SCABS FALL OUT

By September Britain may well have a new TUC. Eric Hammond's scab union, the EETPU, is engineering its way into being thrown out of the existing TUC and intends to set up a rival made up of right wing bosses' unions.

The roots of the TUC split lie at the very heart of union organisation. Although supposedly elected to represent their members' interests, union bureaucrats are more interested in building their own political empires. To them their members are a tool to be used or abused to gain this power. Their constant sabotage of militancy has, however, sown the seeds of their own defeat. Without militancy bureaucrats have nothing to bargain with and the their constant back-stabbing has helped to destroy militancy.

Thatcher realised the TUC "leadership" had lost its power and instead of the old consensus of consulting them she told them where to go. The TUC tried to respond with a "Day of Action", effectively a 1-day general strike. This failure proved once and for all that union bureaucrats cannot create militancy, only destroy it.

They were therefore forced to adopt "new realism", selling out their members with "flexibility", "new working procedures" and "rationalisation". The bureaucrats now sell themselves to management by being bosses' unions, and to workers with cheap insurance. The ultimate upshot of new realism is the single union, no-strike deal. The TUC do not oppose this. They are only angry with the EETPU's blatant selling out, breaking the TUC's "gentleman's agreements" not to poach members. The T&G (and the GMF) want the electricians punished so they can sign all the single union, no-strike "sweetheart" deals.

Hammond knows that only by leaving the TUC can he have total freedom to sell out his members and build a bosses' TUC with members from the EETPU, AEU, UDM, the Professional Association of Teachers and UMAST (the ships' officers' union). This could have 1.5 to 2 million members compared with the TUC's present 9.5 million, and would have strong financial backing from big business.

This will force the TUC 2 ways. They will go further down the road of new realism to compete with the EETPU, and encourage rank and file militancy with an anti-EETPU campaign to prevent them poaching more members. The TUC will want to control such militancy so it remains just an anti-EETPU campaign. Although it is important to fight the Hammond TUC we must not be side-tracked into a negative anti-EETPU campaign, especially one controlled by the TUC.

The only way to fight Hammond, TUC bureaucrats and the bosses is militant unionism built from, and controlled by, the grass roots - ie anarcho-syndicalism.
The seaman's dispute has, once again, shown the weakness of traditional trade unionism when faced with a determined and ruling class determined to break the organised working class in the pursuit of even greater profits.

The thirst for more profits, has led P&O to disregard proper safety levels and insist on less crew working longer shifts with shorter breaks. Even after the disaster of the Herald of Free Enterprise, they've shown that the safety of passengers and crew is a poor second profit. Recent fires on cross-channel ferries have highlighted the case for proper staffing levels and the need for an alternative ownership. This P&O remains oblivious.

Another aspect to be considered is the channel tunnel which will mean less demand for ferry travel, P&O have decided that by acting now, with the double strikes over government and judiciary, they can break the NUS with the added bonus of forcing their rival against Sealink, to follow suit or be forced out of business. They believe they have more resources than Sealink to ride out the strike.

Secondary picketing which had earlier been successful in spreading the dispute to the majority of P&O ports, was halted by the sequestration of union funds. Since then Sam McCluskey, the NUS general secretary, after signing off on this action has attempted to purge the union's contempt of court. But it should be obvious that after nine years of Thatcherism, the judges know what is expected of them and now the question of the legality of picketing even at Dover has been raised.

LIMITATIONS

The NUS has lacked imagination up to now. Selective strikes and picketing on P&O operations would focus attention on the reasons for the strike. BR management, on the other hand, would sustain the public's acceptance of the union's demands. More fundamentally the limitations of trade unionism have been exposed when it is faced with a bankrupt and openly hostile capitalist class using économie conditions to tighten political control and destroy working class gains. The TUC is unwilling and unable to mobilise, any genuine support while the Labour Party with its abysmal record of breaking the law, however unjust, and its desperate attempts at moderation and responsibility, is worse than useless.

Today's political climate means that disputes are being settled in the High Court, not on the picket lines. The rank and file are being sacrificed while lawyers argue over the legality of their actions; general secretaries run from courts to committee rooms and the basis of a dispute is obscured behind a smokescreen of legal double-talk.

This dispute can only be won by bringing the working class solidarity, making a concerted effort to black all P&O operations at every level at every port. The question of this can be achieved within the present set up of working class organisation. The answer is it cannot. Only the self-organisation of working people defending their interests can progress be made in the direction of working class solidarity is the only answer.

THE FOLLOWING is a letter which has been circulated to the King's Cross branch of ASLEF to other railway union branches in support of the Health workers' campaign to defend our National Health Service, BR management obtained injunctions in the High Court against six King's Cross ASLEF branch officials. The proposed strike was quashed by court order on the 10th of March.

Not content with that victory, BR suspended the ASLEF LDC (shop stewards' committee) chairman, Steve Forey, on the 15th March and the following day he was sacked. His 'crime' was to inform his branch of the unauthorised actions of BR officials explaining the reason for the strike. Management admitted his approach liaising that Steve Forey was sacked for trade union activity.

The remaining five branch officers are even now under threat of court injunction. None of them can be seen to be promoting the strike, or demand of any kind of King's Cross branch. Meanwhile, they are fighting a rearguard action of distributing the branch's official newsletter to ASLEF members explaining the reason for the strike. Management admitted his approach in liaising that Steve Forey was sacked for trade union activity.

The attack on King's Cross and the contract of Steve Forey cannot be separated from BR's attack on all railway workers' conditions and jobs. They are trying to intimidate and fetter us. The new contracts are the open shop concept and the abolition of the machinery of organisation. In allusion to the pipeline, BR are playing high for low. They want to make the railway more profitable. But if we cannot defend trade union representatives and organisations, what chance is there of a fight against these attacks?
A BURNING ISSUE

BRING & BURN

NO POLT TAX

On the 2nd of May government booklets and registration forms were burnt on top of Carlton Hill, Edinburgh, as well as on other hill tops across Scotland. Although the elements were against the demonstrators 100 people attended the Edinburgh burning. This burning was organized by the Citizens Against the Poll Tax with other Anti-Poll Tax groups giving support.

The APTU and Community Resistance Against the Poll Tax have been, and continue to be, the most effective area by area in campaigns of non-payment. In many areas a stall is now a Saturday feature where leaflets are handed out, with window posters saying "NO POLL TAX". In some areas there are whole streets where these in the windows showing people's commitment in opposing the tax. Another feature of the stall is people queuing up to sign a non-payment pledge sheet, published by Edinburgh Trades Council.

LUCKY STARS

The Labour Party leadership, on the other hand, has launched the "Stop it!" campaign and have ruled out a non-payment campaign. They prefer staging highly publicized meetings with celebrities from football and pop music - the idea being to show how the Labour Party is opposed to the Poll Tax but are doing nothing to "Stop it!". Some Labour members believe that the tax has thrashed the Tories in Scotland at the last general election over the issue, it should be allowed to get through to England and Wales and so Labour win next time. Meanwhile we have to take the medicine and thank our lucky stars as we are guided by the Labour government by 1991 at the latest.

This strategy isn't accepted by the whole of the Labour Party. Labour Movement Against the Poll Tax support a non-payment campaign and lobby the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress such a campaign, while giving support to groups like the APTU and Community Resistance Against the Poll Tax. They argue that non-payment is the only way to defeat this unfair tax which benefits only the rich.

The following is part of a leaflet issued by Edinburgh DAM:

SOME POSSIBLE TACTICS

As of the 1st April 1988 registering for the Poll-tax will be illegal. Aspirant registration will call round with a questionnaire to fill.

1: Don't answer the door. After three visits, if the "responsible person" is not available the form will be sent to you.

2: You have 21 days to return the form. If no return it is ignored after 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 days, asking for "another form" the next day. This routine appears on the canvass. For example one of the questions you are asked is "Are you a domiciled of the United Kingdom?"

3: Remember, send only one question at a time as you cannot repeat this. In every instance you have 21 days to complete it.

4: Another tactic is to use another name as this is not illegal in Scotland. If you have registered under another name then you can, after two months or so, inform the registration officer that you have recently moved in and you can start all over again. It would also get the officer wondering where the other person has gone to.

5: Return the form to the registration officer marked "not known at this address".

6: Claim you never received the questionnaire, the burden of proof is on the registration officer, not you.

These are only a few suggestions - the important thing is to make the Act unworkable. The end result will have to be:

CAN'T PAY? Won't Pay!

This delaying registration strategy has suffered a setback as the information given to us about the questionnaires has now been scrapped by the government, this is probably due to them being aware of the planned actions. This shows that this government is flexible in its strategy too. Having said this, some of the delaying tactics are still applicable (in the leaflet shown here), only the quantities are no longer applicable.

FOUL BREATH HITS BOLTON

NORMAN FOWLER arrived in Bolton last week. A campaign of leafleting was launched in the town where he was being held and the SWP members present began selling papers there. After inquiries proved futile the demonstrators went down to the Bolton business centre where Fowler was next to be seen on his brief whistle stop tour of Bolton's plastic caravan park. On arrival we were separated from the building by police whose number the Poll Tax had to 30 or more. Two more arrests were made after people had refused to move. One male there, who was heavily pregnant, was also grabbed but later let go as it's obvious

THE OZONE LAYER

The Ozone Layer screens the Earth from the harmful effects of the Sun's ultra-violet radiation. Without it there would be no life on Earth. Although present in very small concentrations, it is most abundant in that part of the atmosphere called the stratosphere. This is situated between 15 and 50 kilometres above us. Ozone is destroyed by a number of chemical reactions with it. Nitrous oxide and methane can destroy ozone, but the major damage has been done by the manufacture and release of chlorine-fluorocarbons (CFC's). Global concentrations of ozone in the stratosphere have declined by approximately 5% between 1979 and 1986 according to measurements made by instruments on the satellite Nimbus 7.

In the early 1970's, three quarters of CFC's were in aerosol sprays. CFC's provided the propellant for these. Now, the major uses of CFC's are in "foam blowing" for the manufacture of take-away cartons, fire fighting equipment and cavity insulation in cavity walls. One type of one is widened in refrigerators as a coolant and in air conditioning systems. An agreement to reduce CFC's was made at the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer in March 1985. By a series of stages the worldwide consumption of CFC's is to be reduced by 50%. A 50% cut in the world's consumption of CFC's won't be enough to save the ozone lay-
ACTION AGAINST FASCISTS

ON ST GEORGE'S DAY, Saturday, April 23rd, despite a Home Office and local government ban, the National Front Support Group held an illegal march and rally in Leeds. They did this with the full support and protection of West Yorkshire Police.

CRIMINAL INACTION

Despite Leeds being considered a fascist "stronghold" it is probably has less than 30 organised Nazis. However, the criminal inaction of the Leeds left, notably the SWP, has allowed them to build a strong peripheral, particularly at Elland Road, home of Leeds United. Leeds Anti-Fascist Action has leafletted Elland Road in opposition to the next paper sales with the dual effect supporting Leeds United's vast number of anti-racist fans and of embarrassing the Directors of United into acting against the NF. Their excellent report on the NF Support Group is available from Leeds AFA (25 AFA, 52 Cal Lane, Leeds price £1, postage).

IN NORWICH on April the 16th the fascist British National Party attempted to gain respectability for their candidate in the local council elections. They were able to hold a public meeting in a school in South Norwich under the Representation of the People Act 1884 because they are a "bona fide" political organisation. (It is degenerate decided that?)

It was a public meeting only in the sense that the country folk, the working people from all walks of life including a sizeable DAA counge
ting. The actual participants in the meeting were all invited and escorted into the school under police protection. The action started as the fascists tried to leaflet. John Tyndall, BNP Führer, got bricks through the windscreen and back window of his Citroen as he tried to drive off with one tyre flat. A car and transit was belonging to the fascists came under a hail of stones, receiving constant abuse from the repellant occupants looked at the police as the police April 16th was a fine example of "Rock" against Racism.

THE MEDIA UNION, ACCT passed a resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland at its 54th annual conference in April.

It was the first time since the troops were sent in force, almost 20 years ago, that the union has taken such a position, and almost the same length of time since they last discussed it. It came as a surprise to most activists, but was passed comfortably with no need for a count, after a show of hands.

Coming shortly after the violent events in Gibraltar, Milltown Cemetery and Andersonstoun, the delegates were obviously impressed by arguments for the withdrawal. Violence of the last 20 years will continue so long as the island of Ireland is divided and the sectarian stalemate of Northern Ireland, thrown up by the British state.

Opposition ranged from the threat of a "civil war" if the troops were withdrawn, to not wanting to join the "medieval" south of Ireland, to a comparison of the Province with the Sudan to a concern about camera crews being attacked or loyaltyists if the motion was passed. Each of these were dealt with and the delegates were more persuaded by the arguments for withdrawal.

The issues covered by the motion included the creation of two artificial states where in one case the Catholic church had a monopoly and in the other the Protestant church the division of the working class north and south as well as within the north itself; discrimination and the inadequate response from the north Irish unions; the moves with which was dealt and was not a campaign for withdrawal; consciousness of the media; imperialism, sectarianism and the route of violence was seen for a stronger withdrawal.

The need for self-determination for the people was compared to the union's already existing important support for self-determination for Palestinians, Nicaraguans, and South Africans.

It is expected that within General Council, a unique union structure where all shop stewards meet every six weeks, opposition will again surface, but it is hoped that enough can be done to carry on throughout the year to increase awareness and to campaign both within the union, and with other like-minded organisations to increase the pressure on the British government for withdrawal.

ACCORDING TO RECENT research an artificial sweetener "saccharin" or "aspartame" food and drink can cause people to become severely confused. The sweetness also contribute to the development of Alzheimer's disease. The artificial sweetener is manufactured by Monsanto, and in the USA is sold under the name of "Nutrasweet". The chemical accounts for 10% of the company's sales. Aspartame is 200 times sweeter than sugar, but only 20% as sweet as saccharine. 12g of palm oils Institute for Medical Research in Florida, has studied the effects of Aspartame. Severe problems were reported in 28,916 people who have 89 people studied. One third suffered from severe dizzyness, and half from incapacitating headaches. Eleven persons suffered temporary loss of vision. Roberts reports that thousands of London civil servants took strike action on Tuesday May 24th to demand the sacking of DHSS worker, Malcolm Skegg, a member of the British National Party, who once stood as a National Front parliamentary candidate. He had been working in the Oldham Green DHSS office.

Skegg due to fame while working for Lewisham council as a librarian in 1986. He was sacked for possession of BNP newsletters on council property. NUPBE workers attacked a tribunal where he was awarded £14,400 for unfair dismissal. It was assumed he'd never again work in the public sector. Working in the DHSS he has access to addresses of Black and Asian people, which he can pass them to on his own. He even has the power to delay their claims.

DHSS workers in Tottenham supported the campaign to sack Skegg, but then realised that regrettable as "The Flag" Paul Nash worked for them of four years. A member of the NF Support Group, had worked there for 9 years. Another of a troth shop steward who knew about him done the same thing, and they have decided to try and get him sacked too.

We believe the campaign to get Skegg sacked is a mistake. It is wrong. It will give them a blank cheque to sack people because they are people, do not see it and it won't be fascis
tic. The best policy is for the workers at Skegg's office to take the matter into their own hands and make it impossible for him to work there. Why is it wrong? He has no right to work there. He is a fascist. He is a fascist and he is a fascist and he is a fascist and he is a fascist and he is a fascist...
Have you ever considered how many vital services are provided by public libraries? If not, you probably don't take them for granted, so think about it the next time you go to the library. The Green Paper on libraries' funding, derived from the Adam Smith Institute's paper "Ex Libris" - "For Books (they certainly didn't get it from going to libraries) - is the ideological basis for an attack on libraries as a community service.

Your caring sharing Tories have determined that libraries are used by the middle classes to borrow pulp fiction, which is all they want you to read. They also reckon that there is a need for further literacy in the kind of labour market they are creating, and Clause 29 of the Local Government Act indicates how they want to limit access to anything outside their ideological drive. I mean, can you think of an idea more vulnerable to attack than self-determination of an individual...?

Apart from basic(s) reference services they reckon the rent is a luxury, so it's OK to charge for Audio-Visual materials; most periodicals and reference material; information and enquiry work and put them out for tender. Development of Business Information services is already happening or being planned, as part of income-generation schemes, and what is profitable will get tendered for by private contractors - the rest will suffer. The "Organ of the Book Trade" has already welcomed the demise of Information Services, it as a fetish of public librarians that diverts funds from their own products.

CLASS HATRED

Equally warped thinking is running riot in Hackney Council's Labour leadership, but then I always say that whatever their politics are, class hatred will out. Tommy Sheppard, the arts officer, who is the head of Community Services, is apparently under the impression that working people are the thick of it, with all the rest of us who belong to an ethnic minority or are black, don't use them, can't afford it - nonsense to blame for this - you've guessed it, working people ourselves. It is alleged that library use in Hackney is lower than elsewhere because workers are out-dated and inflexible, and the librarians are "ahistorical" but a cultural background of library use.

Now, I can count middle class reading material on my fingers, and in the Caribbean, for example, educators, educators and the like, are often better-used and maintained. Library workers in Whitechapel are overwhelmingly white-collar workers, bloody hard to try and provide decent service to meet the needs of the whole community. We have to cope with inadequate seating, frequent closures due to a high vacancy rate; lack of resources like new books; lack of publicity or thanks for the services we provide; lack of support for services; and of course, a history of incompetent management.

PREJUDICES

The management is exclusively white, middle class, and does not live in inner London. So their solution is to cut services and jazz them up a bit. Under-use is the justified excuse for the cuts, though the reason for under-use has never been examined. The reasons given are merely definitive occupation of the 3 branches to be cut.

After a partially successful half-day walk-out and a meeting to set the rate, the time came for action. On the 11th of March we walked out of the afternoon again, and established a round-the-clock occupation to beat the closures due the next day. The locks of branch locks were held by HANCOG members from another directorate, and a series of cultural events and public meetings were held in the buildings to build up wider support and publicity. Leafletting of nearby estates was done regularly and after 5 weeks people were beginning to accept that the libraries would stay open.

At first management only issued threats and got out of 3 phones cut off, and seemed to be hoping to let us go away without too much adverse publicity. However, it soon became very much a porting role to local residents running the libraries and were somewhat overburdened in trying to conduct a dispute while still working our normal jobs.

LAUGHABLE

Not only were we unable to put in the time and effort strikers can in order to raise support, but our union branch failed. We had only 4 full-time officers and a string of others. There was little done to raise support, only laughable "mass" streetwritings; 30 mics with party line, and 1 genuine supporter at the last "on", though it is full-time leaderships, not particular individuals which are redundant. The real work could only have been done by us going direct to other workers for aid. With our over-burdened it showed up just how useless the full-time were. The vertical structure of the branch means that wasn't the good, well-used links between departments necessary for any effective solidarity. Established unions like Hackney NALGO are geared to negotiate, not action.

DLO (Direct Labour Organisation) building workers and NUPE manual workers in our department did nothing to undermine our action, like boarding up the 3 libraries. Let's say the black organisation, "professionalism", etc, have solidarity from other library workers. Management tried to raise the profile of the dispute, and the Cuts outside, by showing how much we'd achieved, and by putting pressure on the trades unions by making it impossible for them to cooperate. We also discussed how to escalate and win the dispute, though we've probably stopped any further cuts in the department just by showing resistance.

SACRIFICE

In the long term all our problems, and the cuts, boil down to exploitative management, which is a feature of state-run industries and services, as much as private ones. As well as building their salaries by adding "responsibilities" and creating more layers of management to create their status, public sector managers want to add things to the CVs to get better-paid jobs. This means managing, building services to fund what amounts to a flashier, worse-equipped version of the same service, which has a different name to go on the CV. Services are there not for people, but to fund bureaucrats' empire.

Politicians also exploit services in the same ways, the only real solution is to dump the lot, and the only adequate service will be a self-managed one, controlled by the workers who run and use it. But with all the will in the world there'll only be a revolution when we've organised properly to make one, and neither trades unions or politicians are part of class warfare. We need the unionism from the anarchist syndicalist, the self-educating and self-managed, fighting spirit of the class war. Direct Action readers want to read about organisation, education or related sectors, and who want to get in contact with like-minded workers should contact:

Local Authority Workers' Network, c/o 840 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 or PO Box 96, Doncaster.

Decided on Penalties

On Sunday 15th May "victory" was won by the library occupation at the Labour Party's "Annual" Borough conference (the 4th in 12 months) when delegates voted 74 to 66 to restore all 6 library services. The meeting was packed and for action. The restoration was to be funded by scrapping the "Strengthening the Centre" package, which basically involves a £250,000 shortfall. The vote was rescinded by 98 votes to 50. The decision was later reversed by being 8-0 all up at full time, and the referee's ruling that the match would be decided on penalties.

SUPPRESSION

With the NUPE and UCATT branches voting 90 to 5 for cuts it must be obvious that the Labour Party and its affiliated trade unions are not responsible for the suppression of black, women, or solidarity and strength of reactionary ideas. We claim a moral victory and though our occupation has no achievable objective left, and will probably collapse, we fight on.
In April, Tricia Jennings, the worker who was sacked by Burtons for being pregnant, received, at extremely short notice, a date for her industrial tribunal. An appeal was made for an adjournment since the date which had been set (22nd April) was less then three weeks before Tricia’s baby was due to be born. This appeal was upheld but no new date has yet been set. Incidentally, when we approached Burtons’ to join in our appeal for an adjournment because of Tricia’s medical condition they said that they would only do so if the pickets were called off - we should have remembered you never let people stand in the way of profits.

In her campaign for reinstatement Tricia has not only been fighting against the Burtons’ loco but also against the officials of the trade union which is supposed to represent Burtons’ employees (USDAW). Tricia is not a member of USDAW - when she started work she got an impression from other workers that it was of no use joining the union until she had been there 6 months and so when she was sacked in November last year, she went to the Clitheroe rights office rather than the union for help and she has since been helped by a legal representative.

In January this year the Tricia Jennings Defence Committee was set up to fight Tricia’s case and to put pressure on Burtons’ by picketing their shops. However, in early February, the local USDAW area official asked us to call off a picket because he said he was negotiating with the management to get Tricia’s job back. We agreed at the time but later found out that this official was acting without full knowledge of the case and, more importantly, without ever having consulted Tricia about it (he did not know if Tricia was a union member or not; he did not even know her address).

BETRAYAL

This union official’s "negotiations" bore no results and, although a letter was sent to the union asking for their support, no reply was ever received. Apart from a five minute phone call to Tricia’s husband, in which more interest was expressed in getting the pickets called off than in getting Tricia her job back, nothing more was heard from the union until 31st March. On this date, the same USDAW official sent out a letter to all his members in which he stated: "USDAW disassociates itself from the Tricia Jennings Defence Committee. All Burtons group employees to cross any unofficial picket or any march associated with Tricia Jennings." This betrayal of the basic principle of unionism is made all the more disgusting by the USDAW slogan "Unity is Strength".

Since sending out this letter, the official has said he will "see what she can do" for Tricia if the pickets are called off. She is not very impressed by this offer and is determined to keep the pressure on Burtons by having picketers of their shops as often and in as many places, as possible.

COSY RELATIONSHIP

The reaction of USDAW official to this case and his decision to fight back in the most effective way possible shows up again the willingness of the trade union bureaucracy to betray workers if their case is not sufficiently high profile or assured of easy success. Trade union officials would much rather keep their cosy relationship with management than risk it for one woman. They thus forget two important things: firstly, Tricia is not just "one woman" - women workers throughout the country are being subjected to discrimination, harassment and poorer pay and conditions that men (and this is something we should be stressing in the campaign so that other women's cases will come forward and join Tricia) - and secondly, they have forgotten the meaning of trade unionism, "an injury to one is an injury to all".

The 18th Congress of the International Workers Association was held in Bordeaux during the 1st, 2nd and 3rd April. The Direct Action Movement sent a delegation of 14 members who were accompanied by a number of observers and they were pleased to see all that the sections of the IWA were well represented at the Congress.

The Congress itself was a well-organised affair, being held in a flash hall. The provision by the German comrades of high-tech translation equipment meant that for the first time the Congress proceedings could be simultaneously translated. The two hour French meal breaks were not enjoyed by everyone, especially when the work of the Congress meant comrades staying up to 2 or 3 in the morning.

The work of the Congress covered many things ranging from the organisation of the IWA; the relationship of the IWA to various organisations internationally; support for international campaigns such as the case of Omofo a Japanese comrade on death row; and a day of action in support of the right of the Aboriginal people to choose the control of their affairs. Discusssions on such topics as the flexibility of working hours and conditions; ecological matters; militarism; and the position of women were inconclusive as it was felt that further ex-

For those of us attending the Congress the most interesting aspects were the reports from the various sections and how Internationally our struggles and strategies are taking similar paths, whether they are in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa or the Middle East. The Congress heard reports and letters of support from Ireland, Portugal and the Polish Solidarity underground as well as the International of Anarchist Federations. The resurgence of anarchosyndicalism on an international level was proved by the acceptance of two new sections to the IWA - the COGB from Brazil and the ASF from Australia.

One of the most important things to come out of the Congress was the fact that this is a new IWA maintaining the principles of anarchosyndicalism, inspired by the past, not rooted in it, but growing and developing out of present situations. The coming together of the "old" and "new" movement sections such as the FORA in Argentina and the CNT in Spain shows the way for the future. The DAM and the COGB from Brazil provides good mixture for education and inspiration that isn’t stifled by experience or tradition.

The DAM was lucky enough to take part in a Europe-wide speaking tour by Leonardo Morelli, the present secretary of the COGB from Brazil, who is presently sacked from his job as a railway worker and is awaiting trial for his part in organising a rail strike. The DAM was also able to organise four meetings in London, Bristol, Liverpool and Sheffield with the European section of the IWA. After his case and the corruption concerning aid meant to go to people suffering from the recent mudslides in Rio de Janeiro.
Polish Workers Fight On

The recent wave of strikes, sit-ins and protests across Poland in response to government-imposed price rises and wage cuts marks not only the resurgence of Solidarnosc but also the coming to the fore of a new, younger generation of militants less willing to compromise with the authorities than the old guard gathered around the fading Lech Walesa.

The nationwide strike wave which began to break the occupation at the traditionally militant Nova Huta steel complex, south of Krakow, had been building steadily since the imposition of massive price rises — up to 40% for basic goods — in the early part of this year. The end of April saw thousands of workers in many of Poland’s key industries — coal, steel, transport and shipyards — were out in sympathy with the Nova Huta strikers in what was the biggest demonstration of working class strength in Poland since 1981. In the mining communities of Silesia, pressure from the Solidarnosc underground was so great that the new official union, which replaced the more traditional underground unions, were forced to declare a “collective dispute with the government over wages” in a wasted attempt at saving face and maintaining influence in the mines.

However, unlike 1980, when the largely spontaneous wave of strikes was carried by the government by surprise and instead was used by the “reformist” tendency within the Polish Communist Party to unseat the controlling “stalinists”, the recent strike was met with the brutal suppression. Television viewers across the world watched scenes reminiscent of old Poland, with the miners’ strike as police troops using tear gas smashed their way into an “anti-striking operation”, into the Nova Huta plant lashing out at the workers with truncheons and batons. Similar scenes could be seen in many of the unofficial May Day demonstrations called by Solidarnosc across the country where plain clothes police attacked the crowds.

By the second week of May the stage was set for a bloody end to the mass occupation of the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk, seen by many as the birthplace of Solidarnosc, as they and again the riot police, in a sadistic demonstration of psychological warfare, run up to the shipyard gates in an attempt to terrorise the workers into submission. Perhaps the key factor in the peaceful and bloodless end to the Gdansk occupation seems to have been Lech Walesa, as an international figure and Nobel peace prize winner, remains largely immune from a Polish government seek to keep him out of the way. The West, if the shipyard had been attacked, would have taken Walesa inside it, it’s likely that Poland would find it difficult to gain further loans. Therefore the Gdansk occupation succeeded peacefully along with another chapter in Solidarnosc’s history.

LITTLE INFLUENCE

But what of Walesa? His role in the recent strike wave was almost purely as a media figure — which, of course, had its use in the final defence of the Gdansk shipyard. His political comments, apart from the wild “bloody revolution” rhetoric, were confined to berating the strikers for being “spontaneous” and “premature”. It must be said that Walesa’s role has been of little influence at the activist heart of the underground. One sign of Walesa’s declining influence among the activists was the absence “of sick leave” from the shipyard at the start of the operation. He was not, he was said, “needed to co-ordinate strikes elsewhere”. This is indeed debatable as the underground has enough experience and organisation to co-ordinate nationwide strike without the help of outside leaders. Later in a contradictory statement, Walesa said: “The strike caught me when I was on sick leave with lumbago”. This was a definite statement — he would have known when the strike was due to start. Perhaps closer to the truth is the possibility that Walesa, defeated from some kind of struggle within the shipyard Solidarnosc committee over the timing of the strike, turned to “sick leave” as some kind of face-saving device. This makes his talk of “spontaneity”, which he knew already, what it really is, all the more hollow.

Walesa’s demise is a sign of the growing militancy of the Solidarnosc underground. The wait-and-see policies of the old guard have only led to Jaruzelski who came to power in the bloody December 1981 coup. Past articles in Direct Action on the Polish resistance have shown how sections of the underground have moved towards a near-socialist position, re-discovering the militancy of the syndicalist ZZZ, active in Poland before the second world war and, in a clandestine form, in the wartime resistance. There is no better sign of the increasing relevancy of syndicalism to Polish workers than the letter (printed below) addressed to the Euro- pean syndicalist International, the International Workers’ Association, of the recent Congress in Bordeaux. The letter asks for help from the Silesian region of Solidarnosc, an area which suffered brutally for its militant opposition to Jaruzelski, is a sign that Solidarnosc is far from dead.

Polish Police Attack May Day March

In the name of the Lower Silesian region of Solidarnosc, I send cordial greetings to your Congress.

For eight years we have fought in our country, first as a legal union and since December 1981, underground, for the same ideas as you — solidarity, justice, liberty and self-management.

Precisely, for us as for you, syndicalism and self-management are the principal methods of workers’ emancipation. We have experienced it clearly and neatly in the Solidarnosc programme adopted democratically at our 1981 Congress.

Our union has solid origins, the double tradition of Polish and world syndicalism. Let us recall the ZZZ, the union which the second world war prevented entering the IWA in 1918. Let us recall the Silesian workers’ union, that for 65 years your organisation has waged against injustice, terror and the persecution of individuals or social groups. We are certain that you will continue to support Solidarnosc and its struggle.

We don’t believe the Iron Curtain can divide us. No, it can only reinforce our struggle for operation and international solidarity. We are convinced I believe in the feeling of all members of Solidarnosc in telling you:

Long live international workers’ solidarity!

Live long the IWA!

Long live Solidarnosc!

Terror, injustice and dictatorship — down with you!

On behalf of the Lower Silesian region of Solidarnosc,

Władysław Fralinak. (Member of Solidarnosc national committee, representative of the regional committee, Lower Silesian Solidarnosc).

March Against Le Pen

More than 2,000 people answered a call from the French Anarchist Federation and took part in a May Day demonstration against "Le Penism" and the electoral games that favour it. The success of the demonstration was certain to not due to the media, which didn’t announce it the day before. It wasn’t even reported on television, unlike the pitiful demo organised by Force Ouvriere the previous night.

This didn’t stop the libertarians from showing themselves from the leading banner ("The voting booths are big, the extremists right") the slogans shouted along the march ("Le Pen or Pasqua, the same right"; "Chirac or Mitterrand, we lose"; etc). Others called for active solidarity with immigrant workers and with the Kanak fighting colonia st in New Caledonia. There were also, of course, banners and slogans against capitalist exploitation and the use of the economic crisis for anti-working class ends.

At the end of the march, the participants were invited to meet again in the afternoon at a big demonstration organised by the whole of the French left. This call was also answered and about 1,000 comrades met up at 3pm and took part in the day’s second demonstration. However, Le Pen cannot be defeated by demonstrations alone. It is with day by day activity in the streets, unions, associations, workplaces and schools that Le Pen and the cops can be isolated and defeated.

Source: Le Monde Liberte
**Letters...Letters...Letters...Letter...**

**FINAL RIGHTS**

Dear Comrades,

I think it is only right that any reply to criticism of an article in DA be written by whoever Instigator of the question. Members of the editorial group should not always write letters in reply to criticism unless this particularly because I don't agree with elements of PH's reply to letter of Mr. Ross concerning my review about animal liberation (in DA 48).

Against the protests of those comrades who have written in, I maintain that the fight for animal liberation is not as far as the revolutionary destruction of the capitalist system, and as the creation of a libertarian communist society is concerned, hence the exploitation of animal rights with other "barbaric" rights and the rights of racial minorities is mistaken.

The overcoming of sexual and racial prejudice is vital to the revolutionary process since the sort of revolution we are talking about is a mass affair, necessarily involving working class women, blacks and other racial minorities. Animals will not be with us on the barricades. Moreover, our revolutionary struggle is about the granting of "rights" but the taking of them - and animals can only be granted them.

I, personally, am disgusted by the exploitation and torture of animals. This exploitation is symptomatic of a society based upon the profit motive and a morality of exploitation (of other people, of animals and of nature itself). It is that an animal rights society has removed the profit motive and the alienation of animal individuals that capitalism tends to create, we need a greater or lesser extent to the liberation of animals.

For me, the stagnation of a minority of young working class people in the moral and political sense which is intrinsically linked up with the understanding of the reality of the lives of animals shows a lack of a deeper understanding of the revolution. Furthermore, like PH, I, although I don't agree with it, wasn't arguing against the animal rights sophistry that "all living creatures on this planet have an equal right to their own lives, and to live naturally". The DA is an attempt to further a particular aim: the liberation of our class through the destruction of the repressive institutions of the human domination of the human, the creation of a truly human community, not an animal-oriented community. We have no "party line" on animal liberation, unlike the anarchists an anarcho-syndicalist organisation has no intention of policing the personal philosophy of its members or of other libertarian revolutionaries. It's not a question of being for or against animal liberation but rather of understanding how to move towards an animal rights society which is not a utopian pipe-dream but an urgent necessity.

Finally, on the Health Service, PH disapproves John's concerns too easily. As a healthworker, I am accurately aware of the great contradictions in fighting for the present NHS. Yes, we need the services it provides, but the NHS is a State institution which does not have the maintenance of the "autonomous health care for the individual and the community" at heart. In essence, it is based on the machinery of a working class that is fit to be exploited by capitalism. I would say to John that we must take part in the struggles against the Health Service but that it is not because we support the Welfare State or think the NHS wonderful, but because the starting point for Anarcho-syndicalists is reality. However, it is only our starting point - we want a different reality!

In solidarity, P Connell

[This letter rounds off, for the time being, the debate on workers' or any other issues DA.]

**Anarchosyndicalism**

Dear DA,

Your review of Rudolf Rocker's book in DA 47 revealed the central weakness of anarchosyndicalism - the theme of the "social general strike" as a logical extension of Rocker's statement that "For the workers the general strike is the place of the barricades of the political uprising." Similarly, in an article "The Union Or The Party" (DA 34) you stated: "The strike, the natural form of conflict, is also the form of conflict at work. Workers have no longer hope to achieve anything by insurrection because of the absence of a more effective control of the armed forces".

You really have to off your rocker to believe that the working class is going to give up a fight just because workers are not in the syndicalist trade union army that has always rejected the idea that this is pacific nonsense, as have more intelligent anarchists such as MA and ME.

"The general strike as it is foretold to us is a pure utopia. Either the worker, driven with hunger after three days of striking, will go back with bowed head to the workplace, and we can chalk up yet another defeat. Or he will seek to take over production by main force. Who will then find stability to stop him? Soldiers, policemen, apart from the bourgeois themselves? We cannot hope to destroy the world without help from the world. The strike will be to the strongest," (quoting a letter of Rocker's "Anarchist Reader")

In Spain 1936 workers in the CNT had control of the factories, but they left the capitalist state intact with some CNT leaders even joining the bourgeois government. The result was counter-revolution and bloody defeat. If anarchosyndicalist ideas ever gain mass acceptance again it will be disastrous for the working class.

Obviously there's no question of a revolution without a general strike. But this is insufficient. The state must be conquered by a working class insurrection.

Yours, MC

Dear Comrades,

Like many people the writer has (wittingly or not) totally misunderstood the meaning of anarchosyndicalism and the social general strike. Anarchosyndicalism is a revolutionary method of overthrowing capitalism and the state.

In the article "The Union Or The Party" it also states "There cannot be a sudden peaceful change over" and in the following issue (DA 35) an accompanying article, "The Social General Strike" makes it clear that we do not expect the ruling class to give up without a fight, and talks of the need to form workers' militias because "a bitter experience shows that the state will respond to major strikes with forceful armed if necessary" intervention... Capitalism will not passively surrender for working class is met, it would be met by a declaration of war".

Anarchosyndicalists unions are the only economic and political fighting organisations of the working class. They break through the imaginary division, created by capitalism, between economic and political issues and immerse the day to day struggle between the working class and capitalism with a deeper meaning.

Malatesta was, is, a well respected anarchist agitator and militant. The quote used comes from the debate at the 1908 anarchist congress in Amsterdam on syndicalism. At that congress many other anarchists, misunderstood the meaning of the Social General Strike. Later he was to modify his views and came to share platforms with British anarchosyndicalists and congratulate them on their successes. He also was to write in 1922: "The social and political force for social transformation is the trade union movement and on its intensification depends to a large degree the course the events will take and the chances of any future revolution.

The differences between anarchosyndicalists have with Malatesta's ideas. To see specific political organisations or factions holding the consciousness of the working class is that the working class has the potential and the means to emancipate itself. Otherwise the social revolution would be dependent on a new self-appointed elite.

In Spain 1936, although there were many reasons for the defeat of the revolution (including the actions of the syndicates), one factor was the absence of an effective mechanism of theCNT-FAT led by the CNT-FAT behind the government, and in the absence of the situation and caused confusion and crucial mass action against the re-construction of society.

Revolutionary trade unions must use the phrase "mass strike" as a means of revolutionary action. Unlike the capitalist system, the working class must engage in a battle of war. Revolutionary trade union movements must be clearly defined as workers' organisations of the working class and the struggle against the state.

Anarchosyndicalists unions are the only economic and political fighting organisations of the working class. They break through the imaginary division, created by capitalism, between economic and political issues and immerse the day to day struggle between the working class and capitalism with a deeper meaning.

We have to go beyond the.tif image, which is the basis of the proletarian dictatorship of the proletariat. It would see the working class taking control of economic and community functions and smashing political power completely. That is why we need the revolutionary union of the working class to be the organisation that is the re-construction of society.

As one bitter opponent of Direct Action, With the introduction of the Public Order Act, the likeliest form of attack on trade unionism is growing ever greater, as you know. So we feel that it is crucial for a list of "good" solicitors throughout the country to be compiled. What we want is for all groups to send us information on solicitors that they know to be reliable, with where possible, details of cases they have been involved with. We appreciate the fact that such solicitors are thin on the ground but that is precisely the reason why this list should be made.

Once the list is compiled it will be sent to all anarchist contacts.

In solidarity,
Blackberry Anarchists
(c/o Palm Tree Box, Sheffield Peace Shop, 5-7 Exchange Place, Sheffield 1)

Dear Comrades,

The article in March's issue of Direct Action "What is the British Environment" contained many worthwhile points but it lacked a basic understanding of ecology.

We are earthlings, for the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat are part of natural cycles that depend on the well-being of this green planet. It is not simply a case of gaining control of the state and the consumption of resources. We have to appreciate that the mode of production is killing this planet.

As the article said the environmental movement is dominated by the middle class, and that Direct Action's materialism stops them supporting class struggle against the capitalist system, however, class struggle is not simply about taking control of the environment, damaging processes could be continued under an economy controlled by workers.

For instance modern medic...
ADVERTS

LONDON DEMONSTRATION IN SUPPORT OF SACKED P&O SEAFARERS

Wednesday, June 28th.
Assemble 12 noon at Hyde Park corner.
We will march to P&O's Headquaters in Paul Mall and picket. Called by all the London support groups.

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LONDON ANARCHIST HEALTHWORKERS' CONFERENCE
Saturday 2nd July, 11am-6pm (approx).
Leicester Unemployed Workers Centre, 136 Charles Street, Leicester, (above the AA building)
Cure provided.
If you require any accommodation please contact us in advance.

ANARCHIST WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
July 23rd, 1pm to 6pm - £1.
West Indian Centre, Laycock Place, (nr Trades Club), Leeds.
Workshops include:
- Mujeres Libres video: "De Toda la Vida" anarchist women in the Spanish Civil War.
- Women & work; trade unions; initiating strikes.
- Improvisation, the role of music and theatre in revolution and social change.

—continued from previous page...—

FOR CONTACTS

North East
Doncaster —— PO Box 96, Doncaster 4, South Yorkshire.
Huddersfield —— PO Box 120, Huddersfield 1.
Leeds —— Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds 2.
For contacts in Newcastle, Teeside and York write to North East DAM secretary, c/o Leeds DAM.

North West
Bolton —— c/o Bolton Socialists Club, Wood Street, Bolton, Lancs.
Burnley —— 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancs.
Liverpool —— Box DAM, 82 Lark Lane, Aigburth, Liverpool 17.
Manchester —— c/o Box DA, Raven, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.
Preston —— c/o Black Cat Press, 16-18 Lancaster Road, Preston.
For contacts in Crewe and Cumbria write to North West DAM secretary, c/o Burnley DAM.

Scotland
Edinburgh —— PO Box 316, South West DO, Edinburgh 10.
Glasgow —— Box DAM, c/o Clydeside Press, 37 High Street, Glasgow.
For contacts in Inverness write to Edinburgh DAM.

South East
Bristol —— Box DAM, 37 Stokescroft, Bristol 2.
Leamington Spa —— c/o Box DAM, 123 Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.
For contacts in Corby, Kettering, Northampton and Wellingborough write to Box DAM, c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge.

Industrial

For contacts in Hertfordshire, Kent, Reading, Salisbury and Southampton write to South East DAM secretary, c/o East London DAM.

Other Groups
Bristol —— Box DAM, 37 Stokescroft, Bristol 2.
Leamington Spa —— c/o Box DAM, 123, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.
For contacts in Corby, Kettering, Northampton and Wellingborough write to Box DAM, c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge.

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 workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality. Independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies.
All such workers' organisations must be controlled and directed by the workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers' movement. All and any 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 interest in class struggle and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all states do not exist to protect the workers of those states, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.
7. We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and environment.
8. The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism. It is the British section of the International Workers' Association (IWA), the anarcho-syndicalist international, which was formed in 1922 and has sections in more than a dozen countries.

The DAM was formed in 1979 from the SWP (Syndicalist Workers Federation) and other groups and individuals believing in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism. It is the British section of the International Workers' Association (IWA), the anarcho-syndicalist international, which was formed in 1922 and has sections in more than a dozen countries.

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WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?
I would like to find out more about the Direct Action Movement. Please send me information.
Name
Address
Send to DAM-IWA, c/o Box DAM, Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir St, Cambridge.
Produced and published by Manchester DAM. Printed by Aldgate Press, 468 Whitechapel High Street, London E1. Send all articles, letters, donations, orders and so on to: Direct Action, Box DA, Raven, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester 1.
COUNTER-Demo against Loyalism

SAT. JUNE 18TH - CHESTERFIELD

The following article has been included in the Direct Action to provoke discussion. It does not necessarily represent the views of all members of the Direct Action Movement.

CONTROVERSY: CONTRACEPTIVE

For about a decade now, Depo-Provera—just one of the many steroid contraceptives on the market, has been thrust into the limelight, receiving much criticism from various organisations. These organisations have used the sort of tactics where just one steroid contraceptive has been highlighted, the possible side effects over-emphasised and the risks involved distorted— all in order to get Depo-Provera banned. Not only are these tactics dubious, but the ultimate aim is ridiculous. It is control of the drug that needs challenging, not the existence of the drug itself.

There are 2 types of hormones which control both the ovarian cycle (production and release of the “egg” from the ovaries) and the menstrual cycle (changes within the wall of the uterus). These are progesterone and oestrogens. When women become pregnant the ovaries are stimulated to increase the secretion of both these hormones, thus preventing further ovulation and maintaining a thick uterine lining, unsuitable for further egg implantation.

MOST RISK

Since the 1960’s these same chemicals have been produced synthetically and used as methods of contraception. The most commonly used steroid contraceptive is the ordinary combined pill (OCP) so called as it contains both progesterone and oestrogens. It also carries the most risk, as circulatory disorders are the most common and dangerous of steroid contraceptive side effects, and these range from high blood pressure, to thrombosis of the veins or arteries (blood clots) to heart attacks and strokes. It is the oestrogen content of the pill which is the major cause of these problems as this chemical increases clotting factors in the blood, at the same time as decreasing anti-clotting agents.

In Britain, it is the most commonly used form of birth control—used by 25% of heterosexual women (Family Planning Authority figures—1984). Among long term users, in over 2 years, the death rate due to circulatory diseases is increased by 4-5 times (Royal College of General Practitioners figures). For those using it over 5 years, the risk of cervical cancer is increased 2 fold and there is still much debate as to whether it increases or decreases the risk of contracting breast cancer (World Health Organisation figures—1990).

GOOD NEWS

Despite the fact that Depo-Provera contains the hormone progesterone, it appears to have some advantages over the combined pill, as it is less likely to be affected by smoking. Depo-Provera is also less likely to cause spotting or withdrawal bleeding than the combined pill, and has been shown to be effective in reducing the incidence of dysmenorrhea (menstrual pain). It is also less likely to cause nausea, vomiting, headaches and other side effects which are common with oral contraceptives.

DEPA BANNED

Deko-Provera has been licensed for use in over 80 countries and has been used by over 10 million women without a reported death (Abortion, Sterilisation and Contraception—Wendy Savage). In this country Depo is only licensed for short term use to cover the period after a woman has had a rubella vaccination, or after her partner has just had a vasectomy. In 1984 an American campaign by a Black person who saw Black women being given the drug without their knowledge in an attempt to reduce the Black population, and a Roman Catholic who saw Roman Catholic women using Depo as a form of contraception which their partners could not detect. Attempting to ban Depo-Provera is not solving any problems— it is, in fact, doing a disservice to women.