Summer, '85); No. 3 (Spring '86); No. 4 (No Date); No. 5 (Summer, 1987); No. 6 (No Date). I don't know if HERE & NOW is still being produced, but instructions for orders in issue No. 6 were: Published by the Here & Now Collective in the West of Scotland:-

POs/Cheques to be made out to G.P.P.; Subscriptions: 2.00 for 3 issues UK; 2.50, overseas; 4.00, institutions. Articles should be sent to the above address.

HERE & NOW, the successor to the Clydeside Anarchist Journal, has been in circulation for about 4 years. As the first editorial put it, the magazine was motivated by the need "to re-examine the assumptions at the root of what is taken for 'activity' by revolutionary minorities". The corollary aim, to understand "what is unique to our time", is realized through a broad selection from current developments in radical theory and practice. Indeed the variety of articles is very impressive - to the extent that it is impossible to give a robust summary. Instead, here's a very partial list to give some flavour of the spread (see contents lists presented close to this review): Theoretical issues covered have included the contradictory impact of Information Technology, the problematics of contemporary selfhood, the recuperation of the past, and the mire of ecopolitics. Concrete historical commentaries ranging from Kampuchea to Poland to

Clydeside communities have been presented. In addition to the usual letters, reports and some excellent book reviews, there has been a series of challenging analyses of important modern theorists such as Bookchin, Castoriadis, Lasch and Baudrillard.

It is difficult to pin down any overall stance or style within and across issues. At most there is a quasi-situationist sensibility running through the pieces of some of the more regular contributors, but this is always reflexive and undogmatic. The magazine's critical openness, when alloyed with the political incisiveness of many of the articles and the willingness to engage in debates that might seem marginal or even antithetical to anarchism, has made HERE & NOW a very stimulating read. I can only hope we have not seen the last of this excellent periodical.

Mike Michael.

(RH)

n° 7-8- The tyranny of normalisation (how the anti- institutionalism of the 60s has been appropriated by the managers of the 80s) - Cash in hand (self employment harbours the possibility of a challenge to the domination of commodity economy) - Language , truth and violence - Policing the truth (on the reality of policing in the 80s)- Sigh of redemption (on the ideological impoverishment of the left)- Not what it seems (review of the book 'The assault on culture : Utopian currents from Lettrism to Class War by Stewart Homes) - The 'secret articles ' of Guy Debord (review of Debord 's book 'Commentaires sur la Société du Spectacle) -Mythinformation (review of some recent books on modern technology) - The issue includes an 'Eastern Europe supplement ' mostly concerning Poland (except two short texts on Romania and Yougoslavia),

HS

Wildcat

BM Cat London , WC1 N 3XX -(in english)

n°13 - summer-autumn 89 -Capitalism is a disaster - Hillsborough : police massacre -Poll tax ; don't register , don't pay - A blasphemous arrow of retribution- 1789 and all that ...-Dolor de Cabeza por capitalismo- The Intifada spreads- The ACF on Ireland -Eye witness in Halabja - The Herald of Free Enterprise ; Thatcherism in crisis.

Subversion

c/o Raven Press , 75 Piccadilly , Manchester , M1 2BU (in english)
 Discussion paper n°3 on 'Decadent Capitalism ', This is the third
 discussion paper produced by Subversion in a series leading up to a
 conference in Manchester on the 1st July 1989. This text contributed
 here , by the Communist Bulletin Group seeks to provide a historical
 framework for the discussion, the main theme of which is : 'the
 importance of the market and bureaucracy for capitalism and its
 enemies ' ; it also looks briefly at the recent experience of
 'Keynesian ' and 'Thatcherite ' policies in Britain .(Communist
 Bulletin - Box CBG , 167 King Street , Aberdeen) , n°2 of these
 discussion papers is quoted in the section 'Japan ' of the present
 Echanges issue , n°4 will be on class struggle in USSR and available
 at or just before the conference date .

HS

Solidarity

Solidarity (London) c/ Lathom Road , London E6 2 EA (in english)
 n° 20 - Spring 1989-The impracticable in practice (after ten years of
 conservative rule why is there still no effective socialist
 opposition?-A K Barnard argues that what is dogging the left is surely
 its own dismal record in power rather than Mrs Thatcher 's avowed
 intention of destroying socialism .-Anti nuke movement falters as west
 cheats on missile treaty (even as the first cruise missiles were
 being removed from Britain last september under the terms of the INF
 treaty , the Pentagon was preparing massive new facilities at US bases
 in Upper Heyford , Banwaters and Lakenheath for their replacement by
 types of cruise missiles not covered by the agreement. Yet , as Paul
 Anderson finds , with the achievement of INF , support for CND has
 evaporated .- Dilemma saps european peace initiative -Review of three
 books on newspapers in UK ; 'The making of the Independent'(Michael
 Crazier - Gordon Frazer) , 'Disaster ; the rise and fall of the 'News
 on Sunday' ; Anatomy of a business failure (Chippendale and Harris-

HS

Sphere Books)- 'Eddy Shah , To-Day and the newspaper revolution '
 (Mac Arthur - David and Charles)

Mass -Observation

was a publication during the last world war championing the value of
 qualitative social research (no need to insist of the use of such
 works in war period and peace as well), 'War Factory ' by Celia
 Fremlin was published at first in 1943 and has been reprinted by the
 'Cresset Library '(Century Hutchinson -London). The book described the
 condition and resistance of women conscripted into factory work, 'Lack
 of interest in their jobs - and even in the war - left women few
 reserves to resist the long hours and tedious work. The book evokes the

detail of their daily lives as they struggle to find time to enjoy themselves and maintain some semblance of a normal life in extraordinary circumstances. Copy of the introduction and conclusion of the book at Echanges. - The Cresset Library published other Mass Observation books: 'The Pub and the People' and 'Britain'. HS/RH

The Economist

A survey of business in Britain-special issue-20/5/89(in english).

The end of the beginning- a lot of informations, data and charts on the present situation of english capitalism after 10 years of thatcherism.

Ford workers carry unions' torch on pay

The Independent -27/5/89 - in english

One of the key of the present strikes or threat of strikes in UK. (copy at Echanges)

A decade ago Ford's Halewood workforce was in daily dispute. To-day, with the same union leaders, it wants a 'made with pride' slogan on every car - Business Week 3/89 -(in english -copy at Echanges)

HS

The control of absenteeism : an interim report .

F K Edwards and C. Whiston - University of Warwick - (in english)

Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations - n°23 - I/89

This short university study on absenteeism in some selected workplaces in the Midlands does not bring new information or ideas on the question. Nothing has actually changes on the motives and methods for the management to deal with attendance and absence. Analysing 'shopfloor customs relating to acceptable standards of attendance' (for instance among the dockers), the authors came to identify what they call a 'clear work group culture of absence', adding immediately that the 'variation in absence rates between individuals was so great that there seemed to be no cultural norm'.

The paradox is that they give themselves the clue to this norm: harder is the capitalist competition, more were managers under growing pressure to control their costs, the result being that any absence affects operations more dramatically than used to be the case (e.g. with tighter staffing standards, any absence will have more direct effect on production). On the reverse, absence goes up immediately when the reasons for a tighter control are fading away. The conclusion is that 'much absence is unavoidable, many current control mechanisms operate only on the minority of 'bad attenders' and the claimed effects of new policies are often neither documented in detail nor shown to have any more than short-term impact'.

For instance , the study clearly stated that :

-staffing cuts had tended to eliminate some problems of long term sickness and also to remove some of less "conscientious workers" , the result being that the present workforce was younger , healthier and keener(which means less experienced in class struggle and more easily exploitable)

- a pretended low absence rate can be the result of a careful recruitment policy (meaning that the potential long-term sick as well as 'malingerers' don't even enter the factory) having nothing to do with the attendance control or a specific 'dedication to the job 'from the workforce.

Some of the quoted examples prove that a low rate of absence can suddenly jump to high records when new conditions open new possibilities for the workers (e g the introduction of more generous sick pay arrangements , of some tighter standards to control absence , monotony of work ..) Even the threat of dismissal for poor attendance is no longer a threat when other work is easily available .In other words,the pretended successes against absenteeism have not at all eradicated the 'disease ' but only pushed it on sides from where it can recur at any moment when 'objective conditions ' are here again .

It is the first conclusion we can draw from this study , even though it is not expressed openly like that ; what was considered ten years ago as part of the 'english disease ' was only creamed off by the new management policy of the 80s and present capitalist evolution could bring quickly the same kind of problems for the managers and a new balance of struggle (the post strike and the nurses action could give some examples) .

What is not answered in the text is the other ways of struggle used by workers when they are subject to a tighter control of absence(though the text reveals that a certain level of absence is impossible to reduce);we can get the beginning of an answer when the authors write that 'resentment ' (for instance against a tighter control of work) may make change in other areas far more difficult .

What is more clearly expressed is the unescapable contradiction between the carrot and the stick , between 'participation' and 'repression ' ;'deliberate and unjustified absence for the management may look to a worker like necessary escape from work pressures' and as 'the difficulty of tightening control is that standards may become too rigorous , particularly if there is an associated increase in effort levels '(managers need an 'absenteeism expert ' to write that 'taking

a day off is a great weapon of revenge ' .Actually , for the managers , the question is not so simple as they pretend it is . 'Politics of attendance control have become more important in many firms , but to the extent that these conflicts with other aims or fail to persuade workers of their purpose' so they can have limited consequence .Thence the importance for some firms to promote 'employee commitment or to find some recipes to 'communicate the purpose of control policies '(e g using the unions for that).The real conclusion is a very materialistic one ; the gains of reducing absence (by any method even the most sophisticated and often most costly ones) have to be set against the costs involved .Everything at the place of exploitation of labour force works in a capitalist system ,e g according costs and profit; in such matters as the so-called 'attitudes to work ' , the managing of labour is a kind of Penelop's work , workers trying constantly to unweave what the management is weaving on them ; this dialectical process has to be seen in the working relationship as a whole and as the main force pushing ahead the destabilising capitalist dynamic.

H S 6/89

SPAIN

Odio al capitalismo

A.V.Vida Natural , Apartado de Correos n°25 -27080 , Lugo (in spanish) n°4 - April june 1989 -The building of a programme ; an historical text with an annex on the 2d International and some biographical notices- some informations on class struggle in Spain -Argentina ; reproduction of a text of Emancipacion Obrera

SINEW, Spanish Information Network

6 a , The Drive , Roundhay , Leeds ,LS8 ILF, UK (in english) This anarcho-syndicalist publication gives a lot of various informations about Spain (class struggle and organisations) n° 6-12 contains ; 'Organising an anarcho-syndicalist trade union' reproduction of a 1983 pamphlet supposed to give some guidelines to the CNT in Spain-Report of the sixth congress of the CNT-AIT --Why stand for unions elections ?-What was the CNT like in the 30's- 10th congress of the CNT-U-'Victoria six' come up for trial and go free- Across the North East corner (about workers in the CNT-U in Barcelona, Zaragoza)- CNT -Michelin-Vitoria- Car workers on the move (SEAT Barcelona)- Sweden ; the SAC , rank and file trade union , -The OVB ;Holland's rank and file trade union .

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Cultura Libertaria

Apdo de correos 1687 ,Vittoria 01080 (in spanish) n° 15 - mai 89 -The Ferrer influence in Brasil-The documentation centre of the A I P (Association Isaac Puente)

Resiste

Resiste/Eutsi , Apdo 1673 - Gasteiz - (in spanish)

n° 8 -Anarchoindependentism -An anticapitalist and antiimperialist answer of Euskal Herria -On drugs -The hard task of free expression in Gasteiz -The 'communes 'yesterday and to day -Answer to the sociology of social control-Art and non art - On sex and sexism

Zer egin

S.Martzial 2,4 -Ezk ,2005 - Donostia (in spanish and basque)

n°260 -Argentina ; the surprising occupation of the Tablada(january 89)-Crusade against the assembly of unemployed ,

N)ÉS& -The viability of the basque self determination-One year of the Intifada -

n°262 -Violation and reform of the penal code -Mariategui ;an original american marxism

n° 263- the basque identity-

n°264 -marginal linguistic commentaries-The sexuality: pleasure or danger for women-A strike against discrimination in Osakidetza ,

LATIN AMERICA

-Discussion on Nicaragua ; Socialism (in quotation marks)

News from everywhere -Box 14 , 136 Kingsland High Street ,London E8 2NS (in english)

reprint from 'No middle ground ' San Francisco 1984,This small pamphlet which introduce healthy view on a subject generally dealt with sentimental or ideological arguments ; as it is printed in the back cover ; 'The FSLN is ,another example of how traditional left organisations...choose to look upon society's production from a productivist point of view,.... A productivist point of view denies or forget that production most of all produces class relations between people (workers and management) and also subordinates workers to objects"

-Guatemala ; What has democracy wrought ?-High hopes for civilian governement have given way to grim reality- New York Times Magazine 26/3/89 (in english) (copy at Echanges)

-The other Guatemala - Ruth Sheridan - Central American Update -may 89 (in english) copy at Echanges)

-Guatemala ; Labour inches out of the long repression -In these Times 25/1/89 (in english)(copy at Echanges)

-Nicaragua , a personal reflexion - Ruth Sheridan-Central America Update - april 89 -(in english) (copy at Echanges)

-Despite terror , Guatemalan students protest openly -In these Time- 25/1/89 -in english -copy at Echanges -

China's New Labour Market-No more iron rice bowl (in english)
The Nation - 28/11/88

We reproduced this article which gives the social background of the recent social and political riots in China. To compare we can read again Marx description of capitalism in the first half on 19th century. HS.

NO MORE IRON RICE BOWL

China's New Labor Market

SAUNDRA STURDEVANT

Economic reform in China has moved ahead during the past ten years with a speed that has left the country breathless. Since Deng Xiaoping's protégé, Zhao Ziyang, took over the Communist Party leadership in November 1987, the reforms have gathered pace. Zhao has been an energetic advocate of accelerated growth: Upon taking office, he encouraged the rapid development of export-oriented industry in China's "Gold Coast" provinces, even at the risk of social inequality and disorder; and he argued for continued reliance on the market to set prices, even at the risk of inflation. In both cases, the party leadership appeared until recently to believe that short-term upheavals were necessary growing pains on the way to a healthy economy.

But the twin threats of inflation and debt are now at China's door. Inflation is perhaps the last remaining shred of egalitarianism in the Chinese revolution - its effects are felt by everyone. Earlier this decade inflation was running at an annual rate of 10 to 12 percent. But each of the past three years has seen increases of 20 to 25 percent, and in the Special Economic Zones (S.E.Z.s), where the new industrial growth has concentrated, the rate has climbed to at least 50 percent. With the price increases of the first six months of 1988, costs of consumer staples have officially risen by 24 percent. The real inflation rate may be more than twice as high.

The root of the problem is the overheating of the economy by the extensive construction of new industrial capacity. Deng's reforms called for renewing China's industrial structure through the purchase of advanced foreign technology, and that has been enormously costly. The state has also sunk huge additional resources into providing the right environment for industrial investment; in an economy of scarcity with a strained transportation system, the result has been fierce competition for construction materials, equipment, energy and other resources.

Western bankers now estimate that China's external debt has reached \$35 billion. Loans start coming due in 1990, with the Japanese holding most of the paper. In a world of mega-indebtedness, that may appear a less than critical

Saundra Sturdevant is the former East Asia representative of the American Friends Service Committee. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily represent those of the A.F.S.C.

level: The consensus seems to be that there is no cause for alarm until the debt reaches \$50 billion. But the \$35 billion figure does not tell the whole story, for it covers only central government debt, not debt incurred at the provincial level, where purchases by factories - and, increasingly, by individual entrepreneurs - have mushroomed as a result of the decentralization of contracting powers. Repeated efforts to establish central accounting procedures for foreign-exchange transactions have failed.

Deng and Zhao observed the success of the South Korean and Taiwanese economies and decided that the key to China's success in export-oriented development was the country's cheap labor pool, even though plant and equipment lagged twenty years behind the capitalist world. They applied the lesson first to the labor-intensive processing and assembly plants in the S.E.Z.s, where thousands of Hong Kong-based industries have relocated.

This spring, the industrialization policy was extended to the densely populated cities, towns and villages of China's nine eastern, southern and northeastern coastal provinces. There, thousands of industrial interests have begun to compete for foreign capital. Other Asian investors have followed Hong Kong's lead in shifting operations there, and with a good percentage of the world manufacture of toys, watches, textiles, plastic products, electronics and communications components based in East Asia, the potential for their relocation to China, with its low wage rates, is enormous.

A special plenary of the Communist Party Central Committee in late September demonstrated that China's leaders are now abruptly taking account of the social impact of this rapid modernization. One of the most dramatic effects of the reform has been what the Chinese press, never shy of hyperbole, calls the "tidal wave of transregional transfer of labor."

China's free labor market originated in the countryside, the first area touched by Deng's reforms, where labor was privatized and given new mobility. As the Chinese Communist Party says, "Maximum use of the special positive feature of an abundance of labor resources will be made by bringing the rural labor force into a big international cycle." Deng's agricultural reforms transformed the rural organization of labor and shattered the "iron rice bowl" - the Chinese idiom for security of employment with social welfare and worker's benefits. The reforms broke up the commune system and replaced it with one in which the head of each household contracted to cultivate an agreed-upon acreage of land, setting a certain percentage to the state.

The head of a household was thus in a position to resume his traditional authority to allocate each family member's labor with an eye to generating the maximum total income. Other than labor performed inside the home, all work and service relations became contractual. By the spring of 1983, the commune system had come to be regarded as a historical aberration of the Maoist period; the bedrock of the new value system was the idea that "to be rich is to be glorious."

Under this new system, many left the countryside hoping to make a better living than they could from agricultural labor. The land itself is poor. Even the best of it, which is

home to most of the famed "10,000-yuan peasants," is only medium-grade by world standards. The rest of the countryside either lacks infrastructure or is just plain dirt poor. Ten years ago 10.5 percent of the land in China was suitable for cultivation; today the figure is down to 7 percent. With a rural population of 800 million, China simply has too many people trying to make a living off the land. Budget allocations for agriculture dropped from 10 percent in 1978 to a mere 4 percent in 1987, so there is little likelihood this situation will change soon.

Most of those leaving the countryside are young males. They seek employment in mining, lumbering and rural industry, or as trade apprentices; but work in haulage and construction absorbs most of them. Anything pays better than farm labor. A ten-hour day in haulage or construction, for example, pays seven or eight yuan (roughly \$2 at the official exchange rate). Work in the fields pays as little as two yuan.

Growing numbers of young women are leaving the countryside also, to work as domestics, waitresses or child care providers. At one major migrant labor market for domestics in Beijing, there may be 40,000 to 50,000 women looking for work — compared to 200,000 or more young males looking for construction work at another agency nearby. Other cities have similar labor centers, and pickup points for day laborers also operate, commonly near railway and bus stations.

Some young women have turned to prostitution. Officially, this is described as part of the phenomenon of "spiritual pollution" caused by increased foreign influence. But nothing is said about the growing number of women known as *lu-ben-yi* ("roadside chickens"), who ply their trade along the overland transportation routes. Often two or three will work together out of a roadside food stall, a sort of Chinese truck-stop. Privately, officials laugh this off as a temporary and natural byproduct of development, and offer recently opened VD clinics as proof of the state's sense of responsibility.

The exodus of workers from the countryside has been quickened by the droughts, floods and man-made disasters of the past three years. Virtually all areas have been affected. Hubei province has just experienced the worst drought in a century, and forest fires in the northeast have been the most extensive ever recorded. Deng's agricultural reforms have left rural areas extremely vulnerable to bad weather. In this country of scarce arable land, the key to production and survival is effective water control and irrigation. But the privatization of labor has been accompanied by the privatization of land and water-control systems, and the lack of maintenance is striking. In the lush fields of southern China, three-foot plants sprout from the sides of aqueducts. The rains bring rapid deterioration, and the underfunding of flood-control systems is made worse by the fact that large numbers of skilled local leaders, who might have taken corrective measures, have migrated to the cities to seek more lucrative jobs.

Urbanization as a result of migration is dramatic, with cities of all sizes growing rapidly. By late 1986 Beijing had 1.2 million registered migrants and was absorbing some 100,000 new residents each year. The influx into Shanghai and Guangzhou is even heavier. By early 1988 some 50 million peasants had flocked to the cities and towns, and no one has any idea of how many unregistered illegals there may be. This flood of new arrivals has placed an enormous strain on housing, transportation, energy, the food supply

and health, education and security services. The birthrate among urban migrants is high by Chinese standards, with three or more children per family common. To try to establish some control, the Public Security Office has now begun issuing identification cards to anyone aged 16 or older living in the cities and border regions.

For these new migrants, the iron rice bowl will not be part of the employment picture. Medical, accident and pension benefits are now seen by the party as "excessive social welfare burdens" that companies "need to be free from in order to improve their market competitiveness." If benefits are provided at all, it is increasingly in the form of productivity bonuses.

The abundance of cheap migrant labor in an economy of scarcity that is rushing to industrialize and maximize profits has placed enormous power in the hands of employers. The threat of unemployment is now always in the background. The state considers this a positive thing, seeing the combination of unemployment and competitive hiring as a way to "spur the enthusiasm of the workers and encourage their originality," resulting in a greater output of goods and services of higher quality.

The iron rice bowl has given way to the labor contract. Contracts — normally verbal — stipulate the length and conditions of employment, enumerate the tasks to be carried out and specify the quantity and quality of the services or products to be provided. At the more modern end of the industrial scale, for example at a Sanyo plant, the employees' "floating wage" is calculated on the basis of a piecework system that links production to the overall economic performance of the workplace. Output, profits, quality, energy consumption and safety are all taken into account.

But most of China's smaller labor-intensive enterprises are not concerned with these niceties. The workplace may be no more than a village room housing twenty women and a half-dozen children, with a single light bulb suspended from the ceiling. Communication among the workers is often difficult, since they are largely illiterate and are likely to have migrated from different areas and thus speak different dialects. According to the Chinese authorities, child labor accounts for a fifth of the work force, though a regulation prohibiting it was recently passed in Guangdong province, adjoining Hong Kong.

Seeking even a modest degree of workplace improvement has revived the old customs of *guanxi*, the patriarchal network of family, school and work relationships that define everyday existence. Cultivated in myriad forms, including wining and dining, gift-giving and bribery, *guanxi* is used to obtain whatever is needed or desired. Those who are implementing the Chinese reforms are the skilled and educated survivors of the Cultural Revolution. In the course of that bitter experience, many learned an elemental lesson: One can rely only on the members of one's family. That discovery lies at the root of what the Chinese now call a "crisis of faith." And it opens the way to pervasive corruption.

The special five-day plenary of the Central Committee in late September served notice that the Chinese reform process may have slipped out of the party's control. Chinese industry was hit by a wave of strikes in the first six months of this year, and late this summer soaring prices provoked a spate of panic buying and bank runs. At the end of the September plenary, the leadership announced that it intended to apply a brake to several areas of a badly overheated economy.

In the first nine months of 1988, the Chinese economy grew at a remarkable annual rate of 17.5 percent. That will be slowed to 10 percent or lower next year, Zhao announced in a speech to the Central Committee made public in late October. This will have an immediate effect on the coastal provinces, where the recent growth spurt has been centered. These regions have enjoyed a high degree of autonomy; now, they will be subject once more to Beijing's dictates. Even the flood of foreign investment may be affected. More than 100 industrial projects have been canceled or postponed, seven of them joint ventures with foreign companies.

The principal target of this economic retrenchment is inflation, which the party aims to reduce to single digits. In his speech to the Central Committee, Zhao described the battle against inflation as the "touchstone by which to test the party's and government's ability ... to be in command of the situation." □

More than just Chinese racism - The anti african protest (in english)
 The Nation , 13/2/89-R, Seidelman - The protests were not purely or only a manifestation of virulent racism . The demonstrations had other roots Nine years ago the Chinese Communist regime introduced free market reforms to have produced the new affluence so evident to Chinese and foreign visitors. But in Nanjing and elsewhere the reforms have also swelled the urban underclass of unemployed and underemployed young people. While Chinese television and the press are full of success stories.... there are many who have been left out in the cold by reforms that make it harder to get and keep a job, receive a decent education or assume a respectable place in Chinese society The real target was the Chinese government and the new economic order it has brought about... While the Nanjing demonstrators were almost all young , they were a varied lot ... the most prominent group was of university students... College students in China may seem like a small elite , but the majority face low-paid state-sector jobs , tiny stipends , poor facilities and vast restrictions of intellectual or political expression... The most unalloyed racism ... was expressed by those young people the government likes to say are "waiting for employment"... in marxist terms it is the lumpenproletariat. Those waiting for employment can often be seen outside Chinese train stations or in public squares... Their growing numbers reflect the negative side of the economic reform process; the mechanization of agriculture has put increasing pressure on the cities and on China's traditional family structure. Education may be less regimented , but it is also less available in many areas . Social services of all kinds are tied to employment ; if you're unemployed , you're protected neither by the old socialist system nor by the new capitalist one'. All this situation looks like a rehearsal of what happened in may and june . (copy at Echanges)

(HS)

The perils of progress

from Far Eastern Economic Review - march 89 (in english)

A complete review of the present situation in China ; Economy , Politics , Agriculture, Foreign Trade , Foreign Investment , The Special Economic zones (SEZ) , Society , Corruption , Population , Foreign relations , Law , Arts ,(copy at Echanges)

What do the workers want ? (in english) from Newsweek

20/3/89: interview of a top bureaucrat of the official trade union as trade union leaders sit in a delicate position between the nervous government and increasingly disgruntled workers (copy at Echanges) HS

Little dragon model : intellectuals advocate strongman before democracy (in english) from Far Eastern Economic Review 9/3/89 - the rise of a 'neo authoritarianism ' theory arguing that economic liberalisation in the country can be realised only through centralised political power (copy at Echanges) HS

NEW ZEALAND

The State Adversary-PD Box 78104 , Grey Lynn , Auckland , Aotearoa (in english)-Paper of the Anarchist Alliance of Aotearoa,

April 1989 -21st anniversary of the may 68 french uprising; it is actually a good example of how events could be seen through the distorting mirror of papers and books from the other side of the world , -Some scattered news about New Zealand,

J A P A N

We are giving only the list of material about Japan ,some already quoted in Echanges, bringing a less traditional view of what is class struggle in present Japan ,

-Class struggle and technological innovation in Japan since 1945 -

Muto Ichiyo (in english)

Notebooks for study and research - International Institute for Research and Education-2 rue Richard-Lenoir, 93018 Montreuil , France or Center for Changes - 7012 Michigan Avenue Detroit , MI 48210)

n° 5 - 1987 --Japan in the US Dominion ; State, Politics and the working class in the 80s -Class struggle in postwar Japan. A review of this text in Against the current n°19 march-april 89 -7012 Michigan Avenue , Detroit , MI 48210 (RH)

The Japanese car industry in 1985 ; an example of the reaction against the problems of the world industry .-Marcel Papin - From Analyse Financière 1979(in french) (copy at Echanges) .

Privatisation of railways and the crisis of the railways unions in Japan (Masanori Hanada) from Travail -October 1987 (in french) already quoted in Echanges (copy at Echanges)

The state and capital in Japan ,

Subversion- Discussion paper n° 2 (in english)- Box W , c/oRaven Press , 75 Piccadilly , Manchester , M1 2 BU

Capitalism Japanese style -State and industry -The political system- The American occupation - Bureaucracy and the market in tandem- Dual economy , dual workforce - Japan ; the democracy that isn't.

HS

PHILIPPINES

US sponsored low intensity conflict in the Philippines- Walden Bello -Food first development Report n° 2 - The Institute for food and development policy- 145 9th Street -San Francisco , CA 94103, (in english) (6 \$)

This small book gives a good report of the situation in the Philippines since the last world war and of its social background. It examines closely the present approach of USA to the domination of this country using what is called the 'strategy of the Third Force'; promoting reformist leaders pressuring for the return of elections as a means of regulating conflicts within the elite and defusing popular pressure, robbing the revolutionary movement (based only on poor peasants claim for land) of its legitimacy and initiative then supplementing this political -ideological blow with military action .

HS

CANADA

Resistance: documents and analyses of the illegal front (in english) Friends of Durruti, PO Box 790, Stn A, Vancouver, B.C., Canada , V6C2N5 n° 12 -Militant Cell (West Germany)- Revolutionary anti racist Action -European unification opposed.

Open Road - Anarchist News Journal (Box 6135, Station 6, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6R46) No 24/Winter 88: Debate on the Vancouver Five: The issue is courage: Whether to flee or fight or accomodate - Review of the book "Attention, MOVE. This is America" (H. Banner Press, Chicago), on the killing of members of a black radical group, MOVE, in 1985 in Philadelphia.

ARGENTINA

The F.O.R.A. in the argentine syndicalist movement (in french)
 Partage Noir (Monde Libertaire , rue Amelot , 75011 Paris)
 Small historical pamphlet but nothing on the present situation.

I T A L Y

Collegamenti Wobbly

Angelo Caruso , Via Felice Casati 26 , 20124 Milano (in italian)
 n° 23-24 -spring 1989-Finis Terrae-On the question of training-
 Philosophical paradigm of labour , political paradigm of communism-The
 enigma of labour- Remote horizon-French file chronique on the social
 movement in France in 1988 -The movement in the health sector in
 France -Demonstrations against the FMI congress in Berlin .

Radio Onda d'Urto -

Contrada del Carmine 16, 1-25121 Brescia - Italy.
 is a free radio broadcasting counter information and asking for
 publications and material to be used in its programmes .

SWITZERLAND

Confrontations

Organisation Socialiste Libertaire- Lausanne , 10 - 15446 -3 (in
 french)
 n°3 - december 1988- 1918 , Brupbacher , the mates and the general
 strike -New technologies ; ETA Marin -The destruction of Zaffaraya-
 Interview about Uruguay- One century of anarchism in Poland
 n°4 -The initiative 'Town-Country ' against the property speculation
 -Squatt in Geneva -On the recent movements of strike in France -
 Columbia ; direct democracy on the way .

BELGIUM

Mouvement Communiste pour la formation du parti communiste mondial
 BP 1666 Centre Monnaie ,1000 Bruxelles 1 (in french)

This new publication follows the merging between of the reviews
 'A contre courant ' and 'Cahiers Communistes '

n° 0 -For the communist movement-some points for a programme-The
 modalities of exploitation -October in Algeria

Supplement to n° 0 ;Venezuela , democratic paradise for capital ,
 deadly inferno for the proletariat .

Le Communiste

BP 54 - BXL 31 - Belgium (the publications of this groups exist in french , english , spanish , portuguese and arabic)

n° 28 - december 1988 ;Our contribution to an account of revolution and counter revolution -The social-democrat transition towards socialism-The social and economical policy of the bolcheviks- OCR : revolution and counter revolution .

Theses of an orientation programme- 1989

Internationalist perspective (in french or in english)

Destryker BP 1181 ,Centre Monnaie , 1000 Bruxelles ,Belgium

or BM Box 8154 ,London WC1 N 3 XX , U K

or PO Box 1748 ,Montclair , NJ 07042 , USA

n° 13 spring 1989 -Nationalism , a crime against humanity -Strike in the public services ; the defence of a sector , an obstacle to the development of workers struggles -Romania: Ceauscu -Gorbachev , the two sides of the same coin -Why the russian revolution is not the model for the revolution of to morrow -Notes on the Mitchell text (a debate on the transition period) .

U S S RThe New USSR

Special issue in english of Time n°15 10/4/89 lokking at every aspect of the present economic and social life in USSR.

Russia last chance

The Economist 11/3/89 -a short historical survey of the recent attempts of reform of the USSR economy .(copy at Echanges)

YUGOSLAVIA

Yugoslavia ; autumn 88 -Tiziano Galante - Provocazione - (in italian)

The last events in Yugoslavia (copy at Echanges)

WEST GERMANYThe Republique of the councils in Bavary (1919)

Partage Noir - Monde Libertaire -rue Amelot -75011 Paris (in french)

This short pamphlet is a good example of a one way piece of disinformation ;pretending to reveal an 'unknown episode of the revolutionary history 'it ignores deliberately the non anarchist non leninist sources ; trying to push ahead an 'anarchist councillist theory' 'not to be confused with councillism which is a marxist doctrine and rather authoritarian '

Die Aktion - Zeitschrift für Politik, Literatur, Kunst (Edition Nautilus, Hasserstr.22, 2050 Hamburg 80) - Ein romantischer Rowdy (on the life and work of the anarchist Senna Hoy).

From Edition Nautilus is ~~xxxx~~ available catalogues about the books by this publisher, which also has produced a number of posters and postcards. Among these books ~~xxxxxxx~~ (all in German) is the series 'Works of Franz Jung', which includes his autobiography and a large collection of the writings of this author which in the beginning of the 20s was a member of the German Communist Workers Party (KAPD) and together with Jan Appel formed the party's first delegation to Russia.

RH

Wildcat "Info" (c/o J.Kuri - Postfach 35 31 - 3300 Braunschweig - in German) No 23/Juli-August 88: Texts about council- and left communism and about Lotta Continua (as part of their debate about 'revolutionary organisation') - Material about the conditions of German prisoners - Report about a strike at Reha-Zentrum in Bad Honnef: an institution where the patients are involved in work and employment therapy and small scale production, and where the nursing personell and other employees went on strike demanding contract negotiations with the employer.

No 24/Oktober 88: Protocol of discussions at meeting of groups associated with Wildcat - Article about the concept of 'productive cooperation': changes in the methods of production, the composition of the working class... - Palestina-the future of a revolt (from Le Brise-Glace no 1) - Article on Chinese workers (from Far Eastern Economic Review) - Report about the activity of Wildcat and other people to help, to mobilize and to intervene among workers (mainly immigrants) of a construction firm and firms providing temporary labour.

RH

GENERAL THEORY

- The work/energy crisis and the apocalypse -Text published in 1980 by (RH) Midnight Notes (Box 204 Jamaica Plain, Mass 02130) in english ,
- All rich nations need their debt, not necessarily a burden (The Nation 23/1/89) (in english , copy at Echanges)
- Castoriadis portrait , a thinker of autonomy -Eguchi Kan (in french) to be published in Revue Européenne des sciences sociales , Droz, Genève ,
- Deep and social ecology- a short review of the different ecology tendencies and their criticism (from Bulletin of Anarchist Research n°15 - copy at Echanges) (in english) (RH)
- Economic crisis , war and revolution from International Review n°52 (RH)
- 1st quarter 1989 - ICC review

HS

U S A

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The Guardian Independent radical newsweekly (33 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011) 14/12/88: Inmates on strike in political isolation unit - A year of intifada gives birth to State.

Labor Notes "Let's put the movement back in the labor movement" 77435 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, MI 48210) No 117/Dec.88: Paperworkers locals plan long-term strategy to stop concessions, win back 3500 jobs - A day in the life of a farmworkers organizer. No 119/Feb 89: Japanese unions adopt controversial unity plan.

Processed World (BACAT, 37 Clementin St., San Francisco, CA 94105) No 23/Winter 88: Debt Heads - We ain't working on Maggie farm (on the Greens) - Credit card gulag - Big shopping - Born again - Mom - Children of the night.

Fifth Estate (4632 Second Avenue, Detroit, MI 48201) Winter 88-89: Report from Korea: a day enlightened by Molotov cocktails - The future of a rebellion: Palestina (from Le Brise-Glace no 1) Stopping the incinerators, starting the movement - Comments on J.Zerzan's Critique of Agriculture (in F.E. Summer 88) - The next generation of Autonomie.

Support Report (Austin United Support Group, 711 4th Ave.NE, Austin, MN 55912) About the group and journal, see Echanges 56. 2/12/88: Meat packers pay the price: safety slashed by speedups. 7/1/89: Meat packing industry news. 3/2/89: A company town decays - Meatpackers defending Lewie? - A union split over givebacks.

United Automobile Workers union making peace with Japanese in U (New York Times 19/12/88 - copy at Echanges) Diamond - Star plant in Bloomington, Illinois, is a joint venture Chrysler - Mitsubishi. Japanese managers have selected workers whose test results show that they can learn quickly and work cooperatively in a team: 872 assembly-line workers from 30.000 applicants. UAW has won recognition (as in Ford-Mazda's Flat Rock and GM-Toyota's Fremont plants) and agreed to the two job classifications at the plant in which workers are no longer "workers" but "production and maintenance associates". They have also agreed to the "team concepts" in which the team and the team leaders direct activities, set schedules and maintain discipline.

HS

Newsletter of the Anarchist Conference Festival 89(july89)(in english)
Without Borders , 1369 Haight St. , San Francisco , Cal 94117

Workers'Info -Rag

c/o Zamisdat Press - GPO Box 1255 - Gracie Station - New York - NY 10028 (in english)

n° 5 - January 1989 - Disturbance by blacks erupts in Miami - Judge puts restraints on pickets at Dravo (Shipyards in Pittsburgh) - Computer virus ,

Discussion Bulletin

PO Box 1564 , Grand Rapids , MI 49501 (in english)

n° 33 -january 89- Industrial unionists gather in St Louis -A contribution to the critique of Marx(John Crump)- Review of the John Zerzan 's book 'Elements of refusal ' ,

n°34 -march 89 ; Text on Norway (see Echanges n°57) -Book review: 'The burning question of trade unionism ' (the Deleonist Society - A.Anderson) - 'Antiparliamentary communism ; The movement for Workers'Councils in Britain , 1917-1945 -M.Shipway- Macmillan (see Echanges) ;'Free is cheaper ' (Ken Smith -John Bull Press)- Correspondence ,

n°35 - May 89 ;Hatta Shuzo and 'Pure Anarchism ' in Japan (John Crump)-Critique of Critical Critique (Louis Lazarus)- A contribution to a critique of John Crump (Larry Gambone) -and some shorter other critiques as well of the same previous article-Anarcho-syndicalism and councilism by Paul-Sheffield Direct Action Movement

Labor Notes

7435 Michigan Avenue - Detroit Mich 48210 (in english)

n° 120 - march 89 - Teamsters reeketeering case nears trial - Community support and interplant solidarity highlight Oregon strike against Morgan products (this strike lasted for 7 months in Sprigfiels - Oregon)

n° 121 - april 1989 -Teamsters win right to vote-Eastern Machinists draw the line on union-busting -AFL-CIO redbaiting hits Philippine unionists- Michigan autoworkers voting for 'New Directions ' ,

Green Synthesis

San Pedro Ca 90731 (in english)

n° 30 - march 89 -Ecology , Community and Art -Finding common ground,

Support Report

Austin United Support Group , 711 4th Avenue NE , Austin ,MN 55912(in english)

n°6 - march 89 - Is the UFCW slaughtering itself?-

n° 7 - april 89 -Hormel -'Welcome to Austin , Poland' -a good article on the background of the Hormel strike (Peter Rachleff) - The true story of why the UFCW canned its me&at head,

Fifth Estate

4632 Second Avenue , Detroit , MI 48201 , (in english)

n°24-Spring 89-Return of the son of seep ecology ; The ethics of permanent crisis and the permanent crisis in ethics(George Bradford)- Cheerleaders for the plague -The question of agriculture(answer to Zerzan's article 'Agriculture , essence of civilisation' FE summer 88

News and Letters

59 E, Van Buren , Rm 707 , Chicago , Ill 60605 (in english)

n°10 - december 1988 -Polish workers speak for themselves-East European revolt and the re-creation of Marx's marxism-Science and philosophy in age of state-capitalism-Ideology of Reaganism continues with Bush's victory,

Industrial Worker

3435 N. Sheffield Avenue , suite 202 , Chicago ILL 60657 (in english)

nov 88 :articles and texts on and from Joe Hill

dec 88 :A new kind of movement , a new form of organisation .

jan 89 :For business Unions -It's monkey business.

feb 89 :Organizing the meat packers (on the Hormel strike)

Workers Vanguard

Box 1377 , GPO , New York , NY 10116 (in english)

n°470, 3/2/89 ;How 'Mississippi Burning ' rewrites History .

n° 471 , 17/2/89 :Crucial battle for all labour :Showdown at Eastern airlines .

n°472 , 3/3/89 ;Strike Eastern , Spread the strike , Shut down the airports- El Salvador , moment of decision .

n°473 , 17/3/89 ;Eastern Airlines -Fascist cancer in Gorbachev Russia - Junk bonds and flying jalopies.

n° 474 , 31/3/89 ;RICO finks and Feds out , Hands off the Teamsters, Continental Flight attendants strike against Lorenzo .

n° 475 , 14/4/89 ;Soviet elections : a vote for what ?

n°476 , 28/4/89 :500,000 teachers strike against starvation wages :labor showdown in Mexico -

n°477 , 12/5/89 ;Eyewitness Kabul

n°478 , 26/5/89 ;Upheaval in China -Gorbachev's troubled harvest- Victory to Los Angeles teachers strike .

n°479 , 9/6/89 ;Beijing massacre ; civil war looms-Coal miners march for strike solidarity (Pittston strike -West Virginia)

The People

914 Industrial Avenue , Palo Alto , CA 94303 (in english)

11/2/89:South Korea Workers still suffer under economic dictatorship , conflicts between capital and labour on the increase.

25/2/89 :suit against teamsters , workers must oppose State control of unions ,

11/3/89 :Sociologist bemoan violence in US society-Shocking child poverty requires more than reform.

25/3/89 :Eastern workers fight vicious company attack-US plants defiling mexican border areas ,

8/4/89 :Sweatshops on the rise in San Francisco area-Youth services plan : cheap labour , more soldiers;coercitive 'poverty draft ' targets working class ,

22/4/89 :Economists' forecasts ignore capitalist realities ,

Eastern Airlines strike : we have a lot of material on this strike , mainly in english ; we can send copies of the most important texts. One issue of Socialist Action (april 89 - 3435 Army Street ,n°308, San Francisco , CA 94110) contains many pages on this strike .

Series of leaflets from c/o Chamberlain , 20 Clinton ,5A , Nex York ,NY 10002 (in english)

-The great adventure is not an amusement park ;On the political situation of love in the 80's,

-Going underground in the mines or : 'History is what we make of it ' ,

-From the left field ,Silicon breakdown ,

-Gang Warfare and revolution : unequal exchange in Granada.

-Their restructuring and ours : an open letter to the youth who would have taken this year's Soviet History Examination.

Series of articles on different aspects of economical ,political and social life in the USA we have groupes by subjects (all in english - copies at Echanges):

-ECONOMY and tendencies of american capitalism ;

+Exxon turns Alaska into dying ground (News and Letters 5/89)

+A new tobacco alliance ;the smoking industry looks to blacks for support (Newsweek 13/2/89)-Pushing cigarettes overseas :even as the Surgeon General fights tobacco at home , US trade officials press for sales abroad (the invasion of Japan and China by american tobacco companies)

+Bush takes the economy in hand , but will it follow :a survey of american economy (Dollar and Sense n°143-Economics Affair Bureau Inc,One summer street ,Somerville,MA 02143)

+America's third world ; the plight of the rural poor is worsening at an alarming rate .Poverty in the countryside now exceeds that of the nation's big cities ,(Newsweek- 8/88) (RH)

+Several articles on the challenge posed by the US savings and loan crisis (mainly the intervention of the Federal government to avoid the bankruptcy of the Saving and Loans industry)giving more and more importance to the States organisation .Hence the 'Concern grows on F.D.I.C. Power (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation);The bush plan would let the agency override Federal laws'(from San Francisco Chronicle , Newsweek ,New York Times and Financial Times)

+Why owner-workers are winners;5% of americans now own almost all capital assets(The New York Times 29/1/89)

+The wasting disease ; behind the fuss over the dollar and the trade deficit lies a far bigger fear ; that America is giving up investment ,(The Economist 27/5/89)

+ New report points to strengths in Northwest economy (The Seattle Times 19/2/89)

-WORKERS AND CLASS STRUGGLE :

+Union bargaining reports : 'In contract settlements involving 1,000 and more workers , union workers are still facing falling real wages , according to the Bureau of Labour Statistics .During the first nine months of 1988 over 1.4million workers were covered by such major settlements .On average ,their union contractsd will provide wage hikes of just 2.5 % over the first year and 2.4 % over the life of the contract.In comparison , the Consumer Price Index , which understates increases in workers' real living costs , rose 4.2% in the year prior september 88...' (The People 17/12/88) (RH)

+No utopia , but to workers , it's a job ; fear , not just japanese style management , drives Nummi workers to peerform so well (New York Times Business 29/1/89)

+Undercover in Corporate America;how a private agent spies on employees to ferret out drug abuse" in the workplace.Workers use drugs largely 'to break up the monotony of going in day after day ' (New York Times 1/2/89)

+Why business turns to teen-agers;hard pressed for labour, employers hire younger workers ,(N Y Times 26/3/89).Some charts from this article ;

+The twilight of the big paycheck , blue collar area (for workers with little education ,, it's getting harder a nd harder to have a middle class life) (Spencer Rich) from the Washington Post National Weekly Edition 13/6/88)

+Despite a 5 year upturn , 9.7 million jobs are lost (NY Times 13/12/88)

Where Teen-Agers Are Working

States with the highest participation of teen-agers in the work force have either low unemployment or sizable farm economies. Teen-agers are employed less frequently in states with high unemployment rates. Figures are from 1987.

State	Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds in the work force	Jobless rate
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HIGHEST PARTICIPATION RATES

Minnesota	65.3%	5.4%
New Hampshire	63.9	2.5
Iowa	60.4	5.5
Wisconsin	59.6	6.1
Vermont	59.4	3.8
Utah	58.4	6.4
Rhode Island	56.8	3.8
Massachusetts	56.1	3.2

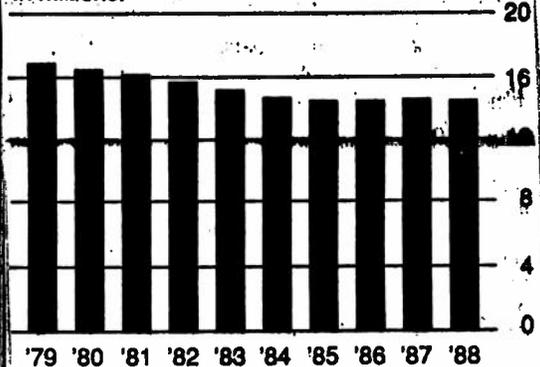
LOWEST PARTICIPATION RATES

Alabama	35.0%	7.8%
Louisiana	31.2	12.0
West Virginia	27.4	10.8
Mississippi	26.1	10.2

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

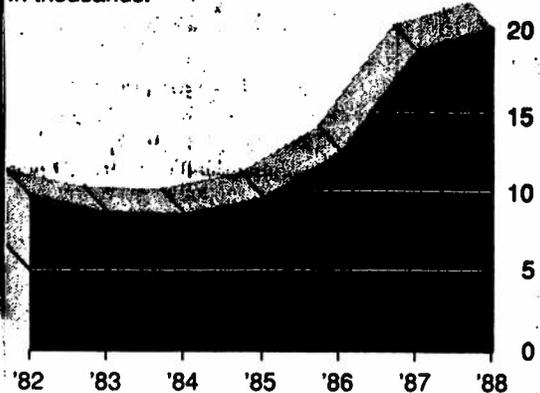
The pool of older teen-agers is shrinking.

Number of 16- to 19-year-olds in the U.S. In millions.



The number of child labor law violations has doubled.

In thousands.



+Sweatshops swell with immigrants (Seattle Times 19/2/89)

+The working poor 'Prosperity' skips these jobholders (Seattle Post Intelligence 19/2/89)

+Fear and loathing on the Chrysler assembly line (In these Times 23/11/88)

+Interview with Noam Chomsky (Kuow Seattle, 25/1/89) on 'Manufacturing consent' and other matters (including explaining his positions in the Faurisson affair)

-UNIONS

+Tiger by the tail-Taking on General Motors;a case study of the UAW campaign to keep GM Van Nuys open (The Nation 17/10/88)

+State of the union ; The Newspaper Guild under the gun (Columbia Journalism Review -1/89)

+A union split over givebacks ; a dissident leader says leatpacking wages should be rising with profits (in the background of the Hormel strike)(NY Times 1/2/89)

+Garment Unions challenge ruling allowing work at home (NY Times 5/1/89)

+Teamsters :The big sweep , sueing the union (Newsweek n° 28 , 1988) ,New Jersey Teamster local elects slate tied to the Mob (NY Times 12/8/88) ,Anthony Provenzano , 71 ex-teamster chief , dies (NY Times 12/12/89)and this short text from The People 17/12/88 :

A Ringing Endorsement

Despite rejoining the AFL-CIO, the Teamsters union continued to buck AFL-CIO tradition when it endorsed George Bush for president. There has been some media speculation that the Teamsters bureaucracy did so partly in the hope of getting Bush to drop the Justice Department's suit that now threatens to put the entire union under state trusteeship.

Having dropped the rule requiring a two-thirds vote to reject a contract and having forced another convict on its executive board to resign, the board may

make a few other reform moves pursuant to an out-of-court settlement with the Justice Department.

Of course, the manner in which the executive board made the decision to endorse Bush belies its hoped-for image of the Teamsters as a reformed, cleaned-up union. The endorsement was based on a rank-and-file referendum, but there is reason to question the procedure, since, according to *The New York Times*, "less than 2 percent of the rank and file returned ballots."

(RH)

-SOCIAL AND POLITICAL

+Lying for a cause runs in the family (on Bush background) (San Francisco Examiner 4/1/89)

+Reagan on Homeless ;some choose life out there (NY Times 23/12/88)

+Prisons of US facing new challenge in increase elderly inmates(NY Times 12/88)

+Ranks of black men shrink on US campuses (NY Times 5/2/89)

+Old radicals (This World Sunday - 11/12/88)

+Sniper's nest -Conscience matters - a review of various books on those who resisted the war within the military , often in Vietnam (Zeta Magazine 1/89)

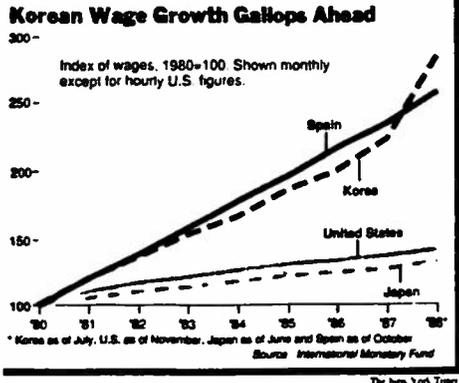
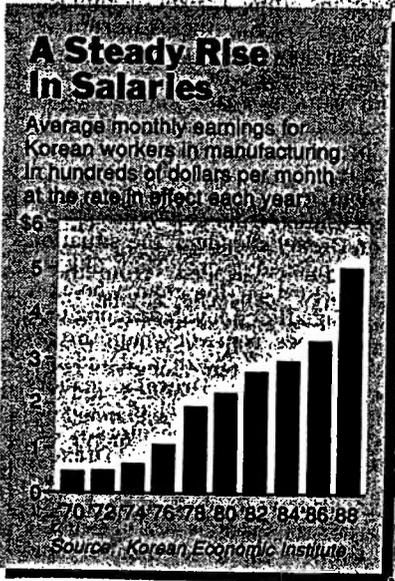
+22 families fight mass eviction in the South Bronx (mainly photos) (Zeta Magazine 1/89)

+Richest got richer and poorest poorer from 1979 to 1987 (NY Times 22/3/89)

+Moving on ; review of two books on the repression on blck people trying to organise : 'Burning down the house ; The MOVE tragedy of Philadelphia ' Henderson and Hevenor - Norton - and 'Attention MOVE ; this is America ' Margot Harry - Banner Press - (9/88)

+The rise of the homeless ; review of the book 'Rachel and her children ; homeless families in America ' Jonathan Kozol - Crown -(The New York Review 16/2/89)
 SOUTH KOREA and other N I C (Newly Industrialised Countries)

- Asia's miracle economics ; The first and last of a dying breed (Dollar and sense -1/1/89 -see address above)
- Labour militancy curbs economic growth in Taiwan and South Korea ; Squeezed by success(Far Eastern Economic Review 16/3/89)
- South Korea 's uneasy labour truce ; US companies caught in struggle for union rights(International Herald Tribune 24/2/89)
- Motorola 's labour war ; its bitter South Korean conflict reflects that nation's attempt to overcome a legacy of authoritarianism(NY Times (22/2/89) ,From this article two charts :



EUROPE

The dockers and the restructuring of european ports.

In different european countries the dockers have to fight against a complete transformation of their present conditions of work ; Spain , Italy , France , United Kingdom. We have already published articles on the struggle of the dutch and the spanish dockers; in further issues we will tell more about Genoa dockers, the strike in the french ports and the struggle in UK against the abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme . In this issue we will just give reference and content of some documents concerning the restructuring in the maritime transport .

General texts :

La manutention portuaire en 1988 - (in french)-Journal de la Marine Marchande -25/5/89-

Los problemas del transporte de mercancías ante la perspectiva de la liberalización europea (in spanish) -La Estiba n° 45 - march 1989

France:

-Dockers à Marseille ; des années 60 aux années 80 .

-Les plans sociaux ; poursuivre impérativement la restructuration mais autrement (in french) -Journal de la Marine Marchande-9/2/89

-La position des chargeurs sur la manutention dans les ports français. (in french) Journal de la Marine Marchande -25/5/89

-Le régime juridique de la manutention portuaire (in french) same reference .

-La compétitivité de la manutention portuaire ; un enjeu national (in french) same references .

Holland

Conflicto en los puertos de Holanda (in spanish)-La Estiba n° 46 4/89

The OVB ; Holland's rank and file trade union having members among Rotterdam's dockers.

Italy :

Les problèmes de la manutention dans les ports italiens (in french) mêmes références .

-Lucha en los puertos de Italia (in spanish)- La Estiba n° 45 -3/89

Spain

-Reunion de zonas de Coordinadora-Puerto de Tenerife, Alicante , Algeciras,Bilbao, Tarragona, Las Palmas (in spanish)La Estiba n°45 , march 89

-Coordinadora : puertos en marcha ;Bilbao , Tenerife,Barcelona, Algeciras (los negocios de Sea Land)(in spanish) La.Estiba ,n°46 ,4/89

- Rotas las negociaciones en Las Palmas- Cartagena en huelga --La precaria paz del puerto de Tenerife -Castellon-Un buquesovietico descarga en Cangas porque le cobran la mitad que en Vigo-Acuerto en Avilès-Tarragona ;La administracion y las empresas no cumplen el convenio - Denuncian a la naviera Contenemar por presunto contrabando de ganado -Los puertos cantabricos : Pasajes y Bilbao(in spanish)-La Estiba n° 47 -5/89.

Some of the texts above mentioned published by La Estiba have been translated in english and published by Sinew (see section 'Spain');n°7 (Dpockers have won round I), n°8 (Dockers fight on) , n° 9 (Dockers win final score 2-0) , n°10 (Grasping defeat from the jaws of victory) , n° 11 (Dockers as seen from America) , n°12 (Dockers'unity cracking),

United Kingdom

-Clear the Decks , abolish the Natioanal Dock Labour -David Davis - Policy Study n° IOI - Centre for Policy Studies - 1988- The basic document of the offensive against the NDLS -(in english)

-Manutention portuaire au Royaume Uni(in french) Journal de ma Marine Marchande 25/5/89.

-Dock Work Billl -Parliamentary Debates -House of Commons -Official report-(in english) 17/4/89 ,

-Asamblea Extraordinaria de los dock shop stewards (28/1/89) (in spanish) n° 45 , 3/89

-La senora Thatcher declara la guerra a los estibadores ingleses (in spanish and in english) -La Estiba n°47 , 5/89

(copies of all these texts available from Echanges ;'La Estiba 'issues can be obtained from c/del Mar ,97 ,08003 Barcelona)

HS

UNITED KINGDOM

NURSES ; long creeping strikes were only
the tip of the class struggle iceberg.

Historical background to understand a complex situation

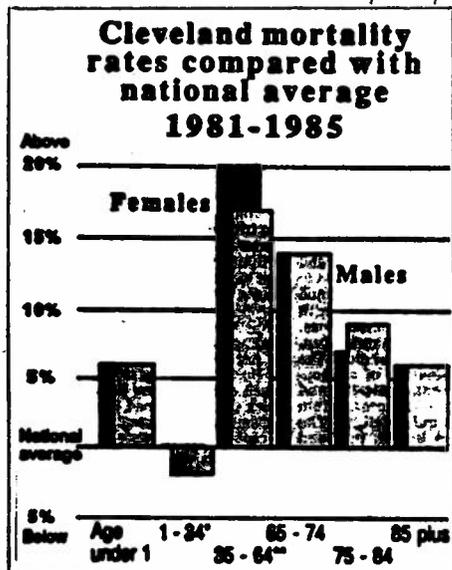
The NHS was established by the Labour government elected in July 1945 just after World War 2; as in other matters, Labour claimed to be doing it for people's welfare; it was part of the attempt to quench hopes in a new society and life which had arisen through the war burden of pain and horror,

Some highly advocated principles were supposed to meet these hopes; they all crumbled throughout the forty years of NHS 'existence'; the NHS was supposed to be:

- entirely free (far from that currently)
- financed out of general taxation (4/5 of NHS income come currently from direct taxes and 63% of it goes to hospitals)
- organizing preventive medicine, research and paramedical action on a national basis (currently a complete failure)
- modernisation and a high rate of investment (even now , hospitals are described as an 'appalling legacy of old buildings' and for years and years cuts prevented its following the path of modernisation)

In 1945 the actual situation in Health was far from these cosmetic considerations. Medicine in general and hospitals in particular were in such a bad condition - aggravated by war - that health problems came up as an essential for capitalism to have enough labour force fit for exploitation and eventually war. Most of the hospitals were private and in such a poor state they could not meet this need. So all medical activities were 'nationalised'; hospital staff as well as general practitioners (GP) and dentists became some kind of civil servants with a specific public organisation. It was far from revolutionary; the whole system was a compromise and an historian of the British Health could write: 'The most aristocratic and reactionary bodies had found it easiest to come to terms with "socialism". Behind the façade, all the health system was impregnated with previous "liberal" thinking'.

The purpose of this article is not to look inside the functioning and the result of an apparently ambitious Labour NHS. Only to insist that behind these 'radical' restructurings of medicine, nothing was really changed; it was class medicine and after some badly needed improvements the crisis brought about again the same tale as 'free medical care' beamed more and more money away from the patients.



Two factors specific to UK amplified these difficulties:

- the management of the crisis as well as the crisis itself aggravated the health gap between the have and the have not (see the chart of mortality in one of the present poorer district of UK),
- the rate of elderly population (the highest in the world; 15,1% in 1985).

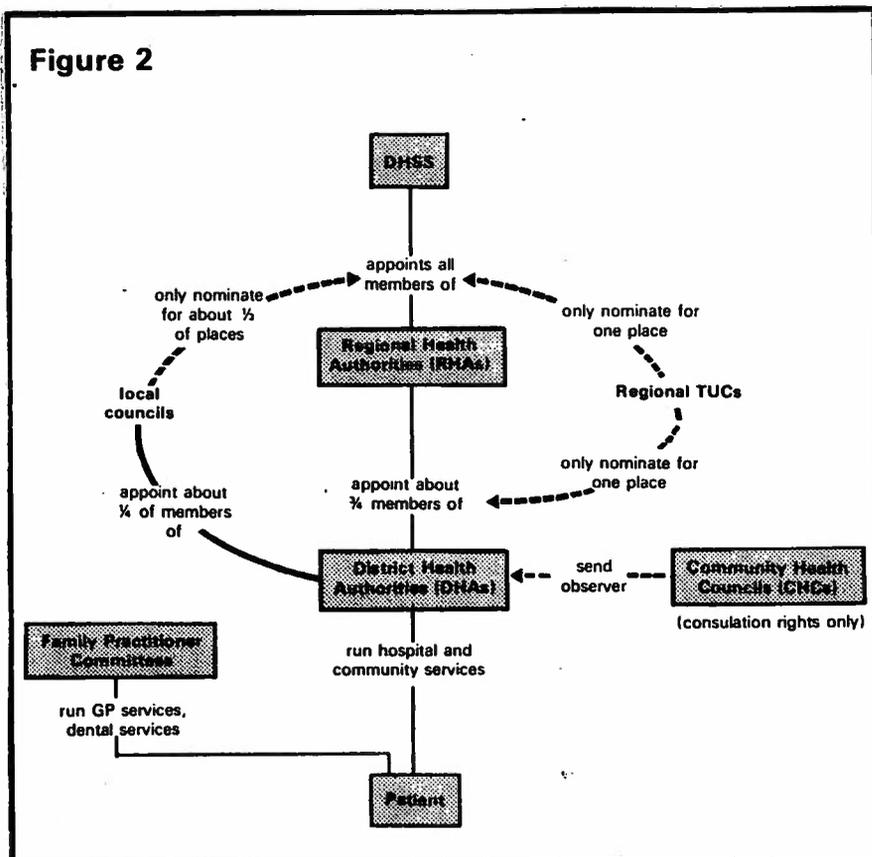
The result was that a higher rate of disease brought a higher burden of work a NHS - mainly hospitals - which saw a decline of income because of the crisis and the decline of the UK economy. This situation had, of course, a direct consequence for the health workers,

especially on nurse. Still it would not be the only cause of the nurses action because the same kind of movement occurred in other european countries without these specific conditions.

Until the 1974 reorganisation, the structure of the NHS was very paternalistic with management and doctors entirely packed with top middle class people. Then the NHS moved to a more bureaucratic structure-with State appointed managers directly dependent on the Secretary of State.

The figure below shows how the NHS is run. During the post 1974 years, the NHS has been exposed to a revolutionary management, the structure moving from a committee based consensus to a more business like management. Ancillary services have been opened to competitive tendering resulting in cash saving and a role for private contractors in some hospitals. Health authorities have faced tight cash limits and been forced to seek efficiency improvement too. A good example of this tendency is given by the appointment in 1984 of the managing director of Sainsbury supermarket giant chain to investigate the main problems of the NHS with the same profit consideration as in business.

Inside the hospitals lies a marked pyramid of power with the wealthy, white male consultant at its pinnacle and Asian and Caribbean cleaners, cook and ward nurses toiling away in despond and underappreciated at the base : a highly developed hierarchy with its intricate snobbery and subtle racial and sexual war ,



This description of the last three paragraphs gives a more general idea of the working conditions of the labour force in hospitals all over Europe , with of course the specific national differences we have developed above for UK . In common hospital staff from everywhere have to face a double pressure from the capitalist evolution;

-the general tendency of the rate of profit to fall pushed capital to open new fields for increasing benefits ;at first in reducing the share of taxation and redistribution of income hence the cuts in public expenses (which lead to business like management) , secondly more directly and as a consequence of the cuts as well to privatisation of more and more important parts of the NHS.

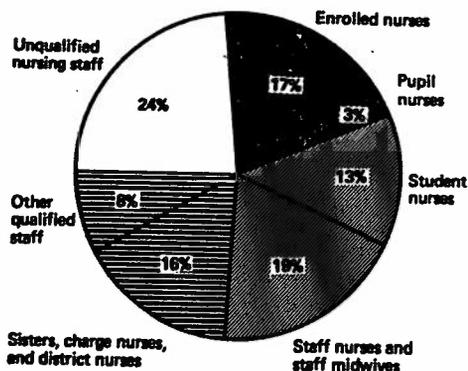
-the introduction of new techniques as part of the general evolution of society but also as the consequence of the general tendency just exposed above .

The consequence for the nurses is well described in a leaflet explaining what are nursing careers in an attempt to recruit for a nursing degree course (june 88): 'The essential contribution of the nurse must always be to care for those who are sick .At the same time , the role of the nures is developing and , with changing trends in health and social needs as the need to cope with an increasingly complex technology , there is a growing demand for nurses who are educated to reach their maximum potential both as nursing practitioners and as people ' ,

Before looking to which reality these requirements correspond ,let's see exactly what is the legal situation of hospital staff in the UK.

The NHS is the largest employer in Europe ; I million in 1987 out of which 487,000 nursing staff; it is also the largest UK employer of coloured people at all levels .There is three kinds of nurses:

- Registered General Nurses (RGN previously State Registered Nurses) .
- State Enrolled Nurse (EN)this category underpaid introduced in 1943 as a wartime solution ,recruited in Commonwealth countries,still recruited on a less qualified basis blocked in the NHS with no possibility of progression and no recognition in other countries; if by chance they get a qualification their residence permit can be withdraw and they have to leave the country; this category is supposed to disappear (mainly because they want to lower the qualification basis for the first category) but it still forms 20% of the work force.
- Auxiliary nurses dealing with non medical work ;bed making ,serving meals, feeding patients.



Distribution of whole time equivalent nursing and midwifery staff in Great Britain in 1985 (n=486 600).

The schools of nursing organise their own courses within the guidelines laid down by the ENB for Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors; qualified nurses can specialise in mental or mentally handicapped. This formation is different for the RGN and the EN and every category can get these qualification separately with the effect that RGN will be more qualified (and paid more) and EN will be less qualified (and paid less). To qualify for training at a first level of registered nurse (RGN) the STUDENT nurses will need 5 GCSE; to qualify for training at second level of registered nurse (EN) the PUPIL nurses need only 'a good standard of general education'. Both will follow more or less the same training but Students (RGN) for three years and the Pupils (EN) for two years. The training allowance will be the same for both (£4,825) on the first year and (£5,075) on the second year.

All trainee nurses have their labour highly exploited; students and pupils are required from the beginning to work part of their training time in a hospital ward. They have to work harder than the full time qualified staff, right up to their examination and are often too tired to study or to attend lectures properly. Unqualified staff are consistently landed with responsibility beyond their experience particularly at night (thence the efficacy of the 'work to grade' strike). Sickness absence which is higher than average among hospital staff because of the sheer pressure of their work destroys the best planned night provision.

Within nursing there is still a caste system with well off white girls training at London teaching hospitals and few working class English girls attracted to a job which demands long hours for very poor money under antiquated discipline. In the low prestige big hospitals, the nursing staff have traditionally been women from Ireland and West Indies with Malysian, Asian and African immigrant providing more and more of the woman labour power.

Trainee nurses are often half of the nurses working in the ward. In the shift work - much of it in unsocial hours without a regular pattern and rotated at short notice. A student nurse with only a single month's training finds herself alone at night with pretty well full responsibility for a whole ward of patients and severely reprimanded for the slightest mistake. Leisure time is often spent within the nursing home. EN pupils and nurse are particularly exploited; when training they do the bulk of the manual work on the ward with very little recognition, job security or prospects. Auxiliary nurses are the lowest paid of the low paid - only making ends meet by working overtime. In 1986, out of 487,000 nursing staff, qualified nurses (RGN and EN) are 294,000, student nurses (RG and EN) are 76,000 and auxiliary nurses 120,000.

As we have quoted above , hospital work is always advertised as worthwhile and rewarding. The reality is even beyond the contrary ;What J.Lloyd described in the Financial Time 5/12/87 can apply more or less the same everywhere ;'The University Hospital of Cardiff unveiled a shroud of complaints ...displayed by a marshalled series of nurses , doctors and administrators ...woven of our work and under pay ,lack of staff and ageing equipment , emotional , financial and physical pressure ,politician indifference and cynicism ...'.All this is an egg and hen problem , consequence of what we exposed in the first part of the general tendency of capital , creating the problems so described whose solution brings more capitalist intervention, the whole lot adding even more pressure on the lower part of the staff , mainly on nurses

In the same leaflet quoted above to recruit nurses,we find this description of student nurses'work;'The juxtaposition of the academic life and the practical more structured world of the hospital wards , while broadening the student's experience , must also make great demands upon his/her ability to adapt rapidly to new situations '.That sounds like a good english joke .

The different methods of class struggle

In 1959 , a psychoanalyst was asked by a general teaching hospital in London to advise on student nurses .She discovered 'high levels of stress and anxiety among nurses.. Their work involves tasks which by ordinary standards are distateful , disgusting and frightening ...The inevitable result is high labour turn over, high sickness rate,and absenteeism and dissatisfaction and inefficiency among nurses..Nurses were allowed no discretion and were only to obey orders....relieved of almost all responsibility...leaving staff and students with a very low level of tasks in relation to their ability ...Nurse has become the middle of a production line..Efforts to humanise are hindered by the invasion of technology ..Nobody is trying to change this situation'

Thirty years later the situation could be described in the same words though it will be completely different , not only in the matter of level and of size but of evolution in the working relations and of the mentality :nurses , as other workers learn from their daily experience ,from the constant confrontation of belief and the hard facts of reality,from the failure of any kind of attempt to move out of this reality .

We don't need to go back so far to understand how working conditions have moved in the NHS as a consequence of the capitalist tendencies exposed above. In 1959 there was 3,027 hospitals, 2,341 in 1985, the effect of a programme of massive closure and centralisation process. This capitalist rationalisation has brought about not only a 'factory mentality' among the staff but 'struggle mentality' as well through the resistances to closures; though these actions were very ambiguous, restoring somewhat the paternalistic attitude and mixed with political background, and often lost, they implicated nevertheless a fight against the government, the use of methods of struggle like demonstrations, occupations, work in (of course under staff control).

Between 1980 and 1985, in the NHS, the number of inpatients increased by 12%, day patients by 46%, regular day attendants by 11% and outpatients by 6%. But the spending was 11% less by case, the length of stay was shortened from 15,7 days in the 60's to 7,6 in 85. To meet this situation and a shortened working week there was an increase of the number of nurses but over the whole period ancillary staff fell by 17,5% between 1978 and 1984. Nurses earnings declined in the same period; in 1987 average nurse earning was 58% of the average male non manual earning; after 15 years an ordinary cop can get 14,000 £ a year and a staff nurse 9,000. The norm of staff for a whole shift in a ward of 27 beds was one staff nurse and 2 student nurses; 60% of the more or less compulsory overtime was not paid. A newly qualified nurse would have in 88 a weekly take home pay of 70£ and a lot of them would resort to moonlighting. Before looking at the nurses action against these worsening conditions we need a look into the nurses unions.

Until recently most nurses rarely joined the industrial unions; it was more an effect of their professionalist tendencies and the idealist managerial view of their activity than hostility to the union. Because of that and of professional pressure of the medical staff, more than half of the nursing staff (268,000 out of 487,000) were members of a professional body, the Royal College of Nurses, RCN; RCM for midwives); this organisation combines educational and professional functions with wage negotiations and is dominated by senior nurses; its constitution contains a rule 12 prohibiting strikes (during the 1988 actions several attempts will be made to get rid of this clause but will regularly fail); nursing assistants and auxiliaries can't be members of RCN which, of course is not affiliated to the TUC.

Two unions are supposed to affiliate any worker among the hospital staff , but because of circumstances they are more or less specialised ; both are affiliated to the TUC :

-the Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE) has 220,000 members, 80% are nurses and most of them work in psychiatric hospitals .

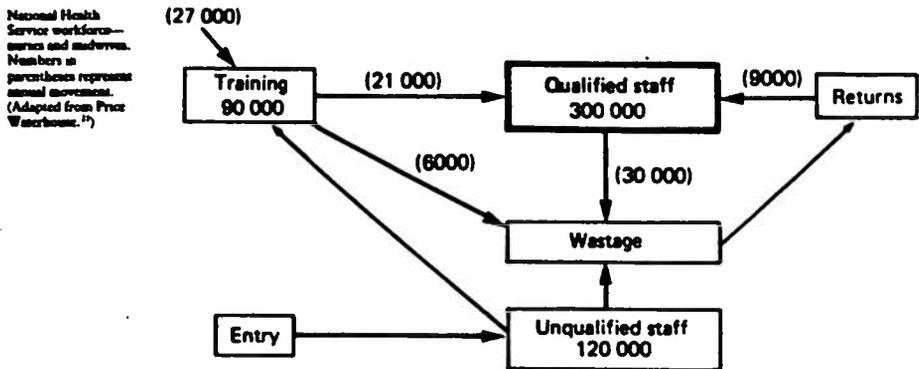
-National Union of Public Employee (NUPE) is a general union for public employees ; out of 660,000 members 80,000 are nurses ;having affiliated a large part of the non nursing staff ,its membership in hospitals has dropped as an effect of the privatisation of a lot of hospitals services(catering , domestic , laundry , portering ...).

The union members of the TUC were perhaps less professional organisations than the RCN but theyall the same have some political background : the RCN leaning towards the conservative , the other ones with the organic link to the Labour Party .The relationship of hospital staff with the union were a complex network of professional and political considerations .For instance ,in 1970-1973 , ancillary workers went in a lot for unofficial strikes in more than 400 hospitals on wages and conditions of work mixed with a lot of local grievances.This action spread to nurses in march 73 when they rejected a wage offer .All over Britain there were spontaneous meetings , the setting up of informal action groups,nurses demonstrations in Birmingham and Manchester.Nurses got a wage increase from 5,6% for students up to 58% for high staff grades .In 1982 action burst out again all through the year, not only on wages but more on conditions of work;there was very enthusiastic support for some kinds of wildcat action; but in the end the unions took control bending the actions towards a political 'defence of the NHS' and a false solidarity in exhausting successive 'days of action ' ; with the result that everything crumbled ,the wage offer was not improved and conditions worsened with more and more cuts.

This situation did not reveal what was in fact moving quickly among the hospital staff and chiefly among nurses.A non militant nurse could say in 1987 : 'Nursing is not what it used to be...There is much more strain , more pressure...I used to be able to go home and say ; 'I may be tired but I have done really a good work'...But now I feel guilty because I feel I am not giving patients adequate care...'."Perhaps this same feeling of inability to answer the 'professional consciousness ' was part of the evolution in mentality but this evolution was also caused by the general evolution of society. This evolution was expressed by a journalist : 'Nurses were overwhelmingly single and female ...but the view that nurses could not serve two hearts is over ; nursing is no longer a semicloistered sisterhood ..Now nurses want both and the status of the other professional women'.Of course the evolution of

mentality was not expressed this way ; when questioned about their claims at the end of 87 , nurses could insist that their action was first about pay but at the same time could expose more than 100 separate complaints from the poor quality of food in the canteen to all the frustrations we have already talked of . 'I am tired of the way things are going and things are getting worse . That is the reason why I have decided to strike .' (a nurse at Middlesex Hospital - London -2/2/88). It was an indirect answer to the traditional paternalistic view expressed by the director of Nursing at the Cardiff Hospital ; 'It is unthinkable that nurses would strike ' already answered by another nurse ; ' The state of the feeling is such that nurses do think about striking ' .

It was by no means the only method of struggle .For years and years , nurses had voted with their feet as an answer to the general pressure barring them from the usual methods of industrial actions and the failure and recuperation of what they could have attempted this way in the past .The following chart gives some idea of the annual movement among nurses .The real figures are even worse; the entire staff of the



NHS renewed itself every six years;83% of health authority have difficulties in recruiting nurses ; the turn over is 20% for nurses , 24% for clerical workers; in 1987 hospitals lost 44.6% of their ancillary and domestic staff (the turnover was even 143% in one district) .In 1987 , nurse vacancies in London were between 25 and 30 % and in some hospitals , the turnover was 100% ; in a survey in november 1985 , the reasons given for this hemorrhagy were low morale (84%) , pay (74%) , stress(65%); in other later surveys we can find the same factors mixed with "workload ,bad atmosphere, cuts ...".An article in the British Medical Journal(2/1/88) could describe the situation as such ;'Some wards have always been difficult to staff ;last year nowhere was

spared ,Even the most emotive of areas were closing beds and refusing admissions...For short periods some even closed completely because of shortage of nursing staff...Many NHS students are leaving before their training end,Those who qualify and stay do so for shorter periods, their morale lower now than at any time in living memory...Paradoxically this is happening at a time when nurses have probably never been held in higher esteem by the public...People say why don't you strike? What striking would mean is that you'd only be nursing emergency patients - which is exactly what we are doing now '.From 81-82 to 86-87the number of those entering basic nursing training dropped by 29% and 21% of those accepted don't join the NHS.

It was a vicious circle ; a persistent staff shortage of 20-25% increased the work load and the stress and more staff were leaving .In a more general consideration ,the NHS os confronted with the same problem described for the Post Office as it is underlined in a report of the RCN in november 1987 ; the shrinking of the pool of school leavers and the competition between firms for employees; the NHS need a minimum of 25,000 recruits a year but the freezing of wages because of the cuts and the consequent use of the new recruit as cheap available labour power is bringing in constant immediate disturbances in the NHS .An estimate gives the figure of a shortfall of 100,000 nurses in 10 years .

The NHS tried to resolve this problem more or less the same way as the Post Office provoking the same kind of reaction from the rank and file.In december 1987 a review body in the DHSS published a report supposed to be a framework for a clinical career structure introducing better rewards for specialists and a supposed stemming of the loss of career nurses; several proposals were on the table ;

- funding of the career structure by cutting the special duty payments (SDP)(these SPD , were paid for unsocial hours -30% of basic rate for night duty after 8 pm and 60% for Sundays and bank holidays, a higher rate than in other branches of industry).A new grading would be introduced with 10 grades instead of 7 , the new grades being allocated according to skill and qualifications - a pay rise of an average of 9.5%
- further large pay rises to solve nurse shortage
- special policy aimed at solving housing difficulties .

More was said on the SPD in early january;it will be replaced by a special duty payment of 1.20£ per hour supplementary to the basic pay for all grades of nursing working unsocial hours.It was a time bomb

because it was evident that most of the nurses would lose between 10 and 30% of their wages. The revolt flared immediately among nurses. On the 7/1 more than 100 night nurses at North Manchester Hospital organised and voted unanimously in a secret ballot to strike; nurses members of the RCN agreed not to do the work of the strikers. The four days notice they gave enabled the hospital to call in other staff. Though the strike was organised locally and NUPE was unaware that the strike was going ahead, the RCN accused NUPE of provoking the strike. They were wrong because nurses did not need any help from unions; the Manchester strike was the public revelation of the nurses determination and had the consequence of breaking the 'moral barrier' imposed on nurses. The wide echo of the Manchester strike in the media indicates the importance of this break for the health authority and the government. It attracted a large support and an extraordinary amount of publicity. They could have guessed at that a long time before but now it was apparent to everybody. The Manchester strike was only a tiny part of a much more widespread movement that breaks all the traditional patterns in health care. The government in an attempt to defuse the tension withdrew subrepticiously its project for the SPD but maintained the new grading system.

It was not enough; throughout the break all other nurses began to push their claims ahead with the strength of years of frustrations. The Manchester nurses returned to work but decided to meet every week to decide further actions. NUPE and COHSE jumped the train; more openly RCN tried to extinguish the fire. All over the UK nurses were on the move; on the 14/1 in Scotland in some hospitals, nurses left the wards leaving agency nurses to cover. On the 21/1 meetings in three London Hospitals decided to go on strike on the 3/2, some hundreds of nurses in all unions including the RCN, just when unions were trying to calm fears about a rash of strikes. A leader of NUPE declared: 'we have no immediate plan to approve any strike'. Yet meetings were held in 15 London hospitals to support the 3/2 strike. Nurses at the Royal Free Hospital, one of the biggest and the most modern in London declared: 'We feel angry that we have been forced into a position where striking is our only hope'. Though trying to get a grip on the movement, TUC unions took their distance. The NUPE disagreed with 'any disruptive action in hospitals next week which could put patients at risk' and issued recommendation of actions such as 'silent vigils, protest lines, candlelights rallies, public ballots, lobbies, demonstrations'.... Neil Kinnock, leader of the Labour could even declare: 'It would be difficult to describe it as a strike'. 'But for the nurses, the action was 'three days of strikes from the 3/2'. The government brought in new proposals: 3% to cover inflation, 8 to 12% with the new grading,

regional pay variations and discretionary special payments. The most active protesters were student nurses. Though the government could dispose of a complete arsenal of strike laws, no attempt will be made presently and all along these strikes to use them against the nurses; for fear of a generalisation of the movement.

HSC10 from April 1988

Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors

Salaries and other payments from 1 April 1988

in England and Wales

There are 9 grades (Scales A to I) in the new clinical grading structure which is being introduced with effect from 1 April 1988. Most nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff will be paid on one of the following scales, depending on the duties and responsibilities of the post held:

	Annual Salary From 1 April 1988
Scale A	£5,000-£6,300
Scale B	£6,075-£6,975
Scale C	£6,975-£8,300
Scale D	£8,025-£9,200
Scale E	£9,200-£10,650
Scale F	£10,200-£12,500
Scale G	£12,025-£13,925
Scale H	£13,450-£15,350
Scale I	£14,875-£16,850

On obtaining EN level qualification the minimum salary scale is Scale C.

On obtaining RGN, RMN, RNMH, RSCN or RM level qualification the minimum salary scale is Scale D.

Scale F is the minimum salary scale for a ward sister/charge nurse.

Scale G is the minimum salary scale for district nurses, community midwives and health visitors.

Student and Pupil Nurses

	Annual Training Allowance From 1 April 1988
Student Nurse (leading to RGN, RMN, RNMH, RGN/RSCN)	
First year	£4,825
Second year	£5,075
Third year	£5,575
Pupil Nurse (leading to EN(G), EN(M), EN(MH))	
First year	£4,825
Second year	£5,075

Senior Posts

More senior posts in the educational and managerial fields are open to registered nurses, midwives and health visitors with suitable experience and have salaries of up to £33,100.

Additional Payments

London Weighting: Payable to staff working in London.

London pay supplements: Payable in addition to the above pay scales. Staff in Inner London on Scales C-I will receive a supplement of 9% of basic pay up to a maximum of £958 on top of London Weighting.

All other staff in London will receive a supplement of 5% of basic pay up to a maximum of £532 on top of London Weighting and staff in the fringe zone will receive 2.5% of basic pay up to a maximum of £266 on top of London Weighting.

Psychiatric Lead: An allowance of £220 per annum payable to those working in mental illness and mental handicap.

Geriatric Lead: An allowance of £165 per annum payable to those working with geriatric or chronic sick patients in a hospital.

It is difficult to know the size of the strike on the 3/2 ; it was harder in London and in the South East (in London 2,500 went on strike and 6,000 were involved in demonstrations), less important in other parts of the UK; everywhere it was a minority strike but the most active had the support of other nurses who for a lot of reasons including professional 'consciousness did not dare to strike .Nevertheless the importance and the impact of the strike obliged the unions , mainly COHSE to organise the traditional 'days of protest' on the 10/2 in the North West , in London on the 5/3, everywhere on the 14/3 .These union attempts to recuperate the movement brought more confusion into the nurses movement; on one hand they gave the nurses the feeling they could get the support of other branches of industry when it was only a token support from some union militants ; on the other they brought in the political ambiguity that the nurses were not fighting for themselves but for the funding and the defence of the NHS; the collective pressure was stronger in Scotland but the unions for a time got control of the action .

It was in this situation that the government brought in new proposals on the 21/4, essentially a full pay increase averaging 15.3 %, a complete regrading according to a new scale of 9 grades instead of 7 , bringing from 4% up to 60% for nurses .The presentation of these proposals was not that reassuring: 'The old system did far too little to reward clinical responsibility; pay was rigidly based on qualification rather than job performance , on a kind of administrative work ...The aim of the new structure ...is to boost incentives and to create a longer clinical career path attractive to well qualified people.' Clearly the project was to promote two categories ; qualified nurses with qualification and rather well paid, ancillary low qualified nurses recruited through agencies ; it was a cheap way to solve the NHS problems and a back door open to privatisation .Everybody agreed that these proposals were inadequately planned and implemented according to a political timetable which proved totally unrealistic; "No private sector company would attempt to regrade half of its staff at the same time, ..nor to widen differentials at the rate envisaged for the NHS (from 8 up to 50%). At first sight it was evident that the effect of the pretended reform would be devastating; In one hospital two nurses both considered to be doing the same kind of job for the same amount of hours could be classified in two subsequent different grades (F and G for instance) ; the difference in salaries could be as much as 3,000 £ a year .In most wards sisters who previously shared responsibility for a ward would suddenly find themselves on quite different pay rates. Nursing assistants with decades of experience will abruptly find themselves

on the same grade as raw recruits. Many junior staff actually take on far more responsible tasks than is implied by their rank on paper and would be considerably underpaid

These measures were evidently published in a hurry to stop the nurses movement, to delay the new grading in the hope of defusing the strength of the local actions, and of course to divide unity with hope of differentials. One month later the real background of these proposals was unveiled; a whole lot of other reforms, more or less agreed though not openly by the unions (mainly the RCN) confirm what was suspected. The recruitment of nurses will be made with a lower qualification (less than 5 GCSE), the category EN would be suppressed and all nurses would take three years training; 18 months in general medicine, 18 months in one of 4 specialist branch programmes. The students would spend less time on the wards and more in the class room; they would get grants rather than salaries. Of course, these changes will reduce the contribution that student nurses make to hospital staffing levels from 20 up to 80%. To face this situation, a pool of 150 to 200,000 'nursing assistants' would take the place of the 111,000 present auxiliary staff; as said the proposals about these new helpers: 'Some would be able to take further training'.

For a time the effect was effectively what was anticipated; the strikes stopped as everybody was waiting to see what exactly the new grading would mean in practice. At the end of June there began to emerge the fact that the nurse pay (average 15.3) might not be paid in full and that local health authorities would get inadequate additional funding to implement the new structure fully. All through July a lot of nurses were discovering that their hopes of a big rise would be dashed and that they would get no more than 4.2%; the reform would mean actually degrading for the majority. Of any grade 77,000 ward sisters were expecting grade G, but the management said that only one in each ward would get this grade and that the other would be grade F, only 11,000 of them. The effect would be to cascade downwards a series of undergradings so that, at the bottom auxiliaries would be put on grade A rather than grade B. In mid August, the strikes started to break out again spontaneously, a resurgence of grass root protest similar to those preceding the pay award in April. Manchester was again at the forefront. There were immediately new discussions between unions and the government and the announcement of extrafunding on the 18/8 but with no clear meaning to it because everything would have to be settled at local level. What was clear was that strikes had not stopped at all.

40

announcement of extra funding on the 18/8 but with no clear meaning of it because everything would have to be settled at local level. What was clear was that the strikes had not stopped at all.

Such a vague concession was not going to stop the strikes. The Maudsley psychiatric hospital in London voted to go on indefinite strike. The unions tried to keep the born again movement under control in organising on, the 19/8 one day stoppage in London as discussions with the health authorities were going on. These talks lasted and lasted up to the end of October. The package to fund the regrading was increased from 803 m £ up to 941 m £ which means an average of 17.9 % instead of 15.3 %. In mid September, the RCN had admitted that 'many health authorities are restructuring nurses's duties to keep wage bills down after the regrading on which pay rises depend... Nurses fear and they are right to fear that they may be cheated'.

Actions were innumerable but scattered geographically and in a wide range of protests and strikes. Some were individual but in such a number as to constitute a complete blockade of this system; 100,000 appeals were made against the new grading; there were three stages of appeal, local, regional and national and they have to be examined case by case; it would take 10 years to sort the whole lot out, even more because the Health Secretary declared on the 17/11 that no appeal would be heard in any unit from staff who were not working normally. This threat means that all the money set aside to lubricate the regrading exercise was supposed to be sufficient to avoid more than a token resistance from the nurses unions. The fact was that it had instead led to widespread industrial action. In fact new forms of action were crippling more than one hospital; reporting late for duties, working to grade meaning for nurses not doing the part of their jobs they are not being paid for; this action was so widespread (16,000 nurses in London were working to grade in November) that COHSE could do no more than cover this form of strike. There were spontaneous walk outs in various parts of the country; the Prestwick Hospital (psychiatry) near Manchester had to close because of an indefinite strike; several other hospitals had to close, in others some wards closed as well and patients were sent home. The action by nurses was becoming increasingly spontaneous; apart from working to grade which was widely spread, different forms of refusal took place; refusal to work unsupervised, for auxiliaries in geriatric wards to escort patients to the lavatory or to clinics without a staff nurse in attendance, to do laundry duties, to supervise training, to take new admissions, to perform extraduties, even to do selectively some specific duties which could be called a withdrawal of good will.

though there were no national instructions, no strike payments nearly all regions were suffering some form of action. Only the cumulative effect of local actions had created a national dispute. The government did not try to repress directly; the strikes were of course illegal according to the conservative laws, but nobody tried to use them against the nurses for fear of a more generalised movement in the hospitals. Against these actions, the unions also were directly useless; some regional organisers urged the nurses to restrain, only to be told to leave the meetings where they tried to defend this position. Even the RCN expressed doubts that it would now be able to prevent all its members taking industrial action. Some attempts at direct repression were quickly answered by the nurses; at Leavesden hospital near Watford (London suburbs), the management threatened: 'if you fail to carry out your normal duties, you cannot be paid for the duty shifts in question' and the nurses decided: 'we will end our protest action if the management set out in writing the "normal duties"...allowing them to appeal against present gradings'. In Scotland, 50 nurses walked out in the psychiatric hospital of Dykebar in protest against the suspension of two nurses working to grade and the day unit had to be closed. At the end of November 45 midwives from North Middlesex Hospital in London collectively gave their dismissal notice asking for 'recognition of what they are due'.

To break the movement, the manoeuvres from the government helped by the unions had to be more insidious. It stuck apparently to its positions, not changing anything in its projects, claiming a minimal disruption in the health service. With more money allowed for regrading there was a kind of breakthrough at the beginning of November; more hospital managers were improving the first grade allocations, e.g. at Birmingham from 12 up to 18 on grade G out of 23 nurses; in North Middlesex Hospital the 22 out of the 55 midwives having given their notice were offered grade F but they decided not to withdraw or postpone their resignation. As the government subrepticiously put in more money to cushion the regrading, Clarke, the Health secretary in a letter to the district Health Authorities asked them to 'sift out the most obvious cases of anomalies'. On their side, the unions still tried to defuse the tension with the ever similar 'days of action' going nowhere even more depressingly because of giving the false feeling of a claimed unity disclosing afterwards the disappointing measure of the deep gap of their isolation both from other nurses and from other workers.

One nurse had said when the regrading was engineered: 'I think one of the reasons for regrading was to divide us, to buy off more senior

EFFECTS OF 1988 PAY AWARD ON SELECTED NURSING GRADES

GRADES OUTSIDE LONDON

The lettered scales indicate a range of possible outcomes for individual staff on regrading. Broadly, the higher letters for each grade will apply to those with additional skills, qualifications and responsibilities.

Grade	New pay scale* £	Cash Increase (plus % increase) £
STUDENT	4,825 to 5,575	285 to 405 (6.3 to 7.8)
NURSING AUXILIARY	A. 5,000 to 6,300 or B. 6,075 to 6,975	A. 435 to 445 (9.5 to 7.6) or B. 1,510 to 1,120 (33.1 to 19.1)
ENROLLED NURSE	C. 6,975 to 8,300 or D. 8,025 to 9,200	C. 725 to 550 (11.6 to 7.1) or D. 1,775 to 1,450 (28.4 to 18.7)
STAFF NURSE	D. 8,025 to 9,200 or E. 9,200 to 10,650	D. 725 to 600 (9.9 to 7.0) or E. 1,900 to 2,050 (26.0 to 23.8)
WARD SISTER	F. 10,200 to 12,500 or G. 12,025 to 13,925 or H. 13,450 to 15,350	F. 1,200 to 500 (13.3 to 4.2) or G. 3,025 to 1,925 (33.6 to 16.0) or H. 4,450 to 3,350 (49.4 to 27.9)

GRADES IN INNER LONDON

Grade	New pay scale* £	Cash Increase (plus % increase) £
STUDENT	5,996 to 6,783	526 to 683 (9.6 to 11.2)
NURSING AUXILIARY	A. 6,180 to 7,545 or B. 7,309 to 8,254	A. 685 to 760 (12.5 to 11.2) or B. 1,814 to 1,469 (33.0 to 21.7)
ENROLLED NURSE	C. 8,533 to 9,977 or D. 9,677 to 10,958	C. 1,353 to 1,297 (18.8 to 14.9) or D. 2,497 to 2,278 (34.3 to 26.2)
STAFF NURSE	D. 9,677 to 10,958 or E. 10,958 to 12,538	D. 1,447 to 1,428 (17.6 to 15.0) or E. 2,728 to 3,008 (33.1 to 31.6)
WARD SISTER	F. 12,048 to 14,338 or G. 13,913 to 15,813 or H. 15,338 to 17,238	F. 2,118 to 1,458 (21.3 to 11.3) or G. 3,983 to 2,883 (40.1 to 22.3) or H. 5,408 to 4,308 (54.5 to 33.3)

* Includes £930 Inner London Weighting and new Inner London Supplement of 9 per cent (max. £958 p.a.) for qualified staff and 5 per cent (max. £532 p.a.) for unqualified staff.

Main Clinical Grades

Old Grade	Percentage in New Clinical Grade	Percentage Pay Increase	
Nursing Auxiliary	A - 86	7.6 - 9.4	
	B - 14	19.1 - 33.1	
	Enrolled Nurse	C - 44	7.1 - 11.6
		D - 48	18.7 - 28.4
		E - 9	37.4 - 47.2
Staff Nurse	D - 25	7.0 - 9.9	
	E - 66	23.8 - 26.0	
	F - 9	45.3 - 51.0	
Nursing Sister II: Charge Nurse	F - 39	4.2 - 13.3	
	G - 58	18.0 - 33.6	
	H - 3	27.9 - 49.4	
Staff Midwife	D - 10	7.0 - 9.9	
	E - 77	23.8 - 26.0	
	F - 12	45.3 - 51.0	
Midwifery Sister	F - 25	4.2 - 13.3	
	G - 74	18.0 - 33.6	
	H - 1	27.9 - 49.4	
Health Visitor	G - 87	13.7 - 19.1	
	H - 3	25.3 - 33.2	

nurses so, The whole thing has been a pretence '. This was now proving to be true except that by mid december 1988 it was no longer a pretence but a reality . Another nurse at Guy's Hospital near London Bridge could say : ' The government exercise has been very divisive among staff and apathy appears to be ruling '. It was evident that the long fight of the nurses has little by little brought some improvement in the new grading pushing upwards the most qualified nurses - perhaps not the most active but the most influent and having more to gain out of the battlefield. It proved a good calculation from government and unions and the time was with them as more and more nurses were only to repeat again and again the same kind of action without open effective gain , with more and more pressure from the management and unions. Going ahead would mean taking more radical actions or getting the support of either other hospital workers or workers of other branches ; what they could not get at this moment from their very situation as nurses struggling for themselves on a professional basis and at the end of a long action with confusing results for themselves not to mention for other workers . As said a nurse : ' There is little hope for a clear alternative ' .

Just before Christmas the unions felt strong enough with this declining movement to call off action which did not flare up in january 1989. The past underground methods of struggle were to take place again : a new wave of resignation , the nurses voting with their feet, hit the NHS whose problems were not at all solved by what looked like a fight to the finish for the government. A lot was said and written about the ' professionalism ' of the nurses actions leading to their isolation. Effectively if the hospital strikes could find some comparison , it would be with the postal strike because , at the very origin of this action is the deep conflict for the management between the imperative to rule a public service according to business like politics (with all the consequences for the workers involved) and the present competition for workers (and mainly qualified workers) between the different branches of industry (the most prosperous ones being able to offer better conditions which a public service threatened constantly by the cuts can't do). The balance of struggle in the hospitals as in the P O arises up from this situation which was by no means slowed by the confusing end of the strike for both categories of worker ; on the contrary the strike , for nurses or postmen, exacerbated the contradictions , gave the measure of what could be done and what could not and as well the experience of fighting for oneself . The regrading exercise did not at all eliminate the objective situation and the same causes will have the same effects

though certainly in various ways , according to the possibilities of the global balance of struggle .

Even more than for the Post Office workers , the nurses action is typical of local actions rising up spontaneously and practically without links to a local , regional or national level spreading in such a way into what has to be called a general movement. Of course , Nurses like PO workers are employees in the same big organisation , NHS or PO , with more or less the same conditions, and scattered in a lot of local units all over the country ;but the comparison has to stop here; PO workers are for a large part concentrated in big locations ; the sorting offices where the differentials are not important ; though divided locally , their action was united involving all the workers in one location , even the new or temporary recruits ; in the NHS the staff was deeply divided in different categories and the nurses were more threatened by the disqualification than other categories of non qualified ancillary workers; their fight has to be based on their professional qualification and the wages attached to it; this was their strength as well as their isolation and weakness .Another difference is the consequence of the nature of the work ; PO workers could withdraw their work in totality which gave them a great strength; for a lot of reasons nurses could not do the same , even taking very original forms of action these actions were never as effective as the PO strike ; their creeping strike lasted for one year to end in ruins and in apparent disillusion. In the present global situation they could not have done more and what they did do was enough , for the time being , seriously to shake the health building ;the more business like management of hospitals is bringing a more militant category of health workers overcoming the traditional ways of thinking and closer to other workers .The elimination of professionalism would not come about from any kind of propaganda bringing consciousness to this category of workers but from their new conditions of work which put them in the same conditions as other workers which situation will give birth to new ways of thinking.

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