

Direct Action

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The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism

Nº 34

November 1986

25p



BRITAIN'S

FUTURE?

The latest stage in the government's attack on our right to organise is likely to take effect later this year when the so-called Public Order Bill is passed. This is an attempt to enshrine in law the destruction of our most basic civil liberties.

The most important aspect of the law is that it gives the police the power to decide the size, duration and location of all marches, demonstrations and pickets. If the police think that a threat to "public order" exists they can ban a gathering altogether. The law carries with it heavy sentences for defiance of these instructions.

Obviously this is of the utmost importance to workers in struggle. It removes the need for an employer to go through the courts, giving the police the immediate power to declare a picket unlawful. It also applies to rank and file members on the ground who organise a picket outside of the official union structure, making them personally liable to arrest. This law must be fought in every way possible. Its implications must be communicated to every single worker and when it is passed it must be challenged and broken.

The Public Order Act will serve to reinforce and strengthen the role of the police in areas of political conflict. How long will it be before plastic bullets and CS gas are used on the streets of Britain?

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Paper of the Direct Action Movement - International Workers Association

Stop Dean and Dubbins Selling Out

Sacked printworkers have been picketing outside the barbed wire of Fortress Wapping now for almost ten months. In that time, they have felt the full force of the Tory anti-union laws - sequestrations, court injunctions, riot police and all. Already, two printworkers have received six month prison sentences for defending the right to a living. One London council, Camden, have been taken to court because of a refusal by their library workers to handle News International titles. The union leadership have been trying to wash their hands of the affair for months, complying with recent court orders to limit the Wednesday and Saturday night Tower Hill marches to "demonstrations" only.

In the light of this, the overwhelming October 8th vote by members of all the unions involved against the latest Murdoch offer was a real shot in the arm, and a big two fingers in particular to the national committee of the NGA who were still campaigning for a "yes" vote even after the SOGAT result (2372 - 9600) had been announced. The mood of the vast majority of rank & file printworkers is still one of anger and defiance.

However, without the numbers, mass picketing has only come close to being successful on a couple of occasions. In the light of recent court orders and the unions' response to them, pickets have responded by taking the initiative elsewhere; up Commercial Road to wait for the scab vehicles once they've left Wapping, to local TNT depots around the country, and to the scabs themselves. The union leaderships have condemned the use of violence as the work of outside agitators, mirroring the bosses' media. This is both an insult to the sacked printworkers themselves, and to their more genuine supporters who have stayed into the early hours and beyond, to show solidarity long after most of the "revolutionary" left have disappeared.

SUPPORT THE PRINTERS

Much support has come from local Wapping residents, for months trapped in their community south of The Highway, or prevented from getting home if unlucky enough to be elsewhere late on a Saturday night. To date there have been half a dozen residents' marches. They have been much appreciated by long-standing pickets, and have usually been as lively and as defiant as the printworkers' own marches.

A welcome addition in more recent months has been the Lesbians' and Gays' "Support the Printworkers" banner which has provided the more blinkered and more short-sighted with some cause for mirth, but which has generally been well accepted. Printworkers' Support Groups have been set up across London and in



Pickets face the full force of Anti-Union laws

places like Reading and Portsmouth, but the idea hasn't been taken up with anywhere near the enthusiasm seen during the miners' strike.

Having said all this, acts of sabotage, no matter how welcome and widespread, in the long run are no real substitute for the greater solidarity from other workers that is needed if this dispute is to be won. The TUC clearly have no intention of organising this. Conference resolution or not, at the end of the day they will not expel the EETPU - as if this would make any difference to the model trades unionists inside Fortress Wapping anyway.

The SOGAT and NGA national union leaderships have all along made no secret of their objections to and distaste for effective mass picketing. These are the creeps who organised the farce of a national demonstration at less than a week's notice on a Sunday (April 13th) ensuring the lowest possible turnout and holding a rally in Trafalgar Square first. Thus by the time the march reached Wapping, seven miles later, most who had turned up had departed, too knackered to go any further.

DEAN'S DISAPPOINTMENT

The obvious look of disappointment on Brenda Dean's face as she read out the recent ballot results had to be seen to be believed - which isn't surprising when you consider that, when all is said and done, the £58 million Murdoch offer isn't that different to the deal both

SOGAT and the NGA recently signed with the Daily Telegraph over its move eastwards to the Isle of Dogs. Selling out workers' livelihoods is still the name of the game. The boycott campaign, morally right that it is, hasn't worked, yet this is the only area the print unions seem to want to put any energy into.

Of course, Murdoch may choose to settle of his own accord. The £50 million offer in June and the recent £58 million offer were both responses, albeit pathetic ones, to the embarrassment caused by the pickets on his own doorstep and plummeting morale among his scab workforce. But any caving in on his part would still leave large numbers jobless, even if some of the sacked printworkers were taken on at Wapping and an eventual deal included union recognition. For the unions to recommend this (as they have already indicated they would) would be nothing less than a sell-out.

THE WAY TO WIN

Only one thing, and one thing alone, will win the sacked printworkers their jobs back - that is genuine rank and file workers' action, independent of the union leaderships. To some extent this has already been happening. But only the formation of a strike committee comprising of delegates from among the sacked membership and directly accountable to them, and whose members are subject to instant recall can give any coherence to this.

At the moment many of the printworkers still have too much faith in the unions and in particular the "left" bureaucrats such as Mike Hicks, Tony Isaacs, Bill Freeman, etc. That these people are able to have the major say on the picket lines is a real brake on the initiative of many of the sacked workers.

A strike committee would give a real voice to the militancy of, for example, the authors of the "Picket" broadsheet, and the Fleet Street Support Unit among others, and take control of the dispute out of the hands of Hicks and the other parasites. In the absence of the numbers needed on the Wapping picket line to effectively shut the place down, it becomes clear that picketing out the rest of Fleet Street is the only viable option left. Some say that this is what Murdoch wants, i.e. everyone buying "The Sun" and "The Times", but the other media bosses would not, and they'd be quick to let him know.

The union leaderships have already said they won't support "secondary" action - for them further sequestrations and confrontations with the law have to be avoided at all costs. Precious union funds come before their members' jobs. The alternative to a strike committee which will move things forward is, if the dispute drags on, the eventual demoralisation and the kind of sell-out dressed up as compromise which both News International and the leaderships of the print unions would love to see.

In an interview with "The New York Times" not long after the printers were first locked out, Murdoch revealed that "they (the unions) had been through here seeing the presses. What we didn't show them was our computer ... and they never saw the extent of our preparations for type-setting. Yet the place had hundreds of construction workers and people here all the time. Anyone could have worked it out." Rank and file printworkers certainly did.

The unions completely messed it up. This has been as true during the dispute as before it. The sacked printworkers have not only lost their jobs, but they have also lost all entitlement to pension rights and been left with two pittance offered as redundancy money. They still demand our support.

"Picket", produced by picketing print union members, now past its 30th issue, is now available in full sets of back issues (three so far), price £1.50 in stamps to "Picket", c/o Housman's Books, 5 Caledonian Rd., London, N1 9DX. These are by far the best rank and file account of the dispute so far.

Labour interfere in NUT

Members of the National Union of Teachers returning in September were welcomed back by some pleasant news - their negotiators had "stitched up" a peace deal and a "peace period" without their knowledge or consent during the quiet Summer weeks. The "historic" pay campaign (two years fudged inaction) cautiously maintained by 13 ballots, culminated in August in a settlement imposed on the membership without a murmur, let alone a vote. It's odd how the union's "democratic" craze suddenly disappeared once the executive decided to negotiate.

CONSPIRACY

The details of the settlement - a little more pay for a lot more work under a binding contract - are not as interesting as how this deal was organised. Much of it has to do with the influence of the Labour Party. At public rallies last May, Kinnock's praises were being sung by NUT officials: the promise of cake tomorrow for peace in schools today was accompanied by cries of "don't rock the boat" when people proposed escalating the dispute. The Kinnock/Jarvis conspiracy moved into top gear in

July and August: a deal was sewn up with the Labour-controlled LEA negotiating body (the Burnham Committee) while Jarvis was signed up as a new TUC boss.

The script goes something like this: "Appear reasonable now, agree a contract and we'll give you a decent rise next year when Labour romps home to victory. Never mind the fact you'll never be able to work to rule again, never mind the fact that we can't give you any guarantees - play the game and we'll see you right. In the meantime we'll preserve our conciliatory image and win more votes, maybe even teachers' votes" (70% voted Tory last time).

While the Broad Left leadership of the NUT went along very willingly, many rank and file teachers have thought and acted otherwise. Motions rejecting the pay deal have already come from at least a third of the membership and a delegate conference for early November has been forced upon the bureaucrats. But that sniff of power the executive enjoyed this Summer will remain in their minds as it would in the minds of all union leaders facing their political masters - the alluring smell of corruption.

Notts. Scabs Lose Jobs



Hammond and the UDM, all the scabs together.

Another colliery closure has been announced and 1500 miners will lose their jobs. The mine is Hucknall Colliery in Nottinghamshire and most of the miners are members of the Union of Democratic Miners. So even scabs are not safe.

The story is that Roy Lynk and his gang believe they have made a "secret" deal with British Coal (different name but same bosses except MacGregor of course, who has taken up writing in his old age). This deal was that if the UDM accepted the closure of Hucknall, then other pits would be kept open and the Hucknall miners would be re-deployed to them. The UDM is putting in some token

protests but everyone knows that Hucknall will close.

If Roy Lynk (who by the way wants to resign as secretary to become President Lynk instead) and his friends think that they can make "deals" with British Coal and that they will work, then they have a lot to learn. British Coal (NCB) have a history of saying to the NUM "let us close this pit to save the others" and then shutting the lot.

In Nottinghamshire the evidence is available to see what is going to happen. Plans are already being made to shut Silverhill or Sutton Colliery or both. British Coal have given figures to British Rail on the amounts of coal they expect to move by rail which are much lower than at present. It can only mean a massive reduction of output and that can only mean more closures. So, UDM or NUM, either way no miner's job is safe in Nottinghamshire.

Between January and June 1986 the policing of the News International dispute cost £1,174 million, representing 662,000 "man"-hours. This is an equivalent of £234,000 per sacked printer, or £20 per person in the U.K.

"Public Order" - Police Repression

We are increasingly seeing a police force that is unwilling to do anything about crime. We are told that the public are too worried about crime, having unreasonable expectations of the police, so instead the state is emphasizing the maintenance of "law and order" on the streets. This attitude is summarised in the "British Crime Survey" issued by the Home Office:

"fear of crime is triggered by non-criminal disorder - drunks, youths causing disturbances, noisy householders, graffiti, rubbish and litter....(which) serve as signs of crime and thus lead to fear regardless of actual levels of crime."

How totally ridiculous! Sensationalised reporting of crime in the "Sun" and the other gutter press has a lot more to do with increased fear of crime.

It is further suggested that this fear leads to neighbourhood decline and therefore an increase in crime itself. Again this is far removed from reality - neighbourhood decline is a direct result of the crazy planning that, gave us the inner city slums. The "British Crime Survey" then goes on to suggest that the answer is police powers to stop and search, thus "maintaining order" and enforcing "middle class" values!

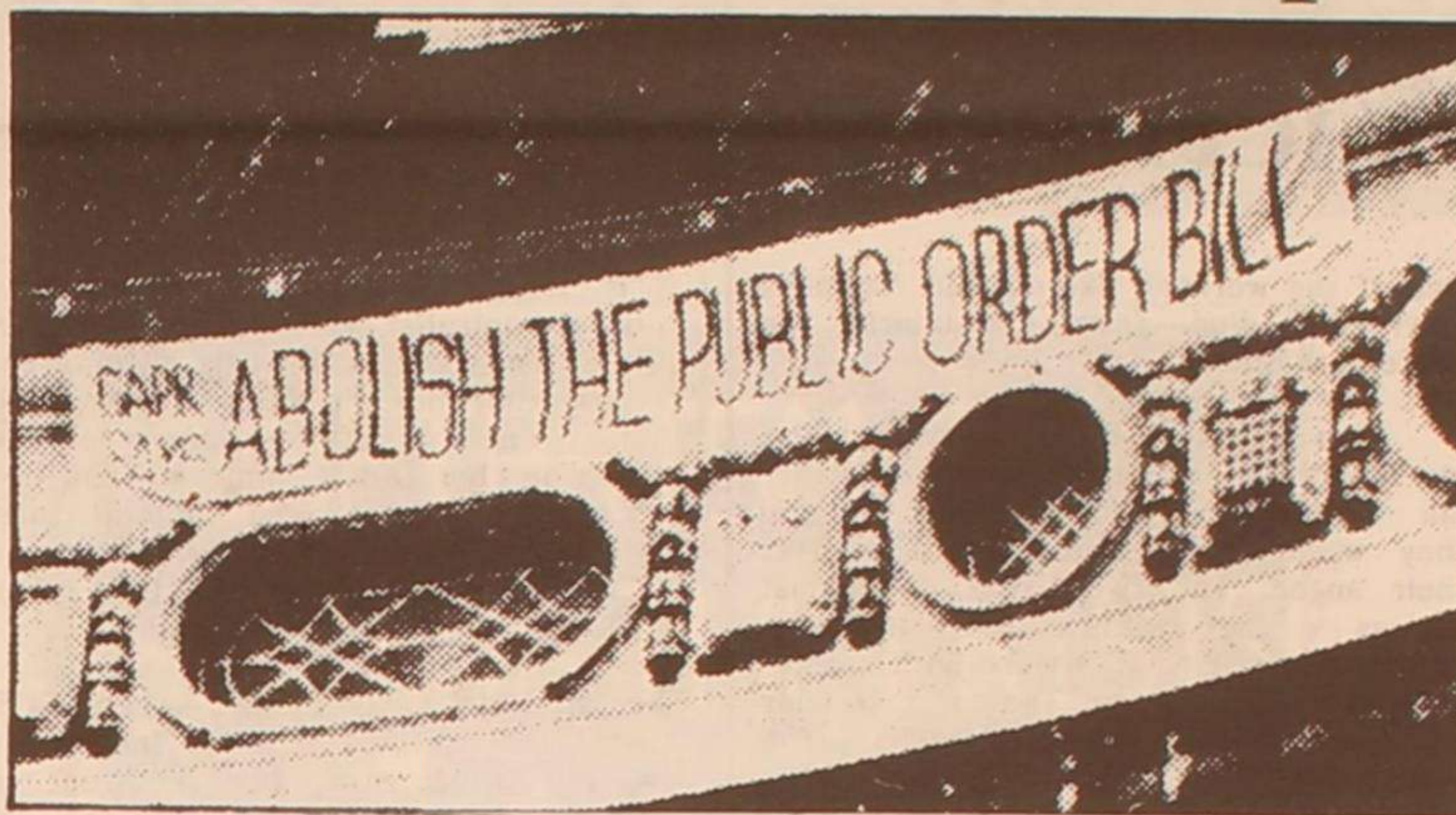
HARASSMENT

Another way of looking at it is that these powers will lead to increased police harassment of political and trade union activists, black people, Asians, gay people and anyone else they don't like the look of. It is in fact, the police who are the real menace to "public order". It is this type of thinking that is behind the public order proposals which when passed will sweep away basic freedoms won in the last century - to assemble, to march and to picket. Thus in the State's eyes decreasing the fear of crime is equated with curtailing hard-fought-for freedoms. This is a convenient smokescreen to blind people to the increasingly repressive tendencies of the British State.

MARCHES AND DEMOS

You can be arrested for:

- organising a demonstration without police permission; the proposals require 7 days notice of a march or de-



monstration to be given to the police; organisers of banned demo's will face 3 months in prison and a £1000 fine as well as having to pay the cost of policing;
- taking part in a demonstration which has been banned; the penalty for this will be a £400 fine;
- ignoring police conditions, for example, laying down the route;
- ignoring police directions during a demonstration;
- spontaneous demonstrations will become illegal when the bill is passed.

PICKETS AND RALLIES

- static demonstrations and pickets will be allowed only on conditions set by the police - e.g time, location, duration and size;
- the police will be able to limit the size of any static demonstrations, say where it should take place and how long it can last;
- they could do this whether the demonstration is at a factory, shop, embassy, etc.

NEW OFFENCES

- ancient common law offences like riot will become statutory, making it much easier to get convictions in court. You could be jailed for life for "riot" if you are in a group as small as 12 people and one of you appears "to threaten" violence, or for 5 years if you are in a group of 3 people, for violent disorder.
- the scope of "breach of the peace

will be widened.

- a new offence, "disorderly conduct" will be created. This means the use of words which are "threatening, abusive or insulting", or behaviour which is "threatening, abusive, insulting or disorderly", likely to "harrass, alarm or distress" another person.

- definitions of these "crimes" will be so wide that the police will successfully be able to frame people up as soon as they gather to protest about whatever they feel strongly about.

In short, there will be no freedom to assemble, march or picket except on terms controlled and dictated by the police - that is no freedom at all. When combined with the current paramilitary tactics of the police to break up demonstrations, the new powers will mean an end to the "freedom" to protest.

PROVOCATION

This review of public order has come at a time when we see the police becoming more and more repressive, as shown by their attacks on miners' pickets at Orgreave, on the peace convoy around Stonehenge, on students and others demonstrating against Leon Brittan at Manchester University, on printworkers at Wapping, to name but a few cases. Also, during 1985 we saw a number of riots in the inner cities which were an obvious response to police provocation. It is clear that the Public Order Bill is a recipe for more of the same.

During the trial and acquittal of those miners and their supporters charged as a result of the police riot at Orgreave, the existence of a secret manual which includes instructions on how to incapacitate demonstrators was revealed. This was drawn up jointly by the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Home Office. Thus the increasingly repressive nature of policing is sanctioned by the highest levels of government and it is clear that senior police officers have re-written the law and are acting upon it.

Thus the public order proposals must be seen in conjunction with recent police practices and it can be pointed out that the law is following the lead given by the police rather than vice versa. The idea is to extend the existing concept of "public order" which originally covered fascist violence and intimidation in the 1930's, to cover the concept of acceptable behaviour. Everything from football hooliganism to trade union rallies are lumped together by these proposals, tarring political and trade union activists with the same brush as those who get a kick out of mindless violence.

The Campaign Against Police Repression is co-ordinating the organisation of a public rally starting at 12 noon in Clock Tower Place, London N7 (Caledonian Road Tube) on the first Saturday after the bill passes through the Commons. If the law takes effect from a later date, there will be another rally for a march the first Saturday after that date. In this way we will signal our open defiance of the law and our refusal to let this pass without maximum resistance.

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NUCLEAR POWER - WHO NEEDS IT?



Chernobyl - the end of the nuclear dream

The horror of nuclear power was clearly demonstrated by the Chernobyl explosion which will claim thousands of human lives in years to come, on top of the agricultural devastation it caused. Fortunately, the explosion was non-nuclear, but it has since been revealed that it almost exploded like a nuclear bomb. (1) Nuclear "experts" have always argued that such a thing was impossible.

People have always been highly suspicious of nuclear power but Chernobyl was the final straw which has swung public opinion against this insanity. The hypocritical American and British authorities say such an incident could not happen in the West, but we have not forgotten the Windscale fire in 1957 and the near melt-down at Three Mile Island (Harrisburg, USA) in 1979.

Unbelievably, there are still those who argue for nuclear power. They argue that it is cheaper, and safer than coal and that it means more jobs. These arguments are easily refuted:

- The true cost of nuclear power is higher than that stated by the CEBG as costs such as waste disposal and de-commissioning (closure of power stations when they are no longer "useful") are conveniently ignored. Also the massive military subsidy (for plutonium and research), which is paid out of our taxes, should also be considered.
- Many deaths are caused by coal mining, but uranium also has to be mined, and many die as a result, but because they are in other countries (e.g. Namibia) they are ignored. Also, deaths in the nuclear industry are not usually admitted to, although large compensation payments are given to relatives.
- The Nuclear Power Industry is capital intensive, creating few jobs. Far more jobs would be created in energy saving schemes, renewable energy schemes (e.g. The Severn Barrage) and of course investment in coal mining.

ANTI - WORKING CLASS

So what is the motive behind the nuclear energy programme? One of the most obvious reasons is that nuclear power stations are used as factories for producing weapons-grade plutonium. Also, in October 1979, a leaked cabinet minute revealed the reason behind the Tories' proposal to build around 10 new nuclear power stations, at one a year, from 1982 onwards. It said: "A nuclear programme would have the advantage of removing a substantial portion of electricity production from the dangers of industrial action by the coal miners or transport workers." (2).

Clearly the motive is a class motive. Nuclear power is anti-working class in that it weakens our industrial muscle as well as providing the ammunition for the nuclear States which will be used against us one day, if we let them.

As a class, we must oppose nuclear power because it is a threat to us, and our environment. It must be stressed that it is construction workers who build the power stations, railworkers and seamen who transport nuclear materials, so it is within our power to put the brakes on the nuclear programme. Already the National Union of Seamen is active in this area by refusing to dump at sea - in fact they forced the government to change its policy on dumping (they now dump the waste on land). Empty resolutions and hot air at TUC conferences are no substitute for the widespread blacking of nuclear materials and construction.

THE ALTERNATIVES

We are often told that there is no viable alternative to nuclear power, despite the fact that we are sitting on

a thousand years' supply of coal. There are two other main alternatives to nuclear power: (a) increasing energy efficiency/conservation, (b) renewable sources e.g. tidal, wave, wind power. Nuclear power only accounts for around 10% of total electricity generated but option (a) could easily eliminate this percentage altogether. Britain, being an island with a large coastline, is ideal for many renewable energy schemes. There are around 10 possible sites for tidal barrages; e.g. the Severn Barrage which is currently being considered and the proposed barrage for the Mersey estuary. In fact the Severn Barrage would generate 6% of our electricity demand and create 45,000 jobs during construction and between 25,000 and 30,000 more jobs in manufacturing and recreational industries. (3)

Britain is also ideal for wave power especially around the west coast of Scotland, but research has been axed. There is also the possibility of electricity from wind turbines which ideally should be built off-shore where the winds are stronger.

Many of these ideas may seem sensible, but what is sensible is not necessarily compatible with capitalism, which always puts profits above our needs. Some of the alternatives may be put into practice to a certain extent depending on how the economics works out. However, capitalism still remains a barrier to a rationally planned society and the State will always want to hang on to its nuclear power stations. Ultimately, the only real solution to the "energy problem" will involve the elimination of the root causes - capitalism and the State - and their replacement by a society that puts people's needs before profit.

- (1) New Scientist, 4th Sept. 1986 p. 17.
- (2) See appendix 4 in "Atomic Crossroads" (J. Valantine, Merlin 1985).
- (3) New Scientist, 17th July 1986 p. 21.

Greek State Claims Another Victim

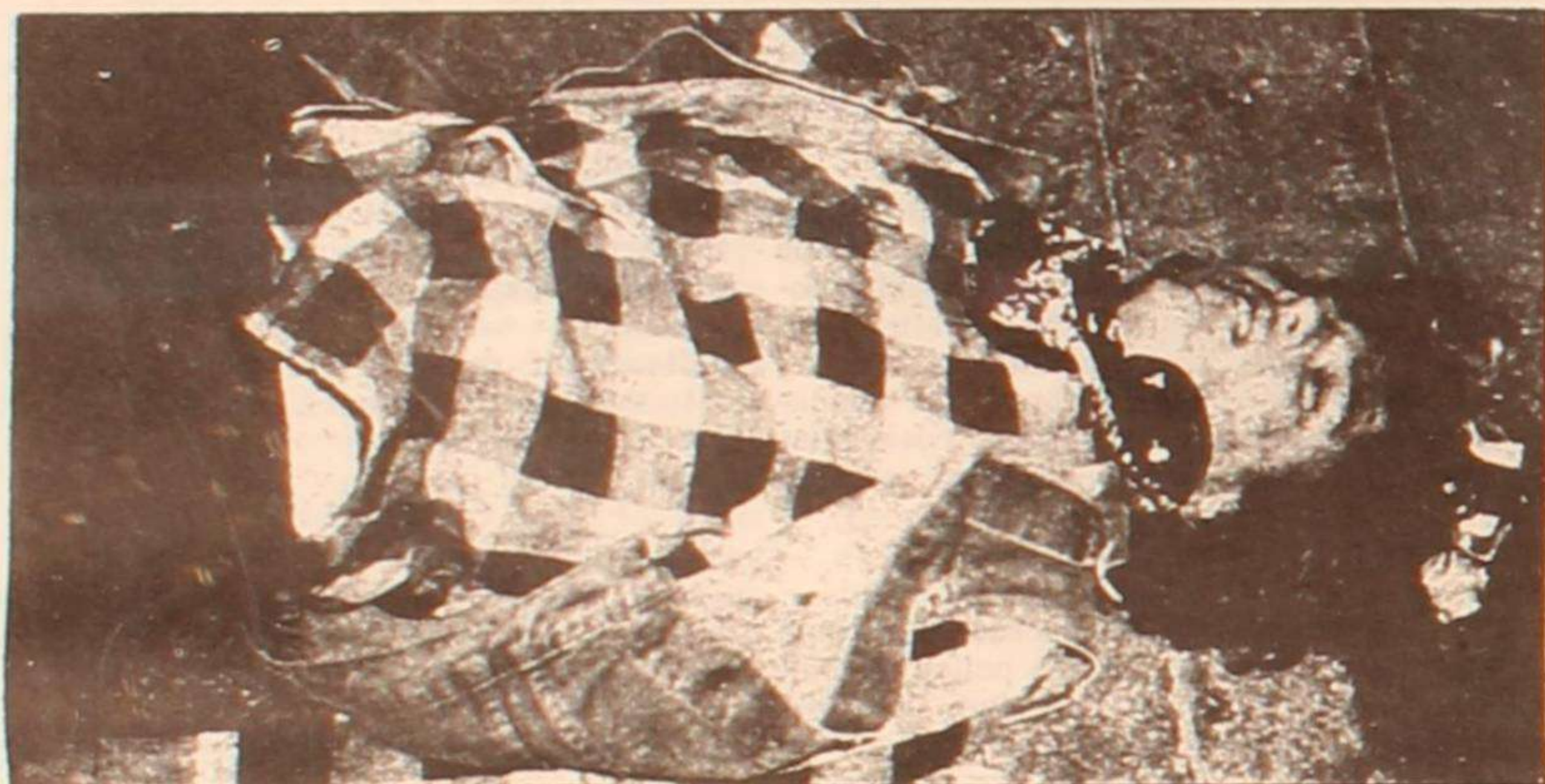
Readers familiar with the anarchist press in this country or abroad will have no doubt been made aware of the violent social struggles that have been continuing in Greece in the last few years. We have read of hundreds of workers, students and unemployed being tortured and locked up by the Greek "socialist" state. Anarchists have been taking the brunt of repression and have been in the forefront of resistance against it. Now, we hear of more repression and another corpse to make the "socialists" proud of how well they can defend a rotten capitalist system.

On September 3rd in Athens, a protest march of building workers took place. These workers, who marched on the Ministry of Finance, were simply asking that the Ministry mediate between them and their bosses who had not paid them for eighteen months. The minister refused to meet them, and all they got was the police attacking and beating them.

One of the workers, 68-year old Anghelos Mavroeidis died from his injuries on September 12th.

Five hundred people turned out for his funeral, of whom 400 were libertarian militants. Following the funeral they made for parliament to express their anger. The two Greek communist parties - the stalinist KKE and the euro-communist KNE - were both noticeable by their absence. The most popular chant was "Kaltezas - Mavroeidis - the state kills. The next death will be a minister!". Kaltezas was the name of a 15-year old anarchist murdered by the Greek police last November. He was shot in the back of the head during a riot in Athens in response to police brutality. Despite the widespread public outcry, and despite leading politicians talking about resigning, nothing was done, and now the Greek state has claimed another victim.

Source: Le Combat Syndicaliste.



MICHALIS KALTEZAS, Murdered by the Police last year

A LIFETIME OF STRUGGLE

During the summer, Antoine Turmo, editor of "Combat Syndicaliste" (Syndicalist Fight), the paper of the CNT-F, French section of the International Workers' Association, died having given his life to the cause of working class emancipation and the building of revolutionary unionism in France.

Antoine Turmo was born in Bordeaux in 1915. Whilst still very young he became a revolutionary unionist, joining France's revolutionary union of the time, the CGT - Syndicaliste Revolutionnaire, then the French section of our International. In 1935 he was called up and true to his anti-militarist principles, he deserted and went into hiding. In 1936, with the outbreak of the Spanish Revolution, he crossed the Pyrenees to Spain and fought the fascists at the front, side by side with his Spanish fellow workers and anarcho-syndicalists in the famous Durrutti Column.

In '39, after the victory of the Spanish fascists, Turmo returned to France to go through another short period of clandestinity, before benefitting from a government amnesty granted on the eve of the war. He joined a tank regiment and became a prisoner of war early on in the conflict, remaining a captive of the Nazi army until 1945.

The second world war over, the class war continued as harshly as ever. In order to fight that war militant French workers founded, in 1946, the Confederation Nationale du Travail, to carry on the work of the pre-war CGT-SR. Turmo immediately joined the new CNT. Black-listed by the bosses and so unable to find work as a boilerman he became an electrician, and began to methodically organise the CNT's Building Union which went on to win genuine victories in the harsh social conflicts of the post-war period. The CNT developed in other areas, in both large and small-scale industry.

The '50's, however, were not so good for the CNT and the revolutionary workers' movement in France. In 1948 the large reformist union federation, the CGT, split, leaving a majority CGT totally dominated by the stalinists and causing the foundation of a new anti-communist federation, the CGT - Force Ouvriere. FO has proved to be a right wing, class-collaborationist set-up but it initially gave itself credibility by referring to the original pre-world war one CGT, which was revolutionary syndicalist. Many militants decided that they would be better off in the FO since the CNT was still quite small, and so left the CNT. Antoine Turmo was one of those who remained, keeping the CNT alive during the lean years of the '60's. In the meantime Turmo became editor, in 1962, of a new paper, "Espoir", published with the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists in exile following the banning of their press by General de Gaulle. Following the events of May 1968 "Espoir" became bi-lingual. Turmo was one of the "old guard" of revolutionary syndicalist militants who was able to establish the important link with the new militants of the post-May '68 era.

Until his death, Turmo took an active part in all the activities of the CNT. He was elected Confederal Secretary in 1977, then in 1983, becoming editor of the re-founded "Combat Syndicaliste". The CNT has been growing progressively in the last few years. France now has a revolutionary workers' union again and that is to the eternal credit of comrades like Antoine Turmo who never gave up the struggle.

The "Combat Syndicaliste" editorial group has now moved from Toulouse to Bordeaux, with comrade Emile Trave as editorial director. The address: CNT, Vieille Bourse du Travail, 34-42 Rue de Lalande, 33000 BORDEAUX, FRANCE.

Nuclear Europe:

Italy

"It is no longer possible to speak of a capitalist system but of a new social system managed by an emergent class that doesn't base its power on the ownership of the means of production but on technical know-how: scientific, legal and administrative - the techno-bureaucracy." (Lotta di Classe, paper of the USI, April 1986.)

The artificial "oil crisis", when OPEC upped the price of oil instead of lowering it as now, had a direct influence on the rise in cost of raw materials and manufactured goods. This forced the international productive systems to accelerate the research for alternative sources of energy to oil and coal just as the nuclear program was at the "commercial" stage. Countries were all rushed into buying American PWR technology and the Russians installed plants in their satellites too.

Every country's productive possibilities are established by the extent the states can use the resources available for their productive structures. However the developments of modern technology have profoundly altered the outline, not because natural resources are less relevant than before but because of scientific and technical research funded by the military-industrial complex of the major and minor states and the tide of innovations that derives from it. It is evident that the present "progress" in technology is seated in the countries who already possessed global economic power. They have assured themselves vanguard positions in every sector of scientific and technical research. They treat their expertise in the same way as

they treat natural resources, monopolising its usage and passing it on to others with discrimination. Knowledge is the key to exploitation of the other resources, vegetable, mineral, animal and of course human.

ENERGY POLICY IN ITALY

USI at its national congress in Turin on the 29th-31st March, 1986, took up a position against the Italian government's National Energy Plan (PEN) which favours expansion of nuclear and coal-fired power stations. The PEN is a policy which favours the militarisation of society and is anti-ecological. It involves the construction of a second nuclear power plant Trino Vercellese, a site which is conveniently close to the Eurex industrial complex at Saluggia. This complex for treating irradiated fuel is capable of reclaiming various substances including weapons-grade plutonium. It is no coincidence that Italy, a major arms producer, would like a 2000 megawatt PWR close by.

The PEN also involves construction of a super coal fired power plant in the north-eastern region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

USI opposes these projects and demands the closure of the nuclear power plants already on line and of other oversized projects. The money saved should be spent on development of the sources of renewable energy, creating new jobs without adverse ecological consequences. Italy has plenty of sun, and also many sources of geo-thermal energy.

A P Marche.

Germany

As a reaction to the "accident" in Chernobyl there were many demonstrations in West Germany.

At the beginning of June there was a main demonstration for the north of the country at Brokdorf nuclear power station near Hamburg. Many people were stopped by police on their way to Brokdorf and were prevented from taking part in what was a legal demonstration.

The following day there was a demonstration in Hamburg attended by 600 protesters including the local FAU group (FAU - Frei Arbeiter Union/Free Workers' Union - West German section of the IWA). However the demonstrators found themselves surrounded by nearly 2000 police, who kept them there for 13 hours without food and water, not allowing them to go to the toilet for more than 6 hours. They were taken out one by one and subjected to strip searches.

Even the capitalist press compared the intention and methods of the police with Chile and some of the younger cops were upset about having to carry out such orders. In fact some even collected money and bought food and drinks for the surrounded demonstrators.

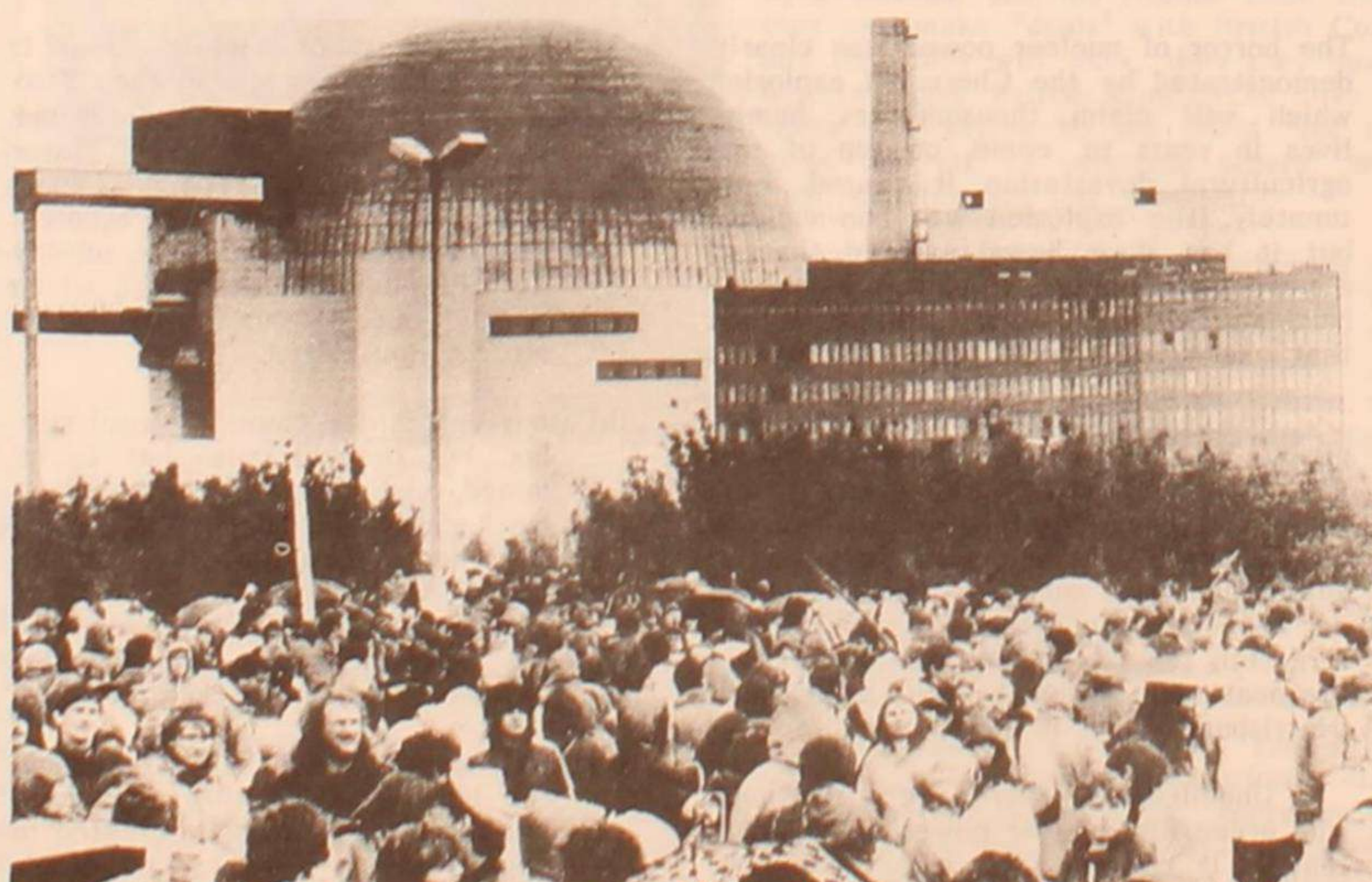
However no such charity from police officials - they stated publicly that they should use shotguns next time.

The intention of the politicians is to divide the anti-nuclear power movement into political-radical and middle class-pacifist groupings by criminalising radical organisations.

The police report compares the FAU to terrorist groups like the RAF (Red Army Faction) and FAU comrades are said to be leading members of a struggle, not so much against nuclear power but against the state.

In order to divert attention from their own terrorism they call us terrorist. If we want to live in a humane world without nuclear power, contaminated food, inhuman jobs, poverty, terror and so on, we have to overcome statism and capitalism. We want to take our lives and our future in our own hands and not leave it in the hands of any politicians or leaders.

Therefore we choose the method of direct action and self-management, but not the methods of terrorism.



The Brockdorf Anti-Nuclear demo

RESTART: a waste of time and money

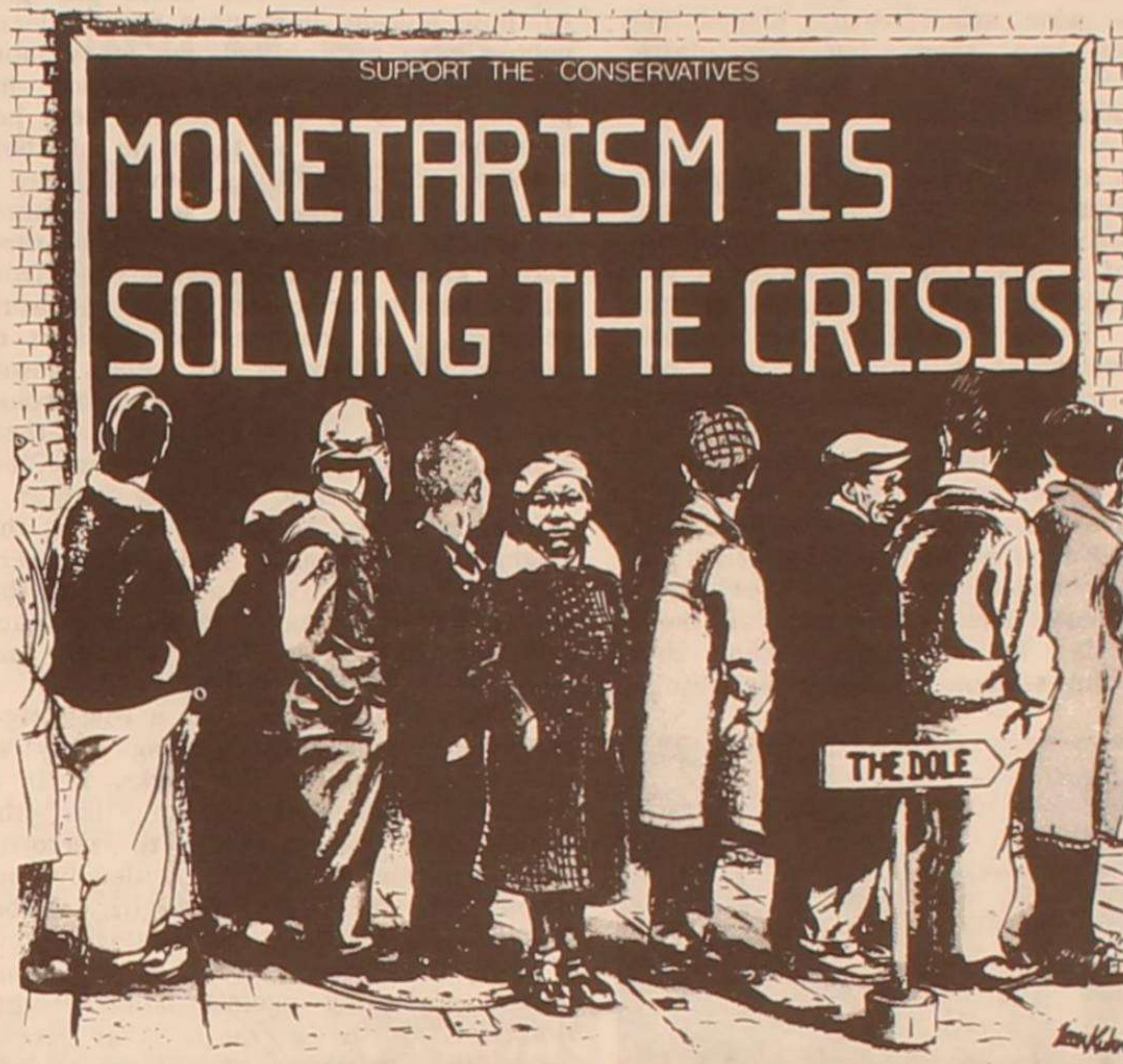
Over the period from July 1986 to March 1987 every person who has been signing on as unemployed for over 12 months will be called into their local job centre for a "Re-start" interview.

The reason for this expensive exercise is the current government's need to be seen to be "doing something about the unemployment figures". Announced in the last budget speech, this "Re-start" program has now been going on for some months.

The interview at the job centre is compulsory. If you don't go they can and will stop your benefit. It is clear that pressure is, in varying degrees, being put on the young unemployed to get off the unemployment register. One job centre official at Alfreton in Derbyshire has stated that she saw it as part of her job to "hound the young unemployed".

The government, at the same time as setting up this scheme, has funded 300,000 new places on the community program. As well as this, for anyone who takes a job paying below £80 per week, they are offering to pay the difference over a 6 month period. Of course, you can't give the job up after the 6 months otherwise you won't be entitled to receive dole. If in March 1987 there is not a drop of some 300,000 in the unemployment figures then something will have gone seriously wrong with their plans to get the figures down before the next election.

Apart from this sort of cosmetic reduction, this whole expensive fiasco will achieve little. In Dundee where they ran a pilot scheme, out of three and a half thousand people who went through it only 11 people got full-time jobs.



"Look! We're already drawing the benefit."

"Re-start" has been attacked by the statist left groups who condemn it as a con-trick. And there we must agree - people's hopes have been raised as they thought they would be getting something, only to be smashed down by the fact that the whole program is a hollow fraud. It offers nothing more to 99% of people on it than the chance to work 3 days a week for a year on the community program.

The problem for statist critics of these schemes is that for years they

have demanded a "right to work". It has been what they call a "transitional demand". What that means is you demand something you believe the state machine cannot give, and so people will realise the impossibility of getting what they want, thus seeing the need for some revolutionary change.

The trouble is that the "right to work" can become a duty to work. If the state wanted to everyone could be given "work". What that would be is

anyone's guess - digging holes and filling them in again is one way.

After next March the "Re-start" program will apply to all unemployed. Compulsory interviews and courses may well become the normal thing for unemployed people. Once they have gone that far, it is a short step to compulsory work to gain benefit. The whole thrust of the Tory government's strategy to "solve" unemployment is to depress the value of benefit and make it harder to get. This lowers the wages that people will be prepared to accept.

With all young workers between 16 and 18 being forced to expect no more than the pitiful rates paid on youth opportunity schemes, schemes that are so outrageously unfair and exploitative to all on them, their expectations will be automatically lowered. If people can be pushed into being ready to willingly accept poverty scale wages, then the Tories will have done what they set out to do.

For a political party that prates on about giving back "freedom" it is clear that under them freedom for working class people has become less, not more. Compulsory programs for the unemployed, and youth training schemes are 2 small examples of how the Tories are removing choices from working people.

It will only be possible to give every person in this country an equal share of the labour and the wealth that labour produces, when that wealth is owned and controlled by the people. No amount of action by governments of whatever sort, shape or politics will solve the problems created by government itself.

For more information on "Re-start" see the Sheffield Anarchist, volume 4 no. 1 (Autumn 1986).

AIDS, Racism & Germ Warfare

Recently the government introduced visas for the citizens of a number of "black" countries if they wished to visit Britain. Now, the Thatcherite racists want to introduce blood tests for visitors and students to this country to screen for the AIDS virus. This will be limited - surprise, surprise - to those from a number of Central African countries.

A number of Arab states already insist on blood tests for visitors, but this is applied generally and not to one race or the inhabitants of 3 African countries. United States citizens are among the largest groups of foreign visitors - where there are 2 million carriers of the AIDS virus - but there is no suggestion that they should be tested before being allowed in! The contradiction is that the major source of AIDS virus introduction into Britain has been from the United States.

There is no plan to have British visitors to these areas tested before they are allowed to return home. AIDS is now a world-wide problem, and international problems need international answers. The AIDS virus has no respect for race, class or gender. While there is as yet no certain cure, containment is necessary, but not in a racist and sexist form. Also, it is important to realise that money spent on research into AIDS would extend our knowledge of the body's immune system, and consequently help in the treatment and cure of all the diseases and illnesses that beset humanity.

GERM WARFARE?

Was the AIDS epidemic caused by an experiment in germ warfare that went horribly wrong? There is a lot of circumstantial evidence to support this. Dr John Seale, a former consultant venereologist at Middlesex Hospital, now in

private practice in Harley St, has claimed that the AIDS virus was engineered from a similar virus (his candidate is the Visna virus which infects sheep).

He believes that either the USA or the Russians could have been the culprit. It could have been released in Central Africa by accident or design, for certainly the disease appears to have started there. However, an expert in biological warfare, Dr Allstair Hay of Leeds University, who has been investigating this possibility for some time says there is no evidence that the U.S Defence Department had been developing such a weapon.

AIDS specialist, Dr Richard Tedder, has said Dr Seale's allegation is based on half-truths and misunderstandings because the Visna virus could not have been made into the AIDS virus. However there are a number of viruses which could have provided the initial material.

In an article in "the Guardian" (20-12-85), it is reported that they had "unearthed evidence that the U.S Defence Department was considering developing a biological weapon - which like AIDS, would destroy the body's defence against infection - as long ago as 1969". "The Guardian" states that it had not found any evidence to show that they had done so.

SECRET EXPERIMENTS

Radio Moscow has alleged that the AIDS virus had its origin in secret experiments carried out by the CIA and the Pentagon in which human beings were infected with animal viruses. Dr Seale admits that the information to back his belief that the AIDS virus (HTLV 3) had been engineered by adding an extra gene to the Visna virus is only circum-

stantial. It is alleged that the experiments were carried out on "brain-dead" human beings who were kept alive artificially on life support machines.

In 1980, a left wing paper in California, "People's World", reported that the U.S Navy were experimenting with biological weapons specifically designed to affect black people. It was these reports which, via an Indian paper, were repeated by Radio Moscow. AIDS has reached epidemic proportions in a number of African countries (Central Africa especially).

"ETHNIC" WEAPON

The main chemical and biological warfare research centre in the U.S.A is at Fort Detrick in Maryland. Germ material is stored there. Fort Detrick is surprisingly a few miles from the National Cancer Institute laboratories where Dr Roberto Gallo was able to isolate the AIDS virus, HTLV 3. This coincidence prompted Dr Hay to use the U.S Freedom of Information Act to search in Defence Department files. He requested documents on work on "ethnic" weapons and work on depressing the body's immune system, that is our natural defence against disease. Dr Hay is satisfied that there is no evidence saying, "the Department of Defence says that they haven't got anything on it (the work he requested) and that's good enough for me until I find some proof".

For some reason AIDS in Africa has spread rapidly to both men and women more or less equally. A variety of explanations have been given for this - re-use of disposable infection needles, an insect "vector" such as the mosquito (so AIDS could be spread like malaria) or the spread is encouraged by malnutrition and vitamin deficiency.

GOOD NEWS

While progress towards an AIDS vaccine remains slow, researchers in California have developed a vaccine that protects rhesus monkeys from an AIDS-like virus (SAIDS). However a similar vaccine is unlikely to be used on humans, as the vaccine is based on a "killer virus" like early polio vaccines.

A new experimental drug, A.Z.T. (Azidothymidine) has been shown to prolong the life of AIDS sufferers, and will soon be offered to 6000 people with the disease in the USA, but tests are to start in Europe in the near future.

EVEN BETTER NEWS !!!!?

British researchers are working on what they claim to be the most revolutionary anti-viral agent in the world. Studies show that it is ten times stronger than AZT. The identity of the chemical, a natural compound, still remains a secret. It has been revealed that the Public Health Laboratory Service at Porton Down (Britain's well known germ warfare establishment - no comment) has been "testing the compound on strains of the AIDS virus taken from people living in Central Africa". (New Scientist 25/9/86).

The Terence Higgins Trust has an information pack on AIDS and HTLV 3 virus with comprehensive advice on prevention. The pack is written in explicit language that is readily understood at street level, and is a useful alternative to the uninformative government advertising.

The Terence Higgins Trust,
BM/AIDS,
London
WCIN 3XX.

Plastic Bullets - The Deadly Truth

On July 8th, 1983, Nora McCabe was returning home from a corner shop - less than 15 yards from her home she was shot and died soon after. That day her murderer and several of his accomplices were in a police station. However, they have never been charged or brought to court and still walk the streets freely, but that is no surprise because they are officers in the RUC.

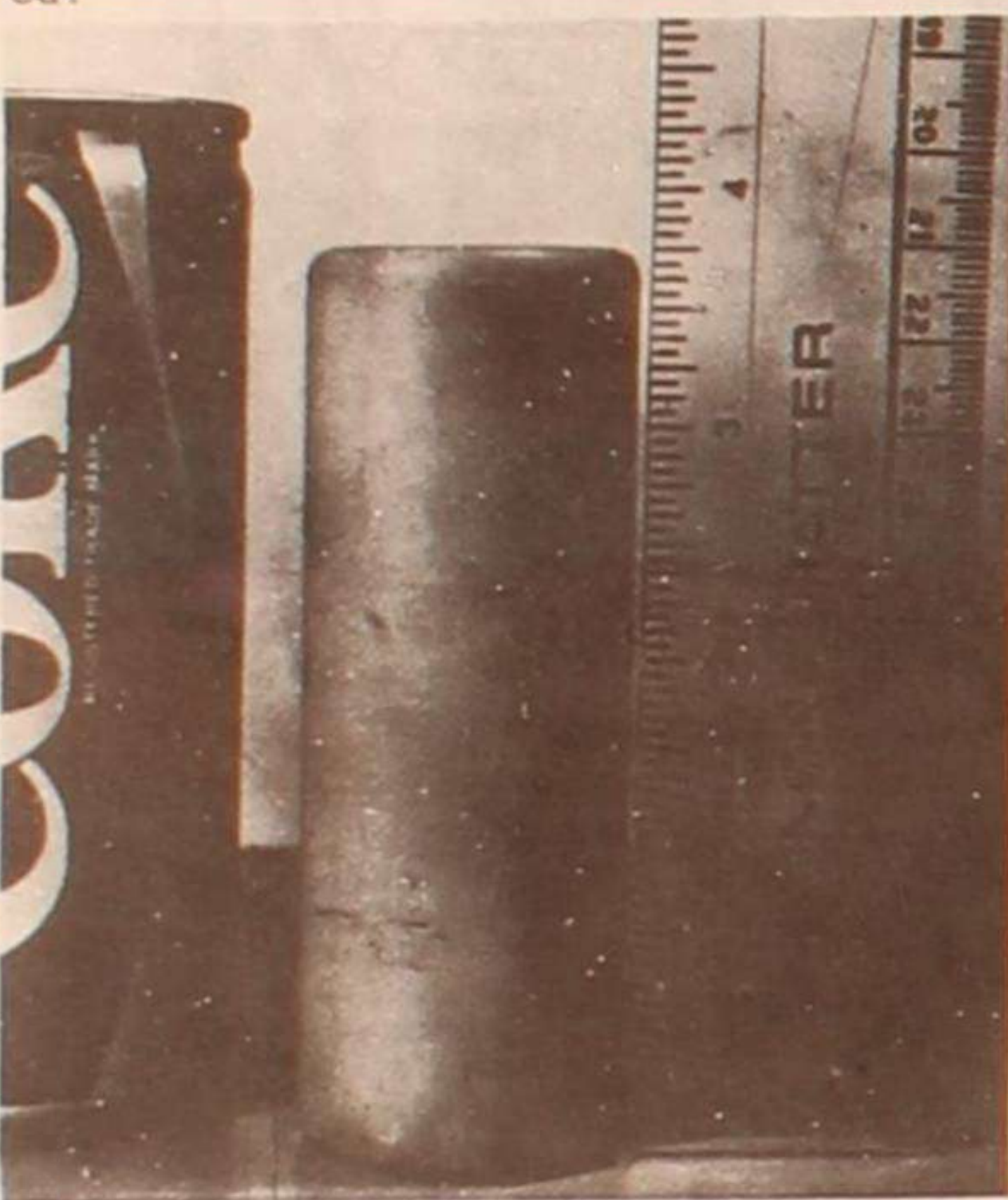
Nora McCabe was killed by the police and British army's "non-lethal weapon", the baton round, better known as the plastic or rubber bullet. She is not the only victim - more than a dozen others have died and hundreds have been injured, many seriously, by this horrific "toy". But for all that, only one member of the security forces has been prosecuted. This was the officer who killed Sean Downes when the RUC attacked the annual anti-internment march firing more than 80 plastic bullets in five minutes. Of course the sectarian courts let him off scot-free! It seems that when carrying out their duty (suppressing rebellious sections of the population) police and soldiers are above the laws of assault, manslaughter and murder.

FLYING TRUNCHEON

The first baton round was used in 1967 in the Hong Kong riots. It was made of teak and weighted with a solid metal core. This "flying truncheon" was wielded with all the constraint of its pedestrian equivalent, i.e. not at all. Not surprisingly then, one girl died and many other people were injured by flying splinters from shattering rounds. It was therefore considered too dangerous, so Porton Down developed the rubber bullet which was first used in Northern Ireland in 1970. The record of this "minimum force" weapon speaks for itself - 3 people killed and many injured. Over 80% of the injured had head injuries including partial or total blindness, brain damage and severe facial injuries. The rubber bullet was withdrawn in 1973 amid widespread public outcry. It was replaced by the "safer and more accurate plastic bullet". It is certainly more

accurate - 1 person has been killed for every 4,000 rounds fired compared with 1 for every 18,000 rubber bullets fired. The numbers maimed and seriously injured have also increased. The rubber bullet was often modified by police and soldiers who stuck razor blades and batteries into them, but the plastic bullet is so hard and deadly it doesn't need such refinements.

To most people the term plastic bullet conjures up the image of a small, soft object fired from a normal gun instead of a dangerous lead bullet - this is an illusion well cultivated by the British media. In fact the plastic bullet weighs as much as a cricket ball and is fired from a special gun at 130-170 miles an hour - about twice the speed of the fastest fast bowler. In cricket a helmet, extensive padding, a box and a bat are used for defence, and there are umpires to make sure that the ball isn't bowled straight at the body - the ordinary person has none of these things. Is it surprising then that deaths and serious injuries have resulted?



Plastic bullets weigh as much as a cricket ball

How do the government excuse the use of plastic bullets? Their excuses are simple: plastic bullets are a safe means of riot control, used only as a last resort in self defence; their use is strictly controlled. The facts put paid to these blatant lies; more than a dozen people have been killed and many more maimed. Independent investigation has proven that 6 of their victims were not even near a riot at the time of their shooting. In fact rioters know to keep a safe distance from the security forces so deaths in riot situations are rare. Those killed are often fired on from within heavily armoured police and army vehicles. It is common for members of the security forces to blast away indiscriminately as they drive through peaceful areas at high speed in their armoured saracens and landrovers. Plastic bullets are fired routinely and as a matter of course. In May 1981 during the height of the hunger strikes 530 were fired per day! There is no way that the judicial system could investigate each incident even if it wanted to.

This is more than just a few "trigger happy" squaddies blasting away at women and children for kicks. It is a concerted campaign, which like the shoot-to-kill policy exists to terrorise the population. The logic is deadly and simple - if a 12 year old girl can be shot and killed while out buying a pint of milk, then what choice has a demonstrator protesting against human rights violations. It is a tactic that works since the number of protests and demonstrations in Northern Ireland has gone down since 1981 when the security forces rampaged through the streets of Belfast and Derry firing plastic bullets like Chicago gangsters.

BRUTAL TACTICS

The fact is that the anti-unionist community in Northern Ireland have long been suffering the brutal tactics that the working class here in Britain have only just begun to see. Plastic bullets, CS gas and armoured AMAC vehicles have all been seen on picket lines and on the

streets of the deprived inner cities. No doubt, soon they will be used to deadly effect.

No government is capable of solving the problems of mass unemployment and poverty, simply because governments and capitalism are the root cause of them, so they resort to increasingly deadly and repressive measures to control the symptoms of the problems; i.e. crime, unrest and industrial militancy. If plastic bullets are not banned now they will only be the start of a deadly arsenal of dirty tricks used to oppress us. Already there is talk of introducing the ARWEN 37, a rapid fire plastic bullet gun. It fires baton rounds which not only cause the usual injuries but burst open on impact releasing a chemical irritant. Plastic bullets must be banned from Britain and Northern Ireland, and banned totally, not just replaced by a "safer" alternative which will turn out to be more deadly as in the past.

VIDEO TOUR

The Direct Action Movement has made a start in this process. We organised a video and speaking tour around Britain. The video (produced by the United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets) is exceptionally powerful, as it brings home through the words of victims and relatives of victims, the full horror of the baton round. It reveals many facts which the British media smokescreen normally keeps from those of us who live outside the 6 counties. Spreading information of this kind is important, but not enough on its own. A mass campaign must be mobilised to remove these deadly weapons.

Video available from:

UCAPB,
c/o 195 Whiterock Rd.,
Belfast 11,
Northern Ireland.

Price £32 (p&p included)

IN BRIEF

The children of poor people are now twice as likely to die in their first year as babies born to better off parents. New government figures show that the infant mortality rate for "social class 5", (the poorest group in society) in 1984 jumped to 14.1 per thousand from 12.7 in 1983. However the figures for social class 1 continued to drop - 7.3 in 1983 to 7.1 in 1984.

A spokesperson for the Maternity Alliance, Lyn Durward is quoted as saying "a child is given the social class of its father, but the increasing number of births to single mothers who are often unsupported are not taken into consideration when drawing up statistics".

From the period from 1980 to 1984 the trend for all social classes had been downwards until 1984.

Talking after Gallahers had announced 700 job losses at their cigarette factory in Belfast, Dr Rhodes Boyson, right wing Northern Ireland industry minister put some of the blame for rising unemployment in Ireland, both north and south, on the American and Canadian governments. He says they should accept more emigrants from Northern Ireland as a way of alleviating unemployment which is now rising by 20,000 a year. Describing emigrants as Northern Ireland's "historical export" he says: "I have told the Americans they are partially responsible now for the unemployment in the Republic and Northern Ireland, because they have cut down the people coming in". Perhaps the government are getting worried about what the effects of rising unemployment will be on Northern Ireland's already unstable situation.

THE UNION OR THE PARTY?

Anarcho-syndicalism has always had a theory of a society derived from the practice of the working class. It started as a movement; it expressed itself in action, and any theorists were militant workers who wrote for workers, not for social philosophers. They dealt with issues of the moment, not with metaphysical niceties that so impress the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless anarcho-syndicalists have always had an overall, coherent view of ends and means.

CLASS STRUGGLE

The root of anarcho-syndicalist theory lies in the class struggle. There are exploiters and exploited, oppressors and oppressed, capital and labour - only the complete overthrow of the existing social, economic and political order and the abolition of property and the state, can change this.

Anarcho-syndicalists reject the marxist theory of history that says that a communist society is inevitable and that it is pre-determined - it is not! We are sure of the final emancipation of the working class, but it will only come about when the will of the workers to achieve it exceeds the will of capitalism and the state to prevent it. Victory will be by our own efforts.

It was once said that while others played at class war like a child with a toy sword, only the syndicalists have constructed from it the appropriate and logical theory of action.

This shows itself in the rejection by syndicalists of political parties - even those who claim to represent the interests of the working class - because by their very nature they deny the class struggle. Party membership cuts across class lines, it draws upon people from differing social backgrounds and economic interests. It attracts armchair socialists who have an abstract, and therefore superficial interest, who, in the end, fraternise with the state and

so betray the working class.

Socialist parties are dominated by intellectuals and professional politicians. Their basis is ideological, dependent on temporary and superficial agreements on matters of philosophy. The party, unlike a class, is an artificial organisation. It lacks the true solidarity that comes from direct economic interest. Their aim is to gain power by appealing to the lowest common denominator of agreement.



Whatever the method of change - parliamentary or "dictatorship of the proletariat" - it means substituting one set of rules for another. Freedom and equality cannot be decreed from above but only achieved by action from below.

THE REVOLUTIONARY UNION

In place of the party anarcho-syndicalists put the revolutionary union - the autonomous organisation of the working class. It unites the workers, not on the basis of some ideology or sentiment, but in their very quality as workers. The union is not concerned with questions of philosophy. The very reason for its existence is to fight the bosses and so it stands at the very point where the class struggle arises.

The union is the vehicle for change. Just as parliament is the natural expression of bourgeois society, so the union is the natural form of organisation of the working class.

The union links the present with the future. It obtains concessions in the short term, while preparing workers, through struggle, for the eventual social revolution. It is both defensive and offensive, destructive and constructive.

By direct action and the use of strikes (see DA 32), solidarity is encouraged - every strike, successful or not, increases the hostility between the classes and stimulates conflict. The strike, like the union, wins concessions from the bosses in the short term but, after a long series of strikes, growing in intensity and making wider demands, comes the social general strike which sees the beginning of the transformation to an anarchist society.

THE NEW SOCIETY

Anarcho-syndicalist theory and practice presents a fully homogeneous programme of action. The strike, the natural form of conflict, is also the form of revolution. Workers can no longer hope to achieve anything by insurrection because of the state's control of the armed forces.

Every strike is a step on the road to the final conflict. While the class struggle is waged, the future is being created. The union, the natural form of battle, becomes the cell for the new society. There cannot be a sudden peaceful change-over - the union is the organisation to bridge the gap and to defend the workers when attacked until the new society is secured.

Anarcho-syndicalism gives the labour movement the theory and the means to achieve the new society, independent of outsiders and sufficient unto itself.

REVIEW:

ANARCHISM IN ACTION - THE SPANISH REVOLUTION

Tower Hamlets DAM - £1.00

Well produced 48 page pamphlet, complete with photographs, describing the Spanish Revolution of 1936. It gives a short account of the history of the Spanish anarchist movement and the struggle against the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. The pamphlet describes the escalation of working class militancy in the form of strikes and insurrections in the early 1930's. The C.N.T., an anarcho-syndicalist union federation, and the F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation) became very influential and their agitation and propaganda was producing a pre-revolutionary climate.

The pamphlet then deals with the election of the Popular Front government in 1936 followed by the fascist revolt which triggered off a social revolution in eastern Spain. The Spanish workers and peasants, especially those in the C.N.T. and F.A.I., took the initiative (initially the government refused to do anything about the fascist uprising) and

organised workers' militias to fight the fascist menace. But they were not just fighting to defend the status quo, they were fighting for social change, and in fact an anarcho-syndicalist revolution took place.

The pamphlet describes how the peasants and land labourers seized the land



from the rich land-owners and set up agricultural collectives, how the industrial workers collectivised factories and put workers' control into practice and how the status of women as second class citizens was challenged.

This pamphlet does not try to pretend that the C.N.T. and F.A.I. were perfect, but criticises their participation in the government and explains that a reformist leadership emerged within the C.N.T. and the federalist structure was being eroded.

The role of the Communist Party of Spain is exposed in organising the counter-revolution. Communist troops smashed the collectives and murdered many anarchists and revolutionaries in the "May Days" fighting in 1937. The G.P.U. (Russian Secret Police) were brought in to assassinate or imprison (and torture) activists who were anarchists or on the anti-Stalinist left.

The revolution was defeated by the Communists in 1937 and from then on it was a losing battle against Franco's forces (supported by Hitler and Mussolini) which finally ended in defeat for the republic in 1939. The pamphlet ends with a short account of the re-birth of anarcho-syndicalism in Spain since the death of Franco in 1975.

DAM-IWA

1. The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisation.

2. Our aim is the creation of a free and classless society.

3. We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery in all their forms and replace them by self-managed production for need not profit.

4. In order to bring about the new social order, the workers must take over the means of production and distribution. We are the sworn enemies of those who would take over on behalf of the workers.

5. We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is by independent organisation in the workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers' organisations must be controlled by the workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers' movement. Any and all delegates of such workers' organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.

6. We are opposed to all States and State institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all States do not exist to protect the workers of those States, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.

7. We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and environment.

8. The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism; a system where the workers alone control industry and the community without the dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.

DAM Pamphlets

Anarchism in Action - the Spanish Revolution (see review) £1.00

Come and Wet this Truncheon - by Dave Douglass (Hatfield Main NUM) 80p

Tell us lies about the Miners - by Dave Douglass (Hatfield Main NUM) 60p

Strike Action 20p

Anarchism and Feminism - Women Workers and the Trade Unions (2 pamphlets) 35p

Syndicalists in the Russian Revolution - G P Maximoff 45p

100 Years of May Day 30p

What is Anarcho-Syndicalism? Free

Write c/o Direct Action, Box D.A., Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.

Make cheques/postal orders payable to DAM. Add 20% of total price for post and packing

ASP Publications

The Methods of Anarcho-Syndicalism - Rudolf Rocker 50p

The Tragedy of Spain - R Rocker £1.20

The Art of Anarchy - Flavio Constantini (Anarchist Black Cross) £3.00

Program of Anarcho-Syndicalism - G P Maximoff £1.00

My Social Credo - G P Maximoff 50p

Libertarian Communism - Isaac Puente 60p

Miguel Garcia's Story £1.20

Anarchism: Arguments For and Against - Albert Meltzer 80p

REBEL WORKER (Australian Syndicalist Federation)

IWA - Principles, Aims and Statutes 50p

Syndicalism in Practice:

1. Spain - The CNT 20p
2. Argentina - The FORA 20p
3. Chile - The IWW and FORC 20p
4. Poland - The ZZZ 20p

Write to: ASP, BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX. or

ASP, P.O. Box 96, Doncaster, South Yorks.

Make cheques/postal orders payable to ASP. For post and packing please add 20% of total price - minimum is 20p.

MEETINGS

RANK & FILE WORKERS' ACTION VERSUS TUC IN ACTION

Public meeting organised by Central London DAM-IWA on Tuesday, November 11th, 7.30pm in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, (Tube: Holborn).

STRIKE AGAINST APARTHEID! BOSSES' SANCTIONS OR WORKERS' SOLIDARITY

An anarchist perspective on South Africa.

At: Jeffrey's Library, Jeffrey's Road, Stockwell SW4.

On: Tuesday 18th November, 7.30 pm.

Organised by South West London DAM-IWA, c/o 121 Railton Rd., Herne Hill SE 24.

SOLIDARITY RALLY WITH SOUTH AFRICAN MINERS

Sat. November 8th. Assembled 11.30 at Gunness Corner, (beside the Jolly Sailor Pub) Gunness, South Humberside.

March past coal import wharfs. Rally at 12.45 pm, opposite Flixborough Wharf.

Organised by Hatfield NUM and Doncaster Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Enquiries: phone Doncaster 66335.

"DEAD FROM THE NECK UP" -

What's the alternative to today's trade unions?

Speaker: Steve Turner.

Venue: Bolton Socialist Club, 16, Wood St. (off Bradshawgate), Bolton, Lancs. 8.00 pm, Thursday, November 13th.

TAMESIDE DAM PUBLIC MEETINGS

6th November: HOUSING - An anarchist approach.

20th November: Communes, Co-ops and Collectives.

27th November: First the factories, then.....

All at the 'Toad and Tulip', 8.00 pm, Stamford St., Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside.

ALSO: Unemployed's Benefit on 13th November at: Enville Club, Katherine Street, A-u-L, 8 pm.

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I would like more information about the Direct Action Movement - International Workers' Association. Please send me information.

Name

Address.....

.....

Send to DAM/IWA, c/o Box DAM, Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir St., Cambridge.

Produced and published by Manchester DAM. Printed by Aldgate Press, 84b, Whitechapel High Street, London. Send articles, letters, donations, etc to Direct Action, Box D.A., Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester. Please specify whether or not letters are for publication.

Deadline for D.A 35 is November 21st.

Direct Action

SOUTH AFRICA:

SANCTIONS OR WORKERS' SOLIDARITY?

In June, well over 100,000 people marched through London to protest against the racist Apartheid regime in South Africa. It was an impressive show of support for sanctions. However, to support such a call means lining up alongside black nationalists, church leaders, stalinists, trotskysts, liberals, social democrats, and even conservatives like Tony Barber and Malcolm Fraser of the Eminent Persons Group. Anarchists, in contrast, have always argued that begging governments to take effective action is less than useless. Furthermore the major force for change in South Africa is not diplomatic pressure, nor guerrilla action, but the black working class, organised in the workplaces and in the townships. Nonetheless there is an important role for international action on the basis of working class solidarity.

EFFECTS ON SOUTH AFRICA

Those who reject any use of economic force tend to stress the harm sanctions will cause to black Africans. From the rioting "comrades" of Guguletu, Crossroads and Langa to the multi-class UDF and the 500,000 strong COSATU the message is clear - blacks have nothing to lose. In fact recent pamphlets written by Mark Orkins argue that disinvestment would proportionally hit whites harder than blacks. Black unemployment, already at 25%, would rise to 26% but white unemployment would increase from 5% to 8%.

Where then would sanctions hurt the South African economy? Although South Africa is the major industrial power in the region she still depends on imports of oil and machinery to maintain production. One third of all specialised machinery is imported while the SASOL oil-from-coal plants only provide for 40% of the country's needs. In attempting to become more self-sufficient South Africa has been forced to create an urban proletariat, and has given blacks greater access to power in the mines and in manufacturing industries (where once there was a white monopoly on the labour market).

EFFECTS ON BRITAIN

One of Thatcher's main arguments is that tens of thousands of British workers will lose their jobs, mainly in engineering and pharmaceuticals. One of the wildest figures quoted - 250,000 - comes from the United Kingdom South African Trade Association which is based on calculations almost a decade out of date. Many of the manufacturing jobs said to be at risk have been lost already. The Rogers-Bolton study of 1981 concluded that a more realistic figure

would be less than 10,000. Thatcher's concern is not, of course, for the workers but for the city stockbrokers, the company directors and the Tory backbenchers who have financial interests in companies which invest in South Africa and which give huge donations to the Tory party each year.

LABOUR SANCTIONS

Many people accept that the Tories will never impose effective sanctions and argue instead that Labour, once elected will take tougher measures. Firstly, we must bear in mind that in opposition Labour are given to promising what they cannot and will not deliver. Secondly, past Labour Governments' record on action against South Africa and Rhodesia is scarcely better than the Tories.

The Labour Government's ban on arms sales to South Africa had the convenient loophole of allowing weapon sales for external rather than internal use - a distinction which quite simply does not exist. In the case of Rhodesia, Wilson imposed sanctions which were only violated with his knowledge but were not extended to South Africa which was propping up the Smith regime. South Africa has always found legal and illegal ways around the arms and oil embargos. Botha today boasts of extensive sanction-busting preparations and stockpiles of oil and it is certainly true that tough sanctions would be difficult to enforce successfully.

Many capitalists see the role of sanctions as something designed to put pressure on Botha to make reforms and save capitalism in South Africa. We must base our activities on the needs of the black working-class for as Petrus Tom, a black trade unionist warned:



Dunnes': the most popular strike in Ireland yet their union did nothing

"Even a black government won't liberate the working class as we have seen in the independent black African states where the working class is still oppressed by their own brothers and sisters who are in power".

WORKERS' SOLIDARITY

In this country action must come from the working-class who produce the goods that South Africa needs, who handle the goods South Africa exports and who sell their labour to the same transnational companies which pay starvation wages to black workers.

This does not mean trade union sanctions for the union movement is more concerned with putting Labour back into office. The union bureaucrats have been conspicuous on anti-Apartheid platforms but have delivered little more than useless guidelines and recommendations. The miners and printers received no effective support so why expect any more than empty gestures of solidarity and conference resolutions which will never be implemented?

In Ireland the Dunnes strikers discovered that carrying out union policy means much praise from bureaucrats, but no help to win the dispute. Furthermore the Anti-Apartheid Movement serves as a transmission belt for the nationalistic politics of class alliances and revolution in two stages, consequently British workers are still badly informed about their African counterparts. As the International Labour Reports found:

"All too frequently shop floor workers never get to hear about calls for support that have been put out by independent unions in South Africa" (ILR Nov-Dec '85)

In theory workers' solidarity must mean widespread industrial action including the blacking of all goods to and from South Africa, organised independently of the bureaucrats and in open defiance of the anti-union laws against sympathy action. In reality, of course, such actions are few and far between. British workers are more frightened for their own jobs and there is little class confidence. The level of strikes so far this year is the lowest for 50 years.

The only practical way forward is to build "direct links" between British and South African workers. This means making links at union branch level with independent union branches in South Africa and sponsoring visits by South African militants to Britain. It means organising support for black workers on strike or in detention, and sending messages of support and donations to these comrades. As a Metal and Allied Workers Union representative said after a visit at BTR:

"British workers were genuinely surprised that black workers have organised independent unions ... their attitude to how they could give ... support really changed when they realised that we who work in the same company also have a union and are fighting the same employer"

Ultimately the sort of working class movement which could deliver effective solidarity action would also be capable of taking on the government and the state. This is what Kinnock, Willis and all the labour movement parasites fear most. We cannot meaningfully separate anti-apartheid activity from anti-capitalist activity and we must expose the hypocrisy of those who do.

