An unwelcome spectre is haunting one of the keystones of Ulster loyalism. The employment of loyalist workers depends on British state funding of its major sources, including the state-owned Harland and Wolff shipyard which has an overwhelmingly loyalist workforce of 4,000 and provides 1,500 jobs among its suppliers, but the Northern Ireland Office has responded coolly to the expected £30 million subsidy required to win the contract to build Ravi Tikkoo’s "Ultimate Dream" cruise liner.

On 27th May NIO Under Secretary Peter Viggers floated the idea of the privatisation of the Shipyard in an answer to a parliamentary question, expressing concern at the £240 million paid out in subsidies over the last 5 years. Although no decision has been made about the shipyard’s future, Viggers warned that “there can be no absolute guarantee of lasting support from public funds regardless of the company’s ability to compete effectively.”

Privatisation is not only a threat to the future of the shipyard and its workforce - it represents a threat to loyalism. It is obviously disturbing to loyalists that a British government should place any consideration higher than providing jobs for them. Worse, a privatised company would lack the state’s commitment to leave employment discrimination intact, and would also be vulnerable to commercial pressure instigated by the campaign in the USA around the MacBride Principles which stress fair employment as a prerequisite for US investment.

Although workers at the shipyard struck late in May against the NIO’s latest piece of “been-to-be-doing-something” legislation on discrimination, this indication of government unwillingness to subsidise loyalist supremacy unconditionally is more significant. Anger at the Anglo-Irish Agreement was directed at ordinary Catholics, not the state, because it posed loyalists no real threat. But unionism remains Britain’s justification for being in Ireland. The consent of the loyalist working class has been bought by discrimination. This, alongside the suppression of anti-unionists, is vital to the stability of the 6 County statelet. If Harland and Wolff goes, so could much more.
After the debacle of the 1982 2-day strike and the defeat of the drivers over flexible rostering, British Rail set about slashing the workforce in preparation for privatisation. For a long time there was little railworkers' confidence has been growing as BR, faced with the threat of industrial action, were backed down time after time in local disputes.

Against this background BR imposed a pay and grading scheme on 5,000 S&T (signallers and telecommunication staff which would have meant more work for less money. The NUR leadership responded in its usual manner, making strong protests about breaking the machinery of negotiation. At the same time they prepared to do nothing by making it clear that if any hit on this compulsory industrial action would be rejected by the S&T membership. It was to form the national S&T grades conference and organise a balloting for a ballots for industrial action that the NUR relented.

OTHER IDEAS

There then followed the usual "massive" campaign of one boring leaflet asking for a "yes" vote to strengthen the Executive's (EC) hand in the negotiations. When the ballot result was announced with 87% in favour of strike action, it was greeted with a boost to activitists. Needless to say the "yes" vote weeks later, before the doom and gloom and no chance of success for strike action, were now crowing about the tremendous victory. Of course they felt all they had to do was say "no" now was an overture and the 53-day meeting management and re-negotiate the agreement, but management had other ideas. A meeting with the union that was now going to be short, they were unwilling to negoti- ates, but they also informed "brother" Knepp they would seek an injunction as they felt the wording on the ball- lot paper was misleading and that a circular instructing other grades not to do work normally done by S&T and to work normally amounted to calling for secondary action.

This was all it took to do to the "yes" vote the new- found confidence. Knepp urged yet another ballot, while a circular was rushed out to explain that the union was not asking other grades to take action in support of S&T. A special strike issue of the union paper was destroyed by the EC as it referred to the original circular. In the event BR didn't go to the courts. They issued a state- ment saying they were not intended to after rank and file workers in various areas of the country threatened to walk out.

Come the first weekend of the S&T ballot the majority of S&T staff work every weekend) the union yet again failed to organise anything. The army of full-time officials was reduced to thin air. The union head office virtually shut down as Knepp went off to the week holiday at the NUR annual general meeting. Nor was this behaviour confined to the higher echelons of the burea- ucracy. The vast majority of branch secretaries totally ignored, and continue to ignore, the dispute. So the first weekend was chaos. Very few places organised pickets and highly demoralising rum- ours of mass acaboing in various parts of the country flew around. However, the dispute remained amazingly solid with only a handful of scabs, mainly in the East Midlands.

By the 2nd weekend work- ers, often with little experi- ence began to organise. A meeting, open to S&T staff regardless of branch, was organised. This turned out to be one of the biggest in the area in years with delegates from all over the north. A dispute commit- tee to co-ordinate pickets and organise a strike bulletin- in and leaflets in the Man- chester area was drawn up and a delegate elected from each of the union's branch committees. Delegates from other areas went home to organise similarly. Dispute committees have, in one form or another, sprung up all across the country and a number of strike bulletins are being produced to counter rumours and man- agement lies. It's also impor- tant to note that BR has not produced a single leaflet since the action began.

Perhaps a reflection of the total moral bankruptcy of your average bureaucrat is that far from winning the committees the union bail- wards have tried to undermine them, spreading gossip and misinformation. The assistant secretary, Dodds, for exam- ple, in a drunken speech (for a change) claimed that at the meeting because Manchester 59% were walked out in disgust at what was being said by mindless militants. Thankfully this back-stabbing hasn't under- mined people's enthusiasm. When the dispute was escalat- ed to a series of one day strikes the committees organised not only pickets for their own areas but also sent flying pickets to the weaker areas like the East Midlands, thus reducing still further the number of scabs.

With no sign of a drift back to work and the strike beginning to bite, BR have shown the first signs of cracking, offering a small pay rise, albeit over the heads of the union directly to workers. Needless to say, on hearing of this, Knepp rushed out a letter to the board asking them to re-open negotiations. There is now a real danger of Knepp nego- tiating a small pay rise and the union accepting it. This is reflected in the fact that lists of demands are now appearing to strike bulletins along with calls for the EC to consult the S&T membership before any settle- ment.

It is becoming clear that to move the intransigent BR further the one-day strikes must be escalated to all-out strike action. There's also a need to build support for S&T workers and other grades as BR are well aware, if they give in to S&T and grant a major pay rise it would boost the confidence of all rail- workers and other grades will soon be queuing up to get the same.

On the wider aspects of the dispute, it has already shown that workers, with little or no experience of strikes, can quickly organise themselves into an effective force and gain the confidence necessary to mount flying pickets, produce leaflets and so on. It has also shown the total bankruptcy of reformist trade unionism. The NUR is little more than a fancy offi- ce block staffed by overpaid bureaucrats, with an empty head for organisation. There is little doubt that when this dispute finishes the any informal structures thrown up will disappear. What is needed is more permu- ta ing organisation and the time to start building that organisation now.

P&O AND RCP JOIN FORCES

In 1986-7 P&O Containers gave £1,500 to a "charity" called The Industrial Trust. In the same period P&O gave £7,000 to the "charity" which itself had given Common Cause £15,000. 10. What are the "charitable aims" of The Indus- trial Trust? It does promote the efficiency of Industry, commerce and the public ser- vices for the public bene- fit, by other means, the improvement of industrial re- lations. Tell that to the sacked seafarer.

COLLECTIONS FOR THE SACKED SEAFARERS of the "charitable" P&O and RCP Join Forces is part of the P&O group, is one of 30 companies or "charities" that belong to the "charitable" group "Common Cause", a trade union labour monitoring group which in the last few years has publi- "charitable aims" of The Indus- ttrial Trust. It does promote the efficiency of Industry, commerce and the public ser- vices for the public bene- fit, by other means, the improvement of industrial re- lations. Tell that to the sacked seafarer. 10. What are the "charitable aims" of The Indus- trial Trust? It does promote the efficiency of Industry, commerce and the public ser- vices for the public bene- fit, by other means, the improvement of industrial re- lations. Tell that to the sacked seafarer.
THATCHER’S SCAPGOATS

The recent European Nations Cup and the trouble which followed it, have prompted more hackneyed pronouncements on football hooliganism from the powers that be. And once more the “experts” and politicians were talking through their ears.

It’s always seemed incongruous, for example, when the country wonders like the Sports Minister, who’d be more at home at a cocktail party, this country is beginning to come to terms with the phenomenon of football hooliganism. Similarly, when Thatcher and her lady jump on the bandwagon and start propounding identity cards for football supporters, and knowledge that somewhere football hooliganism is obviously being used as a scapegoat by the establishment, for their own political ends. That said, football hooliganism is a very unpleasant phenomenon. Trouble is, none of those who have so much to say on it ever hit the nail on the head.

Now it’s not a peculiarly English problem. It’s always been a springboard for the media to use as a basis for their own coverage. Somehow this June instance for there is evidence that local boneheads from across the country have been transported to the American football italy. And curiously enough the reaction of the German media and of American sport was somewhere near as hysterical as that of para-military groups when the same thing happened in England. But if football hooliganism isn’t a peculiarly English problem, then it’s one that is nonetheless most deeply rooted in this country. When, for example, was the last time you heard about German football fans crashing a bar at Queen’s May 1980? Like it or not, when English fans go abroad some of them at least go to take over a local bar, singing “God Save The Queen”, wave the Union Jack and give Nazi salutes (not that the phenomenon is restricted to football. Much the same thing happens in Bendemound every summer. Potter is, who has produced these deficiencies? This is a question Thatcher and the “experts” can’t answer, because these are their children.

Until quite recently iand even now sometimes it’s usual to hear that the English game is played everywhere in the world*. This despite the fact that England haven’t won a world championship in 40 years, that the game as played in England is the most sophisticated, most refined and run and hostile imaginable, with the least skill ingredient of any style employed in the world. Perhaps the calibre of the game is typified by 2 clowns masquer-

adoring as commentators, the amazing couple “Salient and Greaves”. While commenting on a game in German and discussing Spanish midfielder’s Michell’s lucrative contract, Ian “Sain” John managed to come up with: "that’ll buy a lot of paella... really earned your money there, Saint.

Meanwhile, back at home, the faithful fans continue to be bored into dilapidated, grey stadiums, where you’re lucky to get a toilet and refreshments. In fact next to no money has been spent for the benefit of supporters in England in 100 years, in comparison to the millions that have been made from the game. We continue to be treated like cattle. And if you treat people like animals, they’ll like us. Just like before the Bradford disaster in ‘85 there were calls for electric fencing in football grounds. If the idea had been taken up by hundreds would have persisted in the fire instead of fifty.

Every time an international championship comes around the Sun and Co. build up England as the great white hope and of the less intelligent fans go expecting to conquer all. And when the team gets beat or the fans find other "sport", the same shirts wring their hands about the "animals" we’ve brought shame on England", or the knives come out for the unfortunate manager, or excuses are trundled out about cheating foreigners. So Thatcher and Co. spare us your sermon next time union jack clad morons make some corner of a foreign field forever English. You created them. Now the chickens have come home to roost.

Teabreak Tribunal

Tricia Jennings’ industrial tribunal began in Edinburgh on the 28th of June. Accused: the country’s Burtons supporter, pinned against the back wall. All-day ticket was held outside the tribunal office in Edinburgh. Inside things went equally well. Before there was to be another witness to be questioned the tribunal was continuing on the 25th of July.

Burtons’ case depends on insinuations, twisted facts and exaggerations. The official Burtons group lawyer made an entertainment which the statements* about Tricia’s character and behaviour which could have been called a "hit" as she told how she’d been taken to the office. They are relying quite heavily on proving that Tricia had a worse rate of absence than any other worker who might have been sacked for absenteeism. But in this case, it is the Burtons personnel manager compiled a chart of the absenteeism of other sacked workers. This looked impressive on paper but when it comes to Tricia’s case - as the tribunal has been told - she was said: “This is no such help to me in deciding anything”. Another prominent feature of the case is the higher rate of pregnancy which of pregnant women who have been sacked. This was introduced in evidence of getting one of their workers to be a witness to say how she had been treated when she was pregnant. But this also failed to impress because other women names had been employed by Burtons for over two years, and none had suffered pregnancy complications like Tricia. The rest of the Burtons case is built on re-writing facts - re-scraped telephone calls and every transferred to different times, it’s the official Burtons witnesses are terrified of losing their jobs and are either unenthusiastic or selective about their evidence or telling downright lies.

Some interesting facts on Burtons treatment of their employees were revealed. They make a lot of the fact that Tricia was only a "trainee" and therefore on trial to see if she was suitable. However, her contract makes no mention of this probationary period, and even if it does the fact that Burtons-USDW agreement provides for the least grievance and appeal procedures. However, Burtons claim that only the grievance procedures applies to trainees, and that puts the onus on the worker to make and result of Burtons picking and choosing of the time of the contract which suit them that probations have virtually no legal status. As far as the Burtons personnel manager put it: “For the first 5 months probations are on a tightrope".

The situation is further complicated because special rules applying to probationers are not written down. This has been "company practice" for the past ten years and has, according to Burtons, been accepted by both management and the union. When asked how those workers could find out their rights during probation, the personnel manager stated that they would probably be told by their fellow workers "during teaching them". In the tribunal room burst into laughter, he indignantly claimed this was how he - the personnel manager - had to get to know about this "company policy".

On the question of how Tricia’s pregnancy relates to her sacking, the personnel manager would not deal directly with the question of "special consideration" to pregnant women. However, he also said: "at the end of the day absenteeism is absence from work for whatever the reason it is". It is difficult to see how "special consideration" can be given to women who are off work due to pregnancy-related illness under this rigid system.

The tribunal received good press coverage with fairly favourable articles in most of the local newspapers and also in a few national papers. Lots of people now know about Tricia’s case and it is vital that we keep the action going with continuing pickets of Burtons shops and another national day of action on the 25th of July. It is important that Tricia wins the tribunal and gets compensation from Burtons but it’s also important that the public are made aware of what has happened to Tricia (and many other women) and that Burtons and the rest are shown that they can’t get away with it.

Self-defence. No Offence

THREE MEMBERS of a Leicester family who defended themselves against a late- night racist attack have found themselves in court on serious assault charges - while the three thugs who set on them have gone scot free.

The attack on the Singh family happened in mid-March, just after they’d closed their chip shop for the night. Three white men arrived outside, demanding to be served, then started hammering on the glass, chanting racist slogans. One of them smashed in the door. Jit Singh, and his two sons, Jagg and Narinder, went outside to defend themselves and in the struggle that followed one attacker fell and hurt himself and another ran off. The Singh then called the police who promptly, arrested Jit, Narinder and Jag- tar, and let the racist thugs go. Police held the Singh for nine hours while, despite police assurances, no one was sent to repair the front door of their shop and home. Mrs Singh and her daughter were left with no way to look themselves in - knowing all too well that their attackers had already been released.

As news of the attack and assault charges spread, anger erupted in Leicester’s Asian community. The Singh Defence Campaign was formed immediately afterwards, calling for all charges to be dropped and demanding to know why the racist attackers got off scot free. At the first court hearing in mid-June, the police dropped all the charges against Jagtar, as well as those of "possession of an offensive weapon" against Jit and Narinder. With this initial victory behind them, the Singh Defence Campaign is now pressing to get all the remaining charges dropped. Jit and Narinder were due in court again as we go to press, on charges of "wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm". Demonstrations outside the court were being planned.

Contact: Singh Defence Campaign, c/o Racist Attacks Monitoring Project, 6 Seymour St, Highbury, Leicester.
THE ORANGE ORDER, a byword for bigotry, was pro- pounded to parade through Chesterfield on Saturday 18th June. Three hundred years ago a plot was hatched in the town to return to the historic throne King James Il and replace him with the Protestant king. So the Labour Council in Chesterfield permitted the Orange parade this year to celebrate the restoration of the protestant dynasty.

The Orange Order is one of the main reasons why the protestant workers in the north of Ireland were persuaded to support the partition of Ireland in 1922, and why the north became a sectarian statelet. For a Labour council to allow them to parade is a joke, but then we all know the Labour Party is full of jokes, most of which are sick, not funny.

The day started with the obligatory counter-demo when some anarchists bellowed "kill, kill, kill" and "burn, burn, burn" at the march. Violence is an inevitable part of the revolutionary process, a means of cụcing and lasting for it is part of the revolutionary solution. An unusual chant for "anarchists" was "L-I-R-A", hardly appropriate when all the political differences are subjugated in the provos for maximum unity of a united Ireland. Armed action by such as the Defence Committees of the CNT in Spain, controlled by a workers' movement, we endorse, The IRA Army Council is still regarded by many Republicans as the legitimate government of Ireland.

OBLIGATIONS

At the end of the march there was the obligatory rally with the obligatory Labour Party speaker who opposes the Labour Party, and the sitting around for the Orangeboys. The obligator we have no leaders' anarchists charged off after the first leader, such as a megaphone to "get the fascists", the real thing and the militant antifascist organised a march to where the loyalists were to hold a rally.

We soon we joined by the "let's get em" brigade, who brought along their police escort for company. There were reports of a 500 strong parade with a large contingent of children and only a handful of fascists. Rumours, counter-rumours and rumours of rumours spread around but it was eventually accepted that the loyalists had been turned back by the police, so everyone went home.

A small victory in a small town, which in it's way formed common cause with those fighting sectarianism in the 6 Counties, and put pressure on at least one Labour council. Perhaps most importantly, it raised the issues with the many local areas who came up to talk about what was happening.

STILL FIGHTING

Despite the depressing tone of the coverage in DA 49, all is not lost in the fight against library closures and re-deployment in Hoxton. After the rigging of the Labour Party annual borough convention there was a mood of depression among the occupiers and union activists, but a summons to the High Court put an immediate focus on the issue.

A special branch meeting to decide on industrial action over the libraries and a dispute in housing was declared inquorate by district organisation officer, Andrew Jack, shock began to turn to anger.

The protests of branch officers, intent on spending a week on the picket at the borough's annual conference and a further week recovering were stifled by the 50 signatures necessary for an emergency branch meeting to debate one motion. "People Uniting" were in court on Friday 26th - we were meeting on the 23rd to vote for a strike. So we leafleted every major worksite in Hoxton. The next day the picket line was shut down almost every white collar were locked out or on less than 24 hours notice. Around 150 trade unionists and library occupiers from the community lobbied the council. The council got re-possession - but we got 2 weeks notice instead of the usual one and a "prima facie case for judicial review". But like the walkouts of the past.

the dispute most of us saw this as a means of building for effective direct action.

ANGER INTO ACTION

The real joke - you've gotta laugh or crack up - was that the impotent special branch meeting had been recovered for Tuesday 28th and virtually no one had received notice or agenda. The contingency plan to drag members screaming from the canteen remained a farce - 101 members with none against and 11 abstentions. What the 3,000 other NALGO members are now contemplating is non-co-operation with their unions, walking out in support of anyone victimised, striking on eviction day and turning out to stop the bailiffs.

While we are still determined to win re-instatement for 6 services and 21 jobs, the issue now is the council's refusal to negotiate with our union and their use of the courts against workers. It's this issue which we hope will crystallise the anger into action and we have won the vote to hold a ballot of all NALGO members on all-out indefinite strike action. Labour, the scab party, has come out in its true colours. The honeymoon when the Labour Left used local government to push radical policies is over. Some might winge that Hoxton council is "ex-Lef" but it is the character of Labour as a power structure which counts, not the politics of a minority trying to restore a socialism there never was.

THE GOOD NEWS - Section 28 of the Local Government Act is legally toothless. In schools where its main thrust was expected, local authorities have no influence on curricula as that was restricted to teachers and school governors by the 1886 Education Act. Also, the legal definition of "promoting homosexuality" means doing something which actually increases the number of homosexuals and, though this is possible in the fevered imagination of sexually-repressed right wingers it is virtually impossible to prove.

The bad news - This will do very little to stop what would have been the real impact of Section 28 anyway - stimulating a climate of reaction. Self-censorship remains a danger though individuals were never legally liable under the section and it will give reactionary workers and management encouragement to go easy on services to gays and lesbians. Harassment of workers providing services by managers, workmates and members of the public is now set to be a standard part of the job.

A certain north London borough council told the Clause was to display lesbian and gay material to show the threat. But the media was turned on the "anti homophile section of the council". The council's "ex-Lef" as well.

LAMBETH COUNCIL, those well-known progressives, were recently dismayed to find that a community group they had been funding was really a bunch of loony fundamentalist Christians, who spent their time nailing up posters pushing rabid anti-homosexual literature through people's doors. As you can imagine, not enough, they hadn't implemented what opportunities programme either - in fact they only employed other members of their sect. If you think this sounds familiar, you could notice the number of ex-WRP'ers employed by Lambeth.

Occupiers And Trade Unionists At High Court

The unofficial motto of my union is "negotiate at all costs", even this, the fundamental right to strike its own members, has been denied as Labour moves to crush this most touchstone resistance, which has taken the fight for jobs and services out of the workplace and into the community. We know that only direct action can stop ALGO's NEC is withdrawing the approval for a ballot. The chief argument is that a ballot is lost is worse than a ballot never held, using the case of the collapse of Camden branch's resistance to their employer's jackboot tactics when they lost one. Council leaders agreed to talk the union's national officers about negotiations because our NEC is persuaded to agree to a settlement.

While recognition of the dispute by the NEC and the council is a minor victory, the union's basis for negotiation assumes no further industrial action is possible. Not only is this a position that has been taken, but it forces the lack of consciousness and confidence among union members which made it probable the ballot would be lost. Now we must use the ongoing ballot campaign for a "yes" vote, despite the possibility of a ballot, disappointing, anarcho and file militants are fighting for their own consciousness of our power, and of the need for direct action.
STEEL BLUES

I was born within spitting distance (well, not quite) of a steel works furnace and was brought up thinking the sky was actually orange at night and the earth hummed naturally while I slept. I remember being completely shattered when this proved not to be true! My first visit to the countryside knocked me back. It was silent... nearly. All I could hear was that stupid white animal (that scrawled everywhere) baying, and at night it was pitch black when the moon wasn’t out.

As I got older and travelled around more and saw other places I realised that I lived next to a massive steel-producing complex. It didn’t matter about the noise, pollution and accidents - it just went on and on doing the same, not stopping even on New Year’s Day, I grew up in a community of shift workers. We knew whose houses not to play in front of if the curtains were shut and there was music in your own house. If you made a noise upstairs where your dad was sleeping after a night shift...and if you rang a door bell - well, you had to be careful. You often heard of accidents - many people had lung cancer, others died of heart problems. You could see hot cables through jaws and of burnt bodies; lots of workers had small burns on their hands from splashing billets (that were customarily at 1,600°C), and still is, a total joke with everything sacrificed for production - a mill never stops. In accidents what happens if you were working against the rule - but then nobody works to the rule. The employers have you in the catch 22 they want to settle out of court?

EMPLOYMENT

The steel towns have seen a change - employment in the mills dropped from 15,000 to less than 4,000 in under 4 years. And does the workload drop? Does the mill ever slow down? Never! Towns were decimated and mills closed down and cleared like they never existed. Has it all been rational? The Northern Economist. Review criticises the need for closing mills on Teeside, but then economics doesn’t make sense or take into account the needs of people and communities. Can settle only ever survived on steel - now its mills have disappeared. The decimation has gone on with towns and cities accompanying it. To walk through an empty useless industrial wasteland is frightening. Its affect on those who must continue on in its wake can be catastrophic, with often no way forward and no escape.

British Steel is about to be privatized. To privatize the image of its miserable and murderous past it has commissioned clever adverts. Remember the man getting fit and trimming down to be in "shape for things to come?" All I can say is think of the countless steel workers and families who have been sacrificed. Think of the countless injured recovering, trying to get fit after another accident. British Steel’s "health" has been achieved - the fitness fanatic has dark hearts - no decimation. Viability of plants is a sham. They are sold again will Ravenscraig remain open? As a question of balance sheets it’s quite academic - being in the red means the threat of closure. Communities watch and wait while unaccusated. Privatisation means jobs hived off, re-negotiated or redesigned with only the communities around to suffer. After lifetimes of appalling conditions polonizing and killing the privatization of British Steel is coming to a close.

It’s up to the communities and workers to take it into their own hands. After all, as they said in the past, "we all need steel" and it most definitely has to be the workers’ right to decide at what price.

PURITY NOT PROFIT

The water industry’s assets have been valued at more than £26 billion and if they were to be built up again from scratch it would cost twice as much. The assets of British Rail and the National Coal Board would be cheap in comparison. Water is the very stuff of life itself, so no matter what the social system it must be administered for the public good, not abandoned to private profit. Since privatization of water was first broached there has been an unanswered question - how can the maximisation of profit be reconciled with the provision of safe drinking water?

In 1849 13,000 Londoners died of cholera in 1849. In the same year a London physician, John Snow, proved beyond all reasonable doubt that cholera was spread by water. Although it was for different reasons, municipal and regional sanitary sewer systems which put an end to cholera epidemics. Britain’s main drainage system dates back to 1844. 70% and 15% of the sewage system is over 100 years old with around 5000 sewer collapses each year. The ten regional water authorities spend in the region of £6 billion for sewer repairs in total budget of £20 billion.

It is possible that, with all the standards of water purity, the installation of water meters will reduce the use of water for hygiene purposes while the reduction of pollution control will assist to the reappearance of diseases such as cholera. Already, however, millions of people are drinking contaminated water with the levels of nitrates which fall below EU standards. Nitrates are widespread in drinking water in agricultural areas, where they are used to fertilize meat and give it a red colour. They are also present in vegetables due to the use of fertilisers. These nitrates then find their way into our drinking water. In Britain five million people drink water which is heavily lotted by nitrates. Scientists believe that this is a cause of cancer.

Traditionally, the pollution authorities have sought to reduce pollution to the lowest level acceptable. However, the process of improvement has suffered under government spending cuts, but it is still recognised as the objective. It would be abandoned altogether under a privatised water industry. Indeed the Littlechild report reveals the shape of things to come by suggesting polluters be given "property rights" in the form of "tradable discharge permits". In other words, firms could buy the right to pollute - and would be free to sell this right to other polluters. The report asks: "Who might be interested in taking over a water authority?" Candidly, it supplies the devastating answer: "construction companies and chemical firms". Chemical companies already have their offices on the boards of water authorities. For the polluters to take over the agencies of pollution control completely would be the bizarre but logical outcome of privatisation.

The water "Paving Bill" which will prepare the way for privatisation, received the Royal Assent on the 10th of May, Lord Crickhowell was straight away appointed Chair of the National Rivers Authorities, which is to be the regulatory body of the industry. I am a Londoner in the summer of 1989, the Tories intend to sell off the 10 water authorities. Unions representing water industry workers have called on Lord Crickhowell to put the defence of water purity and quality before private profit. The financial expert, Stanley William, has termed the 240 financial institutions a detailed paper warning them against investing in privatised water boards. He argues that there needs to be a positive investment to meet EEJ standards, and to stop the crumbling of the industry's infrastructure. In his document, Hill says there is far from certain that investment in private water authorities will yield a profit.

Marxists at the beginning of the century responded to the syndicalist critique of nationalism with an attempt to make reality take the mickey out of our demagogy. The syndicalist had much to say about how hollow that joke sounds. It is true that nationalism is the politics of the un-satisfied human needs, theCheers and the doublethink or protected the environment. However, privatisation will mean a loss of jobs, and therefore we cannot just stop the situation while the boards are sold off at giveaway prices. Neither privatisation nor nationalism offer the working class anything other than direct workers' control over that.
HOUSING ASSISTANTS at the Dalston-based New Islington and Hackney Housing Association struck in April in support of a grading claim. The 15 workers, members of the white collar union, MSF, took action after 14 months of friction with the management. Despite a strong case for regrading due to increased workload and responsibilities, and comparability with workers at other housing associations, management refused to budge. The threat of strike action helped to bring matters to a head and in May, the dispute was resolved with the raising of the workers' grade.

The cover story continues...

THE TORRES are going to introduce identity cards for all. They appear to believe that all football fans are hooligans so they are bringing in membership cards for all fans and certainly it believes all young people are drunkards - witness the identity cards introduced in Chad, Somerset for over 18 year old drinkers. A DHSS experiment is underway in Devon with so-called "care cards" that carry medical records to be used by computer. Such cards may be seen as a pilot scheme for a national ID card. Tony MP, Tony Fawell, recently tabled a bill to introduce computer-readable ID cards, and though it was defeated more than 100 MPs voted for it. Following this the Metropolitan Police commissioner suggested collecting "geometric fingerprints" of the entire nation and that ID cards would be compulsory by 1992 when all barries to trade in the EEC have been pulled down.

However, the National Physical Laboratory, in Minisest Street, London, also known as "Vestcheck" that scans the darkroom in a matter of seconds, is out using the red light to produce a crude equivalent of a fingerprint. This is able to scan the pattern stored in the image. This isn't quite the chance of 2 people having the same pattern, it is only one in several thousand. Nevertheless, under certain arrangements, it is one in several million. To resist identity cards must start now and should be linked to campaigns against the poll tax, Tony rhetoric on "rolling back the state" must be shown up for the sham it is. The state's attack on working class youth must be answered.

The cover story continues...

The SCOTTISH TUC has called a 15-minute strike against the poll tax. In this time people all over Scotland are supposed to "participate in a variety of actions". It is believed that the question of the poll tax will remain until there is a massive campaign against the poll tax. Meanwhile, Labour MSP, Fiona Cook, has called for a "more fundamental" attack on civil disobedience with 100 Scottish Labour MPs' leaders - "we won't pay. That'll frighten Thatcher to death!"

The cover story continues...

In the final episode of the 3 part political thriller on Channel 4, "A Very British Coup", left-wing Labour Prime Minister, Harry Perkins, decides to "let the people decide" by calling a snap General Election after attempts to make him resign. Helicopter blades are heard over an ominous new broadcast. The implication is clear - if a left-wing labour government is ever elected, if it actually carries out its election programme, and if attempts by the CIA/MBI fail to force a compromise then the military will do its duty to Queen and country.

The series was well-acted, well-directed and very watchable, comparing very favourably with most of the dross served up as political thriller. The scenario was written by Chris Mullin, now a Labour backbencher, and dream of every left-wing Labour activist, having lived it through the last government since the formation of their party. The central character - Perkins' original book ends with Perkins' resignation, forced from power by Labour backbenchers, with the whole of the left-wing Labour party in revolt. The implication is clear - if a left-wing labour government is ever elected, it is in breach of its election programme. The scenario is written by a Labour backbencher, with the whole of the left-wing Labour party in revolt. The implication is clear - if a left-wing labour government is ever elected, it is in breach of its election programme.

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In DA 49 we mentioned that Leonardo Morelli of the COB (Brazilian Workers Confederation) conducted a speaking tour of Europe after the 1979 IWA Congress in April. While Leonardo was in France, Le Combat Syndicaliste, paper of the French CNT, interviewed him. Here we reproduce this interview:

Q: What is the present economic and social situation in Brazil?

A: Brazil is a country of enormous paradoxes. You have great poverty beside great wealth. Capitalist sophistication arms factories next to shanty towns. The country is currently developing into heavy industry and tending towards a big "Hong Kong".

Advances in technology have brought about major changes in capitalism. For example, ten years ago Brazilian capitalism might have been described as monopolistic. Today it is more like the "finance capitalism" of banks, commerce and other services. So, in class struggle terms, the working class has seen radical struggle while in others, with more conditions, the conquest of new rights is all that can be fought. Every day workers struggle to win back what they have lost. This struggle, which never catch up as inflation is established and controlled by the government. The struggle for purchasing power is carried out in a repressive social propaganda, notably Spanish. Despite what you may think, relations with the ECC have gained through Portugal, but through Spain. This products which would have been kept out of Europe are made in Brazil and then exported to Europe.

CHANGES

Everything in Brazil is changing in one minute to the next. For example, for years, the military's policies have changed every 3 months and isn't to say Brazil is back to the 1930's. The CET is viewed as a context of experimentation. International capitalism is seen as a problem. Economic Brazil with new and different forms of capitalism. If we say capitalism is decaying - we don't think so. We believe capitalism can permanently adapt itself and create new forms to survive, due to the working class not adapting its culture to the struggle against it. It is a different situation from European workers who have certain capacities to adopt and continue some tradition of struggle.

The Brazilian state now funds new firms itself, Fiat, for example, that have bought a large number of its shares. When Fiat was bankrupt, the state sold its shares back to them at a loss. This is also the very way the electronics firm, Light, operates.

Q: What is the aim of this?

A: The Brazilian state is simply an agent of the International. By funding and world capitalism, it is re-structuring, in Brazil, criteria that go beyond Brazil. Just as there are British and US multinationals, in Brazil, so too are there Russian and Polish multinationals.

The COB is researching multinational activities as the problem is so important internationally. When Europeans fight to keep jobs today, it can be said countries like Brazil are taking them over. So we think European workers have a limited short term view as to what global capitalist reality is. This restructuring, which is not only economic but political too, reflects a "transnationalisation" of the globalisation. You can imagine large companies like Ford and Volkswagen competing in the car market in the same country. In Latin America, they are making the same trade name, Auto-Latina. Recently, the Brazilian government announced it will re-invest Volkswagen in Latin America. In coming years we can imagine setbacks in the overseas factories while Brazilian workers replace German ones.

Leonardo Morelli

This, according to reformist unions, is good. If such companies develop in Brazil, with its huge unemployment, reformist unions will have a larger "clientele" of workers to control. Thus the COB is compiling and analyzing all this information. We should be able to exchange information and reflections and collaborate with workers of other countries. This transnationalisation in Latin America forces us to go beyond classical political visions, in that of a national state. When it is said the Brazilian state is "weak" and non-existent, it is because no national state was envisaged. There is a new thing for workers - confrontation with a boss who doesn't exist, one who is everywhere and nowhere at once.

Q: How has Brazilian trade unionism changed since the 1970's? What is the reality of images of the workers' media of trade unionists like Luisa, the "Brazilian Walesia"? How has anarcho-syndicalism been re-born in the last 3 years?

A: In the 1970's, and particularly since 1977, there have been important struggles. In 1978 there were negotiations between the bourgeois parties and military for the military to give way to democracy whilst keeping the structures of dictatorship. With the wave of political strikes, organised outside the unionised unions arose. Luisa and his comrades were an important part and he even took a position against the strikes.

RESENTMENT

First, factory committees began to work for immediate demands against the question of authority and hierarchy in the factories. At that time I was in one of the committees which were informally factories resembling army barracks; in Brazil they resemble prisons. Brazilian workers resented this a lot so the first struggles aimed to be better working conditions. The 1977-79 strikes happened after various factory initiatives in the years before. The committees were clandestine because of the dictatorship and were organised quite freely. The hierarchy and well-defined structure of a libertarian model so reformist social union had no way of controlling them. The Church tried also with a "liberation theology" strategy. Thus there was an alliance between the Church and social democracy.

In 1981 repression was escalated. The state no longer lived in the economy, it broadened its field and the economy began to state. This happened presumably a spectacular rise in unemployment and many comrades were sent to the colonial wars. Militant propagandas advocated entre_hard and the original-cadre unionists, so from 1981 the struggle began to be institutionalised. Since 1982 to '83 the myth of the party was born. Marxist-inspired social democratic propaganda led workers to think unions were only for economic struggle, the social struggle being the party's domain. The Workers' Party was then formed, with Luisa as president. Up to 1985 a combination of factors contributed to the workers distrustful of institutionalised union changed.

From 1985 wildcat strikes, in which I took part, began, again outside the unions. Often a new generation of workers have a generally radical and advanced young left and left-sounding, and they were managers of large firms. On all strikes, all strikes were condemned to failure. The All Strike became a trap. There was no preparation for resistance and the all strikes, without workers, discredited the struggle. It was then that workers became aware that other forms of struggle and resistance had to be used like self-defence committees and strike solidarity committees. So, many of us moved towards anarcho-syndicalism. My adhesion to anarcho-syndicalism dates from 1984 when the wildcat strikes first arose. We understood, then, that all the other alternatives were dead.

Previously we had the idea that the IWA was an organisation of old men - we thought of the anarchists from the Spanish revolution. When we received the material for the preparation of our First Congress, it was a surprise to see the material from the Italian USI, with very concrete and important discussions, and very good texts. We had had contributions on quite different countries, demystifying the image of a skeletal IWA. It is an organisation with its roots and existence in very different countries. We now have sections in Japan, North America, Australia, Latin America, etc. So, little by little, we are laying the basis in the whole world, and we can verify that an IWA Congress has much more participation than many anarcho-congresses.

Leonardo Morelli

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Q: What is the IWA's interest in joining the IWA, which many anarchists call skeletal unionism, and whose sections are relatively weak, contrary to your possibilities? What do you want, practically and ideologically, from the IWA?

A: We joined the IWA firstly due to its principles and statutes. The IWA was in agreement with our anarcho-syndicalist principles in the internationalist sense that it is only right to expect from my revolutionary or anarchist militant,

RE-CONSTRUCTION

The IWA is considered the skeleton society has never been for us a pejorative thing since we too are building an organisation that was strong in the past but which is now weak. For us, it is necessary to re-construct an instrument which was strong and must be so again, so it seemed indispensable for us to contribute. We don't seek a ready-made IWA, to which we can give nothing and we expect solidarity as far as its possibilities allow. We do not expect an organisation that is all ready, finished and perfect. We think it is more valuable to participate in the creation of something than to find it all done.

If the IWA is weak, it is due, it is fair to say, to the errors of anarchist militants. We think we've chosen a good path. What we expect the most is exchange of solidarity and information, notably on the evolution of industrial in all countries, to have the best view possible. That will improve our militancy.
THE FIGHT FOR RHEINHAUSEN

The Krupp steel company and the factory committee agreed a rationalisation programme or "concept of improvement" last summer, which guaranteed the existence of the Rheinhausen steel plant at the cost of another 2,000 of the 6,200 jobs. In November, however, news leaked through the press that Krupp wanted to close down the whole plant by the end of 1988. The next day was the start of the "fight for Rheinhausen".

In front of three thousand angry steelworkers demonstrating at the factory company chairman, Croome, advocated closures "as the best economic solution". The answer was moderate - only some eggs and punched 'Nobody worked the whole day, which was rounded off by a 5,000 strong demonstration through Rheinhausen. Up to Christmas there were various demonstrations taking place for West Germany, showed remarkable militancy like the blocking of important Rhine bridges; visits to other steelplants in the area; wildcat strikes; and the storming of the house of Hugo, the former mayor of the Krupp family. This tendency appeared to auger bad for the fight but had no consistency.

In January the conflict flared up again. The factory committee planned weeks of action to force Krupp to abandon their plans - and, on the other hand, to keep the workers under control. Militancy and direct action mingled with piteous begging and alternative economic concepts "to keep at least the factory", even at the cost of another 2,500 jobs - all usually supported by the same workers. The factory committee's strategy - supported by the metalworkers' union, IGAM, and the ruling Social Democratic Party in Northrhine-Westfalia - was successful in that, for the most part, they didn't lose control over the workers, despite a spontaneous factory occupation in the production section of the struggle. However, the plant will be closed in 1990.

End Of The German Steel Industry

THE SPANISH anarcho-syndicalists' dream of an IWA, the CNT-AIT, could soon be made illegal due to a law passed by the present CNT committee. The new law, which has the support of the government, seeks to prevent the organisation of new CNT groups. The law is being attacked by trade unions, who believe it will lead to the dissolution of the CNT.

After the death of Franco in 1975 the CNT saw a massive growth in membership which frightened the Spanish state so much that it banned the use of infiltrators to divert the CNT from anarcho-syndicalism. Thus the first half of 1979 saw the emergence of a parallel structure and at the 5th Congress of the CNT about a tenth of the delegates and infiltrators then held a conference in Valencia's best-rejected libertarian communist.

Then in 1982 at the 6th Congress, infiltrators and trade unionists proposed participation in elections to the workplace committees (joint management-union committees) again in an attempt to steer the CNT away from anarcho-syndicalism. A minority favoured participation and the CNT's response was to ban the new groups immediately.

Finally, in 1983 the government passed a law that made it illegal for any group to organise the CNT. The law was passed without a vote in the Spanish parliament, and the CNT has now decided to take legal action to challenge it.

Unions Put the Brakes On

At Rome Airport, on August 31st 1983, the government's controversial contract with the unions for a 10% pay rise was rejected by the workers, who voted for a strike. The union leaders had a few days to negotiate a new agreement, but they failed to reach a deal.

The workers approved the strike, which was called by the main union, the Italian Union for Steelworkers (CISL). The strike was called by 92% of the workers, who were angry at the way the government had handled the contract negotiations. The union leaders had offered a 7% pay rise, but the workers had rejected it.

The strike resulted in a significant reduction in the number of strikes and an improvement in working conditions. The workers were able to negotiate a better deal, and the government was forced to accept the union's proposals.

The union leaders were given a mandate to negotiate a new contract with the government, and they were able to achieve a more satisfactory settlement. The strike was a significant victory for the workers, and it helped to strengthen the union's position.

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Meetings

ANARCHIST WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
July 23rd, 1pm to 6pm – £1
West Indian Centre, Laycock Place, (nr Trades Club), London NW6.

Workshops include:
- Mujeres Libres video; "De Toda la Vida"; anarcho-syndicalist women in the Spanish Civil War.
- Women & work; trade unions; initiating strikes.
- Improvisation; the role of music and theatre in revolution and social change.
- Thatcher's Britain & women.
- How to improve our direct action.
- Space to devise a workshop on the day.

plus creche, food, accommodation, poor access (help available) on the right, women only.
Contact: Resister, c/o Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds.

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, 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 any opposition from all political parties and trade union bureaucrats. All such worker's organisations must be controlled by the workers themselves and must only be used to further the workers' movement. Any and all agents of such workers' organisations must be subject to immediate re-call by the workers.
6. We are opposed to all states and state institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and requires 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 to control their own lives and environment.
8. The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism; a system where the workers alone control industry and the community with the help of the active participation of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.
9. The Direct Action Movement is resolved to initiate, encourage and wholeheartedly support the creation of independent unions based on the principles of anarcho-syndicalism.

The DAM was formed in 1979 from the SWF (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.

Subscriptions
UK AND IRELAND:
6 issues £2.00
12 issues £5.00

OVERSEAS:
6 issues £3.00
12 issues £6.00

Tick where appropriate and send to: Box DA, c/o DAM, 72 Piccadilly, Manchester 1. Cheques & POs should be made payable to "Direct Action Movement".

Want to find out more?
I would like to find out more about the Direct Action Movement. Please send me information:
Name:
Address:

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I am no expert on contraception and do not pretend to have any great knowledge on the subject. However, I have read a fair amount and feel able to make a few comments on the article in DA 49 on Depo Provera. The author of the article seems well informed but I question his/her emphasis and conclusions.

1) There's just too much controversy about DP to recommend it to women coming from severe uterine bleeding to cancers are attributed to DP and considering that you must wait for 3 months or longer to leave your body (whereas if you have problems with the pill you can stop using it immediately), this seems an unacceptable risk.

2) There is no argument that when choosing between the combined pill and the mini pill that the latter is undoubtedly a safer choice. Why then is this not also true when comparing the mini pill with DP? The only objection the author makes to the mini pill is that if you forget to take 1 or 2 pills in succession it is no longer a reliable form of contraception. Is this such a great hardship? If this happens then you just need to wait until your next period and start the cycle again - and in the meantime use something else. For me there is only the choice of either kind of pill - caps are not an option because I, like 1 in 3 women, have a reversed cervix and can't use a cap (so it's not simply a question of women being unable to cope with their bodies - though this is true for many). And, obviously, the pill, with all its many hazards, is out of the question.

ACCEPTABLE

3) The author reckons that DP is an acceptable form of contraception because, since it is an inject, it can be used secretly by women who don't want their husbands (I assume it would be husbands in this situation) to discover they're using contraceptives. Therefore, it is reasoned, this will free women from having children they don't want. I don't follow this line of thinking at all. Surely women who come from a background/society where they are expected to produce babies will find themselves in deep trouble when they don't produce, whether it's because they're taking contraceptives or because they're infertile (or because their husbands are). This is simply not acceptable to many cultures and the woman is likely to find herself tossed out on the street (infertility is grounds for divorce in many societies) and in the very poverty trap which the author reckons might be avoided if she takes contraceptives. Obviously, this situation can hardly be called a choice - the woman is stuck between a rock and a hard place, but DP is not a solution to this problem. Some women in this fix might decide to take a gamble and hide the fact that they're using a contraceptive - but surely such women could be provided with something - perhaps the mini pill - which is far less dangerous. And if it is Third World women we are talking about, then DP is certainly far from acceptable - anything causing bleeding in women who might already be malnourished is not simply an inconvenience, it is potentially life-threatening.

ARROGANT BASTARDS

4) DP was specifically created as a means of population control by Upjohn, a multinational pharmaceutical company, one of the world's leading lights in the "family planning" field. PD was created with the idea that it would be quick and efficient to use and that the doctor/nurse administering it would have the minimum amount of "nuisance" from the user. Indeed, as the author points out many doctors/nurses do not tell the women what it is they are being injected with. This is a point that I believe needs stressing because it is central to why DP was developed. It is a form of population control created by the arrogant bastards who decide who is to have children and who is not. There is no escaping this, and given the reality of who funds most clinics and not just in the Third World - and who, there-