

REVOLUTION

THE FIGHTING PAPER FOR WORKING CLASS YOUTH

THE HIDDEN HAND OF A LOYALIST KILLER



This man is a commander of the Ulster Defence Association, the biggest of the Loyalist paramilitary groups. The UDA, together with groups like the UFF, LVF and UVF, carry out indiscriminate killings of Catholics in the North of Ireland. They have close links with fascist, racist and far-right movements and with the security services of the British state. They are fighting to keep Northern Ireland as a Protestant state that discriminates against Catholics in jobs, housing and basic rights. They use religion and blind prejudice to prevent the Irish people as a whole exercising their right to a united and independent country. They depend on murder and the British Army's occupation to keep their statelet intact - a statelet whose borders were drawn by the British in 1921 with the sole intention of keeping Catholics and Irish nationalists as a minority.

Behind the hype about the peace process, Mo Mowlam and Tony Blair are trying to persuade Sinn Fein and the IRA to give up the fight for a united Ireland. This would leave the Catholics as second-class citizens, which is exactly what the Loyalist death squads want.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF REVOLUTION

• YOUR RIGHTS AT WORK • LEGALISE IT JACK! • SCHOOL STRIKES SWEEP ITALY • SHOULD NEW ROADS BE STOPPED? • DISABLED FIGHT BACK • SUPPORT SINGLE MOTHERS •

South west students stage anti-BP protest

THEATRE STUDENTS AT Plymouth University took to the stage in late December to highlight the struggle of Colombian oil workers against Oil multinationals like BP and the death squads that protect their oil fields. A REVOLUTION supporter in Exeter invited Freddy Pulecio, a Colombian trade

unionist, to work with drama students and after two days of hard work, put on a play at Plymouth University to an audience of 120.

The students are now demanding their student union support the Campaign against BP in Colombia and the students themselves are planning to organise a tour

of their play to other universities in the country around June 1998. This excellent initiative shows how much support can be built for the struggle against companies like BP who think they can get away with murdering people and polluting their land.

For more info about the tour ring 0171 357 0388.

Agro for Argos in Manchester

SINCE THE BEGINNING of the Liverpool Dockers dispute, there have been groups set up across the country to support the 500 sacked workers. In Manchester we've been regularly picketing Argos. The company insists on using the scab port of Liverpool to ship in their goods. So on 13 December a big day of action was held against Argos by the Manchester Dockers Support group, including the Women of the Waterfront group and a whole range of socialists, anarchists, and some greens.

The day was a complete success, and should be remembered as an excellent example of unity. It showed that direct action is the best way to get your voice heard.

About 40-50 people turned up and gathered around the shop entrance. 'Support the Dockers' posters were stuck onto the shop windows, and a huge, colourful banner was unfurled by a team of absailers to cover up one of those revolving billboard posters on the street corner. It said 'Boycott Argos - Support the Dockers!'

The coppers were there in force too, and were obviously expecting something to kick off. But they couldn't stop about 20 young people from storming the shop and occupying the place. They chained themselves to each other in a circle and many sat on the pay counters or played

music and sang dockers support songs to the tune of christmas carols!

At the entrance to the shop stood a group of around 20-30 people, handing out leaflets to Christmas shoppers, explaining why they shouldn't be using Argos, and shouting "Scabs out - Dockers in!".

After the fire alarm was set off in the shop, the place was eventually evacuated, and the Fire Brigade had to come along. They soon realised what was going on, and after being given a leaflet about the Dockers Support Network, they said straight away that they'd be in and out in a minute as they were union members that knew all about the dispute and supported us completely.

The best part of the day was celebrating the safe and unarrested return of the occupiers to the picket on the street. One last chant of "Scabs out - Dockers in" and we all went our separate ways home. Lots of money lost for Argos and a load more people in Manchester aware of the on-going struggle of the Liverpool Dockworkers and the ugly side of Argos. A good day all round.

"Excellent turnout. Excellent mood. We shut down Argos: Mission accomplished!" - Steve

"Nice to have the punters agreeing with you for a change and to have so many people on the same side as us" - Tam.

London gets on top of BP

CHRISTMAS WAS coming up, and London REVOLUTION realised that we hadn't harassed BP for over a month. We couldn't have that so in mid-December we did the BP service station in Camden.

Three of us arrived early, got onto the roof of the service station, climbed onto those big ledge-things they've got over the pumps and unfurled the Coalition banners. This meant that all the traffic going by could see and honk.

The rest of us arrived, and gave leaflets to cars coming into the station. Most drivers rolled down their windows to ask what was going on, and agreed it was outrageous what BP were doing. All in all a good end to 1997's campaign against the funding of Colombian death squads.

REVOLUTION in London will be continuing with the Respect at Work campaign, organising young workers in bars, restaurants, cinemas, and shops in the West End of London in the fight for better wages and conditions.

REVOLUTION at Pimlico school has already begun petitioning for the legalisation of cannabis and an end to victimising youth for drugs. Next week we will be running a socialist film series, starting with Ken Loach's film Land and Freedom, an inspiring account of the Spanish Civil War.

Expect to see us every Sunday at Camden selling the latest issue of REVOLUTION. Give us a call and find out what's going on - 0171 357 0388.

LEGALISE CANNABIS

JACK STRAW, Labour's Home Secretary, must have got the shock of his life when he discovered that his son William had been caught 'dealing' cannabis to an undercover Mirror journalist.

The journalist set William up. She flirted with him asking if he could get any hash. He didn't have any but got some for her off a friend. Under Britain's insane laws that counts as 'dealing'. Like the low down scum she obviously is, the journalist repaid his trust by grassing him up for a front-page story.

Jack Straw experienced first hand what most parents already know - that millions of young people smoke cannabis. William is no different. This in itself is not ruining either his life or his family's. But the fact that his name has been plastered all over

by **Kirstie, Battersea**

the tabloids and that he was cautioned for selling a poxy £10 of hash is more likely to do serious damage to his sanity. For the rest of us, especially if you're black, the police and the courts are unlikely to be so lenient. In reality the laws on drugs and the new police powers to stop and search anyone under suspicion of possession of drugs is used daily to harass youth.

The recent media hype has exposed the hypocrisy of Jack Straw's policy of blaming parents for the 'crimes' of their children. Mr Straw has suggested 'parenting lessons'. These are just a patronising suggestion by middle class snobs that ordinary people don't know how to bring up their children. It is a way of blaming working class parents for the real causes of crime - boredom,

poverty, unemployment. It won't be made to apply to people like Jack Straw.

However, the real issue is this: Should people be criminalised for using cannabis?

Revolution says NO.

Research reveals that cannabis is less toxic than alcohol and tobacco. Jack Straw and the Labour party are quite prepared to receive £1 million from Bernie Ecclestone as a bribe to leave tobacco advertising in Formula One racing. This means Blair is backed by drug money. Tobacco is a drug - it kills over 100,000 people a year. This is 100,000 more than are killed by cannabis, for which the death rate is a 'dangerous' zero. Yet Straw peddles lies about cannabis so he can continue to use these outdated laws to turn young people into criminals.

BLOWING THE MYTHS AWAY

Myth - Only student drop-outs and junkies are in favour of legalising cannabis.

Fact - The Sun newspaper claimed the Independent on Sunday had "gone to pot" for launching a campaign to legalise cannabis. But then the Sun's own phone-in poll, backed legalisation 2 to 1. An ICM poll found that 71% think it should be legalised for medicinal purposes.

Myth - Smoking Cannabis leads to severe memory loss and psychosis

Fact - The chair of the British Neuroscientific Association says there is little evidence to suggest that cannabis harms the brain or central nervous system, although it does damage the lungs. This is because it is smoked with tobacco. Like all substances, taken in excess it will pose a threat to health. But, a consultant at Warneford Hospital says alcohol and tobacco are more toxic than cannabis.

Myth - First you start smoking cannabis, next thing you're hooked on heroin or crack cocaine.

Fact - Dutch research shows that less young people are using heroin, while its government says that "the decriminalisation of the possession of soft drugs has not led to a rise in their use." They also point out that because of controlled drug use, dangerous solvent abuse and glue sniffing are virtually unknown in Holland.

Myth - Cannabis has no real medicinal effects

Fact - The vast majority of doctors are in favour of cannabis on prescription to help sufferers of Multiple Sclerosis. Researchers from the University of California, San Francisco have shown that cannabis offers effective pain relief and has less side effects than synthetic drugs.

Hypocrite of the month



Jack Straw's new Crime Bill will "make parents responsible for the crimes of their children." Under his new rules, REVOLUTION hereby sentences him to 1,000 hours of parenting classes and a 6pm curfew.

What REVOLUTION thinks

REVOLUTION is in favour of the legalisation of cannabis. Hundreds and thousands are being criminalised for just using this relatively harmless drug. We want access to accurate information about cannabis and other drugs so that young people can make informed choices. We should be demanding that Jack Straw funds research into cannabis. If the production and distribution of cannabis was under a state monopoly with controlled prices this would undermine the gangsterism and criminal activity that feeds on its illegality.

A government that really put people before dealers would confiscate the breweries, pharmaceutical and tobacco companies - the biggest drug dealers of all - and use their super profits to put money where it is needed.

Who are the Ulster Loyalists?



Britain has brought forward new proposals for a settlement in Northern Ireland that all sides are going to sit down and discuss. These include a new assembly in the North, and a Council of the Isles including Britain and Ireland. The effect of this would be to leave Britain closely tied in to Irish affairs. But Ireland has been suffering from British domination for centuries. The Northern Ireland state is a creation of the British, who drew its borders with the sole intention of creating an

artificial majority in favour of remaining part of Britain. Meanwhile inside Northern Ireland the Catholic communities who oppose British rule are treated like second class citizens - fewer jobs, worse housing, biased policing. That is why REVOLUTION says there can be no lasting peace under British rule. We support the struggle to get British troops out of Ireland and for a Socialist United Ireland under the control of the working class.

EDMUND TREANOR WENT to celebrate New Years Eve with his girlfriend at the Clifton Tavern in the predominantly Catholic area of North Belfast. However, he was never to see in the New Year after being blasted by Loyalist gunmen who had entered the bar and indiscriminately opened fire.

Neither Edmund Treanor or any of the other six who were wounded had any connection with Republican organisations.

The attack on the Clifton Tavern was carried out simply because it was a Catholic bar, and it followed the earlier shooting of Seamus Dillon in Dungannon.

These attacks were in revenge for the execution, by Irish Nationalists, of Billy Wright. He was leader of the Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF), one of the most brutal loyalist groups and had earned himself the nickname of "King Rat" in the Protestant papers. He gained notoriety in the early 1990's by ordering the sectarian killings of at least 3 dozen Catholics whilst in another loyalist paramilitary group: the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). In 1996 Wright was responsible for the slaying of taxi driver William McGoldrick at the time of the bigoted Orange parade in Drumcree. He was expelled from the UVF shortly afterwards.

New Year's murder

Evidence indicates that the LVF acted in collaboration with the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) in the Clifton Tavern shooting. Despite their denials they took out memorial notices shortly after his death describing him as a "true loyalist".

The UDA and the UVF are both still represented at the Stormont talks. The UVF representative Billy Hutchinson, who likes to describe himself as a 'socialist', was

by Kuldip, Acton

responsible for the murder of an SDLP councillor and his Protestant girlfriend whose only 'crime' was to dare to mix with each other. Hutchinson and his comrades slashed off the woman's breasts in an orgy of violence.

Mainstream Unionist politicians will use the recent deaths to ensure the so called peace process leads to no significant concessions for the nationalists, because they know that the threat of indiscriminate Loyalist terror will enable them to maintain the Protestant veto over the future of the six counties.

In fact the Unionist leaders, despite publicly claiming to be non-violent have not shied away from associating with the paramilitaries. Billy McCrea of Ian Paisley's DUP, who was then MP for mid-Ulster shared a platform in support of Wright in 1996 after he was accused of the taxi murder, and David Trimble, the UUP leader met with him for secret talks at the time of stand-off over the Drumcree parade.

The British media and liberals in general like to portray the indiscriminate loyalist slaughter of innocent Catholics and the armed Republican struggle as one and the same thing. But whereas the Loyalist thugs are fighting to defend and maintain the Protestant privilege which has existed for more than 75 years in their sectarian statelet. The Republicans are fighting to break free from Imperialist rule.

As Marxists say: "Fighting does not make you as bad as your enemy. The real question is what you are fighting for."

For example if a slave owner uses violence to put a person in chains, and if the slave later uses violence to break the chains and get free of the master, who but

the worst of hypocrites can put their hand on their hearts and declare both as wicked as each other?

State Terror

The fear that has gripped Northern Ireland's nationalist communities has once again given the British an excuse to put troops back on to the streets of the provinces. But 50 years of bitter experience has shown that rather than protecting the basic rights of the Catholic population the military occupation can only serve to defend the sectarian statelet from Nationalist resistance as it did on Bloody Sunday in 1972

Socialist's everywhere must support the Nationalists in their struggle against the Loyalist thugs. In the 19th century Karl Marx demanded separation for Ireland from Britain. He believed that British workers' internationalism would remain a hypocritical phrase if they did not support separation for Ireland.

This still applies today, and REVOLUTION supports the struggle of Nationalists in Ireland and believes in the right of self determination for the whole of the Irish people across the 32 counties.

However to achieve this a mass campaign of opposition to British Imperialism is require. To defend against Loyalist terror, organised self defence is necessary. We do not believe that the defence of Nationalist areas should be left to organisations such as the IRA and the INLA who operate as elite bands of guerrilla fighters. They should put their weapons at the disposal of, and under the control of the Nationalist community. Ultimately the IRA and the INLA cannot deliver victory, only working class people themselves can achieve that.

TELL US ABOUT 'CARING AND RESPONSIBILITY', TONY . . .

Blair to rob the disabled!

DISABLED PEOPLE get treated like shit in this society. If you have difficulty walking, hearing, seeing or talking then the system puts even more obstacles in your path.

Under the Tories cuts in spending meant fewer projects and less help for disabled people.

Now Labours Social security minister Harriet Harman is planning to cut their benefits, when 65% of disabled people already live below the poverty line. She has got the nerve to claim that this will 'help'.

Harman says she wants to help disabled people get work. So why not create new jobs and pass a law to stop employers discriminating against disabled people? There are millions of things that could be done by the disabled if the jobs were there.

But that would cost money. Taxing Blair and Harman's rich mates in the city would provide this, but instead they want to take the money off the most vulnerable. A

by Richard, Hackney

leaked government memo says "a high proportion of necessary savings will have to come from benefits paid to sick and disabled people." This means they want to starve disabled people into work ... even if the jobs aren't there!

Six and a half million disabled people get benefits. To the yuppie scum of New Labour this just means a 'waste' of money. Since May over 20,000 disabled people have had their benefit cut by up to £90 week! They have even brought in spies to check up on disabled people. This is set to get much worse . . . unless we all take action to stop it!

The Disabled Peoples's Direct Action Network (DAN) has thrown itself into struggle to stop this disgrace. Their members have a record of brave actions like chaining themselves to buses in the fight for access to transport and smearing red paint on the street outside Downing

Street in protest at the new moves.

Everyone - disabled or able bodied - should oppose these cuts and fight for a civilised socialist society where no-one lives in privilege and no-one lives in poverty; a world run on the principle "from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs".

REVOLUTION stands for:

- jobs for all at £6 an hour minimum wage
- work or full pay- benefits at level of minimum wage
- end all discrimination against the disabled
- for access for disabled people to all buildings, shops and transport
- support the direct action taken by disabled militants
- access conversion of existing barriers and new projects in housing, shops, municipal buildings and transport funded by a tax on the rich."

Starving single mothers into work

LABOUR ARE SAYING they will sort out child poverty through work not welfare. Roughly translated this means that they will slash single parents benefits and bully them into accepting low paid jobs. They are saying that the money saved by these cuts will help pay for after school clubs so single parents will be able to work.

The problem with this is that you'll still have to pay for this service and will be no better off than you were on benefits. When you consider this it is hardly surprising that many single parents are reluctant to return to work. If the government really wanted to help single parents it would introduce free child care and a minimum wage of £6 an hour and then they could afford to choose to go back to work.

Instead, with these cuts, single parents will lose between £5 and £10 a week, more if they are working. "Why all the fuss about £5-£10" says Labour MP Harriet Harman (with her £80,000 a year pay packet). Single parent of four children Christina gave me her views on this comment, and also talked about the

by Laura, Coventry

difficulties of being a single parent on benefits.

"If I work this cut out as a percentage of the benefits I receive per week it is about 10%. Then work out 10% of Harriet Harman's wages and ask her



"What's £8000". The cut is a lot of money when you get such a small amount already, you don't have a clue until you've lived on £5000 a year.

I chose to leave my (low paid) job because I couldn't do both parenting and

work perfectly (this wasn't helped by the fact I couldn't afford child care) and it was more important to me to be a full-time parent, it was sending me crazy trying to bring up children and work.

The government suggests that it is best for children to have a full time parent, until it comes to finance. People on Income Support are sick of funding the government's deficit problems".

Single parents should have the choice to go to work or be full time parents if they wish, at the moment they don't have the choice to do either, if they want to survive. Annie Oliver from the Single Parents Action Network, SPAN, sums up the real reasons for attacks on benefits.

"The governments attack is a two pronged thing. Its Gordon Brown proving to the city that he's a tough man, and there's a moral agenda that no-one's talking about. They just don't like lone parents".

The Labour government is pro 'family' and these cuts seem to be just another prejudiced attack on people who don't conform to their 'family' ideals.

STUDENTS AND YOUNG WORKERS Stand up for

THE LABOUR MARKET facing all young people out there is crap. Because there's few unions and high turnovers of staff, wages are low. Working conditions are bad, often dangerous. Harassment and even violence are rife. These are the jobs that students are forced into.

A million students are working now, on top of our studies. We have to – with grants being cut back, students need to work more and more just to meet their basic living costs, like food and rent.

If the Labour government succeeds in imposing tuition fees and abolishing the grant these pressures, and the trend in student working, will shoot up.

So it's handy that the GMB, one of the biggest unions in Britain, has come up with a pocket guide to tell you what your rights are. There's some good tips in it (see below). But what comes across is how few rights we've got. Andy from Peckham explains the law and how to fight back.

What are your rights at work?

FIRST OF all, a lot of it isn't law but recommended practice, like overtime pay. At our end of the labour market even if it exists, it isn't much. In the restaurant I work full-timers get 67p an hour extra for overtime, part-timers nothing. The fundamental point is, you've got no legal right to it, so you can complain all you want, your boss can just tell you to fuck off or even sack you.

Second a lot of it is the law, but it's either such an incredible hassle to enforce you just couldn't be bothered, or it is simply unenforceable.

Take the example of when money goes missing from the till, and the boss takes it

crap wages for young workers

Scottish & Newcastle bar staff: £3.06/hr.
BHS sales assistant: £3.56/hr.
HMV records cashier: £3.80/hr.
Warner Village floorstaff: £4/hr.

out of your wages. Technically they can't do this if it's not in your contract, but then the employer can change your contract, and unless you reject the change (by leaving!) they can do it again and again. The law (which is the capitalists' law, passed in their parliament or interpreted by their judges, so of course it'll work against us 99.9% of the

time) divides contract changes into fundamental/non-fundamental changes, only the former being a legally "unreasonable" change – needless to say, very few changes your boss ever pulls on you are going to fall into this category.

Most importantly, if you haven't been working for 2 years you can't claim unfair dismissal or redundancy. This really discriminates against young workers and students, since most of us haven't been working that long, or if we have we've moved from job to job because the work's so crap.

5 TIPS FROM THE GMB "GUIDE FOR THE WORKING STUDENT"

● Part-time workers (the vast majority of students) have the same statutory rights as full-time workers.

● Tips are important to many of us in bars or restaurants, and how many of us know that, as long as a customer's tip is in cash, not credit, the boss can't take any of it legally – if this happens in your workplace, you should get in touch with a union, and always ask customers to tip in cash and explain why to them.

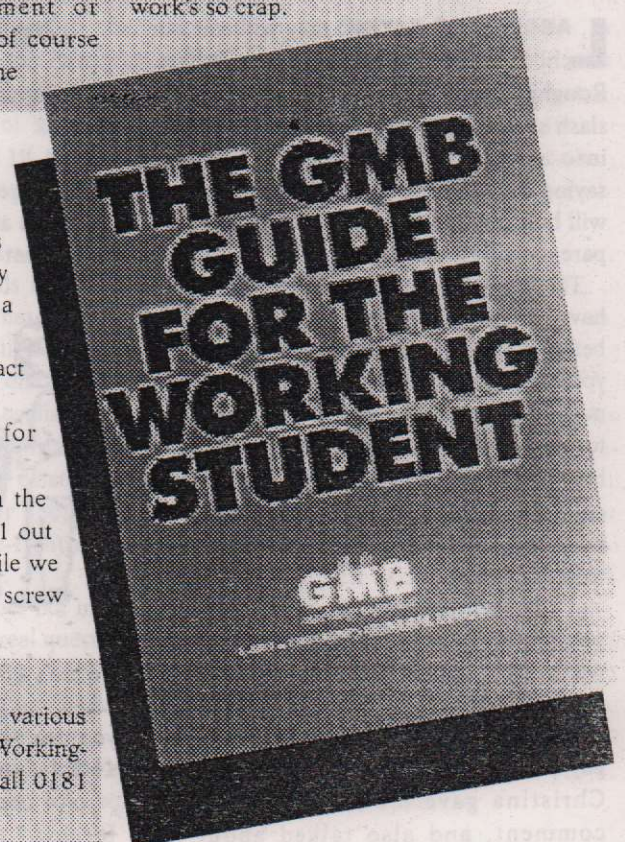
● If money goes missing out of the till, the boss has to have said in your contract that it comes out of your pay, otherwise they can't deduct it.

● VDU-users are entitled to free eye-tests and the employer must pay for glasses/contact lenses/telescopes if you need one.

● They also warn you about cash in hand. This hypocritical practice, which the GMB rightly calls "employer-led fraud" and which is an illegal contract, affects 1 out of 3 working students. The employers dodge taxes and NHS contributions, while we won't be able to enforce many of our legal rights. You can turn the tables and screw 'em if you can get them on tape and nip down to the local tax office.

Read: "GMB Guide for the Working Student" ... call 0181 947 3131 (GMB).

Also: "T&G Guide for Agency Staff", "Rights for Part-Time Employees" and various pamphlets on tips, contracts, bullying and harassment or the new European Working-Time directive, or just over-the-phone advice on a problem or your rights ... call 0181 809 4977 (T&G organising and support unit)



your rights!

Why you should get active in your union

SO HOW CAN we get our rights? First of all we have to get into our union. At least if we join as an individual we can find out what our rights are and get help in enforcing the few that we've got.

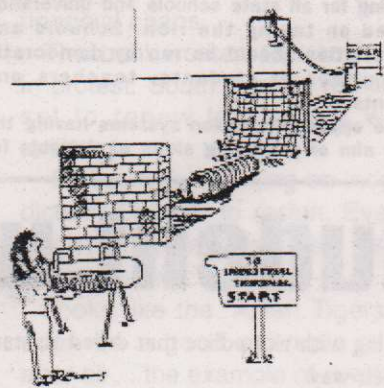
But standing on the law is nowhere near enough. The GMB's guide is typical of the approach of the bureaucrats running our unions, not devoting serious resources to organising but publishing nice glossy pamphlets saying join the union, call us if you need help, as if they were the AA. This passive, consumer approach where members pay the union for legal services isn't enough, we need to get active in changing things where we work.

There's no alternative to strong, fighting union organisation. What legal rights we do have will only be enforced if we've got organisation on the ground to take those laws into our workplaces. And if we're going to start pushing up wages, getting better hours, achieving better conditions and putting a stop to harassment and

management bullying, we're going to have to get organised where we work.

That way we can turn around the culture where we work - people don't let things slide anymore, but start asserting their rights, and instead of us bickering about stuff like "you're late and I had to do your job" while the manager or boss sits back and smiles, we start taking on the real issues like why there aren't enough staff or people aren't paid enough to bother showing up and start uniting together to take on the real cause of our problems, our boss.

Temps, students, part-timers, we all need to be in a union.



UNIONS AND THE FIGHT FOR FREE EDUCATION

THE UNION BUREAUCRATS won't fight for the things student workers need. Where were they in the fight against tuition fees? Poor students won't go on to university or will drop out under the pressure of debt, work and study. This will just close our options more and add more desperate people to the jobs market, further lowering wages.

The best way to get the 1 million working students to join the unions would be to take a militant lead in the fight to defend our rights to a free education. So we need to get in our unions, organise inside our workplaces and outside them in organising drives, but we'll also need to fight in the unions so we can create organisations that we can use to fight back.

YOUR BASIC RIGHTS AT WORK

SO WHAT BASIC rights do you have up to two years?

1) no unlawful deductions from wages (cash tips, not paying you hours you worked etc.)

2) you can't be dismissed legally for health and safety issues (complaining, calling a health and safety inspectorate, etc.), for pregnancy, for trade union membership or activity, or for asserting a statutory right (not too many of these - see below)

3) you can't be discriminated against on the grounds of sex or race

4) Europe says you should get equal pay for work of equal value

5) you must receive a written payslip detailing deductions by first pay date.

6) you must receive a written contract within the first 2 months of work (even if you haven't as long as you've been hired for paid work there's a contract and the verbally-agreed terms (pay-rate, hours, etc.) have the same legal status)

All of these have 3-month time limits for you to complain to an Industrial tribunal.

So don't delay: get on the phone to a union if you're affected by any of the above and get the union to help you.

WHAT REVO FIGHTS FOR

Revo members have experience in organising drives in the GMB and in the T&G, which is running one called "Respect at Work" in different areas of London like Covent Garden. So give us a call and find out what you can do to get organised where you work or how to get involved in the Respect drive.

REVOLUTION stands for:

- £6 an hour minimum wage regardless of age
 - Employment protection from day one - scrap the 2 years rule
 - Jobs for all - share out all the available work between all available to do it, with no loss of pay
 - Massive recruitment campaign to join young workers up to the unions
 - Union leaders to be elected, recallable, and paid the average wage of the workers they represent
 - Strikes and occupations against pay freezes and job cuts
- Ring REVOLUTION on 0171 357 0388 and find out your rights!

School strikes sweep Italy

"Let's change the future with our ideas!"

This is the slogan chanted during massive demos and sit-ins by thousands of Italian school students who have been fighting the Italian Government since last October.

Their weapons? Banners, thousands of people, lots of noise but mostly school occupations and schools under exclusive students' control.

Their reasons? Two proposals by the Italian Government:

- a big slice of state funds to go to push private schools and the introduction of private sponsors for state schools.
- job cuts of 3% for teachers which means thousands of sackings by 1999.

It all started in March 1997 when the government announced a long-needed reform of the obsolete Italian education system. The reform involves more autonomy for individual schools -- something the students had always

by Francesca, Ealing

hoped for. The path to reform was blocked by the right-wing opposition and the unstable government majority.

Also two proposals enraged the students. The first was the absurd proposal to pump state funds (already very scarce) into private schools. The second was to promote sponsors for State schools (in their contorted logic to balance the loss of the state funds!?) so that big companies can control our education and prepare us better for the "real world" of exploitation and poverty wages.

Since October students have been occupying and running schools all over Italy - presenting an alternative idea for what this reform should really be about. The protest carried on with another massive demo in Rome on the 27 of January.

Italian school students speak out!

What are you fighting for?

Maria Rocca, 16: "More democracy and more funds to state schools. Sponsors out of our schools."

Giampaolo Boccardo, 20: "more active student participation in running our schools."

What form have the protests taken?

Adolfo Cicconi, 18: "All kinds of protests in which students and teachers join together."

Giampaolo Boccardo: "Marches and occupations. All sorts of 'visible' protests. You have to be seen in order to be heard. We were 50,000 people in Rome last November."

Marco, 17: "We occupied our school for two weeks... We organised debates and started a monthly paper. We organised ourselves and consulted with the representatives of other schools and managing to occupy schools simultaneously."

THE ITALIAN YOUTH have shown that school students can organise against privileged private education and that the idea of democracy in the schools can win massive support.

REVOLUTION fights for the scrapping of all private education, for a massive expansion of

funding for all state schools and universities based on taxing the rich. Schools and universities should be run by democratic committees of students, teachers and parents.

We oppose education systems having the sole aim of producing skills exploitable for

private greed.

We fight to link up struggles and unite campaigns across the borders, aligning ourselves with the growing fightback of the European working class. That way we can build a socialist education system that meets human need, not private greed.

German student upsurge

By Hauke, a German student in London

Hundreds of thousands out on the streets... People taking out their rage... Protests, marches, and strikes. Sounds good to be true?

Well, students in Germany have just staged their first decent demonstrations in at least a decade. They were prompted by further funding cutbacks for universities, which can already hardly cope with the number of students enrolling, together with a new higher education policy aimed at enlarging private industries' influence in education, lower grants, and a plan to introduce tuition fees.

By early December, over a hundred universities had been on strike, access to buildings had been blocked and buildings themselves have been occupied - hardly any lectures have taken place. 30,000 students marched on Bonn and tried to storm Chancellor Kohl's official residence,

battling with riot police that dared to stand in their way.

Their main demands are better funding of universities, no tuition fees, higher living allowances. But they aim to make university education more efficient and degrees more job-oriented - to improve graduates' prospects in the job market. This is why the head of the Association of German Industry and politicians of all parties have applauded the students for their courage to raise such radical demands.

Their demands to be trimmed fit for the market more effectively, their clinging to the myth of a glittering career has been one of the factors that has largely prevented students showing solidarity with other social campaigns. Unlike the French students who spontaneously supported the industrial workers strike in 1995, the German students have largely not got involved in

backing other workers. In turn, they have largely failed to win concrete support apart from verbal declarations of solidarity. This is a similar situation to Britain.

The problem is that the student movement - whose leaders, mainly supporters of the social-democrats (the German Labour Party) and the middle class Greens, have no real alternative to the agenda of big business - is not yet challenging the idea that education is all about the market and careers. This may explain the partly hypocritical approach of the ruling elites towards the strikes.

There needs to be a discussion about the content of education and the function of education as a whole. The debate must not be restricted to funding modalities but should also focus on who controls education and what we learn, how we learn it and to what ends we apply our knowledge.

Algerian government kills its own people!

A CAMPAIGN OF organised murder in Algerian villages has claimed the lives of over 2,000 people since July. Until now it has been blamed on the opposition Armed Islamist Groups (GIA) and other Islamic factions.

Now the Observer has provided damning evidence that the massacres have in fact

been carried out by the Ninja – slang for the Algerian junta's notorious police force. An interview with a ninja trooper revealed the truth behind the government's lies:

"The Securite Militaire (military police) went in and came out after a time ... After they had gone we went in to clear the place up. There were about 16 bodies, two

families. I saw with my own eyes dead men, women and children all with their throats slit."

The Algerian Government is murdering its own civilians. This shows their desperation to discredit all resistance and intimidate growing opposition from workers and peasants.

Kurdish refugees left to rot

The Kurds are a nation that is denied the right to its own state. The Turkish government refuses even to recognise that they exist! They persecute the Kurds, who have been fighting back for decades.

Now European governments – who are keen to back the right-wing Turkish government – are trying to stop Kurds claiming asylum in other countries. As soon as 1,200 Kurds arrived in Italy in early January, seeking political

asylum, France, Germany, Austria and others put more troops on their borders. France and Germany are trying their hardest to tighten all European immigration controls. With Britain at the head of the EU this year, Blair is set to follow suit.

Youth across Europe must demand an end to these racist controls and support the Kurds' right to determine their own future. Let's tell the EU leaders: refugees are welcome here!

The system is collapsing . . .

ONLY A FEW weeks ago the capitalists were using the example of Korea, Thailand and Indonesia as proof of how the free market can bring prosperity, growth and success all over the world.

Oops! The "Asian Tigers" are now in a deep crisis. Their currencies and share prices are plummeting, and the 'economic stability' of these countries is collapsing in a domino effect as one after the other falls into

financial chaos.

Thai bank workers took to the streets in protest. South Korean workers look set to renew last year's wave of strikes.

Pressure is mounting on Indonesian dictator Suharto to resign. Even once mighty Japan has seen its stock market tumble.

Looks like the "Asian Tigers" might soon be a good example to follow after all ... the example of revolution!



Shock horror! This young woman has a stud in her nose!

Tara Le Santo, 14, however has been banned by her headmaster. He says that she should not be allowed to go back to her school in Brig, Lincolnshire, until she has the stud removed.

She has decided to run a campaign on the Internet against stupid bans on school students. More power to her!

But A.N. Wilson of the *Evening Standard* disagrees. He wrote that 14-year-olds should not have rights at all. He even dared to liken her to another group of 14-year-olds – the ones who killed headmaster Philip Lawrence!

On mature reflection we reply to Mr Wilson on behalf of school students everywhere: grow up you fucking twat!

REVO'S GUIDE TO PIRATE RADIO

Fed up with boring mainstream shit? If you live in London there's plenty of alternative sounds on the air.

Problem ... they're illegal.

Radio stations find it easy to get a license if they're backed by big business and churn out middle of the road commercial pap. But stations that play alternative sounds ... especially black music ... find it difficult to get a license from the racist play-safe authorities.

The state keeps a firm grip on the right to broadcast. What you play – and what you say – are under strict control. But

PART ONE: LONDON

every weekend people are taking the risk and setting up illegal transmitters to fight back against aural sameness. Support them – and support the fight to free the airwaves.

Drum and Bass:

Rince	91.8
Kool FM	94.6
Pressure	100.4
Rude	104.3

House and Underground Garage

Pleasure	87.9
London Underground	89.4
Magic	90.2
Chicago	90.6
Freek	101.8

Soul, R'nB, reggae

Station FM	89.8
PowerJam	92.0
Klimaxx	92.9
C FM	96.6
Bassline	97.9

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

REVOLUTION HELD OUR first conference in central London on the weekend of 22-23 November. 40 people attended. There were groups and individual activists from London, Manchester, Coventry, Exeter, Oxford and Stoke. There was a good number of school students there, particularly from Pimlico comprehensive in London, and quite a few young workers, including several from the retail and catering industries who are involved in unionising their workplaces. University students from Middlesex, Warwick, King's and Manchester also took part, as did observers from Argentina, Colombia and from our sister paper REVOLUTION in France.

The aim of the conference was to establish a truly independent and nationally organised youth group, with its own democratically decided policies. All the policies were written and presented to the conference by REVO activists, and the discussions were completely democratic. Everyone there could suggest changes to the policies and we discussed them all out in full. When there were differences of opinion we voted with the majority decisions being adopted as policy. Unlike the Labour Party and the trade union conferences there were no bureaucratic tricks to stop people putting alternative views.

Revolution not reformism

The first debate that we had recognised the failure of reformism – the belief that socialist changes can come through parliament – and we agreed that socialism is only possible through smashing the capitalist state with a workers' revolution. We also realised that we have to tie together the struggles of today with the fight for socialism, in order to win all our needs.

Several workshops were held to focus on specific issues.

A discussion on organising young workers focused on practical issues of how to build a union, and also how to take control of the unions away from the bureaucrats who run them at the moment.

We want to recruit the young and less organised workers to revitalise the unions.

On the issue of drugs, we discussed the hypocrisy of the drug laws and agreed that the ban on drugs is unworkable and adds to peoples' problems. Legalisation under a state monopoly would stop young people being turned into criminals and will take drugs out of the hands of gangsters, allowing accurate information and safer quality of drugs. There were also debates about how to provide alternatives to destructive hard drug use and whether drugs would be taken on a large scale in a socialist society.

Imperialism and the Third World

Another workshop on the Saturday was on imperialism. The West exploits the Third World politically, economically and militarily. Our movement will support the struggle for freedom from imperialist control. This means campaigning against the activities of multinationals like in Colombia, and taking sides against the imperialist powers when they go to war with semi-colonial countries. The only way to overthrow imperialism is to unite the working class throughout the world.

After a party on the Saturday night, the second day started with a discussion on racism and racial oppression: on how it was developed to justify slavery and colonialism and how it is still being used to divide the working class. We will fight to rid the world of racism altogether.

Ireland

The Ireland discussion, again looking at the role of imperialism, saw how Britain's rule in the North has led to a discrimination against Catholic opponents of British rule. This is where the war comes from. That's why the only way to a genuine peace is by smashing the British state's rule there, with self-defence against loyalist thugs and turning the war into one for socialism throughout the whole of Ireland.

Sexism and sexual liberation

On sexism and sexual liberation the debate looked at the oppression of women

and the role women play in the family and in the workplace, as well as their under-representation in most organisations. There was also a debate about incest laws and whether we need an age of consent.

The sharpest discussion was on the environment. Differences emerged on whether the world is over-populated, whether we should oppose roads and cars, and on whether nuclear power stations should be shut down. The debate will be continued in the pages of REVOLUTION. Write in with your views.

Campaigning for a free education

One of the final discussions on schools and colleges raised the need to unite all the different campaigns for free education. This will enable a strong attack against the Blairite leaders in the NUS, as well as link the struggle for the control of education with education workers and the wider working class. This was shown through the experiences gone through by the local groups around the country.

REVOLUTION has been active in signing up young workers to trade unions, fighting against BP's Colombian death squads, organising school strikes, supporting the Liverpool Dockers, and last July we took a coach of 50 youth to Amsterdam for the European March for Jobs. We will be even more active now we have set up a national organisation!

The fight for free education and the continuing campaign against the blood-profits of BP in Colombia are important focuses for future activity. This is why we had a speaker from a fighting trade union in Colombia, and why we had representatives from groups in other countries, developing the international socialist links.

We elected a Council of nine members to co-ordinate the work of our local groups over the next year.

Having seen the absence of other socialist youth groups and the failure of left groups to come up with coherent socialist politics, Revolution is the only independent revolutionary youth group today. So, if you're not already a member, now is the time to join!

For cars

by Adam, Coventry

CAPITALISM IS A system of production that puts the greed of the minority above the needs of millions. This means that the immediate concerns of bosses come before the long-term future of the planet. We can see this on a daily basis, with environmental problems, when we go out into the streets of the cities. The urban areas are very polluted and over-crowded, with poor housing and bad city planning. The rural areas also suffer from certain environmental problems but these are not at the same level as the cities.

Because our cities are so full of people and space for workplaces has to be found, there are often great distances between home and work. This means that workers have to find some means of transport – often the car. The long traffic queues at peak times – which are the times people are going to and from work – show that most people use cars for getting to work rather than for leisure. This means that stopping workers using their cars right now, or putting a stop on all road improvements, even the building or widening of new roads, is wrong. This would create big problems for people trying to get to work.

Of course, all of this deals with the government and the system that we have at the moment: a capitalist system. What revolutionary socialists should be campaigning for is a better and cheaper provision of public transport. This will need to be under workers control, so that the prices are decent and so that there are proper bus and train services – whether they are going to make a profit or not. But because we are unlikely to win all of our demands immediately, it would be wrong to ban cars and roads at the moment.

Another environmental problem is the burning of fossil fuels and the possible catastrophes of nuclear power.

This is why we need working-class controlled investigations into these practices and into safer alternatives to fossil fuels and nuclear power. We understand that nuclear disasters can happen, but the best people to carry out enquiries are the people who are working there and know the managements' tricks for saving money and cutting safety.

And what would happen if we ban all nuclear power stations (and even, all burning of fossil fuels as some environmentalists call for)? Some countries would not even have enough energy to keep open all their public services, like schools and hospitals. France, for instance, uses nuclear power for 75% of its total energy.

But socialists don't call for the scrapping of all technology and industrial production. Revolutionaries want to take what's best from capitalism – like advanced and energy-efficient technology – and then make it even safer, cheaper and more accessible. To do this, we have to go beyond the limits of capitalism and place the working class in control – of factories, science and all planning. It is only the working class which has the aim of saving the environment for today and for all future generations of humanity.



CARS - WHO NEEDS THEM?

Against cars

by Max, Manchester

OUR ADOPTED POLICY on the environment includes a section on 'Towns and Cities'. It recognises that by 2025 there will be over a billion cars world-wide. It does not however clearly state whether this is a good or a bad thing. It implies that this has a detrimental effect on the environment, but only in the context of 'recognising the tremendous benefits brought about by the car'.

Revolution's programme on the environment says that 'something must be done' about cars, but follows this bold statement with nothing about the building of more cars and the roads that they need. This is wrong and looks as if we are avoiding the issue.

Do we or don't we support building roads and producing more cars? This is a question that Revolution members and supporters should be asking themselves. With the rise in anti-road protests, and the famous 'stop runway two' fight in Manchester, this is certainly a question we need to be clear on.

■ Integration and Regulation of public transport

I am in complete agreement with our position on integrating our public transport system, nationalising the railways and regulating the buses. These are necessary now to provide a cheap, accessible, and comprehensive transport system. But this should be said in the context of aiming to help to discourage car use.

In the same light, we should be taking a clear position on the building of roads and motorways, as well as the production of yet more cars themselves. We should be boldly stating that cars are an uneconomic system of transport, and are environmentally unsound. Therefore, in principle, we are against the building of more roads and against the continual creation of newer (and yet more expensive) cars.

■ Nationalisation under workers control

The car industries should be nationalised and placed under the control of the factory workers. No compensation for the parasitic bosses for their inevitable losses from this change of hands. A nationalised car industry, with production levels integrated into a larger transport plan, would only produce cars that genuinely are needed.

The continual building of roads and motorways should be ridiculed by revolutionaries as unnecessary and environmentally destructive. We recognise the benefits of modern transport, but most people already reap these gains.

■ Workers' Enquiry

If certain new roads are absolutely necessary, for whatever reason, then a workers enquiry can prove this to be the case. We shouldn't be fooled by the so-

called 'independent' commissions of the capitalists; all their rubbish about how they've checked it out and it won't cause any damage at all to the environment. Its obvious that they're going to say that.

A workers enquiry, a commission of consumers, scientists, and workers, would be controlled by us not the state or corporations, who make a profit out of any building ventures, and would have the wider interests of the area as their priority. No more roads should be built until a workers enquiry has shown its necessity outweighs the environmental damage.

The same should apply to so called 'out of town planning' like massive 'lakeside' shopping centres. They bring with them new roads, new carparks and crap jobs. Nothing more and probably less. If they really are necessary as a way of distributing goods to the suburban and out of town shoppers, then, again, a workers enquiry can decide.

We should be against them in principle; against cars, motorways, out of town shopping centres etc. But we should be for the independence of the working class – to support it in making its own decision, and support the authority of those democratic, working bodies.

Until we adopt the principle of this proposal, our position on roads and cars will continue to look as if it's avoided taking a clear revolutionary position.

REVOLUTION

One Solution - REVOLUTION
Eine Lösung - REVOLUTION
Une Solution - RéVOLUTION
Una Soluzione - RIVOLUZIONE

EUROPEAN YOUTH CAMP

Northern France
24-27 July 1998

THIS IS GOING TO BE AWESOME!

REVOLUTION youth groups in Austria, France and Britain are working together to hold an international camp near Paris in July.

Four days of planning action, discussing politics, sharing experiences, sport and partying for young revolutionaries across Europe. Meet communist youth from across Europe, from Sweden to Spain.

The millionaires are planning their European union ... now we get to plan ours!

[Special warning from European Council of Ministers and Interpol:

Under no circumstances will the REVOLUTION European Youth Camp be allowed to take place. Forget about it. It will be crap anyway. Foreigners are boring. Stay at home.]

Further details coming soon.

Book early: ring REVOLUTION on 0171 357 0388.

Pissed off with Fascist graffiti in your area?

Fascists shouldn't be given any space to organise and that includes not putting up with having their racist anti-working class bullshit on our walls. If you don't want to do it alone, give us a call on 0171 357 0388 and we'll cover it as soon as we can.

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