Red Pulse 10 pence
Health bulletin of the Workers Power Group
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# THE NHS IN CRISIS-

# HEALTH WORKERS FIGHT BACK

THE NHS IS in crisis. Hospitals and beds are closed due to lack of money, while waiting lists have grown to 688,000. Health Authorities have overspent by an estimated £150 million this year just to keep services going.

Small children are suffering and dying because there are not enough nurses to treat them. Nurses, already flooding from the NHS due to poor pay see their unsocial hours pay under attack. Operating theatres lie idle while thousands survive the waiting lists on pain-killers.

Refusing to meet parents of heart-op children, Thatcher said: "This is not a health service in crisis, it is doing very well."

Only somebody blind to reality could utter this. But for Thatcher and co. reality is very different from that of NHS users. Whether it is John Moore's pneumonia, or Thatcher's varicose veins, their treatment is never cancelled, because it is always paid for.

It would be easy to see Thatcher's callousness as the cause of all this suffering. But its roots go much deeper. There is a logic behind the chaos gripping the NHS. It is the logic of capitalism, the profit system.

Once a word no-one would speak, capitalism is now theword on every tory's lips. In their champagne bars they have been drinking toasts to "popular capitalism". The press greeted Thatcher's third election victory as a triumph for "popular capitalism".

But the NHS crisis has uncovered the reality behind "popular capitalism". The bankers' champagne, like Thatcher's election victory itself, was bought with money drained from the NHS and other welfare services. The £3 billion that Chancellor Nigel Lawson will give away in tax cuts this year is only the latest instalment. It testifies to the fact that the few thousand capitalists who own and run industry do not care about a decent public health service.

Ever since its foundation in 1948 the NHS has been under attack. Set-up on the principle of providing for the health needs of all, free of charge, it was and isan ever increasing drain on the profits of the capitalists, via the taxes raised to pay for it.

This was a price the whole capitalist class was prepared to pay for workers collaboration in the Second World War. In fear of

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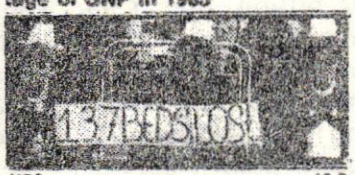
mass radicalisation both Liberals and Tories offered little opposition to the idea of a publicly funded NHS. Nevertheless two important concessions to the bosses were built into the NHS at its foundation.

First there was the compromise with the consultants and GPs whose resistance to becoming salaried workers eventually caused Labour Minister Aneurin Bevan to compromise. This left consultants with the right to practise privately in the NHS and to use the "pay bed" system.

Second and more important was the failure to nationalise the drug and supply industries. The ever expanding NHS is a source of guaranteed profit to the international drug companies. Patent laws allow them to overprice massively. Librium for example is sold to the NHS at 500 times what it costs to make.

All this, combined with private health schemes like BUPA whose profit rate is 30% means that a massive amount of profit is pouring into the bank accounts of the bosses from the NHS.

**Health expenditure as a percentage of GNP in 1985**




| | |
|---|---|
| USA | 10.5 |
| West Germany | 9.2 |
| France | 8.6 |
| Netherlands | 8.5 |
| Ireland | 7.7 |
| Switzerland | 7.3 |
| Denmark | 7.0 |
| Finland | 6.9 |
| Italy | 6.9 |
| Austria | 6.7 |
| Norway | 6.6 |
| Belgium | 6.6 |
| UK | 5.9 |

During the 1960s the massive expansion of industry and profit required a healthy and educated workforce and the money to pay for the NHS, education and local services. But the 1970s brought falling profits economic crisis. With these came a concerted attack on NHS spending.

Labour launched the first wave of cuts after its deal with the international banks in 1976. As part of a £3 billion cuts package 143 hospitals were closed or "reorganised" with fewer beds. At the end of Labour's reign the number of hospital beds per 1,000 people was lower than in 1949.

NHS pay too stagnated under Labour, while inflation soared. The Tory government only had to take over where Labour left off.

By cutting the grants to Local Health Authorities the Tories forced deep cuts in services. Thatcher never tires of repeating that she has increased NHS funding. But the need for treatment has increased faster. Britain now spends less of its total wealth on health care than the USA and twelve other European countries.

Not content with spending cuts the Tories forced through Privatisation of domestic, laundry and catering services. No matter who won the contract - private or "in house" tenders - the result was the same. Jobs were lost and the standard of service declined.

The only real growth area has been management. On the advice of the boss of Sainsbury's the Tories brought in a new layer of Unit General Managers. Their job was to cut costs and enforce work discipline. Paid a commission for every cut they make, these ghouls haunt the corridors of hospitals turning-off lights and heating.

Despite all of these attacks the Tories have not managed to shift the burden of paying for health care onto workers' wage packets. Because as long as the NHS is funded from taxation it will remain a constant drain on the capitalists profits. Geared, however inadequately, to patients needs the NHS consumes money uncontrollably. This is a gain for all workers, but a gain which is now under threat because capitalism's profit motive demands an end to it.

The second biggest employer in Europe (after the Soviet Army) its pay bill is massive. £millions more are paid to the drug and supply industries. £65 million was paid last year to private clinics to do essentail operations not available on the NHS. For the bosses this seems like a dreadful waste. A health system geared to need is an affront to the profit system.

Now the NHS has reached crisis point. Unable to do more than slow its growth, the Tories were content for three elections to maintain a basically free NHS. They have privatised, cut, driven down pay etc. but never dared suggest dismantling the NHS itself. Now conditions have changed.

In December and January Thatcher faced a storm of protest from both consultants and nurses. The £100 million stop-gap payment and the shelving of the cut in special duty allowance were the results.

This opposition from groups the Tories consider "natural Tories" has opened the way for the far-right's long planned solution. Thatcher has ordered a whirlwind "review of the structure of NHS funding".

This means that by the summer John Moore will present a plan to end funding of the NHS directly from taxation. All the alternatives boil down to taking money from the poor and needy to pay for it.



*"This hospital is now charging for meals. Waking you up with tea, toast and a boiled egg at 5.30 am will be £1.50. At 6am it will be £2; at 6.30, £2.50; 7 o'clock, £3; 7.30, £3.50; 8 o'clock, £4..."*

Both the Adam Smith Institute and the Centre for Policy Studies had conveniently produced plans for the destruction of the NHS. But a Guardian report on 28 January revealed that as early as November 87 the Tories were looking at a "radical plan" for the NHS.

They held a seminar for "leading figures from British and American private health companies, special advisers to Number Ten and the Department of Health, and senior figures from the Conservative Party including Lord Skelmersdale, the junior health minister. Also represented were senior figures from the NHS."

Three basic options considered at that meeting have found their way into the Tories discussions on the NHS since then.

First there is the introduction of charges for hospital and GP services. A Bill currently going through parliament already plans to charge for eye and dental check-ups. This will be expanded to everything from overnight hospital stays, hospital food, drugs and operations. Everything will have a price tag. For these charges to come anywhere near covering costs they would have to be way out of range of 80% of the population.

This is where option two comes in; a massive expansion of private health insurance. This kind of insurance is already at record levels, standing at over 10% of the population. Excluding the top 2 or 3 per cent who will always go private this means that a layer of salaried workers is now so worried about NHS standards that it is prepared to pay for what it has a right to get free of charge.

Health insurance, like all insurance, discriminates against workers and their families. The older you are, or more, likely to be ill, the dearer the premium. Like car insurance it goes up for high risk groups. If you are already ill when you join, for example if you suffer from diabetes, none of your diabetic related illness is covered by insurance. If you want better cover then you pay more, and if you cant afford it, you must live in constant fear of illness.

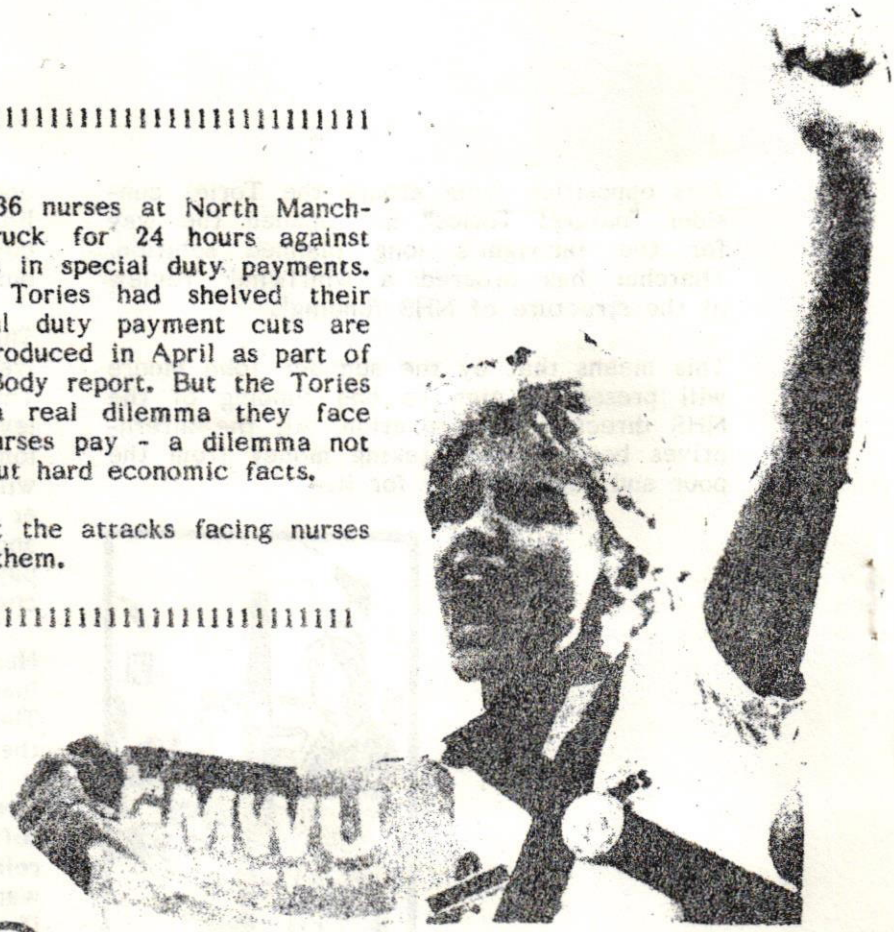
A third option being considered is a special tax levied for the NHS. Drawn up along the lines of the Poll Tax on housing this would have to be massive. Under the guise of equality everybody would pay the same, no matter what they earned. It would be yet another way of making workers pay for the NHS.

The fight is now on to stop the Tories destroying the NHS. This is a fight for every worker. But NHS workers must take the lead. We should use the current wave of nurses action, action over privatisation in Scotland etc. to launch a national campaign of industrial action against the Tory plans. This means learning the lessons of past defeat, and overcoming the obstacles placed by government, union and Labour leaders alike to decisive victory.

RED PULSE is a bulletin for NHS workers produced by supporters of WORKERS POWER.
This special edition has been produced to answer some of the questions raised by the current wave of NHS workers strikes.
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In early January 36 nurses at North Manchester General struck for 24 hours against planned reductions in special duty payments. Within days the Tories had shelved their plans. The special duty payment cuts are likely to be reintroduced in April as part of the Pay Review Body report. But the Tories retreat reflects a real dilemma they face when attacking nurses pay - a dilemma not based on morals but hard economic facts.

Below, we look at the attacks facing nurses and how to fight them.




# NURSES AND PROFESSIONALISM

Nurses pay is appalling. This is a fact that any nurse can see by comparing his/her pay to other skilled workers wages. Low pay and the stress caused by understaffing has led 30,000 nurses a year to leave the service. This has created an acute shortage of nurses which only a big financial incentive can reverse.

At the same time however there is massive pressure on NHS funding. Nurses pay alone accounts for 20% of NHS spending. This is because for years nurses pay awards have been partially funded by government, leaving the rest to be found by cutting costs.

So it is not kind-heartedness that has made the Tories search for a solution to nurses pay and staff shortages, but the "market forces" Thatcher loves so much.

Just as the Tories are now considering a drastic solution for NHS funding, they also want to cut the nursing wage bill by drastically restructuring nurses pay.

Tory think-tanks have long advocated the idea of a "core/periphery" workforce. Strip away the jargon and this means a small "core" of skilled, well paid workers, hopefully organised in a no-strike union, and a large pool of unskilled, part-time, badly paid workers with no employment rights.

Cuts and privatisation have gone a long way towards reducing ancillary workers to this level. But the skilled "core" remains too big for the "core/periphery" model to work. Staff shortages has given half a million nurses vast economic power to resist a general onslaught on their pay. So the Tories plan to introduce the "core/periphery" idea into nursing itself.

The "ten grade scale" to be announced in April will be the first step along this road. It will widen the difference between every grade's pay, and punish non-specialist staff by boosting the pay of paediatric and other areas.

Project 2000, a scheme originally designed to stop the exploitation of learner nurses by basing their training off the wards, will be used to the opposite effect. By removing State Enrolled Nurses (SENs) and introducing a large number of permanently unskilled nurses (Nurse Aides) it will pave the way for the de-skilling of many caring jobs, allowing untrained YTS workers to do the SEN and learners' jobs for under £30 a week.

At a suitable moment in this process the Tories will introduce a compulsory no-strike agreement for the remaining skilled nurses.

There is nothing new about this process in industry. Capitalism's drive for greater productivity constantly leads to one skilled task being broken down into many unskilled ones. Take a look behind the counter in a MacDonalds to see what this means. You will get a glimpse of the future of nursing as it will be if the Tories get their way.

Nurses have to fight not just to defend pay, but to defend every positive aspect of nursing that de-skilling would remove; induividualised care, the nursing process, control of your own work etc.

But in this fight there is one big obstacle nurses have to overcome. It is the illusion of "professionalism".




*"You mean all this stress and humiliation isn't just an initiation rite?"*

Historically the "professions" were self employed small businessmen with prestige occupations. Lawyers, doctors, teachers, in short the middle class sandwiched between workers and the big bosses. Their economic independence gave rise to the idea of "professionalism": a code of conduct, individual accountability for their work, respectability etc.

But these ideas made sense because of their economic position. From the very start of modern nursing the idea of "professionalism has been at odds with nurses real position in the workforce. Nurses are waged workers.

No doubt the aura of "professionalism" was used to entice middle class daughters into nursing. In the 19th century nursing was one of the few "respectable" jobs a woman could do.

But in the context of today's attacks on nurses pay and conditions "professionalism" is a gigantic con-trick played on nurses by management and the RCN.

What many nurses think of as the positive side of "professionalism" - the ability to control their own work, individualised patient care and high standards - is exactly what will disappear under the restructuring of the nursing workforce.

What are left are the ideas of self sacrifice and individual accountability. These make sense for the lawyer who works for himself, but they are an excuse for exploitation for nurses working on a fixed wage.

It is "professionalism" which gives the NHS £160 million a year of free overtime. At the same time one in five of the "professionals" who provide it has to take another job to pay the rent.

It is "professionalism" which allows learner nurses to be treated like children at work and in residence. Except when "professionalism" demands they act-up in charge of a ward on nights.

It is "professionalism" which shifts the blame away from management, onto the individual nurse if things go wrong.

But most of all it is "professionalism" which prevents nurses fighting back.

"Professionals don't strike" say the RCN. Of course it makes little sense for a self-employed barrister to "go on strike". But nurses are waged workers under attack.

And for waged workers the tried and tested weapon to improve wages and conditions is strike action. The Manchester strike shows it can work.

As the government presses home its attack on nurses pay, making more and more carers into unskilled workers, it would be a tragedy if nurses gave in because of the illusion that they were "professionals".

The Pay Review Body is the biggest testament to the uselessness of "professionalism". Granted to nurses "because the RCN will not strike", its findings have been ignored for the same reason. There is nothing to force the government to implement its award.

Nurses must demand that the unions break with the Pay Review Body. A return to free collective bargaining is essential if we hope to gain control of the fight for better pay.

Nurses must link their claims to those of all NHS workers, in particular the fight for a national minimum wage for all NHS staff, including learner nurses, set at the average industrial wage.

But nurses should also demand equal pay for work of equal value. Low pay amongst nurses stems from the fact that 80% are women. Women's oppressed position in society, which makes them second class citizens at work as well as at home, means their wages have constantly been below those of men.

It is not the police we want parity with - because the policeman/woman's pay buys loyalty to Thatcher and the refusal to strike. We want pay parity with the electrician, the computer programmer.

We should take the one element of nurses position as skilled workers -control of our work - and make it into real workers control on a hospital wide basis. Committees of nurses should have a veto over all management decision, effectively deciding on all key questions that affect their work themselves.

All of this means throwing the swindle of "professionalism" into the dustbin along with the RCN membership cards and taking our place alongside all NHS workers' in a a common fight.

# ONE DAY STRIKES AND EMERGENCY COVER

Nobody in the NHS takes strike action lightly. Yet the Tories speedy retreat on Special Duty Payments shows it is effective. A hundred times more effective than petitions to Mrs Thatcher organised by the RCN.

The Tories are so frightened of the wave of nurses strikes that they have launched a big propaganda campaign against it. Their friends in the RCN and the nursing press have been more than willing to help. And behind all the appeals to our consciences and professionalism lies the threat of being struck-off the register.

Their main argument is that strike action hits the patients. But <u>their</u> cuts, privatisation and understaffing have caused untold suffering. What does Thatcher care about NHS patients? She would not even meet parents of heart-op children denied treatment due to understaffing. When she or her ministers are ill they can jump the NHS queue into £180 a night private beds. If the Tories really cared about the patients they would immediately give the money needed to get rid of waiting lists, open the closed wards and staff them with well paid workers.

Interviewed on TV, NUPE and COHSE officials have stressed that the unions will always provide emergency cover and that the strikes will only be "one day" protest actions.

There are serious problems with one-day strikes. The Manchester nurses 24hour strike was courageous. It forced a retreat. But the Tories plans were only shelved. We can't secure <u>total</u> victory through protest strikes or by moral pressure. The position of the employers has to be made impossible before they will give in.

In the 1982 NHS dispute there were a whole series of one-day strikes. Because this action never brought the situation to a head the dispute dragged on for eight months with no sign of the government budging. Despite winning tremendous support from other workers it became more and more difficult to get NHS workers out for one day strikes, knowing that the day after nothing would have changed except their own backlog of work.

INdefinite all out strike action is the key to forcing the Tories on the defensive. It is quicker in the long run, and it can

be the focus of solidarity action from every section of workers who want to defend their NHS.

But indefinite action poses even more sharply the question of emergency cover. We cannot afford to go along with the assurances of the union leaders on emergency cover.

Why? Because most wards are currently staffed at levels well below the emergency cover levels set by management in the 1982 strike. If we let management set emergency cover levels this will mean, in some hospitals, a strike where nobody is allowed to leave their post. Needless to say, strikes like this won't trouble Thatcher very much.

More and more nurses are leaving the RCN to join a real trade union because they want to strike. Leaving cover in the hands of management effectively stops real strike action.

How can we get round this?

We need to start from the principle that management and government are responsible for providing health care, not individual NHS workers. It is the bosses and ministers who are paid and elected to do this, not us.

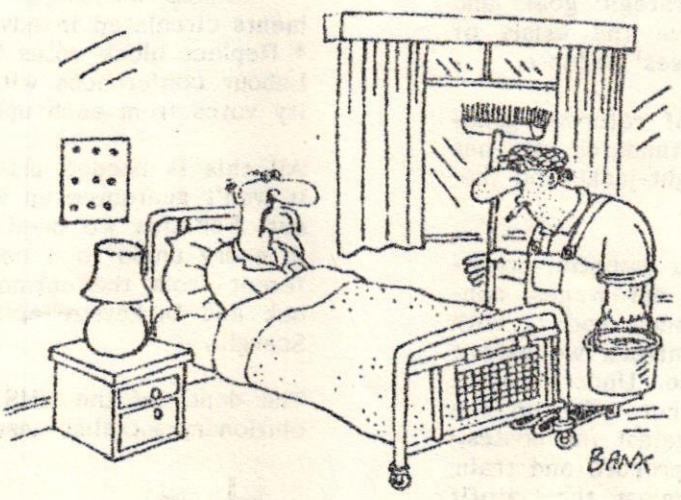
We should decide on all out strike action with emergency cover levels set and monitored by strikers themselves. If management refuse this offer we should be prepared to walk out with no cover. It will be their responsibility if patients are harmed. Nurses in Australia and the USA have adopted these tactics and won their demands in hours not weeks.

Short, sharp action - though it may cause suffering, is better than the prolonged agony caused to patients by the crisis-ridden NHS at present.

As for threats of dismissal under the UKCC code of conduct, what hypocrites the health bosses are. Trying to care for patients on an understaffed ward with the wrong equipment is the biggest breach of the UKCC code. Yet when nurses protest they are told to work harder, be professional, paper over the cracks. And of course it is not the manager but the individual nurse who gets the blame when the ineviable mistakes are made under stress.

The best way to combat this threat of being struck-off the register is to make the strike as big as possible. Lets see them strike-off 200,000 nurses.

Striking with an advance committment to emergency cover is like fighting with one hand tied behind us. Workers control of emergency cover is the best way to minimise suffering. And if the managers refuse it we must be prepared to walk out. They must take the blame for the results.




I didn't know they'd put bed bathing out to private contractors !

# ORGANISE THE RANK AND FILE

ONE FEATURE OF the run-up to the February 3rd strike has been the uselessness of the trade union leaders. Locked in negotiations with the NHS bosses they were taken by surprise as nurses up and down the country have voted for action. Once they realised the strike movement could be out of control they quickly moved to head-off effective action.

London NUPE official Chris Humphreys told the press: "We are asking nurses to make this a day of protest, not a day of strike". He even hinted the strike could be called off after the union leaders met Health Minister John Moore. This indicates the mentality of the union bureaucrat; to think they can call off a strike they never called and have not built for. But all too often this is the reality.

The breakup of the RCN, the influx of nurses into real trade unions will be in vain unless rank and file workers take control of the unions. As long as the officials control goes unchallenged our strikes will always be sold-out.

The working class today is faced with a capitalist system in crisis. The NHS is in crisis. Traditional trade unionism too is in crisis. The miners and the printers were defeated because they failed to develop the organisations, the methods, the strategic goals and immediate tactics to resolve the crisis of the profit system at the bosses' expense.

The old reformist project of reforms, gradual improvement of living standards etc. has now become a terrible straight-jacket on the working class.

The trade unions grew up as essential organisations for the defence of our wages, conditions etc in the workplace. Today, with union rights under massive attack we cannot limit ourselves to this alone. Under present conditions unions that do not take up the tasks of political struggle against the bosses, unions that do not actively prepare and train workers for mass action against the profit system itself end up bowing down to the logic of that system, and bowing to defeat.

The trade union bureaucracy is a tool in the hands of the bosses. The bureaucrats have a material intrest in smoothing over disputes. In return for this they are allowed into the lower reaches of the state machine (government commissions, wage councils etc) It is vital that we win the unions from the control of the unelected officials.

This means transforming the unions from narrow, sectional organisations taking in at best half the workforce. They should become fighting organisations of the great mass of working people. This means breaking down bureaucratic rules and regulations. It means taking politics into the unions, making them fight over issues like womens rights, abortion, British oppression in Northern Ireland, racism and lebian & gay rights.

The time to start is now. In the current NHS strikes we should be forming cross-union strike committees where every ward or section is represented. These should run the dispute, and to make sure they are not ignored at national level they should organise a national delegate action committee to take the running of the dispute out of the officials hands.

In each of the unions there should be a rank and file movement, organising the members prepared to fight to transform the union.

It should fight for:

* 100% trade unionism in the NHS. For one union for NHS workers.
* Joint shop stewards commitee in every workplace, accountable to mass meetings in work time, producing a regular bulletin.
* For workplace union branches, meeting in work time with no loss of pay.
* All officials to be subject to yearly election and immediate recall should the members decide to recall them. They should get the average wage of their members.
* Union policy to be decided by annual lay-delegate conferences. All union executives to be lay (ie. unpaid) members, answerable to the conference. For all full time officials to be under their control.
* All elections to be held in the workplace atmass meetings, with candidates statements circulated in advance.
* Replace block votes in the union, TUC and Labour conferences with minority and majority votes from each union.

All this is needed urgently. But on its own it won't guarantee an end to defeat and sell out. For this we need to rally the militants in every union to a new kind of poltics, different from the outmoded methods of Kinnock and Bickerstaffe, and, yes, of Benn and Scargill.

The depth of the NHS crisis demands a revolutionary socialist answer.



# WORKING CLASS POWER

THE COMING ATTACK on NHS funding means the whole working class will have to rally to defend the NHS. But defending it on the old basis will not work. A properly funded NHS, with waiting lists abolished, and with decent pay and staffing levels will cost ±billions. Even if we force Thatcher to pay with public money, this could never be raised by raising taxes. In the first place the sums are massive. In the second place a tax increase always hits workers pay. We will have to force the bosses to pay.

The money is there, squandered on their expensive lifestyles, piled up in the banks and in the stock markets. A vast reservoir of profit exists, not least in the bank accounts of the drug and supply companies who have leeched ±billions from the NHS.

To really defend the NHS we need a government that would directly sieze the profits of the rich and use them to fund a service based on need. The drug and supply companies, along with the banks and major industries should be nationalised <u>without</u> compensation to the champagne swillers who own them now.

What government would do this? Certainly not the Labour Party. Every time it has gained office it has attacked workers living standards.

Look at its 1987 election proposals on the NHS. Neil Kinnock said: "I cannot promise a supply of funds on a scale that compares with the level of cuts in support made in seven years of Tory government."

This was because to get these funds he would have to attack the profits of the rich. Yet Labour's whole campaign was aimed at telling the rich that their profits were safe with Neil.

Look as well at Labour's response to the current nurses strikes. Kinnock and co. could not even make up their minds to support the nurses action on February 3rd once it was clear that this was not going to limit itself to "protest". The reason again is clear. Labour's strategy is to woo the middle class by softening its support for trade union struggles. This includes the thousands of RCN members who do not yet see the need to leave and join a real trade union.

Every Labour government has protected the profit system. The industrialists and bankers have dictated every move.

More than this, even the most left of Labour's socialists are committed to "peaceful" socialism in a world where every challenge to the wealth of the profiteers is met with armed force, where every democratic right is dispensable once the workers begin to challenge capitalist power.

We need a workers government; a government based not in parliament but on organisations of workers democracy, like the workers councils (soviets) which triumphed in Russia in 1917. In the way of such a government would stand the whole unelected state machine; the police, courts, army and top civil service. It would have to be taken on and destroyed, replaced with a new type of state based on workers councils and a workers militia.

This is a far cry from today, where the majority of nurses have only just begun to see the need for real trade unions, where the unions themselves are weak and defeated.

But every strike, every occupation, every picket line that will be thrown up in the coming battle to defend the NHS sows the seeds of this kind of working class power.

We need to fight every battle today with the future in mind, preparing wherever possible real fighting organisations of workers democracy and workers power.

All this will not happen on its own. To unify the struggles of every section of workers and all those oppressed by capitalism we need a revolutionary workers party.

This would be the complete opposite of the Labour Party. It would be a combat party whose members were commited to leading action in the workplace, the estates, building out of every struggle the organisations our class needs to conquer power. It would be an internationalist party, vigorously opposing our rulers' war drive against the semi-colonies and the stalinist states. It would be the bitter opponent of racism, sexism and anti-gay bigotry.

In such a party there would be no room for the armchair socialists who lead the Labour party. But there would be a place for every worker sick of the exploitation and injustice of the profit system, sick of the Labour and Trade Union leaders sell-outs, and prepared to devote their lives to changing it.

JOIN US IN THE FIGHT TO BUILD A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

# workers power

# WHAT WE STAND FOR

**Red Pulse** is a health workers bulletin produced by members and supporters of **Workers Power. Workers Power** a revolutionary organisation fighting to build a new revolutionary party to overthrow capitalism, at home and abroad.

## WORKERS' STRUGGLES

We support all workers' struggles against the bosses. We fight to turn every struggle into a conscious fight against the capitalist system.

## REFORMISM

The trade union and Labour leaders believe capitalism can be reformed, made better, but they do not aim to overthrow capitalism. They act as go-betweens for the boses with the workers. Even militant leaders limit their action to the fight for gains within capitalism. For this reason we are for building a rank and file movement across the NHS unions and in every union, politically independent of the union bureaucrats and comitted to transforming the unions into democratic, class-struggle organisations.

## REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The woring class needs a revolutionary political party, built in struggle, that can learn and pass on the lesson of every workers struggle. Health workers, who are amongst the lowest paid and worst treated by capitalism, should take their place in the bulding of such a party. Only a revolutionary party can create the class army that can fight and destroy the stinking profit system that constantly threatens our jobs, conditions, organisations and vital services.

## INTERNATIONALISM

We are committed to fighting capitalism world-wide. We strive to build an international organisation of revolutionary parties (**Workers Power** works with Irish, French, German, Austrian and Chilean revolutionaries in the **Movement for a Revolutionary Communist International**). In particular we fight against nationalist solutions to capitalism's crisis, like import controls. We beleive the working class has no country. Its main enemy is its own exploiters, its main allies are the hundreds of millions of workers and peasants across the globe.

## DIVISIONS

We combat all divisionsin the working class. Divisions are fostered by the employers to weaken us. We are implacably opposed to racism and fascism, to all immigration controls and discrimination against black people. We fight for women's liberation, opposing every example of sexism and discrimination, fighting for equal pay and equal rights for women, and fighting to create a socialist society that will free women forever from the drudgery of housework by massively extending public provision - free 24 hour nurseries, free homes for the elderly, etc.

Against the hysteria whipped-up against Lesbians and Gay men we fight for full democratic equal rights and an end to discrimination against Lesbians and Gay men.

We support the right of the oppressed to organise within the workers movement and to demand the workers movement supports them in defending themseleves against the attacks rained down on them by capitalism.

## IMPERIALISM AND WAR

We support the struggles of the peoples and countries oppressed by Imperialism. The bosses of Britain, USA, France, Germany etc. systematically exploit the "third world". Immediately in Britain this means we support the right of the whole Irish people to determine the fate of their own country free of British interference. We call for Troops Out of Ireland Now, and support all the republicans and socialists fighting British imperialism in Ireland.

## WORKERS STATES

The USSR, Eastern Europe, Cuba, China & Vietnam etc are workers' states where capitalism has been abolished However in each of these countries a **bureaucracy** based on the Stalinist Communist Parties, holds political power, blocking the transition to socialism, content to co-exist happily with Imperialism on a world scale, and holding on to power and privelege above the working class. This situation arose out of the international isolation of the Russian Revolution in the 1920s. **We call for a political revolution in the Stalinist states to overthrow the bureaucracy and realise the full potential of the state owned economy through democratic planning.** At the same time, in order to preserve the gain for the working class represented by the abolition of capitalism in these economies we call for the defence of the USSR etc. against imperialist attack.

## REVOLUTION

Capitalism cannot be got rid of peacefully. Behind the democratic mask of parliament stands the army, police, judges, top civil servants and MI5. Every one of these would be used against any Labour government that tried to limit the wealth and power of the capitalists. But the working class has its own power. Organised into workers councils, comprised of delegates from every workplace, every estate, and defended by a workers militia, this power must smash and replace the state of the bosses. Then workers can begin to organise society so that human need, and not profit, is satisfied. Unless we mobilise our class for this task, the capitalist world will continue to stagnate and decline, condemning millions to starvation, millions to unemployment and threatening to destroy civilisation through a nuclear war.

**WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE**
**YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR CHAINS**
**YOU HAVE A WORLD TO WIN**