



DIRECT ACTION

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Paper of the Direct Action Movement - International Workers Association

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ORGANISE



AND WIN!

FIGHT FOR OUR CLASS!

'Direct Action' is the newspaper of the Direct Action Movement, British section of the International Workers Association (est. 1922) and is published in London.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

In this issue of Direct Action we devote our centre page feature to fascism and the fight against it.

Ever since the Italian fascists first organised in the 1920's against the workers' councils and the anarcho-syndicalist movement, the International Workers' Association and its sections have been fighting fascism. During the 1930's and the Second World War, the Nazis and their fascist friends in Spain, Italy and Japan crushed anarcho-syndicalist and other workers' movements. The IWA was active in the underground resistance movements throughout occupied Europe.

Wherever fascists seek to organise today, members of the IWA oppose them. In Britain, DAM members have long been active in Anti-Fascist Action. In France, the CNT are organising Sahelian workers and they fight fascism at work and on the streets alongside SCALP, the French equivalent of Anti-Fascist Action. In Spain CNT members are at the forefront of organising against the various varieties of fascism. In the USA, Workers' Solidarity Alliance (WSA) members take direct action against the Ku Klux Klan, the vicious racist organisation.

Over the past two years there has been an upsurge in fascist activity. The British National Party (BNP) have located their headquarters and bookshop at Welling in South East London. From here they are capitalising on the recent racist murder of Rolan Adams and are organising on the Thamesmead estate nearby. Racial attacks are on the increase, particularly in Tower Hamlets where the BNP secured 12% of the vote in a council by-election. The Gulf War has been a focus for attacks on all black people. Both the National Front (NF) and the BNP are now organising for the next general election. As the Tories attempt to tone down their image in the post-Thatcher era, it is no surprise that the extreme right seeks to organise through groups like the NF and the BNP. This increase in activity is not isolated to Britain. Throughout Europe, particularly in the East, fascists are organising. Prior to unification in East Germany, for example, fascists were even given a platform to speak at a big pro-unification rally.

Fascism is a ruling class attack on the working class. Fascists encourage working class people to blame other working class people for the effects of capitalism. Fascists aim to mobilise some sections of the working class against working class organisation and resistance elsewhere. Low wages, poor housing, poverty, recession and all the rest are caused by the ruling class not by other working class people. It is our lack of organisation and resistance that lets them get away with it.

To those who argue that the fascists are small in number and, therefore, irrelevant, we point to the racist violence being suffered at this moment by black working class people; we point to the electoral success of Le Pen and the National Front in France; and we point to the rapid growth of the fascist movement in the 1970s. Now is the time to demonstrate our strength. Now is the time to chase them off our streets.

Whilst fascists have both used and encouraged racism, fascism and racism are not to be confused. Each is an attack on the working class, but each takes many forms. In Spain and Italy, for example, fascism has rarely been associated with racism. Fascists attack Jewish, Irish and lesbians and gay men, trade unionists and socialists. Racism occurs beyond the strict limits of fascism. Racism is fostered by the state in police violence, in immigration controls and other racist legislation. Racist images appear throughout the media. Black people face racism throughout their daily lives in violence and harassment and in poorer access to state and other services. Indeed it is because racism exists within the white working class that fascists actively parade their own racism. We must, therefore, fight both racism and fascism. But we reiterate that both racism and fascism cannot be isolated from class oppression. The fight against racism and the fight against fascism are each part and parcel of the fight against capitalism and the ruling class. All these struggles are complimentary - without fighting one we cannot fight the others. We concentrate here on fascism. In future issues we will take this debate further as part of the process of developing the fight against racism. Similarly this is far from the last word on fighting fascism.

We firmly believe that fascists must be confronted wherever and whenever they organise. However we do not separate the fight against fascism from the fight for our class. Fascism is not an aberration within capitalism. Capitalism is by its very nature violent. Fascism is simply its most violent face. Therefore, although we fight alongside other groups and individuals, we do not support the broad or popular front approach which relies on alliances involving our pro-capitalist enemies in the fight against fascism. Similarly, the multicultural carnival-type politics of SOS-Racisme in France (and of Rock Against Racism in the late 1970s here in Britain) are at best misguided.

Fascism will be defeated by a united working class movement. Such a movement is united by the direct control by our class not through a centralised bureaucracy, democratic or otherwise. As anarcho-syndicalists we recognise the necessity for groups within the working class movement to organise autonomously. James Connolly's words of 1915 are still as true today: "None so fitted to break the chains as they who wear them, none so well equipped to decide what is a fetter". We, therefore, firmly support the autonomous organisation by those sections of our class which are singled out by fascists, whether this is by black people, women, gay men, lesbians, Jewish or Irish people. The presence of such organisations can only strengthen our class. Moreover, we are not a revolutionary vanguard. We seek to work alongside such organisations, not to infiltrate and take over. In mutual solidarity, together we are strong.

We support the direct action strategy of Anti-Fascist Action (AFA). Nevertheless AFA is not and cannot be the whole solution. Fascism will be fought on many fronts. We urge you to join us in the fight against fascism.

Fight against fascism! Fight against racism! Fight for the working class!

Now turn to our centre pages for a history of fascism and the different forms it has taken around the world, together with an analysis of contemporary fascism and the fight against it in Britain.

DIRECT ACTION is

the paper of the Direct Action Movement, the British section of the International Workers Association (est 1922).

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For a revolutionary Anarchist (Non-governmental) society through Syndicalism (the struggle for workers control) to free communism (common ownership and no state).

Dear DA,

I feel I must respond to Ashleigh's letter in the last issue in which she called my article in DA 71 ("Class Consciousness") a "lukewarm mixture of rhetoric and garbage"!

Ashleigh says the article treated squaddies with total contempt. How should we treat them then, with kid gloves?

As an anti-militarist I regard the army as a 'legitimate target' if you like. The fact that Britain almost alone amongst European countries doesn't need a conscript Army, but can get 'volunteers' to fight for the likes of Major and Thatcher in Kuwait or Belfast, says a lot about British society ...

Elsewhere in Europe, in Spain and Italy for instance, the Army is more widely perceived within the working class as a tool of the ruling class. They have to have conscription in these countries because otherwise they wouldn't have enough cannon fodder volunteering. As it is many of those conscripted refuse to go (10% of the call-up in Spain last year), and are prepared to go to jail rather than put on the State's uniform.

As anarcho-syndicalists we should be pushing militant anti-militarism, as against the vague pacifism that is the dominant tradition in Britain. We should support squaddies who want to get out of the Army, who don't want to serve in Ulster, etc. But the Armed Forces as an institution should be challenged at every opportunity. Otherwise twenty years from now

young working class lads from shitholes like Middlesborough will still be marching off to fight for Queen and country in shitholes like Belfast, without even asking themselves why.

Dino, Middlesborough.

Despite the length of time between this response and the original letter, the DA editorial feel strongly that the questions raised around the Gulf War should continue to be debated if we are to build an effective working class anti-militarist movement for the future.

Direct Action is the paper of the Direct Action Movement. Direct Action is intended to further the aims of the DAM through discussion, debate and argument by putting across ideas in a meaningful and accessible way. To this end, the views expressed in the paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the DAM as a whole or individuals within the movement. We reserve the right either not to print or to edit contributions.

Dear D.A.

In China activists in the Workers' Autonomous Federation (WAF) have recently received heavy jail sentences for their involvement in the democracy movement. The WAF is an independent union movement formed during the massive demonstrations in 1989 that were so brutally crushed at Tiannam Square. The WAF argue that "the workers - that is, the people of China and not the bureaucrats -

should become the masters of all state and collective enterprises".

It seems that these independent union activists have been singled out for the harshest treatment. Liu Zihou and Ren Wandong were each sent down for 7 years. Liu had been part of the Capital Workers' Picket Team, whilst Ren had merely publically advocated the independent union movement.

The Democracy Wall Group are circulating a petition available from DA. Messages of support, solidarity etc will be much appreciated.

Democracy Wall have recently reprinted "Voices from Tiannam Square", a self-explanatory collection of translations from Chinese originals.

Contact: Democracy Wall, PO Box 31340, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.

Dear D.A.

More headlines in May about bosses taking massive pay increases. The publicity this time surrounds the criticisms from the shareholders. In typical arrogant form one boss said this was the rate for the job and that was what they were going to pay. In other words, most other boards of directors are paying their executives/managers similar massive salaries and if they didn't pay them these colossal sums the managers would simply go elsewhere.

And colossal salaries they are. Mick

Newmarch, chief executive of the Prudential has had a 43% rise, going from £380,000 to £544,000 per annum. Sir Ian MacLaurin, chairman of Tesco, has risen to £1.48m, four times his 1989 earnings. While Lord King, chairman of British Airways, received publicity for taking a drop in pay from £515,000 to a 'paltry' £414,000 - big deal. There is no mention of whether he has received any shares in compensation. Shares are the big unseen perks of the 80's and 90's.

Contrast the above to where I work, on the shop floor in Otis Elevators Liverpool, and the miserly 4% the management have offered us. Fortunately the mood in our place has changed in recent times, partly as a result of confidence gained during the 35 hour campaign and genuine economic pressures. We no longer have a right wing dominated works committee willing and able to rush through pay rises just on or under inflation. For several years, through the so-called boom years (that in retrospect we can now all see were boom years for the bosses, not us), we were working 8.00 am - 6.30 pm or 8.00 am - 8.00 pm in some departments (normal shift 8.00 am - 5.00 pm). Despite all this overtime the gap between our wages and the cost of living widened.

When our right wing union officials attempted to get us to accept a reduced working week from 39 to 37 hours with lots of strings people finally found their voice, and many

people began arguing against the right wing. By the time the factory meeting was held it was no longer the 25% of left wingers who regularly opposed the right wing works committee but 75% voted to reject the recommendation of the outside officials and the works committee. For the first time they were defeated and the convenor had no option but to resign. It was not long before management gave him a supervisor's job, "for services rendered", as a shop floor worker shouted after him when he first appeared in his white coat.

With a unanimous vote against the 4% offer by management and now a works meeting that voted unanimously for a strike ballot we'll see what the management's reaction is this coming week. Equally we'll have to ensure the outside officials don't take too long in organising the ballot. While the remnants of the right wing are going along with this, they have no choice, as everyone is aware of the mood on the shop floor.

Clearly, if workers want a better standard of living it is only going to come about by setting out their own demands and being prepared to take action. There must be a great many workers who have won a shorter working week recently. To follow this through with better pay they must not rely on tired old officials but elect workers' representatives who will act in the interests of the workers.

Les, Engineering Worker, Liverpool

My abiding memory of Eric Heffer was when, at the 1990 Labour Party conference, he took the stand during a debate on the economy and called for what amounted to workers' control of industry. I was struck not by the audacity of his demand (for I share it!) but by the fact that someone who had been in the Labour Party for so long seemingly still imagined that it could act in the interests of the working class in such a decisive way. Needless to say, Eric's call went unheeded by Labour and he, along with many on the left of the party, watched with dismay as it became ever more conservative. Eric Heffer was one of a tiny number of Labour MPs whose socialist principles remained intact and undiminished by the corrupting influences of parliamentary politics. It is fitting, therefore, that the by-election caused by his death has raised in many people's minds questions about how far Labour's commitment to its 'socialism' actually goes. This issue has been thrown into sharp focus by two main factors — Labour's civil war in Liverpool and the choice of Peter Kilfoyle as the party's candidate in Walton. The Walton by-election came at a time when the city as a whole was in turmoil. Several Tory government measures had driven the council to breaking point. The poll tax and the mass non-payment it generated, coupled with years of cuts in the

LIVERPOOL—WHY MILITANT WAS NOT THE ANSWER

city's rate support grant, meant that Liverpool was virtually bankrupt. Along with legislation forcing local authorities to privatise services this has led the 'moderate' Labour group on the council to draw up a cost-cutting budget — with many of the savings coming from wholesale job losses and the city's refuse contract being given to a private company. As usual, when the going gets tough the Labour Party turns on the very people who put it in office: the working class.

Labour in Liverpool has always been plagued by faction fighting. This isn't just due to the Militant Tendency but more because of a genuine desire on the part of local people to fight back against the never-ending series of job losses and cuts inflicted on this city. But without doubt it is Militant who have capitalised most on this popular discontent. They have been around (in various guises) since the 50's, and until now their stated goal has been to take over Labour, turning it into a Trotskyist revolutionary party in the process. Their relative success over recent years in Liverpool has invoked the wrath of a Labour leadership more right wing, more image conscious and more sensitive to accusations of extremism than ever before.

When Neil Kinnock vowed to 'clean up' the party in Liverpool the purges began in earnest. Sitting councillors and party activists have been expelled. Local Labour Party organisations — wards, constituencies, even the Labour Women's Council — were investigated, suspended, abolished and re-formed. And who was chosen to oversee all of this? Yes, Peter Kilfoyle — Kinnock's hitman and, surprise surprise, Labour's hopeful in Walton. Needless to say, Militant see the candidacy of the Witchfinder General as the ultimate provocation and this, combined with the pressure of continuous expulsions, has prompted them to stand against Labour in both the May local elections and in Walton. This decision wasn't taken lightly; a mate who attended the Broad Left meeting that agreed it said there were so many numbers being shouted — potential votes, possible votes and how many wards to contest — that it was like a game of Trot bingo!

Despite their success in May (Broad Left candidates won 5 of the 6 seats they stood for), this decision leaves Militant's strategy in tatters — what happens now about 'taking over the Labour Party'? It's true that Militant have a layer of support in Liverpool and may be able to deliver the odd electoral shock to Kinnock here, but

this isn't true of the rest of the country. And it's important to remember that what support they do have was only built up because they were in the Labour Party and were able to capitalise on rank and file disenchantment with the leadership. Without Labour Party membership cards Militant can't gain influence within the party machine and are no different than any other Trot sect on the left — irrelevant to and ignored by working class people. They're not known as the 'Tapeworm Tendency' for nothing! Labour's leadership are crowing over Militant being driven to stand against them. They claim it as proof of their victory over the left and say that the tendency will now have to show its true colours rather than masquerading under Labour's banner.

For us as anarchists this whole episode confirms our arguments that it is neither possible nor even desirable to take over, reform or work within the Labour Party as socialists. Far from Kinnock's actions showing Militant's true colours, they have instead exposed the real function of the Labour Party — to be Her Majesty's very loyal 'opposition' and channel working class anger into harmless constitutional politics. We reject Militant's 'reclaim our party' message —

Labour never was 'our' party and has never acted consistently in the interests of the working class. We don't need to delve into history for examples of them selling us out (though there are many), just look at the party's actions in the ongoing Liverpool crisis.

From start to finish Labour have been doing the Tories' dirty work; implementing the poll tax, using bailiffs against non-payers, slashing their own workforce and privatising much needed services. Not once have they attempted to get off their knees and resist these measures, instead they've heaped the blame for the city's ills on the heads of those who are fighting back — poll tax defaulters, strikers and those the council is making redundant; and the local leadership have been backed every step of the way by Kinnock and the national leadership.

Make no mistake, Labour are about as much use to the working class as a chocolate fireguard. We don't need them, but we do need a movement which can advance the class struggle to a successful conclusion without getting drawn into the compromises and dead ends of parliamentary politics. This is why we appeal to all genuine socialists who are serious about change to forget the Labour Party — if you want workers' control join the Direct Action Movement and its industrial networks.

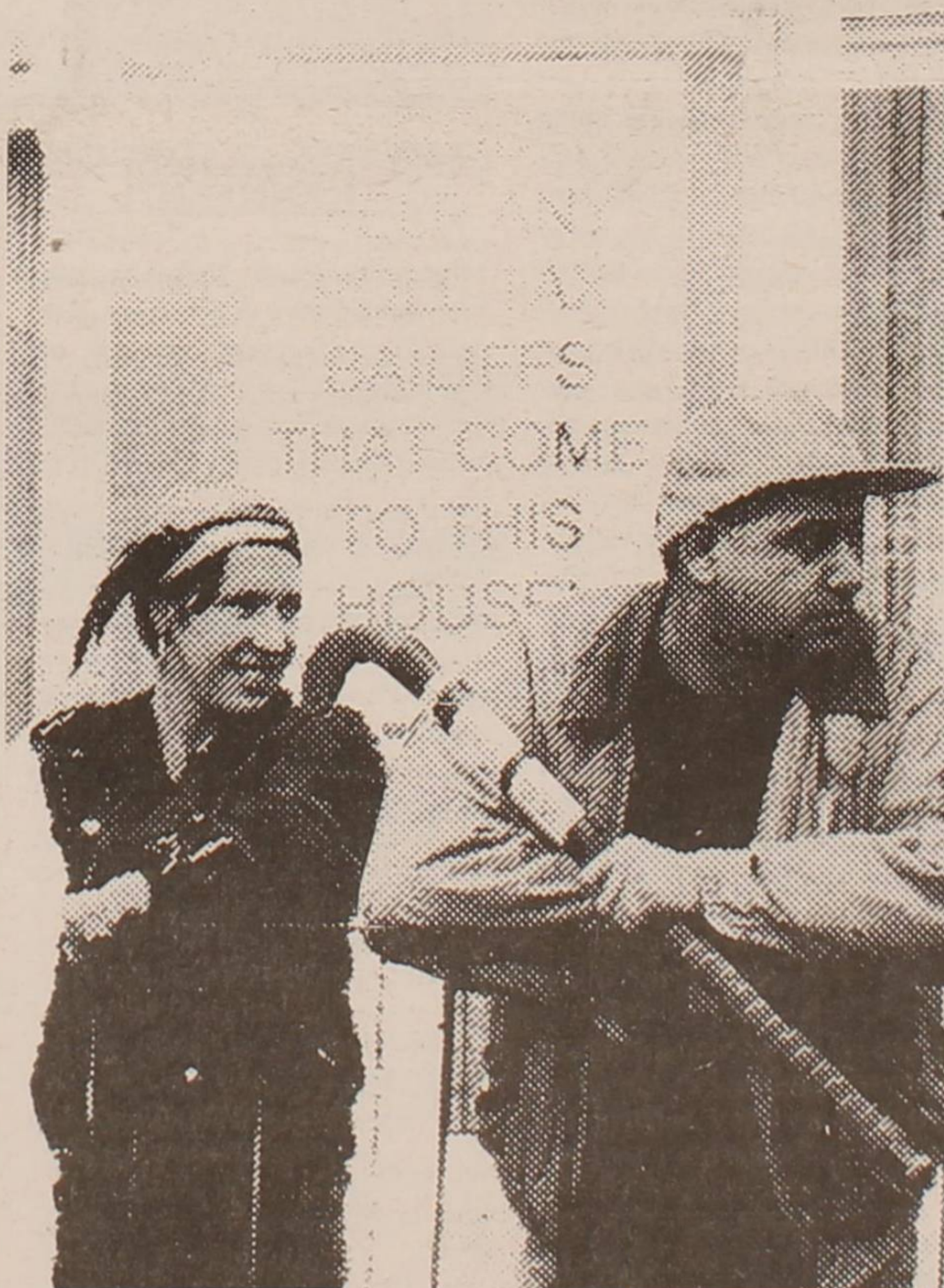
THE POLL TAX VICTORY

The defeat of the Poll Tax has been a tremendous victory for the working class. Though everyone from Militant to the liberals claim they defeated it, it was in reality smashed by the massive non-payment campaign waged across the country by our class. This marks a significant change to the run of defeats we have suffered over the past decade.

However, whilst we celebrate our victory, we must not forget, as the ruling class would have us believe, that the campaign is not yet over. The government hope that by a deft change of name and some tinkering at the edges the anger over the poll tax will be deflated. Who are they kidding? The council tax will still rip us off. We will still pay more for less. Local services will continue to be restructured to meet not our needs but the needs of the ruling class. And, let's not forget that there are currently more than 40 people banged up inside either for protesting against the tax or for not paying it.

In looking forward to the future of this struggle, we must also look back and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the anti-poll tax movement so far. How did we win such a victory? Why has the campaign not achieved more?

Certainly the government made a major mistake in making such a blatant attack on the working class as a whole, thus ensuring at least the potential for a very broad range of support for the campaign. However the campaign's achievement was to mobilise this potential around a programme of non-payment and direct action outside the confines of social democratic reformism. This in turn was due in part to the role taken by the anarchist movement in the campaign, right from the beginning.



From the start the movement was organised along libertarian lines. The movement took the form of a largely decentralised and anti-hierarchical network of locally-based anti-poll tax unions. Although not perfect by any means, this essentially working class movement represents a significant step forward from the centralised and stifling structures of political parties and reformist trade unions.

It is a success in itself that the movement took this autonomous form. Indeed, this is what has most alarmed

the politicians prompting them to desperate attempts at convincing us that it was really parliamentary democracy that defeated the tax. Nothing could be further from the truth!

Although Militant jumped on the band wagon late in the day, years of experience at back-stabbing, infiltration and manipulation enabled them to take control of the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation. Little good it did them, for the Federation did not control the movement. Many groups simply disaffiliated from the Federation

maintaining a national network through 3-D, Refuse and Resist and the Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign. Thus largely unhampered by the political parties and opportunist politicians, the libertarian form of organisation was retained, allowing it to continually adapt to new problems.

The SWP abandoned their original position the irrelevance of non-payment when they realised the size of the campaign. Subsequently torn between their desire to merge with Militant and their inability to defend Militant's practice, they concentrated on a recruitment drive attempting to cream off the 'best' activists to join their revolutionary vanguard, all the while urging all and sundry to 'pass a resolution at your next branch meeting'. Nevertheless individuals within the SWP have done some good work and it is to their credit that the paper continues to publicise imprisonments.

One of the real positives to emerge from the anti-poll tax movement is the Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign (TSDC) arising out of the Battle of Trafalgar of 31st March last year. In contrast to Militant's denunciation of criminal elements and their promise to 'name names', TSDC has argued for the unconditional support for all poll tax defendants. Moreover TSDC has had real success in forging new international links.

Of course, there have been failures and weaknesses. Militant were able to gain a stranglehold on parts of the movement and in some areas have to all intents and purposes closed down the campaign. All too often, the campaign relied on the passive individual acts of not registering and not paying. We were largely unsuccessful in getting the majority of non-payers to take a more active role in their resistance. The movement as a whole seldom broke out of treating the poll tax as a single issue. Partly because of this, many former activists are now treating the fight against the poll tax as over and done with.

The greatest failing was in the workplace. Ironically in the area where we have traditionally been stongest as a class, we have made so few inroads. It is an indication of the scale of the cumulative defeats that we have suffered over the past 10 years that such a popular campaign within the working class got virtually no support from the trade union bureaucrats. Moreover, that these supposed workers' organisations have encouraged a view of the anti-poll tax campaign as illegitimate and have fostered the fear that many workers have had at even discussing the poll tax at work, only points to the inability of reformist trade unions to act in the interests of the working class.

So where to next? The fight against the poll tax, the council tax and cuts in local services must continue. In particular, the campaign will not be over until all those imprisoned are given an amnesty. It is to be hoped that local anti-poll tax unions can, like the Solidarity Network in Harrogate, broaden out the campaign to take on other working class struggles. Whilst recognising the difficulty of this task, without such a transformation it will be impossible to sustain the movement in the longer term.

The most important lesson however is that we must organise in the workplace. Our libertarian methods have been shown to work in the locality. It is high time that we demonstrate them at work. Through industrial networks we can counter the presence of reformist unions in order to build a revolutionary movement. Such a movement organised in the workplace and the locality would really be a force to be reckoned with.

The nature of the anti-poll tax struggle is an expression of the new political reality breaking out across the world, as new truly working class movements are formed and increase in size and influence. It marks a new starting point for the class struggle in this country. So let's keep the ruling class on the run. We have a world to win. Organise!

RMT AND STRIKES

RMT AND STRIKES

Many readers may remember last spring's vote for strike action on the London Underground when workers voted 2:1 for strike action against proposed job action. The strike was called off when the RMT (Rail, Maritime and Transport Union) accepted a formula which saved 200 jobs with further talks on conditions. Whilst the partial backdown by management was seen by the union and many workers as a victory, behind the headlines lay a deep-seated problem that has divided workers both on the underground and on the railways for many years – the rivalry between the drivers' union, ASLEF and the RMT.

During the ballot management had embarked on an intense campaign of intimidation in an attempt to terrorise workers into returning a 'No' vote. In the larger depots there was enough workplace organisation to give workers the confidence to resist management. The issue was further complicated that ASLEF officials right down to branch secretaries joined in the 'No' vote campaign with management. One tasty little leaflet urged a 'No' vote and asked why drivers should go on strike to defend platform staff's jobs.

This treacherous act was just the latest (albeit the worst) incident in an increasingly bitter membership war between the two unions. The guilty party in this has been ASLEF through its attempts to poach drivers from the RMT. All this takes place against a background of supposed unity

between the two unions. Since the early '80's both unions have been part of the rail Federation set up under a TUC agreement which was supposed to lead to a merger.

The attitude of ASLEF's leadership, which is behind the poaching campaign, has led to much bitterness among rank and file RMT activists. At a recent RMT conference of drivers, guards and shunters, angry workers from the underground made it quite clear that although they had supported the Rail Federation in the past, they had finally had enough – the gloves were coming off and they would start recruiting ASLEF members despite opposition from the RMT leadership. Conference called for an end to the Rail Federation and to a return to the pre-1981 position where the two unions were in direct competition for members among drivers. To those outside of the railways in an age when union mergers are all the rage this position may appear strange. Indeed the NUR has only recently completed the merger with the NUS to form the RMT. Unlike many of the union mergers which are often no more than lumping together workers in different industries with few or no direct links, a merger of RMT and ASLEF would be genuinely beneficial to rank and file railway workers. Witness the 1982 railway strikes when the NUR came out one week while ASLEF worked, and vice versa a few weeks later.

Logic and common sense unfortunately do not always prevail in these matters. There is a long and bitter history of rivalry between the two unions. The craft union mentality of

many ASLEF leaders (only drivers can be members) has been a constant barrier to a merger. Ten years of apparently working for a merger has ended in a recruitment war. It must be questioned whether they will ever merge. The current ASLEF leader, Fullock, has privately stated that he would rather join the TGWU than the RMT.

Where does all this leave rank and file railway workers? There is real danger in RMT members showing two fingers to ASLEF and trying to recruit all drivers into the RMT. It leads them into arguing they have a better union than ASLEF, ignoring the pathetic record by the RMT over job losses, restructuring and its often treacherous behaviour during rank and file strikes. Witness the Manchester Piccadilly guards' dispute (see DA no. 69). The record of RMT over the past few years has been better than the abysmal performance of ASLEF, but this has not always been the case. For example the disgraceful behaviour of the NUR leadership during the 1982 ASLEF strike.

It would be simplistic to call for the rank and file activists of both unions to work together. To do so ignores the bitterness that exists at local level. Officials in both unions often feel unable to speak to each other. More importantly the vast majority of local stewards are wedded to the ideas of reformist trade unionism, not seeing the need there is for workplace activity amongst their own union members, let alone breaking down barriers between the two unions to build for joint workplace action.

There is a crying need for links to be

built with the few activists willing to take militant action, irrespective of what union they are in. Activists need to consciously raise in the workplace that only by confronting management and not by seeking to compromise with them that better pay and conditions can be won. In the long term activists need to argue for the building of an alternative to reformist trade unions which can confront the capitalist system and help build a society in which workers would be able to live a meaningful life. We cannot carry on as in the past with a divided workforce or settle for the idea that one reformist trade union instead of the current two will solve our problems.

PATRIOTS REWARD

Six workers at a Sheffield engineering company were allowed to break a strike during the gulf war. Their fellow workers and their Union let them go into to do defence-related work 'in the national interest'. Now three of the six have been made redundant along with a number of others. Outraged, they protested that they should be kept on as they had shown their 'patriotism'. The company reply was 'You were not patriots or you wouldn't have gone on strike!'

Such is the reward for workers with illusions that 'National Interest' is anything other than the interests of the bosses. Ironically, the firm concerned was one of those implicated in the Iraqi Supergun affair!!

NALGO STRIKE?

Newham NALGO voted at a branch meeting on June 5th for a one day strike if disciplinary action against 6 playwrights continues.

The playwrights at "Playbarn and Arc in the Park" refused to work on a bank holiday. Although their contracts contain no reference to bank holiday working, management claim the reference to "flexible working" covers this. Now we know what council bosses mean when they boast of "flexible working arrangements" in council job adverts.

Management refused NALGO's compromise of seeking (paid) volunteers from the workforce to do the work. Instead they chose to intimidate the workers. The women stood 100% firm. They have now had a days pay docked. Bill Sanderson, the Play Services manager, who had argued for the necessity of a bank holiday service, set an example by taking the whole half term off. Maybe he agrees with us that we don't need bosses! Seriously though, this represents management's double standards. They expect these low paid women workers to work holidays which they themselves take for granted.

FAT CATS AT LLOYDS

One piece of good news has been the insurance losses at Lloyds. Some of these fat cats stand to lose hundreds of thousands of pounds. Too bad! Let's hope this recession bites them deep.

LEWISHAM STRIKE WAVE

Lewisham Council (Labour's answer to Wandsworth) faces growing unrest among its workforce. Following the infamous 'compulsory redeployment programme' – which will mean the sack for staff who refuse to move to a lower paid job – Lewisham now plans to cut at least £5 million from the education budget. Already it is set lower than the government's recommendation. This would increase class sizes, close playcentres and put many support staff, such as lunchtime helpers, out of a job.

A one day strike in Lewisham on July 4th organised jointly by the NASUWT (National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers,) NALGO, NUPE Education, the GMB and NATFHE (National Association of Teachers of Further and Higher Education) attracted wide support. The NUT, the largest teachers' union, didn't ballot in time, yet still most of their members, and hundreds of workers not directly involved, refused to cross picket lines. Postal deliveries were turned back. The NUT are organising for sustained action, starting with a three-day strike on July 16th-18th. Teachers, however, were disappointed at their union's failure to join the NASUWT on July 4th, and most feel that taking joint action will be more successful in the long run. NALGO members voted for a further one-day strike to build on their success, and this will tie in with NUT action.

Lewisham's attempts to turn public feeling against the strikers failed miserably. Parents are angry at the damage being done to education.

Hundreds of thousands are being squandered on PR – a glossy brochure flogging Lewisham Council's services, eg, offering £10 for every unanswered complaint about the refuse collection service! There is a rumoured £20,000 'productivity bonus' for the Director of Education – presumably paid for out of the cuts she makes! The Children and Parents Campaign for Playcentres hit local headlines (and scared Lewisham Council) by direct action when parents and children occupied part of the Town Hall. The Lewisham Education Campaign, which has parents' reps in all but six schools, is organising a 'Parents and Pupils Strike'. On July 19th parents will collect their children, and older pupils will walk out of school, to converge at the Town Hall for a mass picnic!

Though there are parents who are still reluctant to support teachers on strike, the education issue has at least raised public support for action against all council cuts. Public support alone never won a strike – but it certainly helps!



SCABS IN COLD WATER

Hat's off to Liverpool strikers. They recently occupied the Housing Department's boiler room and made sure that scab housing workers had no heating, hot water or toilets. Let's hope we see more direct action like this!

MINERS GO SOFT ON KENNETH!

Miners in South Yorkshire have branded Education Secretary, Kenneth Clarke "ignorant, arrogant, and rude". This follows an interview he did for a teachers' magazine, where he said that he would only be fit for the pits if he were educated today, because of falling educational standards.

His utter contempt for working people is shown quite clearly in this statement. Perhaps he should try working for a couple of weeks down a pit. I'm sure the lads would put him straight.

The Miners Song By Jim Connell

But we see a light through the breaking night and a smiling dawn we greet.

We'll toil no more in the planet's core for a crust and a winding sheet.

We'll drive despair from the breathing air and hands and hearts combine,

And we'll find our health in the common wealth

When the miners own the mine.

WALTHAMSTOW

Four years after the rest of the country's bus services were decimated ('deregulated', as the media likes to call it), privatisation is now on the

HEALTH & SAFETY

SAFER SEX - SHOWING THE WAY

The recent international congress on AIDS and HIV in Florence has highlighted several aspects in the struggle against the spread of HIV (the virus which can cause AIDS) and the development of drugs to treat PWA's (People With AIDS) and AIDS-related syndromes.

Most worrying perhaps is the fact that young heterosexuals have still not fully understood the dangers of the HIV virus. Gay men, one of the highest risk groups, have in the main modified sexual behaviour in the light of HIV, even though there is a trend towards adopting less safe practices amongst younger gay males.

People still need to learn a lot about sexual expression and how to show affection in a society which is increasingly mechanised and in which there is pressure for a 'quick fuck'. We need to show more respect and affection for our partners, whether she or he is more or less permanent or a one-night cop off.

As such we need to eroticise safer sex. Here are a few ideas:

instead of fucking, anal or vaginal, move away from penetrative sex; try other forms of sexual expression such as tickling erogenous zones all over the body – nipples, ears, neck, anus, etc.

use more oral techniques – licking of ears, nipples, neck. It seems that licking or sucking the penis or anus can be dangerous, at least in the transmission of other diseases. If in doubt, use a flavoured condom, or a normal one with jam on;

lesbian sex is the lowest risk form of sex;

mutual masturbation (one doing it to the other) or individuals in front of each other (or more than one) with, perhaps, the use of mirrors, or in the shower, are good fun and provide highly erotic entertainment.

Diversify, erogenise and express; we must treat our partners(s) and ourselves with care.

agenda for London's buses. The absurdity of it all is brought home by a comment from Grey-Green Coaches plc, a major private operator in London, that "deregulation would wreak havoc, put millions of cars on the road, all in the name of 'redundant ideology'".

But London Transport are still slaves to that redundant ideology, and dutifully pressed ahead with putting one of London bus districts out to tender – the 'Walthamstow Division' in North East London. The management of London Buses Forest District put in a tender at below what they get now, and won. They then turned round to the workers and told them to take a 20% pay cut or pick up the cards. Of 75% of the crews polled in a subsequent ballot, only 6 were against industrial action. However, the Transport & General is failing to widen the struggle, even though there is a golden opportunity with pay talks for the rest of London bus workers going on at the same time.

London Forest must not stand alone. Reject the 5% offer! Fight the attacks in London Forest! If London Regional Transport get away with it in one district, who's next?

NO CUTS— RESIGN!

In order to prevent Poll Tax capping by the Scottish Secretary of state Ian Lang, Labour controlled Lothian Regional Council, has decided to inflict self imposed cuts to the tune of £20 million! Lang, not wanting to be left out, and seeing this for what it was, a sign of capitulation from a Labour controlled authority, decided to cap the council by a further £18.8 million. In response the Council has decided to take on the fight with its workforce by drastically reducing services and creating compulsory redundancies rather than take on the Tories.

It was on the 5th of March this year that the people of Lothian learnt through the press that cuts were to be made, affecting primarily the voluntary sector. The Citizens' Rights Office (CRO) and the Edinburgh Unemployed Workers' Centre (EUWC) were to have no further funding after June. Other voluntary organisations had to accept cuts in their workforce.

Having 'listened' to the various deputations present at the March 14th meeting of the Social Work Department, the Labour group decided to implement £350,000 of cuts from the voluntary sector, confirming the withdrawing of funding of the CRO and the EUWC, which could mean the loss of 9 jobs for the former and 1 for the latter. Other cuts included in this round involve school closures and the freezing of posts.

Nalگو Broad Left organised a meeting to which rank and file members of the unions and organisations involved were invited. As a result it was decided that it would be useful to carry on having such meetings in order to exchange information with the view of starting an anti-cuts campaign. Nalگو members managed to push its officials to call for a one day strike and organise a demonstration in support of their members losing their jobs. It has to be said that the officials were less than enthusiastic about this. From the start Nalگو wanted to campaign on the basis of redeployment rather than saving existing posts and services. The fact that it was the Labour Party who were effecting these cuts obviously cooled down the 'militancy' of the officials.

A couple of days before the Nalگو strike, Lang announced his decision to cap Lothian Region by £25 million. No doubt this encouraged more people to join the strike and demonstration on the May 8th, which saw a crowd of more than 2,000 oppose the Labour cuts.

A meeting followed the demonstration which effectively launched the Campaign against Redundancies and Cuts (CRAC) who immediately decided to produce an anti-cuts broadsheet and hold a press conference on the June 1st which would unite all unions, voluntary groups and community members using the facilities affected by the cuts.

Meanwhile the Labour group lobbied the Secretary of State for Scotland on May 17th and managed to negotiate the capping down to £18.8 million. Claiming some kind of victory (!) the Labour Group entered into the second round of cuts which deepens the ones inflicted on the voluntary sector and education, as well as threatening concessionary bus passes for the elderly and redundancies for bus drivers.

Against this background CRAC has been set up to fight all cuts. In order to do this effectively, this campaign has a gigantic task in front of it. It has to break down the barriers between unions, the voluntary groups and the community at large. In the past unions have tended to fight on sectional issues, and similarly voluntary groups have tended to fight their own corner rather than see themselves as part of a wider struggle.

That union officials and politicians of all colours will endeavour to channel it into an ineffective campaign of lobbying and petitions is obvious. CRAC has been formed by rank and file activists of various organisations and intends to firmly resist any attempt to muzzle or control it. It cannot and will not accept the logic that the Labour Party is intent on pursuing, namely that cuts are inevitable and that they are better carried out by a party with a 'social conscience'.

Cuts are being implemented by the same agent of the Establishment in Strathclyde, Liverpool, Lambeth, Bradford and elsewhere round the country. Anti-cuts campaigns that already exist should attempt to link up rather than fight in isolation.

It is undeniable that these cuts are the product of a government intent on destroying any kind of social services. That it is pursuing this by means of attacking local government by and large controlled by the Labour Party is irrelevant. We cannot allow the party of government-in-waiting to either make capital out of this for their own benefit or to implement those cuts in order to show that they can make hard choices and govern.

Labour councillors in Lothian have recognised the enemy. It is the same one the government have, as one of them stated publicly in the Regional Chambers - **it is the crowd outside shouting NO CUTS and RESIGN.**

PINDOWN: THE DEGRADING SYSTEM OF CARE

A series of scandals and outcries about children's homes have hit the headlines in recent months. The most publicised has been the 'pindown' regime in Staffordshire. There has also been the revelation that two Home Office establishments, St Lawrence's and St Charles Youth Treatment Centres, have been sedating young people against their will. Meanwhile, Gwent Social Services have publicly recognised the brutality of their regime at TY Maur children's home. It all points to a crisis in the care system. But this crisis is not new. It is at the very heart of the state system of childcare. Certainly the working conditions for residential social workers have deteriorated. With the cuts and closures justified by the current emphasis on 'family care', the few homes that remain are underfunded and under-

staffed. At the same time, these homes house the young people who have been labelled as the most 'dangerous' and 'problematic'. Large numbers of agency workers are used to plug gaps. In this situation there is little opportunity for workers to build up relationships with the young people and a positive discouragement to have a consistent overview or influence on the running of the home. The emphasis is on conformity and control rather than on meeting either the young people's or the workers' needs. Many young people who end up in residential establishments have been damaged by the brutality of the system. However many of these young people's so-called problem is in reality their strength - their headstrong, no compromise attitude. Of course the ruling class does not want young people with a strong fighting spirit.

So, as with prison reform, politicians, civil servants, council bosses and judges queue up to condemn these occasional scandals, but actually introduce reforms which reinforce and reproduce this institutional and degrading system of care. The ruling class want 'pindown'; they just don't want us to know about it.

As anarcho-syndicalists we recognise that council residential homes do not meet the needs of young people any more than the nuclear family does. However asking for reforms can never be enough (although some might be welcome). There can be no real freedom or choice for young people or workers until we have a integrated approach to childcare as part of a truly libertarian society. To do this we must start to organise workers and young people now.

HEALTH AND THE HSE

Spending cuts are putting health and safety at risk in more than a million workplaces, a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) report warned recently. The number of fatal accidents and serious injuries increased last year in the 1.2 million shops, offices, hotels and warehouses where local authorities are responsible for the enforcement of health and safety legislation. There was a 14% increase in injuries such as amputations, serious fractures and burns, while 61 people died, half of them members of the public.

More workers are being killed than ever before in small firms, many of which are not even bothering to register with the HSE. Workers in small manufacturing firms of under 50 employees, where it is harder to organize, are 20% more likely to have an accident than those in firms with 100 to 1000 employees - and 40% more at risk than those in firms with more than 1000 employees. At the same time small firms make up about 90% of Britain's Gross Domestic Product and some 90% of employees. The HSE has launched 'flying squads' of inspectors to monitor small firms, concentrating on Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Leeds, Sheffield and Manches-

ter. The investigation of Manchester firms has shown that of 221 premises visited 96 were not registered, while 21 improvement notices and 8 prohibition notices - 3 of them on building firms has shown that of 221 premises visited 96 were not registered, while 21 improvement notices and 8 prohibition notices - 3 of them on building sites - were issued.

The Local Authority Report on Health and Safety states that 21,796 accidents were reported in 1989/90 compared with 14,382 in 1986/7. Meanwhile there was a 19% cut in health and safety staff from 1986 to 1989 leading to a situation where staff levels in the HSE stand far below what was necessary when the original Health and Safety at Work Act was passed. This means that fewer than 5% of workplace accidents are now investigated. And the number of factory inspectors is set to be cut from the present laughable level to a new all-time low.

Initially the anger of workers at deaths and injuries at work was instrumental in articulating demands for industrial safety legislation and the establishment of the factory inspectorate. While we would not deny the positive aspects of the work of the inspectorate, we think that if health and

safety in the workplace is to be improved then it is now down to the workers themselves. We are now back to the position faced by the working class at the beginning of the century. We have to respond in the same way as they did then - with direct action.

Big Bill Haywood of the IWW, speaking of direct action said: "They can compel the introduction of safety appliances, of ventilation systems, and save in that way thousands of lives every year...If they have the power to bring that about by direct action, they have the power to reduce hours; they have the power to increase or at least to better the labouring conditions round the mines and have better working". (quoted in 'Non-violence in America').

For your health and safety direct action is a **must**.

Safety Pays', a report for small firms from the Director of Field Operations and Chief Inspector of Factories is available free from the HSE at Public Enquiries Points, Baynards House, 1 Chepstow Place, Westbourne Grove, London, W2 4TF, and Broad Lane, Sheffield.

'Local Authorities Report on Health and Safety in Services Industries'; 1989/90; HMSO; £3.50

REGRADING AND NALGO

Local authority residential social workers throughout the country are mobilising in support of their year old regrading claim. The majority of residential social workers are NALGO members. When the original claim was put forward for a national regrading, NALGO decided that local claims should be pursued first arguing that this would automatically lead to a national agreement. Since in 1989 NALGO staged its first national all-out strike in defence of national negotiating rights, this stance surely demonstrates the union's lack of support for low paid and low graded workers and the reality behind its campaign against low pay.

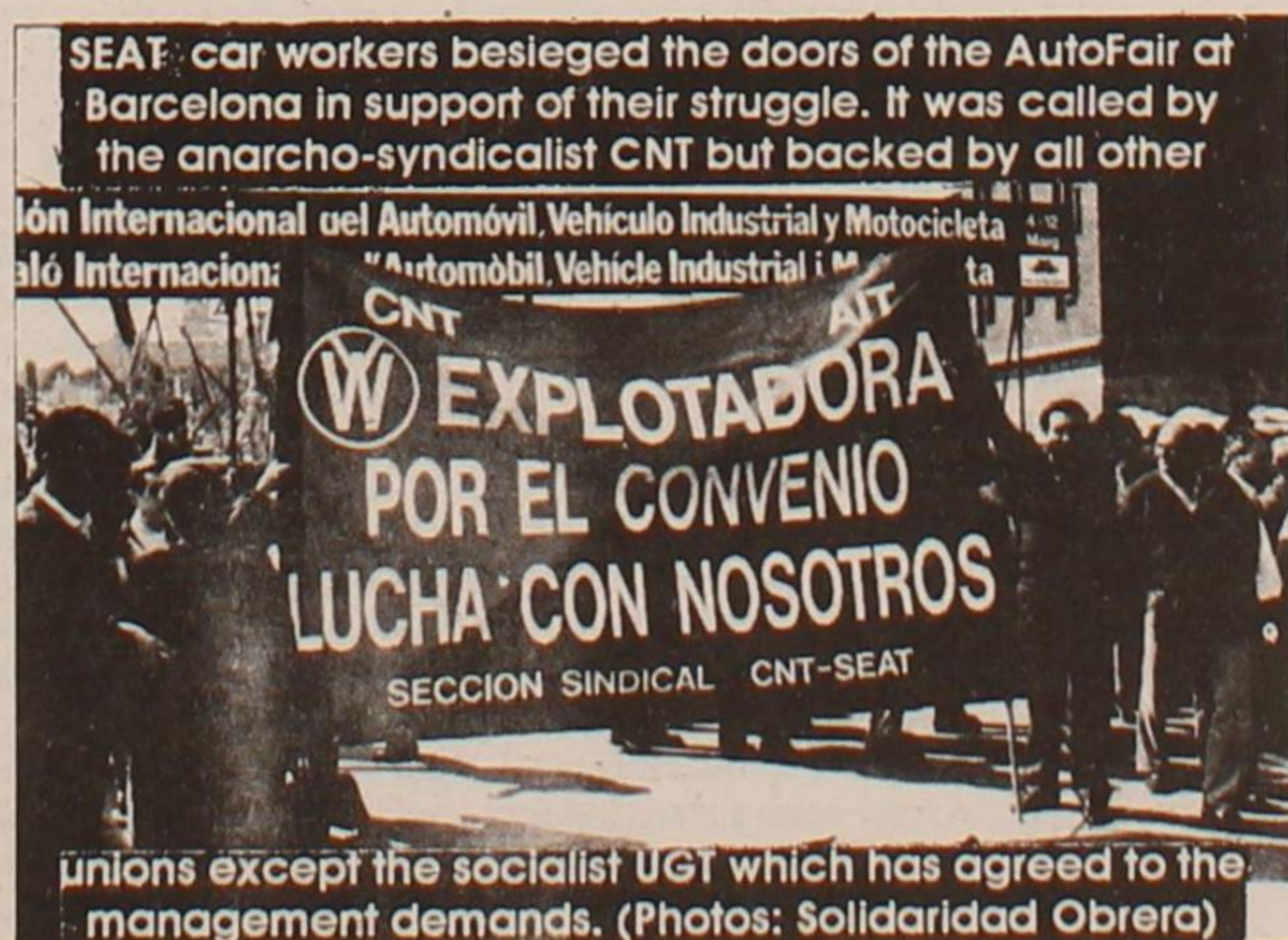
In Manchester a local claim was submitted over a year ago. For twelve months the workers heard nothing

from the union or from management. On 15th May 1991 the first day of action in support of the claim took place. At a subsequent general meeting workers decided to escalate the action to include a series of one day strikes together with overtime and admission bans. Manchester workers are still awaiting the ballot which the union insist upon. It appears to be blocked somewhere in the union's bureaucracy.

Residential social workers are paid much less than other social workers. Yet the work is difficult and stressful. It is both physically and mentally demanding. Moreover workers are continually forced to patch up a system decimated by the cuts imposed by council bosses. Workplace organisation is made difficult by the isolation of workers in small units. Man-

agement continually use the age old tactic of divide and rule. Rather than blaming management for their difficult jobs and the faults in the system, workers are encouraged to blame other workers in other establishments. The view of service users themselves as the "problem" is also fostered, thus enabling the growth of horrific regimes like pindown.

To counter this workers will have to strengthen links between establishments and services and between themselves and the young people and adults in their care to present a united front against management. NALGO, which also represents council bosses, are incapable of this task. Unless we start to organise now the future will be bleaker for residential social workers and for all those who depend on them.



THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM IN BRITAIN TODAY

The activities of the British National Party (BNP), the violent neo-Nazi group led by ex-National Front chairman John Tyndall, have in recent months put fascism back into the headlines. Black people and those among anarchists and the left in touch with working class reality know they never went away, but there is a myth in some circles that their electoral eclipse by Thatcher's racism in 1979 has marginalised them and that the rising tide of racist violence is simply 'desperation' on their part. Apart from insulting the victims of race attacks, this complacency fails to analyse the changes in both fascist strategy and the strength of the Labour movement since 1979. It is necessary to examine these factors and how they relate to each other before any kind of effective strategy for combatting fascism can be developed.

The fascists have latched on to racial violence as the crucial issue, focussing on incidents of Black youths fighting back against racist gangs portraying this as a 'race war' being waged against whites by lawless 'aliens'. The idea is to spread fear and insecurity and then pose as the strong men who can 'defend' 'Rights for Whites'. In nationalist logic black people are 'alien' and to grant them equal rights with the white population is to restrict the rights of the latter. The fascists use emotive images like counter-posing Overseas Aid figures to pensioners freezing in the British winter. The reality of Aid is, of course, that it lines the pockets of repressive despots who perform a service to British multinational companies by preventing their labour force from organising, or it goes straight into interest payment on loans from British banks. It is being taken away from the white working class to give not to foreigners but to British bosses. Blaming black people for poverty is indeed 'the socialism of fools'.

That the fascists can use these 'issues' to gain support among working class people is an indictment of the Left and demonstrates the desperate need for working class politics instead of left-wing posturing. The only way to defeat the fascists is on their chosen ground. The 'revolutionaries' flit from one short-term recruitment issue to the next, hardly noticing the working class at all. The former left-wing of the Labour Party has turned into its New Right, and has trapped the few demoralised socialists left in the Party in a web of their own illusions. Both the fascists and the estimated 70,000 racial attacks each year have grown in the political vacuum caused by the crisis of the Labour movement - its inability to cope with its long exclusion from power.

Thatcher's victory in 1979 did not so much eclipse the fascists as displace them. Having stolen their 'respectable' anti-immigration stance and brought racist Tories firmly back in the fold, the Conservative victory reduced the fascists to the hard core for whom the irrelevance of an electoral strategy did not matter, as well as allowing rabid racists to become more respectable as Tory MPs. The fascists in both the NF and the BNP had to rethink their strategy during the early 80s, the former adopting 'Strasserism' - 'left' nazism - the latter building covert links with sympathetic Tories while maintaining a more traditional nazi posture, although wrapped in the Union Flag not the

neo-Nazi Sun Wheel. The effects of Thatcher's policies in the Labour movement served to open up a political space hitherto denied the fascists as the Left retreated, a space in which their post-'79 strategies have been implemented and are beginning to bear fruit.

During the period of the fascist rethink the Tories took on and beat the major industrial organisations of the working class. The 1984-5 miners' strike was the watershed dispute, and was seen as such by both workers and the State and the time. As well as the catastrophic effects on the miners and their industry, and the recurring argument about the inefficacy of strike action it has lent the Right in the trade union movement, this defeat has had knock-on effect across the working class. For almost two centuries progressive and radical politics in Britain have been rooted in the struggles of organised labour. The crisis of the Labour movement caused by the inability of such a reformist body to cope with the exclusion from power it suffered in 1979 it has led to a general collapse of socialist assumptions and culture, particularly among young working class youth who have had no contact with workplace organisation or its philosophy.

The Miners' defeat in 1985 was swiftly followed by the collapse of the apple of the Left's eye - GLC-type 'municipal socialism'. Local union bureaucrats left resistance for rate-capping up to the 'fighting leaderships' of the Councils, they caved in and blamed insufficient support from the workforce. The 'Socialist Republics' had often been regrafted on to traditional 'one party' Labour boroughs with a new generation of political appointees in the Policy Units, set up to tell the Labour leaders and the world how wonderfully socialist they were, joining the old bureaucratic and masonic fat cats.

Among the new fat cats was a small and insecure black middle class who are themselves beginning to lose out now. The Race Relations Units (RRUs) have been a typical triumph of image over substance, but the publicity has been used by racists to state that the 'loony left' cared only about black people and not about the white working class. The reality is that they never cared about any working class people, black or white, but the racists and fascists deal in emotive images not political realities.

In the East End of London Tower Hamlets council fell to the Liberals. The Liberals/Liberal Democrats have played the racist card in housing and other areas to great effect, taking advantage of the discredited state of socialist ideas after decades of Labour rule. The fascists have always been in the area, and still sell their papers on the corner of Brick Lane in Bethnal Green. In 1990 the BNP made the area a national priority and has

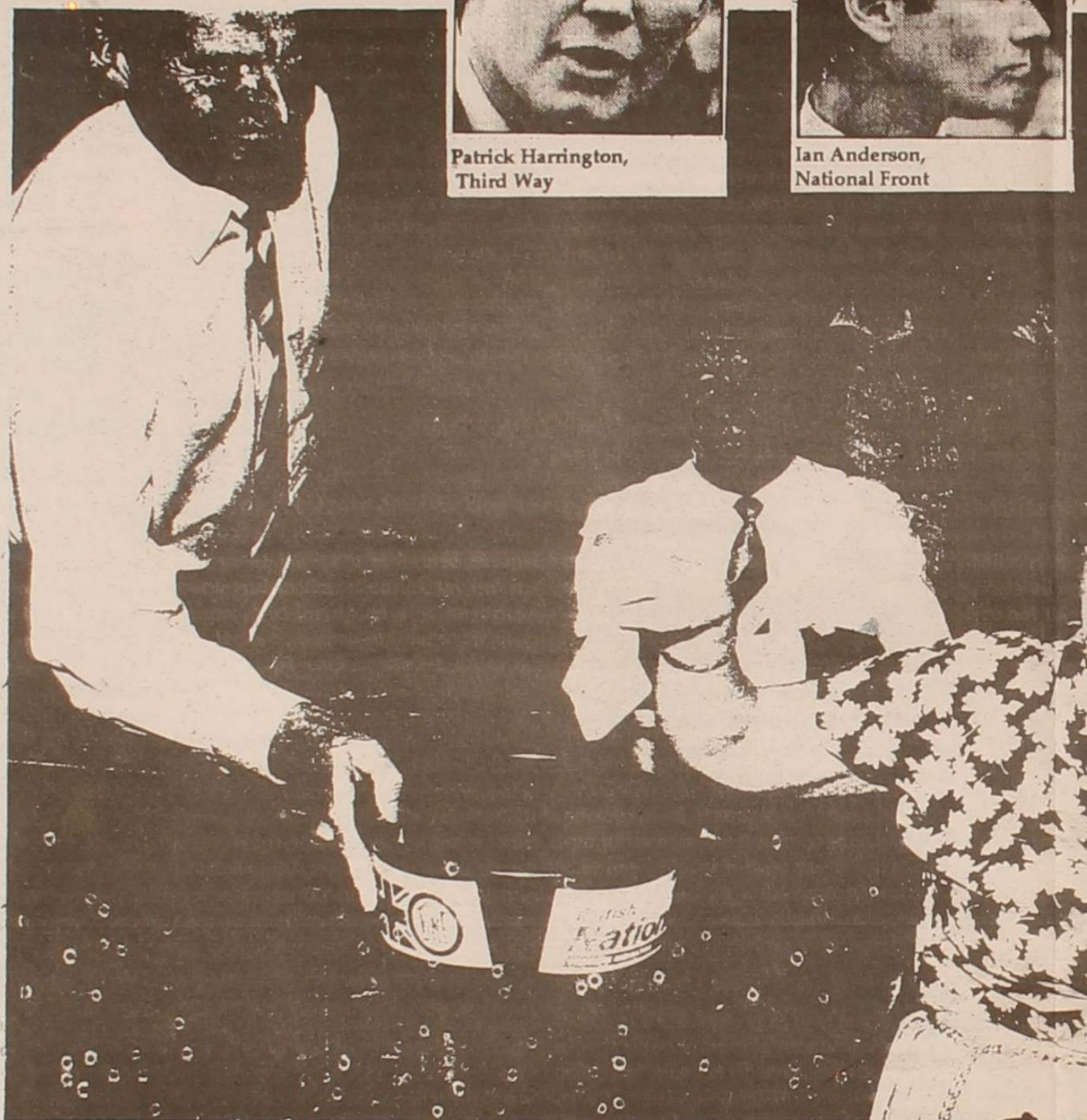
ENEMIES OF OUR



Patrick Harrington,
Third Way



Ian Anderson,
National Front



Not a bucketful of blood this time.. BNP passes the bucket among fascist regulars

been trying to capitalise on the highest level of race attacks in the country, offering thugs a political justification and a status as 'defenders' of the 'white race', as well as encouragement and help in carrying out more attacks. Their aim is to turn youth gangs into the Party's stormtroopers and get them involved in attacks on the 'commies' as well as the 'blacks'. Fascism is at once more and less than racism, but it is certainly true that fascism and racial violence cannot be separated out and fought separately.

This is the view of Anti-Fascist Action, which has been re-launched in London and other parts of the country after its near collapse by 1989 as a result of a constant series of internal disputes and attempted witch-hunts by middle class liberal 'anti-racists' against the working class component of the organisation.

Although AFA was founded in 1985 by working class groups like Red Action and East London DAM, it also contained middle class liberals and the magazine *Searchlight*, whose own agenda dictated that they hated the former almost as much as the fascists. AFA has been re-launched as an organisation dedicated to fighting fascism both ideologically and physically on the streets. It now has a clear perspective that it is working class politics (which oppose the State and capitalism) as the real causes of the problems which the fascists seek to exploit, and which provide the ideological component.

To oppose the fascists ideologically it is necessary to go on to the streets

and into the estates where they are trying to organise. This involves confrontation with the fascists and local gangs, and means that the ability to carry out propaganda work safely is a prerequisite for any activity. Safety on the streets is mostly a matter of organisation, making sure the easy targets the fascists love are not presented to them. Part of that organisation is the ability to meet force with force and to win fights with fascist thugs, whether it is a case of beating off an attack or of clearing them out of a working class area - where they don't belong. All violence against fascism is defensive. There can be no artificial distinctions made because if you don't stop the fascists organising on your streets, you are going to end up a victim of their violence sooner or later.

AFA is also committed to making the 'no platform for fascists' (to which the Left pays lip-service) a reality. This means taking their paper-selling pitches, occupying their re-direction points for meetings and assembly points for marches, and disrupting or preventing any street activity they have planned.

It also means occupying their election meetings (about the only way they can hire rooms) to prevent them spreading their hatred. All this involves risk of fascist attack and injury or arrest. This is not for everyone, although anyone who claims to be anti-fascist will either support it or be exposed as a fraud. However, you do not have to be a streetfighter to take part in these activities. The keys to defence are organisation and information - knowing where the

fascists are and not presenting them with any targets they can handle.

Legal Support (and prisoners' welfare in extreme circumstances) and the three elements of Security, Organisation and Intelligence, are combined in AFA's Stewards Group. This has so far proved effective only in the first element and measures are being taken to remedy the situation but the Stewards Group is for all committed anti-fascists. As many people as possible are needed to develop the organised skills required to be effective and safe in opposing the fascists on the streets, halting the spread of their propaganda and enabling the spread of working class ideas among their target group. It is not a 'firm' or an inner-circle elite but something designed to allow the broadest possible anti-fascist mobilisation on the streets.

AFA is essentially an umbrella group for all individuals committed to fighting fascism and has a number of small political groups ranging from DAM (the largest affiliate) to Trotskyite groups like Workers Power affiliated to it. The emphasis is on practical activity and the range of views within the organisation means it would be impossible for AFA, as a single issue group, to define strategy for working class organisation without provoking a split. This does not mean that DAM sees itself as the organisation to join if you wish to organise politically but that AFA is no substitute for the revolutionary labour movement - anarcho-syndicalism - which we see as the means by which the working class can revive the val-

OUR CLASS

VARIATIONS

ON FASCISM



Richard Edmonds,
British National Party



Nick Griffin, International
Third Position/Liberation



ues of workplace organisation, militancy and solidarity and embark on its liberation from the chains of capitalism and the State.

On a more immediate level, rooting out racist violence will have to be done on a very local basis, actually on estates where the attacks take place. The race attackers, whether fascist or not, require the tolerance and silence of other white residents and the isolation of their victims in order to operate. The isolation and the tolerance of persecution need to be broken, which means identifying the gang leaders, organising local opposition to them and letting them know that they have been identified and will be held responsible if the attacks don't stop.

While AFA could play a supporting role in such a process, especially if the fascists come in to support local gangs, it can only really be done by working class people who live there. If black residents are made the scapegoats for repairs not done or for any other working class grievances, then there is a need for a local working class community to unite black and white residents to fight for improvements. This is essential if lasting (class) solidarity against the racists is going to be built and the problem solved in the long term. Solidarity groups of local people committed to using direct action and organising on the basis of class solidarity to fight round local issues are a possible vehicle for such activities.

There is a lot more to racism than just race attacks but there is not space to

examine State and institutionalised racism here. Fascism is a specific phenomenon which may need racial violence to flourish in Britain today, but which is basically anti-working class in character. Historically, fascism has gained partial or total power through providing strike-breakers and street gangs to attack the working class, and though offering a strong State to the capitalists to overcome challenge from workers' organisations. The crisis of the labour movement today means that fascist challenge for power is not on the agenda, but if we let them get a foothold in the working class and establish themselves, they will be there to fight us by means the State is unable to use openly when we have built a revolutionary movement. We in the International Workers' Association (IWA/AIT) have recognised this since we first encountered fascism in Italy in 1918 and we will fight it to its death.

To find out more about AFA, an introduction to London AFA is available from AFA BM Bx 1734, London W.C.1. 3XX - price £1 + p&p

AFA Prisoners

David Phelan, NT 1337, HMP Bisley, Woking, Surrey GU24 9EX

Tony David, NT 1338, HMP Bisley, HMP Blundeston, Lowestoft, Suffolk

Mark, c/o AFA BM 1734 London WC1N 3XX

For some years now the very name of fascism has stunk. Regrettably this has only been because of the actions of the Third Reich rather than an appreciation of what fascism is. It is the last ditch of the ruling class when the working class becomes "too uppity". There are many variations on it and they are not all the same, though any fascist group will jump on whichever is in the ascendant..

Many people are "against fascism" because Nazi Germany was an enemy but that does not make them anti-fascist. Fascism, once favoured by the ruling class even when not practised, became unfashionable unless served up under another name.

What is fascism and where did it come from?

The Final Solution

Fascism began as a response to anarcho-syndicalism. Because the Italian workers had occupied the factories. Younger members of the land-owning and capitalist classes began forming goon squads to strike back at the workers. They burned halls, gunned down workers, kidnapped strikers or agitators in the style of the Mafia, and also (which received the most publicity) physically attacked liberal lawyers who defended the workers' cause, dousing them with castor oil and tying them to lamp posts. They were aided and abetted by the police, without whose complicity fascism nowhere could have succeeded or even got a hearing.

D'Annunzio, a poet and dreamer, who wanted Italy freed from "foreign invaders" (i.e. grab Trieste) invented the word fascism for a nationalist philosophy (the fasces were the ancient Roman symbol of law and order). Mussolini, a Socialist editor who had been bought by the Italian government to push intervention in WWI, was called in to give it a populist base. He reorganised the goon squads into a political party, borrowing freely from anarchist slogans (not ideas) such as talking of 'national syndicalism' and using black shirts as a reply to black flags. The whole purpose was to prevent the occupation of the factories, smash up workers' organisations and preserve private capitalism and the monarchy. He succeeded by getting the support of the ruling class and was to the end of his life their defender.

Hitlerism - The Nazi Version

Hitler's party was a response to Marxism. He took over the leadership of a party most people thought of as Bavarian Nationalist or monarchist which had no clear ideas but that of fighting communism and defeatism (with the war). He aped Mussolini but the party did not have to fight the occupation of the factories since the workers' councils had already been defeated. He was paid by Big Business to prevent it happening again. He did not steal anarchist slogans but Marxist ones (calling his party 'national socialist') and using a red background for his banner, for the simple reason that Marxism was as popular with German workers as anarcho-syndicalism was with Italian workers. For populist effect he revised the anti-Semitic programme which had been current in German right wing circles since the late 19th century and designed to discredit the rising tide of socialism with "guilt by association".

The idea behind using racism was that it was hoped that if one minority was stigmatised, became unpopular, and was unorganised and unlikely to fight back, it would be a stepping stone to attacking another minority, and so on, until the majority were terrified. In point of fact this did not work. Hitlerism was still unpopular when it was given power.

Only police protection - i.e. support by the ruling class - guaranteed its existence. It came into power basically to crush trade unionism, than any opposition to its rule.

British Variety

Groups like the Imperial Fascisti in Britain were formed specifically as strike-breaking organisations. It was only when Mosley came along taking his ideas from Hitler that they pretended to be anything else (though their actions were similar). Since Mosley's death, fascists have been changing the name and changing back again trying to dissociate themselves from their specifically anti-worker philosophy by populist slogans, especially racism. They are still only able to do so because of police protection but the ruling class only need them in a last resort. The reason Big Business backed fascism was because of the danger of revolution, of confiscation of wealth, of the threat from anarcho-syndicalism in Italy or Marxism in Germany, which are no longer there except as represented by groups less in numbers than the original Nazis.

The British ruling class have not only a Government but an Opposition which can deliver all that they have ever expected of fascism. Why should they spend their money, hazard their political chances and maybe prejudice their futures for a few nutcase adventurers who may not be as trustworthy to them as Mussolini was, and turn out to be Hitlers?

So far as the British variety of fascism today is concerned it is totally irrelevant with no chance of success. End of story? Not quite. This does not make them harmless, otherwise the police would not be detailed to preserve them carefully like an endangered species. They are useful to the ruling class in deflecting workers from revolutionary ideas, in dividing the workers class by racist ideas, and above all by being goon squads which are now used in racist attacks but could if necessary be used (and disowned) for other purposes.

The Race Card

Racism. It has always got to be remembered that as regards immigration the capitalist wears two hats. As a capitalist wanting to cut wages, he can move his factories to where the cheap labour is, or bring the cheap labour to where the factories are. As a right-wing politician, if he has done the latter he can denounce immigration as cheap labour, acquisition of housing and so on, and divide the workers. A right-wing politician in a liberal consensus needs two parties, kept separate - respectable conservative (or a substitute) and fascist. That the local fascists have never been up to the job is unfortunate for them, but to make sure they never can be, the only answer to them is relentless opposition.

Fascism Abroad

French fascism has to compete with other right-wing elements, such as Royalism, often indistinguishable. The French fascists during the war abandoned the populist idea of a supreme nation-state - which the Catholic right wing tried to enforce under Vichy - and looked to Germany as the supreme power (as many other fascist elements did, in the Netherlands for instance). This is why the right-wing was in decline for years and was taken over by De Gaulle. Now by using racism - never far from the French ruling class agenda - there is a revival of fascist fortunes. Ultimately, however, fascism is not about racism or nationalism, both of which it uses as stepping stones to power. It is about keeping the workers down, and

this came out very clearly when fascism was in power in France.

During the war German fascism used forced labour, or in other words slavery, not just for its productive and economic value, but as a means of reducing the power of the working class by starvation, overwork and death. Had the German soldiers returned to victory, work would have counted for nothing, as in Imperial Japan, and those who ran the factories supreme.

The Japanese system, which we can call Mikadoism, though it never got a special name, has only been modified in Japanese industrial practices, where 'paternalism' flourishes and workers are regarded as belonging to their place of employment.

Military Dictatorships

Military dictatorships have the same repressive measures as capitalism. They are not the same economically and are usually dominated by corruption. We see these over South America and can distinguish between Peron's rule (which was fascist) and Army rule later in Argentina, nowadays backed by gangs of off-duty or mercenary soldiers and police backing the army ostensibly out of power.

Any fascist grouping can be used for one thing or the other. It does not matter what programme they put forward, whether openly big business, anti-worker, racist or plain eccentric (as in the case of neo-fascists in England, who have come to the vague and weird ideas of reactionary novelists G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc, Distributism).

Spain and Franco's Falange

Spain had the misfortune to be conquered for years by a coalition of all the elements vaguely lumped together as fascist bar racism. (Though glorifying nationalism and yielding to nobody in regard to religious persecution, also possibly because of the nation's mixed racial composition, it did not need racism). It had an openly fascist party, the Falange, whose leader and would-be dictator had the bad luck to be in anti-fascist territory when the war loomed up. It had the pro-capitalist Christian Democrats. It had the Christian capitalist Opus Dei and the anti-capitalist feudal Catholic elements opposed to industrialisation, as well as two different royalist parties wanting different kings (in the end they got a third non-runner), one of which was divided in two (pro and anti-capitalist). That's why the army generalissimo ran the show himself as a military dictatorship.

American Capitalism

American capitalism has always relied on populism and vigilantes to oppress the people. Yet the federal government itself while maintaining democratic forms can achieve all the repression needed by a capitalist class. Today racist demagogues flourish in the US as a response to the rising consciousness of Black Power. Their attitudes are imitated by most fascist groupings throughout the world who appreciate the ruling class does not need them at present, and would only need them in an emergency if they built up their strength on playing on racist divisions.

Please send articles into D.A. on disk. We can accept nearly any word processor / Pagemaker DTP file on 3.5 or 5 and quarter disk. Please clearly label disk with name/s of file to use. Include sae.. thanks

VENEZUELA

We reprint below an article from *Umanita Nova*, the Italian anarchist paper, written by two Venezuelan libertarian groups, *Collectivo Ciculo A* and *Revista Correo A*. Whilst there are elements within the analysis here with which we disagree, we feel the article still presents a valuable picture of Venezuela. We welcome the resurgence of working class action and the growth in the Libertarian movement there.

In our country the 90s have begun with an accelerated worsening of the economic and social situation, with the collapse of the illusion that 'oil dollars' could be the basis for building the consumerist plenty presented us by the Europeans, Americans and Japanese. This crisis stands out, not so much for its severity – though it is severe – as for the violent transition from a 'mini-Saud' Venezuela to a clearly Third World status, unthinkable 10 years ago.

Despite the recent increase in oil revenues due to the renewed conflicts in the Middle East, the popular feeling is that things will continue to get worse for us, as is obvious from even the manipulated official statistics: 'critical' poverty for 46% of the population; 'relative' poverty for another 33%; a general rate of inflation for 1990 of 'only' 40%; the average cost of essential goods and services has quadrupled in the last 4 years, while the average wage hasn't even doubled; industrial and agricultural sectors are on the rocks; unemployment and underemployment have grown; chaos in education and health; and, crime is at its height.

The country drunk on oil reached its

peak in the first presidency of C. A. Perez (1974-79). This makes the contrast with his second reign (1989-?) all the more ironical. From pseudo-socialist nationalism, the glories of statist paternalism and much acclaimed 'fair association' with the multinationals, we have come today to self-sufficient neo-liberalism, to privatisation on the basis of blackmail and to being given over unconditionally to the international technobureaucratic powers.

At the same time, the travelling salesman Perez (he's notched up 24 foreign visits and over 100 days abroad in the first 20 months of his government) doesn't hesitate to take up the mantle of Third World leader, judge of genuine democracies in Latin America and putative father of more egalitarian North-South relations. These grotesque ambitions contrast with the suffering of almost the entire 19 million inhabitants of the country.

The Venezuela of Perez II is yet another example of the pitiless application of an International Monetary Fund 'package', that miraculous technocratic recipe book which converts promising underdeveloped countries into convinced developing countries. This is happening under everyone's eyes: economic reconversion to the benefit of the multinationals and the local parasite bourgeoisie; unconditional productivity of physical and human potential for these interests. The whole thing is accompanied by a brutal offensive against the common people, who won't passively accept that their aspirations are 'unproductive waste' (ie workers' demands for housing, health, education etc). They have to suffer the rigours of state

repression. The hundred of victims of 27th February 1989 (when riots against government imposed price increases were violently crushed) have already shown repression's macabre capacity.

What is more, since the fall of the last military dictatorship in 1958, we have not known such a climate of moral and political degradation as exists now. Accion Democratica (AD) – the social democrats in power, a convergence of various political factions – collapsing amidst internal conflicts and the discredit brought about by the actions of a government that is as corrupt as it is directionless. This is nothing new in its 50 years of existence, but is intolerable in the climate of crisis and of the 'package'.

The official opposition, the Christian Democrat COPEI party has survived and prospered under the wing of the social democratic Accion Democratica, being so identified with Accion Democratica that in the past the respective electoral programmes became indistinguishable. Now, however, the Christian Democrat COPEI is, at great risk, proposing more extreme neo-liberal recipes for getting out of the crisis. Meanwhile the minority parliamentary 'left' is buried in its classic search for legitimacy at a cost of agreements and shameful compromises with the government.

But other, more inconvenient, actors are playing in this scene: workers, the impoverished middle classes and the enormous mass of the poor. These are the protagonists of 27th February, of the 65% abstention in the last elections, of the climate of social protest (strikes, demonstrations and street actions). All this has been unknown

for 30 years and is incomprehensible to the traditional politicians. But in this reinforcement and deepening of consciousness, the growing Venezuelan Libertarian groups, hope to root ourselves.

KURDISH MASSACRES

The root causes of the massacre of Kurdish people cannot be solved by imperialist intervention in Iraq whether by military or political means. Currently allied forces under the auspices of the United Nations are herding refugees into huge camps. Here the Kurdish people can be controlled and manipulated by so-called leaders and politicians backed up by military force. At the same time the various political factions of the emerging Kurdish bourgeoisie are being courted by the international ruling class. The aim is to ensure that the working class can be purged of its revolutionary elements and thus smashed completely. There is an urgent need to go beyond the limited humanitarian objectives of the charitable agencies and to counter this ruling class attack.

Through Kurdish exiles here in Britain we aim to establish links with revolutionaries fighting for our class amidst this disaster. Obviously given the current situation together with the high profile presence of repressive forces, such revolutionaries have great difficulty organising. However they do exist and they need our support. For example, we have recently heard of an organisation called the Communist Path which has been distributing literature attacking both the Iraqi state and the Kurdish nationalists.

We appeal for funds for our Kurdish comrades both to provide aid for revolutionaries involved in the present conflict and to enable them to distribute information on what is really happening in Iraq.

Please support our comrades in their hour of greatest need. Solidarity forever.

Send donations to: Kurdish Fighting Fund, c/o DA.

USA - EL PASO STRIKERS

Seven garment workers (six women and one man) went on symbolic hunger strike in El Paso, Texas, to protest continued exploitation of garment workers in that garment centre.

The hunger strike is organised by La Mujer Obrero (The Working Women's Project), an El Paso organisation dedicated to fighting for the rights of women workers and against exploitation in general in the garment industry.

Their particular target is the small contract firms. These outfits take in work from the larger manufacturers and are known for their cheap wages, little or no benefits, and terrible working conditions. It is not uncommon for these contractors to employ children.

La Mujer Obrero is an independent organisation that attempts to fight the exploitation on many fronts (legal, direct action and so forth). They can be contacted at: **Centro Obrero Inc., PO Box 3975, El Paso, Texas 79923, USA.**

NEWS FROM THE SOVIET UNION

An international conference was held in Moscow on 16th-18th March, attended by, amongst others, the IWA Secretariat and organised by the KAS (anarcho-syndicalist confederation). It was dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Kronstadt rebellion. The following resolution was passed at this conference:

"We, participants of the International Syndicalist Conference in Moscow (March 16th-18th 1991) dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Kronstadt's rebellion, state that the corpse of Stalin's system of state socialism against which Kronstadt's sailors had fought, opens new perspectives for the independent workers' movement in the USSR.

We warmly support the aspirations of the workers of the USSR to be independent of Party and State structures. We are certain that to simply substitute state exploitation for national and international capital will not give us freedom, social justice, private or collective security.

Today the Party and State bureaucracy, by using the slogans about 'denationalisation' of our economy, usurp our means of production with foreign companies, setting up dirty and resource rapacious factories within the USSR. The interests of our old bureaucracy and of our new capitalists coincide with each other.

Only the determined struggle of the USSR workers fighting for their interests, by forming strong militant unions and fighting for the reconstruction of our society on the principles of self government can be an alternative to this".

In remembering the sailors of Kronstadt we look forward to the creation of a classless and stateless world of workers' control, built through international working class solidarity. To this end, the IWA Secretariat are financing a regular English language information bulletin from SMOT – the free inter-professional workers union in the USSR. Copies of the first bulletin are available with a donation from DAM's International Secretary.

FINNISH NEWS..

Our comrades in the SAL-AIT, the Finnish Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation affiliated to the IWA, continue to pursue revolutionary objectives through direct action working alongside other libertarians. Here are just two of their recent activities.

A group of young trade union activists have set up the "Youth of Finnish Trade Unions". The group bills itself 2as no less than an internal revolt within the SAG (the Finnish equivalent of the TUC).

In February, environmentalists used direct action and passive resistance to halt the construction of an illegal road through the Jerisjarvi Nature Reserve in Lapland. They succeeded where legal measures had failed. Despite assaults on the activists by a posse of hunters and businessmen aided and abetted by the police, the minister of Transport has suspended the work. Well done.

INDONESIA

Source: *Australia Asia Workers Links*

Last September in Jakarta, a new trade union was launched, "free from the influence of the owners of industry, employers and government".

The 'Setia Kawan' (solidarity) Free Trade Union has been formed because, in their words, "the existing state controlled union, SPSI (All Indonesian Workers Union), has failed to defend workers".

The government's immediate reaction was to declare the Free Union illegal. Sudomo, the minister for Political Affairs and security, said "the government will not accept a new union.... its existence cannot be tolerated". No action has been taken by the government so far, but a crack-down against the union and its activities is imminent.

The government and military did not interfere with the Inaugural Congress of the union on December 15th 1990, when a constitution and programme of action were adopted. The Congress was attended by over sixty delegates representing fourteen provinces as well as workers in the textile and garment, electronics, pharmaceuticals and transport industries. The government reaction may depend on how effectively the union, which began with nearly ten thousand members, can organise. Government reserve probably also has a lot to do with the fact that the union was created after President Soeharto called for a greater observance of human rights, last August and lifted a 27 year ban on strikes.

That has not stopped the repression and sacking of workers who have

taken industrial action. The government does not wish to deter foreign companies who have been investing in Indonesia at an increasing rate over the years. The minimum wage is A\$1.30 per day, which is rarely enforced by the Manpower Ministry, which is powerful incentive for multinationals.

Setia Kawan, also known as SBM, says it wants to build a strong bargaining position for workers to pursue a minimum wage of up to A\$3.00 per day.

Letters of support can be sent to SBM Setia Kawan, Jalan Menteng Kecil No.10, Jakarta 10320 Indonesia.

USA SLAVE LABOUR

Last November, Californian voters approved an initiative (Proposition 139) that would allow private industry to enter into joint ventures with the Department of Corrections to hire inmate labour.

Companies would receive 10% tax credit on wages paid to inmates in county jails and state prisons who would work inside or outside the prison.

A similar programme in Arizona resulted in 400 lay-offs when a meat-packing company shut its doors to make room for inmate labour. A report entitled 'Californians To Save Jobs' states that even more jobs may be lost in California because the initiative makes no restrictions on prisoner employment. The fact that prisoners will now be doubly exploited has been generally ignored.

AMIBA



**CNT/IWA (SPAIN)
SOLIDARITY WITH
BARCELONA DISABLED**

Three and a half years ago PRO-IECU, a company that made money from work by disabled people, was closed by the Spanish socialist government (PSOE). Workers were promised compensatory work in ONCE (National Organisation for the Blind) but in Catalonia alone only 250 - 1,200 registered disabled workers were given work in ONCE. They therefore organised into AMIBA (Disabled Association of Barcelona) to demand work. The government refused to offer any new work. On May 1st, at the CNT organised demonstration, AMIBA distributed leaflets calling for proper work and compensation and denouncing ONCE for treacher and government ties.

SOME FREEDOM

Exactly what freedoms were the allies defending in the Gulf? Not, it seems, the freedom of workers to organise. Although there is a legal trade union federation in Kuwait, it is hardly free and independent. Non-Kuwaitis have to wait 5 years before they can join. Potential members must be certified as being of good reputation and conduct before they can join. In Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates on the other hand trade unions are completely illegal. Some freedom!

BRAZIL

Source: *Ideas & Actions* (the paper of the Workers Solidarity Alliance (WSA), the American IWA section)

Dear Comrades

Here in Brazil, things are crazy. In March the new president took (stole) the money of everybody (from their current accounts, in the banks, if they had more than US\$500) and then a big recession was created, and it's going to get worse. The population has been deceived; they have been waiting for some miracle, or maybe they are waiting for the President to improve their lives.

While the people believe, the government sticks a knife in their back. The worker's movement is feeble, and workers can't strike anymore because of their fear of the recession. Many problems, no solutions.

At some of the industrial plants in the state of Bahia (Nitrocarbono, Cobafi, etc) some workers died, and continue to die, as the atmosphere is polluted with benzene and other products.

In the (rural) Northeast of Brazil, one child dies every ten minutes from hunger. The people don't have enough water to drink. Life in the cities is bad, too. The poverty increases everyday and the church propaganda appears to keep people everywhere resigned ('God is Love', etc). Day by day the people appear to be losing hope.

Leftist parties (Workers Party, Communist Party, etc) and their unions are entering into a Social Pact with the government and the employers.

The Communist Parties are talking about changing their names. The rightist parties, which base themselves on patriotism and the 'end of socialism' deceive the people.

But in the last election (October 3, 1990), most of the people seemed to show their dissatisfaction with these parties and their disillusionment with democracy. Now, maybe, these citizens are coming to understand what the government (and the churches, the politicians, and the employers too) have in mind for them: more poverty, more ignorance, more hunger. Fifty percent of the electorate refused to participate in this election. They didn't go to the voting places at all, or else they annulled their ballot (the vote in Brazil is mandatory — a person can be fined if they don't vote).

So maybe they understand what we anarchists have been saying. We need to show them how to live in peace and without government. The time is coming soon when the anarchists shall show the way out for the people. And the people shall decide and act for themselves — through direct action and self-management.

The anarchists in Brazil are organised in almost all the states. Either in separate groups or federations (like the COB — Confederacao Operaria Brasileira, or the MANN — Movimento Anarquista Norte-Nordeste). In recent months, most of the anarchists did a campaign against voting. Now we intend to do a campaign against compulsory military service (and against militarism). Many books have appeared in the bookstores about

Kropotkin, Bakunin, Malatesta, Herbert Read, etc. Many anarchist meetings are taking place all over the country. We are a bit optimistic, but we know that the fight will be hard.

Carlos Baqueiro

COB-AIT (Bahia)

Brazilian Section of the IWA

The PSOE (PARTIDO SOCIALISTA OBERO ESPANOL - THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY) has been rocked with further scandal. Many companies owned by PSOE ministers have been receiving donations from the national banks for electoral campaigns. In Spain PSOE is clearly seen as a good bet for big business.

THAILAND UNIONS BANNED

Source: PTTI (Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International) News

On 15th April, Thailand's military appointed National Legislative Assembly passed a new law dissolving all unions in state-owned enterprises, including PTTI's three affiliates, TOTWU, CATLU and TWU-CAT. The Assembly, consisting of 60% military ranking officers passed the legislation in three readings on the same day. On 25th February, at a meeting with trade union leaders, the authorities had pledged not to restrict trade union rights and activities during the martial law administration.

More than two hundred thousand State enterprise workers, handling electricity, water, communications, nationalised banks, ports and public utilities in general, presently grouped in more than 120 unions, will be denied their fundamental trade union rights as laid down in ILO (International Labour Organisation) Conventions 87 and 98. All unions in the State-owned enterprises are dissolved; the only alternative being to form associations. The funds and assets accumulated so far by the former unions must be transferred to these government-initiated 'Associations'. Unions refusing to turn themselves into

associations will either see their funds disposed of in accordance with their rules; or, failing that will have their funds and assets seized and transferred to charities, e.g. the Red Cross. The associations cannot be considered as independent and representative workers' organisations — and cannot function as such — because of the very stringent conditions and criteria imposed upon them under the new Act. The right to any form of collective action (e.g. strike, work to rule) is denied to them. The associations are prohibited to hold general meetings other than on official or traditional holidays.

Associations formed under the new legislation cannot join existing national centres of trade unions in Thailand. It is unclear whether associations are allowed to establish national federations of their own.

The new Act allows State enterprise workers to form 'associations' within their own enterprises but bars them from being active outside these enterprises and from demanding benefits for workers in other State-owned enterprises. Apart from losing their positions in the national trade union congresses, trade unionists employed by State-owned enterprises will also have to relinquish their positions in tripartite bodies such as the Advisory board for Labour Development, the National Wage Committee, the Labour Relations Committee and the Central Labour court. Nor can they sit as associate judges in labour courts. The PTTI General Secretary protested to the Prime Minister of Thailand, calling for the immediate withdrawal of the legislation. Many PTTI affiliates have taken similar action. The workers group of the ILO Joint Committee on PTT Services also sent a protest.

A complaint has been lodged with the ILO.

To demonstrate the PTTI's solidarity with the Thai public sector unions, the PTTI General Secretary visited Thailand and addressed a PTTI/PSI Seminar, 25th-27th May. There were some 40 participants from a wide range of public enterprises. The General Secretary assured representatives that the PTTI would continue to work with affiliates in Thailand to support the struggle for the full restoration of trade union rights for public sector workers.

NORWAY..

We recently heard from Norway of a novel approach to fighting organised racism...

The Fatherland Party was due to have its official foundation meeting, in Bergen (Norway). Though attached to Ivar Garberg's local radio and the National Democrats — both right wing — the meeting was held in a democratic fashion. So when a hundred anti-racists turned up at the meeting and overwhelmed the meeting, there wasn't much they could do but call them 'national betrayers'. The majority in the hall agreed to the singing of anti-racist songs and gleefully accepted the name of the party should be the National Betrayers Party. The organisers called in the police but it was decided it was all perfectly constitutional (it could only be in Norway!) and an anti-racist programme was agreed while the defenders of the fatherland left with their tails between their legs.



ABEL PAZ
OUR HISTORIAN!

Abel Paz, the author of the classic "Durruti: The People Armed", is still alive, well and living in Barcelona. He wants to publish a book — provisionally entitled "At the Foot of the Wall" — about his experiences whilst imprisoned by the Spanish dictatorship. However he has no money for the project. Help him reclaim our history.

Donation however small can be sent to:

Diego Camacho Banco Banesto Cta. N. 1237-271 c/Providencia 64 08012 Barcelona. Spain.

Correspondence to:

Abel Paz c/Verdi 109 3 - 2º 08012 Barcelona. Spain.

Further details from DA.

GREECE

Occupations and violent protests erupted throughout Greece early this year over government reforms in education. Privatisations, closures of halls of residence and cafeterias, and the introduction of a 'points system' (a grade for attendance and behaviour both in and out of school) all led to some of the most serious violence Greece has seen for many years.

A large demonstration in Athens in December 1990 ended in fighting with the police who attempted to attack the occupied polytechnic. In January fascist groups attacked the schools in different parts of the country, leading to one teacher being killed. Immediately teachers declared a national strike, and occupations were strengthened. The Minister of Education resigned. There were huge demonstrations in Athens. Once again the demonstrators were attacked by police. During the violence police fired a gas cannister into a bookshop, setting it alight along with a neighbouring clothes shop. Four people died of suffocation. It was later discovered that one of them had in fact been beaten to death. For the next twelve hours the police attempted to gas people off the streets. Riots continued for the next week as the police continued to try to occupy the polytechnics and schools. The state blamed the anarchists for the disturbance and started arresting militants involved in the movement. Hundreds have been arrested so far and the state intends a crackdown on the movement in general. The anarchist movement in Greece has been growing for many

years, despite the harsh police repression that is ongoing. However, this seems only to have broadened and strengthened the movement.



UTOPIA MADE
REALITY ??

TRACTOR APPEAL

On the outskirts of the beautiful mountain side around Rhonda (Malaga, Spain) a group of five or six adults and three children have set up a collective called 'Los Arenalejos'. They went from France to New Caledonia but found they were regarded as colonists themselves and they looked around for somewhere else and finally ended up back in Almunecar (Granada), where they found sympathy and solidarity to start their collective. It was 15 hectares with olives and oranges and a large house which was 90% destroyed. They have rebuilt and cultivated oranges and pears successfully and now form part of the Anarchist Federation of 'Land' Communes.

They maintain regular contact with the libertarian movement and give valuable advice on ecological problems. They have encountered a lot of problems with the land that they farm and desperately need a tractor, says the journal CNT, which feels it is a great opportunity to help them realise their potential.

If you want to help them financially please contact them via the journal CNT C/O Calle Viuda de Epalza 12, 2º 48005 BILBAO, Euzkadi, Spain.

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BLACK FLAG?

Black Flag which had been running 21 years had to be suspended in November 1990 (number 201).

The reason was due to the breakdown of computer typesetting facilities. It needed a brand new computer — which it has now got. (DAs using it!) But meanwhile it suffered death, sickness, emigration among those responsible in the collective.

Meantime all the collective have been active in other respects — Black Cross, DAM, anti-poll tax, etc. But they're still conscious of the unique contribution Black Flag makes and it will be out soon.

Back as stropky as ever!

Dear Readers, Subscribers, Distributors, Bookshops.

Welcome to issue of **DIRECT ACTION**.

Our apologies for the delay in its arrival. We have recently changed the way in which DA is produced and this has taken us some time to organise. We hope you like the new style paper and enjoy this and many more issues.

(Distribution Note. There have been various changes to the distribution system which we hope won't affect many people. If it does let us know.)

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REVIEW - 'THE DOORS'

The film would have been better titled 'Jim Morrison' as it is Morrison that Stone concentrates on, whilst the characters of the other band members are not really explored. If you enjoy the Doors' music, but are not too idealistic about the men themselves, then you will probably enjoy the film, which follows the band from its founding to Morrison's mysterious death in a bath tub in Paris. There is some beautiful photography, but the story is spoilt a bit by Stone's mysticism (a dead Indian and a death-like figure keep appearing). However, Morrison himself was a bit mystical and Stone draws out how he used ideas of Shamanism (a Shaman is a sort of witch doctor associated with drama and music), Dionysianism (Dionysus is a figure from Greek mythology connected with sex and alcohol) and mass hypnosis. Morrison is shown 'warts and all', including locking his girlfriend in a closet and trying to burn the house down. [Oh, he was a one, wasn't he.]

Both Morrison and Stone are symbols of what was good and bad about sixties American counterculture. On the one hand, freedom, the challenging of establishment values, rediscovering of older traditions and ideas, a sense of belonging to a movement that could change the world, and the counterposing of Love and Peace to bigotry and war, can all be seen as positive. On the other hand, naive experimenting can lead to dangerous self-destructive activity and addiction. If not seen as part of a social and political movement, the idea of freedom can degenerate into selfish individualism. Hero worship is not useful because it often involves ignoring the lessons of what people did wrong. Neither Stone nor Morrison raised questions of class or serious dis-

cussion of the issues of sex and race. There are glimmers of understanding when in the film Morrison drunkenly attacks the blind idolisation of him by the fans. He then smashes the TV in a rage at the Doors becoming just another commodity in the capitalist supermarket. Irony, given the ultra-hyping of the film.

Jim Morrison was a drunken, selfish, sexist bastard, but ultimately a sad character who produced some interesting music and words. Val Kilmer gives an amazing performance as the main character. In the end hope lies not with the Shamans, the rock stars or liberal film makers, but with the mass of ordinary working people.

"THEY'VE GOT THE GUNS, BUT WE'VE GOT THE NUMBERS".

Paul, Doncaster

EMOTIONAL HOOLIGAN by Gary Clail/On U-Sound System.

It's hard to imagine lyrics such as "everybody needs food, clothes and shelter, proper health care and clean running water..." actually forming part of anything reasonably musical, never mind something to dance to. For years now anything with any real anger and politics has been caught up in the 'do they owe us a living?' anarcho scene. Enjoyable as that side of life might have been, it's a bit old now. What Gary Clail has managed to do in his new album, is something very fresh, verging from almost reggae beat to hard techno dance music. All this while the lyrics question "What makes a man hate a man for the colour of his skin, why do people get off on bigotry, intolerance and racial intolerance." A great album, and gives a kick in the teeth to the Tory MP's who commented recently that the homeless are those people you step over when you leave the opera. Very poignant. Potentially very boring lyrics taken into a lively context and made exciting.

THE KATE SHARPLEY LIBRARY

The Kate Sharpley Library will be opening in early 1992. This is a preliminary announcement.

The Kate Sharpley Library is intended for collecting, borrowing or consulting material on anarchism and related ideas. It already holds substantial stock and further documents, books and videos have been promised to it from other private collections. It has been in abeyance for two or three years since it was originally set up in 121 Raiton Road, but owing to difficulties in preserving and keeping up the Library it was placed in storage.

Now we have obtained ample space outside London, and are cataloguing, shelving and preparing to reopen. (Nothing is available for re-

search until we finish cataloguing and open).

If you or your group have any books, pamphlets, newspapers, tapes, and material relating to anarchist, anarcho-syndicalist and anti-State activity, please consider donating it to us and putting us on your list to receive future issues of publications.

We hope eventually to compile a history of anarchism in Britain and elsewhere and to make this the first library and anarchist research centre of its kind in this country.

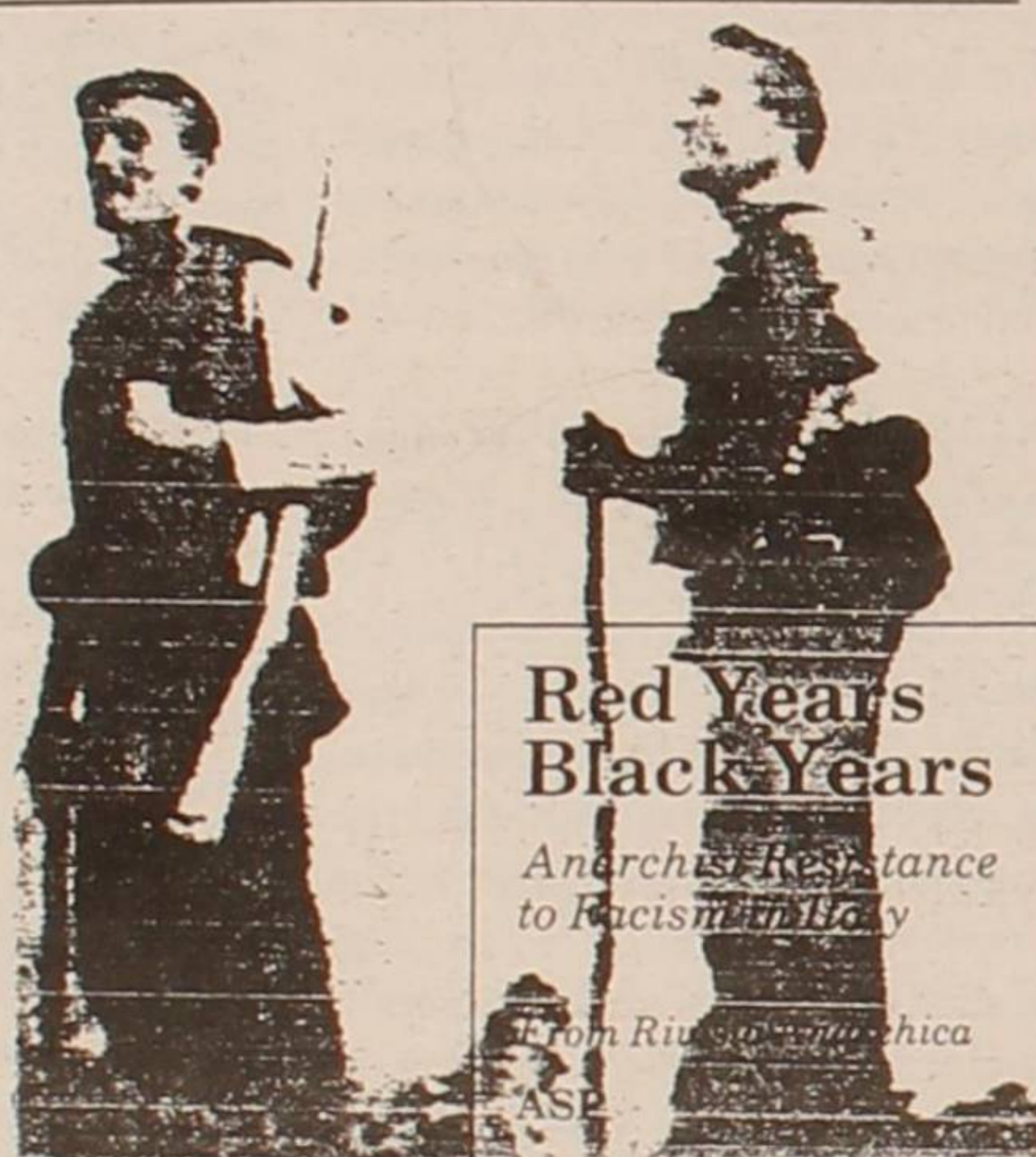
The service will be free to members of DAM, ABC, and supporters of Black Flag, Direct Action and activist groups. We don't particularly want to cater for academics into pure research for its own sake.

The KSL Collective.
BM HURRICANE LONDON
WC1N 3XX

THE RED YEARS BLACK YEARS

The armed struggle against fascism did not start in 1939 or even in 1936. It started after WWI in Italy and Germany. By 1939 many, if not all of those who joined the anarchist partisans had seen years of active armed resistance to fascism. 'Red Years, Black Years' a tribute to those men and women who fought both the native fascists and the German Nazi invaders.

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'DIRECT ACTION' A brief history

Many papers in the international syndicalist movement have been called 'Direct Action' or DA for short. The name represents what is one of the basic principles of anarcho syndicalism. Since its creation in 1945 'Direct Action' has consistently advocated the direct control of society by workers, completely unswayed by any political party - an attitude not only deeply rooted in the traditions of British labour, but more relevant than ever today.

Initially the paper was founded as the journal of the original Syndicalist Workers Federation. When the SWF merged with other anarcho syndicalist groups the name 'DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT' was chosen and the title 'DIRECT ACTION' continued as the paper's name. Since then the paper has been published, always without the help and hindrance of party hacks or paid political journalists, by various DAM groups, such as Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield and now London. We wish it all the success for the future!!

The Direct Action Movement was formed in 1979 by the Syndicalist Workers Federation and other groups and individuals believing in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism. The DAM is the British Section of the International Workers Association (IWA). The IWA, was formed in 1922, and has sections in France, Spain, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Japan, Australia, Argentina, Brazil and the U.S.A and Finland. If you would like to find out more about the DAM and anarcho-syndicalism, please contact the national secretary or your nearest group.

SUBSCRIBE

Subscription to DIRECT ACTION is really nice and easy.
DA is sent around the world for the following costs

Within the U.K.only £3.50 for 6 issues.
and £6.00 for 12 issues.

Direct Debit is nice and handy for us, (our bank details are Account No : 07216904, Sort code 010488, Account name 'Direct Action' at the Ladybarn Branch of Nat West).

Europe is a bit more expensive but blame the post office
6 issues is £4.50 and for 12 issues only £8.00

North and South America is more pricey with 6 copies
at £6.50 and 12 copies at £12.00

The most expensive of all is unfortunately the rest of
the world. 6 copies at £7.00 and 12 at £13.00.

WONDER SUB!!

To all new subscribers we will send FREE
either of the following pamphlets !!

'Miguel Garcia Story' or
'Sans Culottes in the French Revolution'

Please fill in the bits below and send to
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DIRECT ACTION and tell us which pamphlet you want.

EVENTS & GENERAL LISTINGS

(Next Deadline is 1st August!)

East London Unity Carnival
Sunday 8th September
London Fields, Hackney
London
organised by
Anti-Fascist Action

National Demonstration
Against Fascism
Saturday, October 5th
the day after the
50th Anniversary of Cable Street

10th Anniversary of Hunger
Strike
Benefit for Irish Republican
Prisoners
Friday 26th July
Music by Faoirse
at The Emerald Centre
Hammersmith Broadway
London
Late Bar - £3/£2

Deptford DAM Benefit
Saturday, 3rd August
Music by The Proles & Guests
Lewisham Labour Club
Limes Grove
London SE13
£2/£1

The editorial wishes to thank the
following for donations to
Direct Action :

£50 - Alex, Bristol
£37.40 - Manchester DAM
£12.20 - Deptford DAM

REMEMBER VANDANA PATEL CAMPAIGN

Vandana Patel, aged 21, had been married for over two years. Throughout that time, she had suffered extreme violence at the hands of her husband to the extent to which she sought sanctuary in a Women's Refuge. On the 29th April 1991 he stabbed her to death. Horrifying by itself, the murder was exacerbated by the fact that it took place within the confines of a Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) at Stoke Newington Police Station, where police were supposedly attempting to reconcile the couple.

A campaign is now being built around the DVU's - 'Police Protection Is No Protection'

For further details please contact
Remember Vandana Patel Cam-
paign, PO Box 225, London, E7,
Tel - 081 472 0528.

A translation from Greek into
English is needed for publication of
two chapters of a book on anarcho-
feminist Mujeres Libres. If you can
help us please write to PO Box 73,
Norwich.

Public Meeting in Norwich
'The Need for an Anarchist
Approach to Environmentalism'
Wednesday 31st July, 8.00 pm
Duke Street Centre
Norwich

FREE LEGAL SUPPORT

A group of solicitors and barristers
are providing free legal support to
any one in London in danger of going
to prison for non-payment. Several
non-payers have avoided imprison-
ment when they have had good legal
support.

For details contact Mike Yule at
Powell Spencer, Solicitors (071-624
8888). If you're outside London, they
may be able to put you in touch with
sympathetic lawyers.

CONTRIBUTORS

Thanks to everyone,
from those within and
outside the Direct
Action Movement, for
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PUBLICATIONS AND SALES

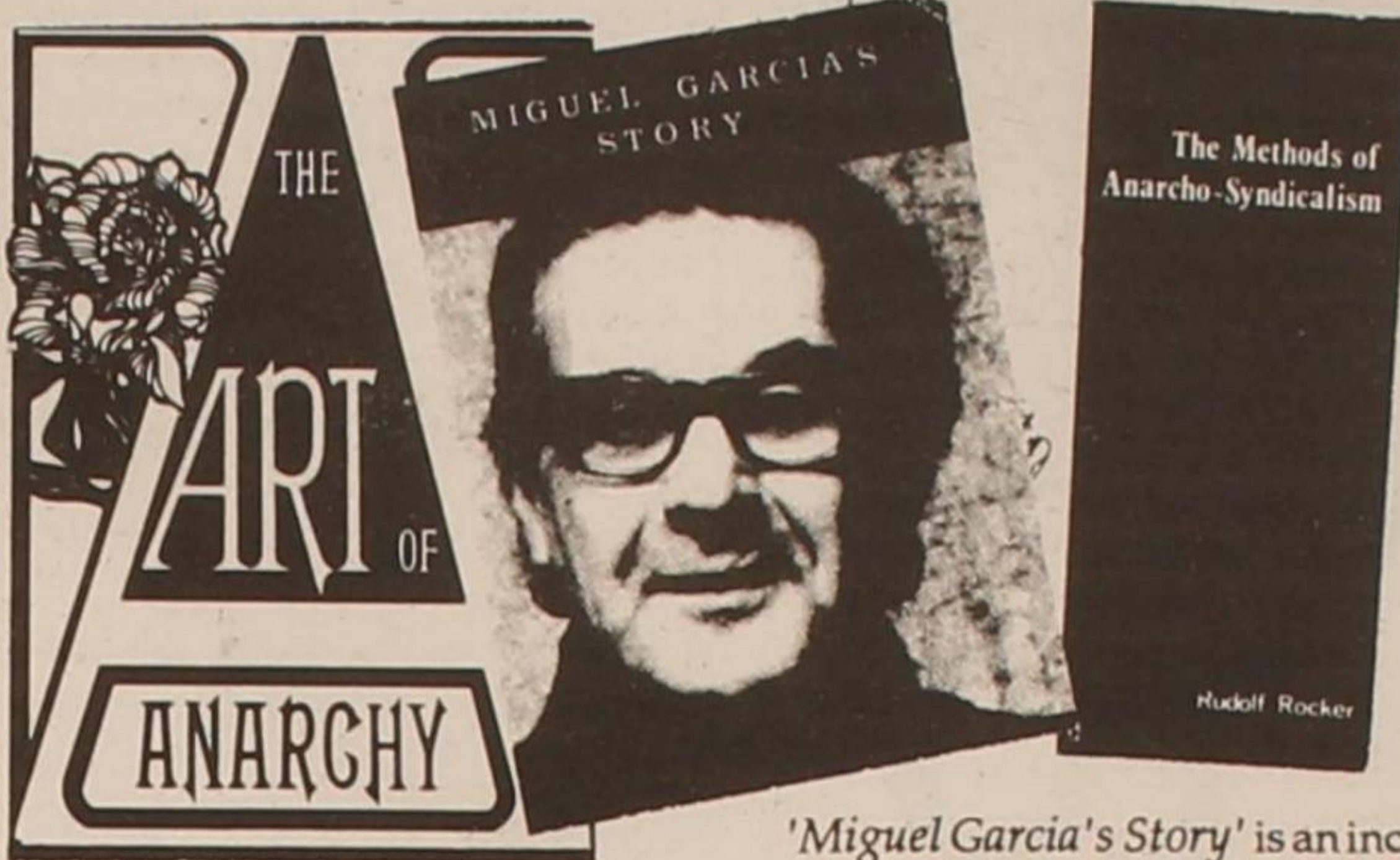
'Winning the Class War' is an excellent publication by the DAM. It's a well produced interesting pamphlet, which doesn't really seek to lecture or give a blue print of what to do next. As such it gives a lively, if complex introduction to the ways and means of the labour parties, dodgy unions and the possibilities for class action in the nineties. Available via D.A. for the very meagre price of £1 plus with 30 pence extra please for postage.

'Winning the Class War'. ADAM-IWA publication 1991.
ISBN 873605 00 5

Yet another publication from the DAM in 91 is the **'Sans Cullottes in the French Revolution'**. This pamphlet deals with the 'mob' politics of the revolution, and gives a first class account of the ordinary peoples fight as distinct from the versions picked up by English speaking readers second hand from 'reactionaries'.

Available for the brilliant price of £1 plus 30p postage ...

'Fragments: A Memoir' by Sam Dolgoff is a personal recollection drawn from a lifetime of struggle in the cause for anarchism. Sam started life working the railroads and lumber camps in America. He got caught up with the ideas of socialism and became a member of the IWW. He lectured across the whole of America and taught himself six different languages. He published innumerable articles and pamphlets. A great anarcho syndicalist fighter with some brilliant stories to tell, published shortly before he died. A lasting tribute to a great and dedicated fighter. Available via DA for £5.00 plus 30p postage.



'Anti Fascist Action' is the paper of London Anti Fascist Action believe it or not. Shows Searchlight up and highlights the very important activities around town against those fascist scum. Only £1 plus 30pp.

On the historical side of life **'Tom Brown's Syndicalism'** offers a great insight into working class organisation and anarcho-syndicalist explanation and theory. A good read for only £3.95 plus the usual 30p postage via DA

'Rudolf Rocker's Anarcho Syndicalism' is a more pedantic and less accurate view of the same subject as covered by Tom Brown's book, however still definitely worth a read, and costs only £2.50 plus 30p postage.

Everybody needs stickers, useful for covering up fascist shit if nothing else. D.A. will be offering individualised stickers (with more details on this next issue) and the wonderful old slogan as a sticker, **'The only good fascist is a dead one'**.

Available from DA at £2.50 per 100 with 30p postage as well.

'Miguel Garcia's Story' is an incredible story of a lifetime struggle against the fascism of Franco and in support of the CNT-AIT. This story is a very moving and emotional account of a persons life to the background of the civil war after which he spent twenty years in prison. Published in 1982 by the Miguel Garcia Memorial Committee in association with Cienfuegos Press shortly after Miguel died it is available via D.A. for £1 only. Please send 30p extra for postage.

'Summer's' here and it's still raining but that no excuse for not getting hold of one of Norwich DAM's lovely red and black t-shirts. Available from DA for the dosh of £6 only with an extra 30p for postage.

'The Art of Anarchy' when it was first published won an award for the best cover / published design. This edition published in 1986 shows the stories and history of anarchist struggles as portrayed by the artist Flavio Constantini. These amazing drawings / prints are superbly reproduced and are available via DA for the very inexpensive price of £3.00 plus 30 pence postage.

'Art of Anarchy' ISBN 0 948703 00 8

CONTACTS

THIS IS THE DAM

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

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 work place and the 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 world wide 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 resolved to initiate, encourage and wholeheartedly support the creation of independent workers' unions based on the principles of anarcho-syndicalism.

9. 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.

SCANNER APPEAL

In this issue of D.A. we launch an appeal for a scanner which we can attach to our computer which will then allow us to scan in documents with optical character recognition, which saves us the re-typing of articles. It also scans in graphics and so help us to achieve our aim of full computerised production of D.A. making it faster, easier to produce. The end result will help us produce a brilliant paper.

Total needed approximately £750. Any offers!

CONTACTS

DAM National Secretary: c/o Manchester DAM, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15
DAM International Secretary: c/o Edinburgh DAM, PO Box 516, Southwest DO, Edinburgh EH 10
IWA International Secretary: Postfach 10 12 23, D-5000, Köln 1, Germany

CENTRAL REGION

Nottingham DAM: PO Box 12, Carlton, Notts NG4 3SW
South Yorkshire: PO Box 106, Rotherham S60 1NW
Leicester DAM: c/o National Secretary, Manchester DAM, PO Box 29, SW PDO
For contacts in Derby & Souththorpe write to Central Region Secretary, c/o of Notts DAM

NORTHEAST REGION

Leeds DAM: Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS2
Middlesbrough DAM: c/o Leeds DAM, Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS2

NORTH WEST REGION

Burnley DAM: 12 Kingsland Grove, Burnley, Lancs BB11 3PY
Liverpool DAM: PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 8DP
Manchester DAM: PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15
Preston DAM: PO Box 172, Preston, Lancs PR1
For contacts in Cumbria, Lancaster, Salford and Stockport, write to North West Region Secretary, c/o Burnley DAM, 12 Kingsland Grove, Burnley, Lancs BB11 3PY

SCOTLAND

Edinburgh DAM: PO Box 516, Southwest DO, Edinburgh EH10
Glasgow DAM: PO box 239, Glasgow G3 6RA

SOUTHEAST REGION

Norwich DAM: PO Box 73, Norwich NR1 2EB
Hertfordshire DAM: PO Box 245, St Albans, Herts
Deptford DAM: PO Box 574, London SE4 1DL
East London DAM: 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
North London DAM: PO Box 1681, 44 Tottenham Lane, N8 7LE
South London DAM: PO Box 761, Camberwell, SDO, London N22
For contacts in Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire and Reading, write to the South East Region Secretary c/o of North London DAM, PO Box 1681, 44 Tottenham Lane, N8 7LE

SOUTHWEST REGION

Bristol DAM: c/o National Secretary, Manchester DAM, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15
For contacts in Plymouth and Somerset write to Bristol DAM

INDUSTRIAL

DAM Council Workers: c/o North London or Manchester DAM
DAM Despatch Workers: c/o Deptford DAM
DAM Railway Workers: c/o Manchester DAM
Despatch Industry Workers Union: C/O 489 Kingland Rd, London E8 4AU
Independent Education Network: PO BOX 29, SW PDO, Manchester, M15 5HW
Health Workers Federation: C/O PO Box 761, Camberwell, London SE5
North West Independent Education Network: PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW

OTHER

Organise (anarchosyndicalists): 7 Whitehaven Street, Belfast 1
Anti Fascist Action (North London, East London, South London & South East London Branches): BM 790, London WC1N 3XX

Direct Action

THE ROAD TO NOWHERE

Much has been made of Britain's latest attempt to cobble together a solution to its war in Ireland. Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland Secretary, has been praised for his diplomatic skills, despite the fact that all he's achieved so far is to get some of the parties involved in the conflict to sit down at the same table!

The British government is hoping that out of such talks will come a devolved Six County administration where a form of 'power sharing' between the unionist parties and the moderate nationalist SDLP can take place. These talks are part and parcel of an ongoing British policy of normalisation in 'Northern' Ireland. This policy aims to present the province as a normal political entity rather than the crisis-ridden colony it actually is. Normalisation can take many forms: the promotion of tourism, the pushing of non-controversial aspects of Irish culture, attempting to restore the 'primacy of the police' in law enforcement (as opposed to the British Army), and efforts to present the republican struggles as a mere 'law and order' problem in an otherwise normal part of the UK. It is within this framework that Britain has been trying for years to replace direct rule from London with an internal administration for the north. However, all such attempts have failed because of either unionist hostility to power sharing, nationalist reluctance to play second fiddle in devolved government or republican or loyalist resistance.

There have been as many 'talks about talks' and doomed initiatives as there have been Northern Ireland Secretaries. All have come and gone without success because they don't address the central issue which fuels the conflict — Britain's continued presence in Ireland.

Because Brooke's talks didn't contain the option of a British withdrawal they will do nothing to de-escalate the war. A new devolved Six County assembly may even be set up (provided the unionist veto on significant change is built in), but this in itself will only guarantee the continuation of 'the troubles'. It's not as if Peter Brooke himself is unaware of this. In a statement issued to mark his first hundred days in the job he admitted that the IRA could not be militarily

defeated and accepted the inevitability of a British government eventually having to negotiate with the republican movement. Despite this, Brooke is again going through the same old talks routine because this time the Irish government are involved, and Britain wants to negotiate a new agreement with them to replace Hillsborough — the 1985 Anglo-Irish treaty which gave Dublin a nominal say in matters affecting northern nationalists in return for improved cross-border security co-operation and a deal on extradition. Indeed, Hillsborough is the main reason that the present talks are taking place at all. The unionists have only agreed to partici-

pate in them because they wish to scrap the treaty altogether, while the SDLP's credibility is so tied to Hillsborough and any deal replacing it that they can't afford to ignore the talks process.

Brooke is engaged in a delicate, but ultimately futile, balancing act. He believes that if he can shunt the unionists into a Six County assembly which gives the SDLP and maybe Dublin some clout in northern affairs, he may be able to persuade the southern government to renounce its territorial claim over the north, while maintaining pressure on the IRA through even tighter London/Dublin security co-operation. If such an

DAM POLICY ON IRELAND

As a working class organisation DAM supports working class unity. We believe that working class unity cannot be achieved without challenging the causes of division within the working class.

1. PARTITION

Partition splits the working class three ways in terms of outlook and immediate interests - in the Six Counties unionist against anti-unionist; then the division between the Six County working class and the 26 County working class. Although we support and encourage all manifestations of working class unity now, we also believe that an end to partition will be a great help to that unity.

Partition was imposed in order to preserve the existing capitalist order in Ireland and to guarantee the respective class interests of both the Unionist bourgeoisie in the Six Counties and that of the Free State. The 1919 General Strike in Belfast and the "Soviet" movement in Southern Ireland were perceived as a "Red Menace", leading to repression of working class radicalism, with the southern bourgeoisie abandoning their nationalist ambitions in return for political stability. Partition was based on British military might and the British state remains the ultimate guarantor of the existing social order in Ireland.

No revolutionary movement can ignore this fact and, therefore, must be anti-imperialist and oppose partition. The DAM's commitment to British state withdrawal from Ireland is a matter of working class internationalism and solidarity with our comrades in Ireland. It is not a matter of "single issues", or of regarding nationalism as progressive, and cannot be ignored or marginalised as such.

2. REPRESSION

The use of CS gas, rubber and plastic bullets, the shooting of unarmed civilians, internment without trial, the use of beatings and torture, the criminalisation of anti-unionists in Ireland and the Irish community in Britain, the employment of informers and the use of show trials in no-jury courts, are all examples of violence and repression by the British state against Irish working class people.

3. RESISTANCE

We consider the Six County state to be a barrier to working class unity, not the IRA's armed struggle, which is directed against that state, and is the result of its discriminatory nature and of British military occupation. The example of past Irish history shows this to be true, and therefore, the armed struggle will probably continue until the British state withdraws

WINNING THE CLASS WAR

"An excellent publication by the DAM.....it gives a lively introduction to the ways and means of the Labour Party, the unions and the possibilities of class action in the Nineties."

AVAILABLE FROM:
Deptford DAM
P.O. Box 574
SE4 1DL

ISBN 1 873605 00 5

AN ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST STRATEGY

agreement could be found, the British would use it inside the Six Counties to boost the flagging fortunes of both its lackeys in the SDLP and the process of 'constitutional' change itself. The aim being to draw support away from Sinn Féin and the IRA.

Brooke's manoeuvrings are in line with the normalisation strategy, the ultimate goal of which is to restore the pro-British 'peace' that existed prior to 1968. His mistake (and that of all recent British governments) is to imagine that this is even possible. What Brooke and the ruling class of London, Dublin and Belfast are not taking into account is the fact that people have learned hard lessons over the last 20-plus years. The Civil Rights movement of the late 60's was begun by well-educated liberals who wanted only to democratise the Six Counties and who asked the state for relatively small changes. When this moderate movement was met with RUC violence, loyalist mobs and, in the end, by British Army bullets, it was the rank and file of the Civil Rights campaign who realised that the state wasn't capable of being reformed and that it had to go. It was these people, and

now a younger generation, who took up arms, made 'Northern' Ireland ungovernable and who have now invested so much in the struggle that they are never going back to second class citizen status — no matter what phoney agreements Brooke, Paisley, Hume and Haughey can dream up.

The Brooke talks have failed. The war in Ireland is beyond normalisation and the British state must be forced into implementing the one tactic it has yet to try in the north — withdrawal.

Anarchists want the British out of Ireland, not because we're keen to see the creation of a 32 County state, but as an expression of solidarity with the struggle there. The British presence props up a vicious Loyalist ideology based on bigotry and sectarianism. It is this, and not the IRA campaign, which divides the working class in Ireland. We want working class unity for a class war against the real enemy — the bosses.

Get Britain out of Ireland and Loyalism is finished — one less barrier to working class solidarity and victory.

militarily and politically.

While we recognise the armed struggle as resistance to state repression, we do not believe that it can bring about a free socialist Ireland, as it is a purely military tactic with no perspective for building working class unity in the Six Counties.

Although the military presence in the Six Counties is the most visible form of state oppression, it is not the only type of oppression. The fight against military occupation should not stop the struggle against other forms of class oppression - ie the bosses, the churches, sexism, etc. - throughout the whole of Ireland. It is a campaign around these issues that will unite the working class to break down the sectarian divide.

4. NATIONALISM

A purely nationalist movement against partition cannot hope to command a wide enough base of support for its objectives, appealing as it does only to the immediate needs of the northern anti-unionists. The southern working class has no interest in the maintenance of partition and nor, in the long term, has the unionist working class. For an all-Ireland solution both their involvement is vital. Nationalism will not command support among all Irish workers. For a working class movement to do so it must put revolutionary aspirations on the agenda.

5. BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

As Anarcho-Syndicalists in Britain, our main role in supporting working class unity in Ireland is in putting pressure on the British state to withdraw. Part of this role is in education on the nature of British repression and challenging prejudice against the Irish among workers in Britain, which like all bigotry and racism, only serves the interests of the ruling classes everywhere. While British troops are in Ireland, past experience shows that the pressure most likely to force their withdrawal is large-scale involvement of the working class in any withdrawal movement.

We support the broad withdrawal movement, and the demands of complete British military and political withdrawal; disbandment and disarmament of the RUC and UDR; amnesty for all political prisoners; and self-determination for the Irish people as a whole. Although these fall short of our goals, we believe that their fulfillment will create more favourable conditions for a strong, united working class movement to develop.

In supporting these demands, and politically supporting our comrades in Ireland, we stress our anti-militarism as Anarcho-Syndicalists. We must expose the anti-working class role and character of the British Army. The DAM should also promote, and participate in, anti-militarist activities.