

# Direct Action

P.3 floating hell

inside — MINERS  
IRAN —  
— STAR WARS

The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism

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## We'll sell you insurance We'll sell you out!



## Willis and the TUC, The biggest SCABS of all!

Paper of the Direct Action Movement - International Workers Association



## AN END TO ISOLATION

Eventually, after the various and often irrelevant arguments that have all too frequently plagued the Support conferences so far, at last something has emerged. At the second conference on Aug 8th in Manchester, steps were taken to set up and produce a bulletin that will pass on and link up information about struggle. Although, quite rightly, the main emphasis will be on factual information, there will still be room for political discussion of tactics and the lessons to be learnt from past defeats and of course future victories. The bulletin will be open to all groups who share the aims of the Network and will be monthly. After discussion it was decided that the bulletin is to be an external publication although not a glossy expensive affair. It will contain a contact list of current strike committees and all support groups participating in the Network. Strikers will receive the bulletin free of charge - it will be funded from subs and a £5 levy from local groups. Editorial control and production will be in the hands of a delegated local group, currently Gateshead Workers Support Group, who will be accountable to frequent delegate meetings (open to all supporters). The editorial responsibility will be rotated. The first issue will be out sometime in September.

Such a bulletin is totally dependant on local groups for finance and reports / articles that provide its content. It must be made to work - up to date factual information will end the present situation of hearsay and rumour. The bulletin must become the embodiment of a living, fighting network, something to enlarge and build upon. By sharing and linking up our experience of struggle we can start to end the isolation and demoralisation of workers' struggle.



# Frickley Miners lead the way

Tensions are higher in the mines than at any time since the Great Strike of '84-'85. British Coal has launched a vicious 2-pronged attack backed up by a barrage of media lies and the UDM scabs to batter down the miners' fighting spirit before they introduce the Tories' mad scheme to privatise the mines. BC management and the Tories think they can walk all over the miners and that they were broken after defeat in 1985 - well that's not true!

The first prong was planned 6-day working. Originally to be introduced in the new South Wales super-pits it is obvious it was a Trojan horse. Once South Wales accepted, it would be forced on all other miners. BC have never quite explained why more flexible working is needed in super-productive, super-efficient pits - you'd think they're the last places it was needed. The truth is miners will be expected to work longer hours for much the same money. As 1 miner put it: "I don't want to work weekends, I want to see my wife and kids sometimes". But the threat of negotiating with the UDM and even EETPU - how electricians can mine coal is anyone's guess - and the desperate need for jobs meant the South Wales NUM had to give in.

### "NORMAL"?

The stage was set for the next attack - the Code of Conduct - designed to pick off militants one by one by dismissal for any trivial reason. BC disguised it as a normal code no different from any other industry as it is roughly based on an ACAS code, but as the NUM point out it breaks the ACAS code in several important areas. Firstly it refuses dismissed workers the right to representation in appeals by a union official of their choice, totally breaching the ACAS code. Secondly management have stated they will discipline miners for almost anything including incidents outside



One of the Frickley picket lines

work time and workplace. The code is applied viciously - Nottingham NUM members were disciplined for putting up NUM posters; in North Yorkshire Ted Scott, secretary of Stillingfleet branch was sacked for allegedly breaching the catch-all code; in South Yorkshire 5 men at Frickley pit were sacked for supposedly leaving work early.

This time they didn't take it lying down. Frickley walked out and immediately sent flying pickets to spread the strike - 16 other pits came out in sympathy. It looked, to management's surprise, like South (and maybe North) Yorkshire would entirely close down. However, Yorks area executive told Frickley miners to go back and await the result of the national ballot against the code. The men were furious and voted almost unanimously to stay out.

### PAPER SELLERS

Monday 20th July saw the area council meeting, with delegates from each pit, almost all of whom strongly supported Frickley but were enraged when a group of left paper-sellers shouted "traitors" at them. Like most workers, miners, most of whom refused to cross the Frickley picket lines, resent non-miners telling them what's best for them and prepared to fight to the last drop of miners' blood.

There were definite moves to capitalise on this by elements not supporting Frickley. Although area

secretary, Jack Taylor said he would "accept no word of criticism of the Frickley men" one delegate (a Communist Party member) attacked them, calling them "wreckers" and "ultra-left" and that there was a need to "seize the nettle over those who called picket lines"; another openly stated he had "his" men through the picket line; yet another called for a re-definition of what was an "official" picket line. These people wanted to use the anger caused by the paper-sellers to create a backlash against Frickley but they failed. Although the council voted to tell the Frickley miners to go back to work they were praised for their actions rather than condemned.

The Frickley miners were discouraged by the call and after applauding those that stood by them they went back to work. The Frickley 5 were re-instated, given a verbal "bollocking" by the manager and at least 1 found "not guilty". However, Ted Scott's appeal was dismissed but he has been offered a job at another pit so the managers got their wish now he's no longer branch secretary.

Since then the NUM has voted 3 to 1 for industrial action against the hated code. British Coal management and the Tories clearly made a big mistake by believing the miners are broken and beaten. The fight is hotting up! An overtime ban breaches the disciplinary code so those taking part can be sacked. The right to strike and take action is one fundamental to us as workers - we must fight at all costs to maintain it.

## Salplas Occupied!

Workers at Salford Plastics in Eccles, Gtr Manchester went into occupation on August 22nd after 7 months on strike. A 40 ft high, 20 ft thick barricade of steel hoppers was laid across the factory entrance. The occupation lasted 42 hours - the time it took the courts to give the company access rights, backed up by police and bailiffs. The occupation was an attempt to stop owner, Barry Chapman, from selling up - 3 different customers were seen visiting the plant the previous week; some machines were stripped and repainted for removal; 2 processing lines have now been leased.

Chapman's bid to be a millionaire at 50 failed (he's 46 now). After sacking his workers to smash the union and recruiting scabs at half the wage, a list of failures ensued. The injury toll (one scab lost his arm in a machine); non-payment of suppliers; and use of rival factories to maintain outlets pointed to defeat - production has now ceased. Meanwhile the strike remained solid; the 24-hour picket went on and moral and financial support came from other workers and groups in the area notably Lankro workers next door.

As the September 14th Industrial Tribunal (to hear the original 6

sacked workers' cases) looms nearer, the possibility of Chapman disappearing to avoid compensation grows stronger. But the TGWU wasn't prepared to launch an injunction to freeze company assets. So workers took the initiative and occupied hoping any injunction served by the company would allow them to impose financial conditions on the firm's right to re-enter. The attempt to prove Chapman's plot in court fell through, no small thanks to TGWU officials who, apart from being unreachable when the injunction was served on the Monday afternoon, did not prepare proper evidence to prove his intentions - an easy enough job. They only appeared when strikers were forced out on Tuesday night, to make sure nothing had been lifted or sabotaged during the occupation.

The strike and picket has been lifted considerably by the action though it must be said more direct solidarity could have been shown by more workers in the area. A picket of Chapman's home, Casa Pina, Kirkbourne Grove, Baildon, Shipley, West Yorkshire, is planned. Please send messages of support with donations if possible to: Jim Billington, 6/196 Branch Secretary, 43 Abingdon Road, Urmston, Manchester, M31 1GW.

## COST-CUTTING CAUSES CHAOS!

After an overwhelming 3-1 vote for industrial action, London Bus crews and engineers held 2 one-day strikes both 100% solid. The general public were sympathetic and some private operators were also affected despite threats of dismissal.

### DISCONTENT

The situation at Norbiton garage sparked off the dispute. Drivers were told that, before competitive tendering of local routes their hours would be increased from 38 to 43 and pay cut from £4 to £3.50 per hour. Feeling on the picket line was general discontent with worsening conditions. London Buses Ltd's action at Norbiton is the latest in a long line of grievances, including introduction of one person-operated buses (OPOS), resulting in delays in services; increased stress for the drivers; and redundancy for conductors. Also ancillary services have been privatised; compulsory short-term contracts introduced in preparation for tendering; and LBL still fail to give staff proper protection against assaults.

The result of privatisation, with emphasis on profits at the expense of service, is already seen in the suburbs. The Woolwich to Sidcup route is a good example. When London Country Buses first took over buses were reliable and clean. Over the last 6 months standards have fallen - buses regularly break down, are in poor condition and the service is generally erratic. This is a direct result of not enough support staff due to massive cost-cutting in order to win the tender.

If further escalation is to be successful it will need the active support of other public transport workers and the communities they serve. If tubes and trains stop also buses it will effectively bring a large part of London to a halt. Due to London's geography, cheap reliable public transport is essential. If the buses are to remain a truly public service they can not be run as a profit-making enterprise. While London's transport is run by out-of-touch politicians and faceless bureaucrats, the community's real needs will never be met.



# The Tools of State Racism

## Hellship Prison "Good for tourism"

Immigration laws and controls are amongst the most clearly recognisable tools of state racism in Britain today. The past year has seen the introduction of stricter visa controls for people travelling from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nigeria and Ghana; a new Carriers Liability Bill to penalise airlines for carrying refugees not having official documents; the use of a floating detention centre for immigrants at Harwich Harbour; and removal of MP's right of representation.

As well as putting more pressure on people wanting to join relatives here or seeking asylum, the government has increased the harassment of refugees and black people living in Britain. So-called "illegal immigrants" and "overstayers" are hunted for in raids on homes and workplaces, and a whole network of internal controls is enforced in schools, DHSS and housing offices. Information is relayed back to the Home Office. The result has been a sharp increase in the number of people - women, men and children - imprisoned in detention centres, removed

and deported (over 50 a week). As centres near Heathrow and Gatwick have filled up the Home Office has opened up new ones Derbyshire and Wiltshire, as well as using remand centres and police stations.

The Earl William, a redundant passenger ferry moored at GasHouse Creek, Harwich Harbour, is the latest of these prisons. Already more than 100 people have been detained on it, kept in cramped cabins originally built for short channel crossings. The port hole windows are sealed shut leaving cabins unventilated.



Tamil refugees protesting on the Earl William

During daytime detainees are locked out, unable to return to collect possessions. The ship is guarded 24 hours a day by Securicor guards whose violent behaviour has been the subject of constant complaint. The detainees are not just Tamils but Iraqis, Iranians, Somalis and Eritreans are also imprisoned. Their crime? To be black, poor and dispossessed

(what more do you need?).

The Home Office is leasing the prison ship from Sealink at £2,500 a day! This provides the company with a convenient excuse not to re-develop the site, recently scene of a National Union of Seamen occupation. The NUS have, for this and other reasons, always been strongly against the use of

the Earl William in this way. The Mayor of Harwich greeted the floating prison with amazing warmth. The refugees, in his words, are "lawbreakers, illegal immigrants (who) are violating our space". According to him the Earl William is "good for tourism".

Since June 6th black, refugee and anti-racist groups have been holding pickets every Saturday on the quayside where the Earl William is moored. This brings attention to the existence of the ship as a prison and offers solidarity with the prisoners, whose conditions are harsh and all of whom face imprisonment or death if they return to their own countries.

On September 6th there is a day of action protesting at government treatment of refugees and those held as illegal immigrants focussing on places where immigration prisoners are held. Further information on this and pickets at Harwich from Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign on 01-254-6689.

### REGISTER WHILE YOU CAN!

The mass of legislation called the British Nationality Act lays down who is British, who can become British by registration and who must rely on "naturalisation" for citizenship. The delayed effects of the act are still to take effect. Most non-British people living here have the right to register as British citizens. Many - including Irish citizens, some UK and colonies citizens, and women married to British citizens before 1983 - will lose this right on December 31st. Some commonwealth citizens have until January 31st 1988, to register and some have no time limit.

Registration costs £60 but if a wrong or unnecessary application is made the Home Office keeps £10. Because of this and the fact there are 5 different forms to fill in you should get advice from a Citizen's Advice Bureau or Law Centre. If you have the right to register your application cannot be refused.

Naturalisation, for those not allowed to register or who miss the deadline costs £170 and can be refused by the Home Office without explanation or right of appeal. To qualify you must be "of good character"(!), be able to speak English, Gaelic or Welsh and have lived here for 5 years (3 if your husband or wife is a British citizen).

Many countries such as Trinidad, India and Australia do not allow dual nationality, so becoming a British citizen could mean losing your original nationality and complications if you wish to visit or return to that country. However, not registering could lead to deportation or losing the right to work in EEC countries.

## — More Family Misery Proposed —

The Tories have proposed changes to the 1971 Immigration Act, designed to make it more difficult for people to come to this country in order to join relatives already here.

Men entering Britain before 1973 were allowed automatically to bring their wives and children with them. To do so under the proposed changes they must prove they will have no

recourse to public funds - that is, housing benefit, supplementary benefit, family income supplement - and their right to housing taken away. This last restriction will have a particular impact on the Bangladeshi Community about 2000 of whom get homeless person's accommodation each year. In Tower Hamlets the racist Liberal council are trying to evict Bangladeshis on the grounds that

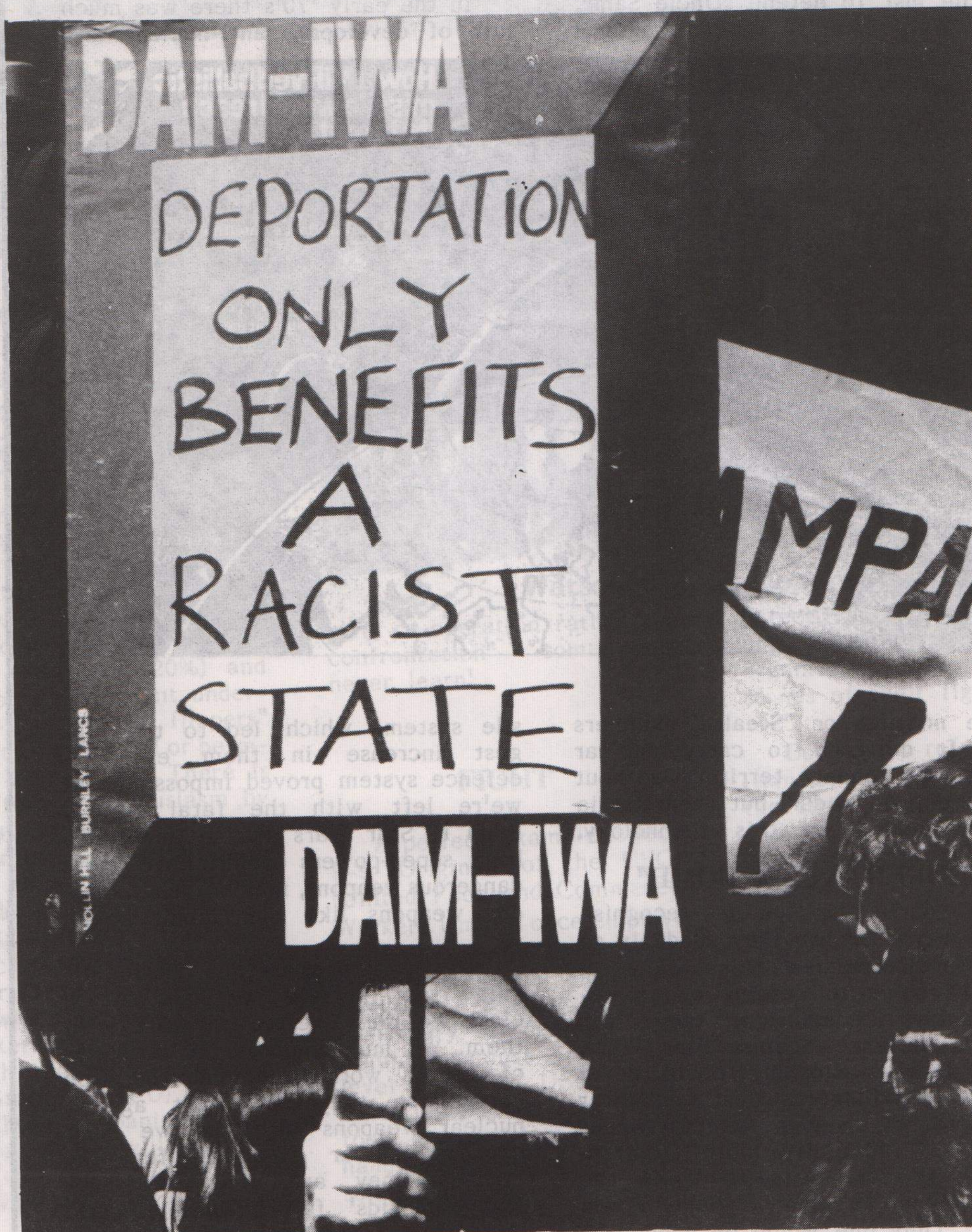
they "made themselves intentionally homeless" by coming to Britain. This will become much more widespread when the proposals become law.

People claiming citizenship but not living in Britain will be denied the right of appeal in Britain. They will have to appeal from abroad even though it will be heard in this country. As attendance at the appeal greatly increases the chance of winning, most cases will now be lost.

So the sustained attacks on the rights of black people and their relatives seen in recent years are to continue into the 1990's. These are another example of harassment and criminalisation of the black community by the racist British state, coming on top of police attempts to take control of black communities, notably Broadwater Farm in October 1985 and St Paul's in September 1986.

In response to this the Movement for Civil Rights and Justice has been formed: "This Movement is being called because we cannot stay quiet and see our rights being smashed and replaced with harsher and tougher measures by this police state system. Just look at places like St Paul's, Bristol, Belfast, Brixton, Liverpool, Handsworth, and the mining communities. We still have no real answer to what happened to Trevor Monerville, Paul Davis, McCurbin, Mohammed Parkit, Anthony Lemard and many others". They have called a march on October 3rd from Broadwater Farm to Downing Street with a rally afterwards in Hyde Park (see back page for details).

All working class people should support the struggles of black people against these attacks. By closing ranks and defending all its members our class can strengthen itself against the other attacks from the state and strengthen its commitment to and solidarity with workers of all countries and their right to travel, live and work where they choose.





# "Just Sign Here..."

Earlier this year a Blackburn woman came to Burnley General Hospital to have a caesarian section performed for her 2nd child. Unknown to her, after the successful operation the surgeons then sterilised her. When told afterwards what had happened, she and her husband were totally devastated. Having had 2 healthy children and wanting to continue having more, they demanded an explanation from the hospital who couldn't find a suitable excuse. The couple are now in the middle of a legal battle.

A slip-up you might think? A genuine mistake? Not likely. This isn't an isolated case. A number of women have come to this hospital solely to have an abortion. Whilst still coming round from the anaesthetic and groggy, they were asked to sign a form agreeing to be sterilised. When they finally came round, they were told about the second operation and could do nothing about it - they had signed the form! Burnley is noted in the North West for its high illegitimacy rate and its general hospital is known as having the highest infant mortality rates in the country. In the light this enforced sterilisation takes on a morbid significance.

## WOMAN'S CONTROL

Incidents such as this are not unique but must be seen in the context of a history of violation of woman's control over her own body. Such violation, however, is governed by factors ranging far beyond that of women's oppression and must also be seen as a consequence of prejudices along lines of class, race, disability and so on. For example there was a case in the 1970's

of a 26-year-old black woman threatened by officials that her welfare benefits would cease if she refused to have a surgical sterilisation. More recently the case of a mentally-handicapped woman whose sterilisation was sanctioned by the Law Lords came to light and on a broader scale women in the 3rd world are regularly blackmailed by Western-backed aid programmes into accepting the fitting of IUD's or treatment with Depro Provera, an injected contraceptive deemed unfit for humans in Europe and the US.



Women protesting in the '70's - now there's more to protest about.

Reproduction in our society is governed by a notion of the "ideal mother" who is middle class, white, heterosexual, married, able in mind and body and aged between 25 and 35. Reproduction is not just a "women's issue"; it is a political issue in every sense of the word. Whilst it is important to fight for the right to free abortions, working class, black, disabled and lesbian women often have to fight for the right not to have abortions and not to be sterilised. Reproductive rights are under attack; it is up to all of us to fight back.

## Morning Star Porn Link

The management of the Morning Star recently decided to sell its offices to the soft porn paper, Sunday Sport, who plan to become a daily probably next Spring. They have paid £2.5 million for William Rust House, home of the Morning Star since 1930.

The new owners are quite clear on the philosophy of their proposed daily. According to Mike Grabert, editorial director, it will be "a bottom of the barrel newspaper. We have no pretensions ever to be anything other than that and it will certainly have more colour and boobs than its competitors".

But why should that bother the Moscow-backed managers of the Morning Star - after all they have always acted like any other managers, sacking printworkers with minimum compensation and has recently put typesetting of the paper out to contract with the loss of many jobs, leaving only the journalists and administrative staff. They are searching for cheaper premises in East London and visiting other national newspapers to see how they operate "New Technology".

## The War To End All.....?

Will Star Wars rid the world of the threat of nuclear war or could it ultimately be the death of us all? Those that believe the second statement have further evidence from an unusual source - Former US Secretary of Defence, Robert McNamara.

Star Wars, or the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) was called by Reagan an "impenetrable umbrella" that would totally protect America from nuclear weapons. Once the US develop it they would share it with the USSR then as nuclear weapons would be obsolete the 2 sides could dismantle them all. Sounds fair and Reagan would go down in history as a great "man of peace". But McNamara revealed on Radio 4 that there isn't 1 Star Wars system but 2!

The first is the "leakproof" system, the one described by Reagan. This could totally protect America from Ballistic nuclear missiles even if Russia attacked first. However McNamara revealed it couldn't work for at least 40-60 years. The second system, the "leaky" system, could work much sooner but wouldn't defend against a Russian first strike. However, if America attacked first wiping out most Russian land-based missiles it could defend the US against Russia's reduced revenge strike mostly from submarines. Even then the US has the best anti-submarine warfare system in the world! As McNamara said: "It must be seen as part of an aggressive system. That's how we would see it if the Russians were developing it."

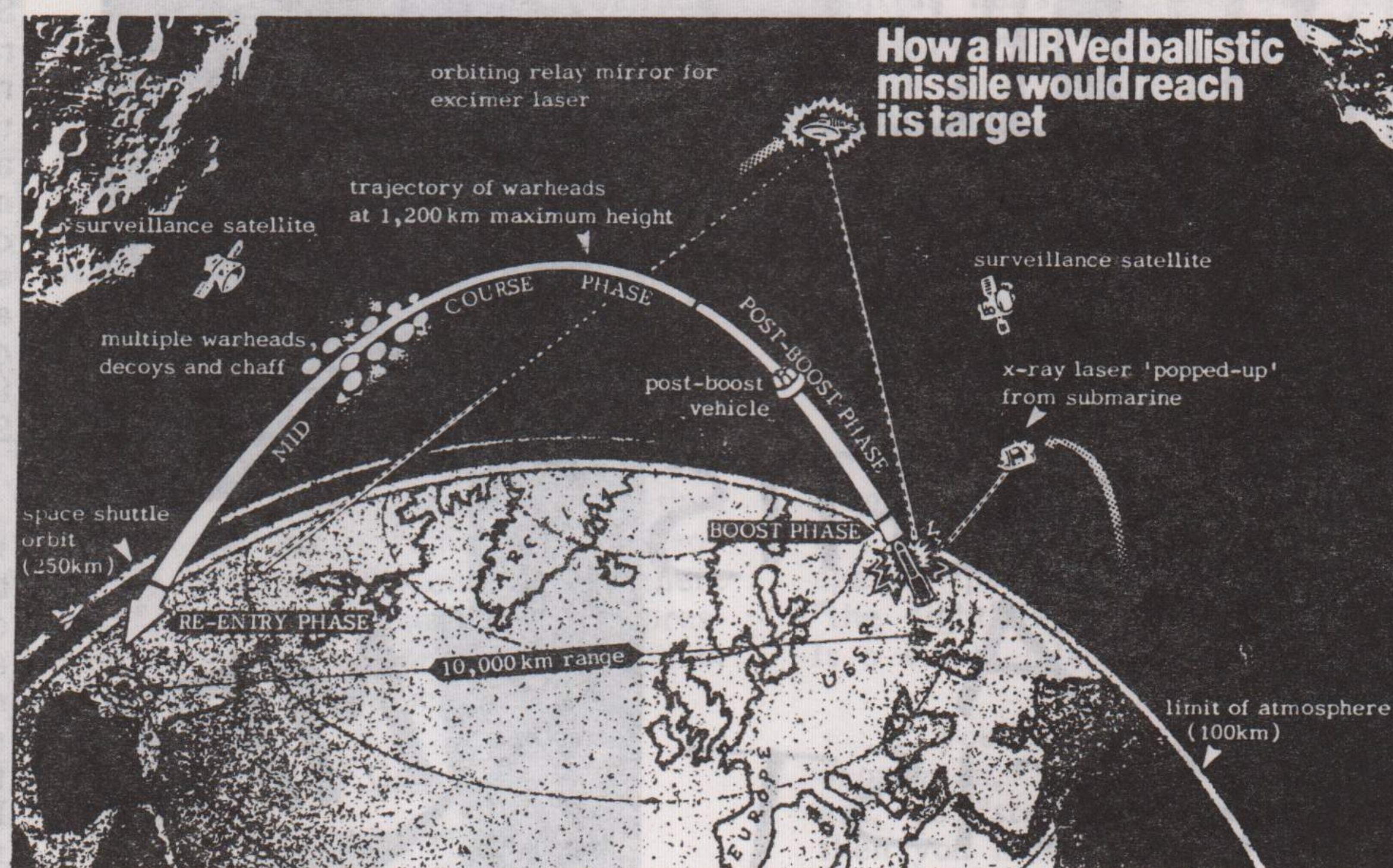
There are further questions. If it was a purely defensive system the US would share with Russia why not develop it jointly with them? Or why bother at all? If the final aim is disarmament leaving Star Wars as expensive junk floating in space, why not go directly for disarmament? The answer is the US won't share it.

Also Star Wars could only defend against long range weapons, not against short and medium range ones. Although America isn't within range of such weapons Britain is! And

through early warning radar stations Britain will play an important part in Star Wars, making us even more of a target than today. Nice to know we will die just to defend "Uncle Sam"! Star Wars won't defend against

blow up the whole world and destroy us all. Fantastic as it sounds the Cobalt Bomb has been known about for decades and would be cheap compared to Star Wars. No one has made one as the threat hasn't been enough to need one. If the USSR built one they could position it so that if the US attacked it would go off automatically. If it were to go off by accident...

In the early '70's there was much talk of developing anti-nuclear mis-



cruise missiles or "Stealth" bombers (aircraft designed to carry nuclear bombs into enemy territory without being seen on radar) but then Russia is far behind on this technology.

### "SUPER ATOM BOMB"

Of course the Russians recognise this - why else are they suddenly so keen on disarmament talks? However if talks come to nothing or an unsatisfactory conclusion they will need a defence against Star Wars. Their fragile economy could never develop anything as costly as Star Wars so a cheaper alternative is needed. A possibility more frightening than Star Wars itself is the Cobalt Bomb, a kind of "Super Atom Bomb". Only one would be needed to

silence systems which led to the biggest increase in them ever. A defence system proved impossible but we're left with the fatal legacy. Even if Star Wars proved impossible both super-powers would have more dangerous weapons, maybe even Domsday weapons like the Cobalt bomb.

The working class has nothing to gain from nuclear weapons. As a class we must refuse to work with them. We must support the struggles of fellow workers behind the iron curtain so they can fight against nuclear weapons also and we must expose nuclear weapons for the madness they are. It's our future and our kids' future these lunatic Generals are putting on the line!

## SAY NO TO DEPORTATIONS

Alvado Samuels entered the UK on April 15th to visit his family, most of all his father who underwent major cancer surgery last year. Arriving at Heathrow with a 3-month return ticket, Alvado was detained by immigration officers saying they were unsatisfied with his reasons for entry.

Apart from being interviewed at Heathrow, Alvado has had 2 further interviews at Manchester Airport, the 2nd on July 16th when the Samuels family asked for Alvado to be given leave to stay for a further 3 months as his ticket could be extended to then. His presence is an important encouragement to his father who is still seriously ill (Alvado is the only family member not permanently resident in Britain). It's essential that the family is together at this difficult time. Although, during the interview the immigration officer gave the impression this may be possible, Alvado was given a "Notice of Refusal of Leave to Enter" as the officer was dissatisfied that Alvado was "genuinely seeking entry as a visitor only for this limited period". The notice also detailed directions for his removal on August 6th.

Such cynicism by the Home Office is only seen in cases of black and Asian people and can only be interpreted as an intensification of the British state's racism through increasingly restrictive immigration policies. Although intervention by Gerald Kaufman stalled deportation on the date given Alvado has had no official leave to stay and awaits further communication from the Home Office. The struggle continues...

For further information contact: Alvado Samuels Defence Campaign, c/o Immigration Aid Unit, Room 713, Town Hall, Manchester M1. Any donations or communication would also be extremely welcome at this address.



# Broad Left Groups Curb Militancy

The vote against an all-out strike by the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) is a blow to many activists giving the government a green light to attack low-paid employees and paving the way for attacks on other sections of the working class, especially claimants.

The Unemployment Benefit Service (UBS) is to be merged with the Manpower Services Commission to drive claimants into low-paid jobs undermining wages and conditions and to train workers to accept low pay. Supplementary benefit is to be replaced by Income Support and the Social Fund, replacing many benefits with loans. Recently the Guardian gave details of a draught Income Support questionnaire with direct questions about nationality thus linking benefit entitlement to immigration status to terrorise and stigmatised immigrant workers.

Civil service workers' anger and militancy peaked in Spring. Department of Employment (DE) workers had fought ethnic monitoring and availability testing; there were massive votes for striking for more pay. A national strike in Customs and Excise, VAT offices, the Home Office, Treasury and elsewhere could have crippled government machinery during the election. But the CPSA National Executive Committee (NEC) opted for use-

less and demoralising regional strikes with the members as a stage army. Within weeks the momentum and interest waned.

The Communist Party's Broad Left '84 (BL '84) group joined the right-wing arguing against an all-out strike. Only the Broad Left group was for, but was tied to winning the NEC elections and a Labour general election victory rather than taking the arguments to the rank-and-file. It won control of the NEC yet didn't call off the selective action. Instead, weeks were wasted in petty bureaucratic squabbles with the right. During the June 8th/9th national strike Broad Left did not send out speakers and leaflets or hold rallies to argue for an all-out strike but distributed a glossy "Vote Labour" leaflet.

The NEC at last voted for a ballot and Wembley Conference Centre was hired for a national rally on a Sunday. Of 300-odd activists in an empty hall delegate after delegate, mostly Militant supporters,



reported there was no problem and victory was in reach. But the time for all-out action had long passed. The NEC later admitted: "The ballot...had come too late" - national circular, 16/7/87. Lost wages for little gain were all that selective action achieved. Only an intense campaign at the start could have delivered. The rank-and-file cannot rely on union bureaucrats - even left-wing ones.

While defeat is demoralising for many, the ballot showed 19,000 members are willing to fight. Members in the DHSS

are already taking action over "limited period appointments" - "super-casuals" on limited contracts vital to conversion to Income Support. In the DE there has been action over the introduction of YTS to the department itself.

A rank-and-file movement must link these struggles against the unions' sectionalism which divides workers in the DHSS and UBS. Arguing against attacks on claimants and immigrants can create an alternative to union leaders who demand a "better civil service" whatever its anti-

working class content. Many of those willing to fight are drawn to Broad Left but end up lost in bureaucracy. A step towards a strong rank-and-file is to argue for workers to control their own disputes through elected strike committees so union leaders can never conduct such a disastrous campaign again.

DAM Civil Service Workers, c/o 121 Railton Rd, London SE24.

WORKHOUSE - rank and file civil servants, c/o 75, Stockwell Rd, London SW9

## DON'T REOPEN OR WE'LL BE BACK!

The 90 sacked printers in the Midlands Trader dispute were forced to call off their fight but pledged to return to the picket line if former boss, Lionel Pickering, tries to re-open the factory with a scab workforce. After 7 hard months their resentment and frustration against the National Graphical Association (NGA) reached breaking point. Many felt that with the union doing its utmost to undermine and sabotage their fight, there was no way they could win. A chapel meeting on June 26th voted 31 - 16 to wind things up. If the chapel had voted to continue they knew the NGA would have tried to call it off anyway.

The union's final stab in the back came at the previous NGA national committee meeting from NGA boss Tony Dubbins. Ignoring a chapel vote to continue he said: "I want the dispute stopped, now". Many Labour Party hacks on the committee suggested waiting for the election result so Dubbins then suggested giving strike pay (£66 a week) to strikers who canvassed for the Labour and only half for those who refused. He wasn't joking - even the committee threw out his suggestion. Extension of strike pay for 7 weeks was only a stay of execution as the printers realised all too well. Militant strikers were prepared to fight on without the union, as were all the support groups, but many printers were not.

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Ending the dispute won the best media coverage throughout the strike. On local TV and radio they left Pickering with a clear and defiant message: "You try and re-open Heanor Gate and start up printing and we'll be back in our hundreds and thousands to stop you."

The anger and bitterness towards their union and its sell-out won't be easily forgotten. The best action in the final weeks was an 1-day picket (without NGA permission) of the Welshpool factory in Wales where fellow NGA printers are scabbing by printing Trader titles. It brought the union



### Nottingham Anarchists, always strong supporters of Traders Strikers

leadership's wrath down on their heads once again. Dubbins demanded an explanation and a promise they'd never picket there again... As to expelling the Welshpool scabs, the NGA say this: "wouldn't be in the best interests of the union", or to you and me: "We don't want to lose the money these scabs pay to union coffers." As one printer said: "The NGA has just become a subs collecting agency..."

Despite the union they've learnt a great deal - "the best 7 months of my life", one printer put it. For months they've acted together to run their own dispute. They've travelled all over the country; picketted day and night; spoken at rallies; been interviewed by radio and TV; produced leaflets; held collections; run stalls; taken

photos and found themselves doing things they'd never believed they could have done before the dispute. Now they're editing a video of their fight which they filmed themselves. It has been a living example of self-education, self-activity and mutual aid.

When a supporter was arrested on the picket line at Leicester Trader offices and fined £265 for "aggravated behaviour" the strikers insisted on paying it in full themselves to return the solidarity they've felt from the support groups.

It wasn't the strikers who lost this fight. Time and time again they showed their willingness to take on the bosses. Their fight has been a defiant "NO!" to both Pickering and NGA and SOGAT bosses.

## ABBAY MEATS STAND FIRM

Workers at Abbey Meats near Newtonabbey, Co Antrim have been on strike since the end of May when they occupied the factory to protest against the sacking of 14 men for their trade union activities. The company has offered the strikers £10,000 each to call off the dispute. This has been refused. The dispute comes after two years of on/off disputes over sackings, shut-downs and changes in work practices. Every time management have threatened these very militant workers have beaten back the attacks and stand every chance of being successful this time.

The strikers (TGWU and USDAW\* members) appealed to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) to publicise the dispute and black operations at the company's other factories - "United Meats". This has met the usual result - no action despite 100% backing of the workforce for the dispute. However, at the July ICTU Congress in Cork the strikers protested outside. Afterwards they staged a sit-in at a nearby factory owned by the company with the full support of the workers there. This achieved the result of bringing management to the negotiating table for the 1st time in 2 years. At the time of writing negotiations are continuing with the prospect of success for the strikers.

\* TGWU - Transport & General Workers' Union.

USDAW - Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers.



# Italy- Where Striking is a 'Crime'

Italian workers are showing their mistrust of the party-controlled union confederation\* and so-called Autonomous (bosses' "sweet-heart") unions by organising rank-and-file committees - the Comitati di Base.

First to organise was the teachers with a co-ordinating body (Cobas). The structure is horizontal with autonomous local groups based on direct democracy and rotation of representatives. The teachers' committees are in struggle against both the Education Ministry and official unions, who together arranged contracts without consulting the mass of teachers. The old contracts were unsatisfactory as they rewarded senior teachers while giving miserable rises to lesser staff. Junior, part-time and supply teachers' increases do not even match inflation! Work-to-rules is the main form of struggle so far and they are refusing to do end of year reports. May 25th saw a national strike and demonstration in Rome by the teachers' unions.

## MILITANCY CRIMINAL

The independence of the Comitati di Base with no leaders and local, sometimes wild-cat character has alarmed both union bosses and education officials. At the start of the struggle armed police went into some schools to arrest militants. For failing to do

after-school evaluation they were threatened with losing a whole day's pay. It seems that militancy outside the unions is a criminal offence!

The Cobas national conference in June was attended by 1,000 people. Officially there are some 2,050 committees demanding a workers' referendum on the entire contract. During the summer holidays they'll be preparing to renew the struggle in Autumn.

Next to organise were locomotive drivers, forming provisional sector co-ordinating bodies. They want health and

rest days' per week; rights to meals when working; and a 160-hour maximum working month. Their ideals are similar to the teachers, demanding worker participation in decision-making and direct democracy. The first national strike - a 24-hour stoppage on June 23rd - was a success with 70% of drivers joining it - 90% in some areas - despite union opposition. Assemblies in many areas discussed the right to strike and formation of a national co-ordinating body at the June 30th conference.

The conference decided on a further 24-hour strike on July 26th with each area organising as workers there think best. Such stoppages enable the nearly 20,000 drivers to hold assemblies where different shifts meet to discuss their problems. The drivers state



"Fighting for a better world"

safety improvements both in restrooms and locomotives; 2

the organisation is healthy and strong as a steel chain,

more autonomous than the autonomous unions. Unlike the traditional unions its numbers are not measured in union cards but in the number of workers who joined the June day of action and assembled in the railway stations.

## TOADYING UNIONS

The growth in the rank-and-file groups and "unofficial" strikes is another blow to the official unions. Their toadying to the bosses and state dates from the fascist era, wanting to control workers and all decision-making about contracts and strikes. Their "no strike" deal with the last government was undermined by the militant action of Genoa dockers (see DA 37). They've had votes against them in some Alfa-Romeo factories. Now they face opposition from teachers and railworkers. So the UIL (Republican/Social Democratic unions) has called for anti-strike laws to "protect citizens". Obviously workers are not citizens in their eyes!

Other unions are split on this. Socialists in the CGIL support it but Communists in the same union oppose it. The Catholics of the CISL are surprisingly against it, but their leaders thunder against rank-and-file groups. These splits are mirrored in the "autonomous" unions with only the USI (Italian section of

the IWA) and some libertarian organisations supporting self-managed workers' action. In Italy the unions are part of the state and capitalist system. They are a transmission belt between bosses and workers passing on orders from party bureaucrats to the workplace. Now they cannot channel workers' unrest into acceptable forms of protest as they are no longer seen as workers' organisations.

## WORKERS CONTROL

The growth of the rank-and-file movement depends on various factors. The Communists will try to regain lost ground by using militant rhetoric to draw support from the Comitati di Base back to the CGIL. Attempts to criminalise rank-and-files by legislation to give all decision-making on strike action to official union structures may deter some workers. Ideological development depends on libertarians and anarcho-syndicalists arguing the case for total workers' control, not just more democratic participation in the existing system. The rank-and-file movement is a step in the right direction - it remains to be seen if it reaches its destination.

\* CISL - Catholics  
CGIL - Communist majority + Socialists  
UIL - Republicans + Social Democrats

# —Shipyard Battle-Zone—

Puerto Real shipyard used to "be a lifeline for Cadiz. During the 5 months' struggle there this year it was occupied on Tuesdays and on Thursdays demonstrations and meetings were held in the town. Anti-riot reinforcements were called in from all over as more and more people outside the shipyard took up the struggle. On February 24th police cut through the fence to attack the assembled workers. On Tuesday March 10th 300 cops surrounded 1500 workers but were chased away. Mass assemblies in the town centre usually ended in clashes with police using rubber bullets. Barricades were erected and the road to Cadiz cut off.

## CAUSES OF CONFLICT

A decree in 1983 broadly laid out the redeployment of shipyards proposing 18,000 job losses throughout Spain. In Puerto Real the administration, the firm's management and the UGT (Socialist union) agreed 2,000 redundancies - a reduction to 3,400 employees. At the time Pepe Gomez, secretary of the Puerto Real union section of the CNT-AIT (Spanish section of the IWA), stated that the objective was not a sectional fight in shipbuilding, but to involve all sections in crisis or being redeployed in united action as the only likely way of making the government back down. He was thinking of steel, engineering, and agriculture (the day-labourers in Andalusia having mobilised already).

For Puerto Real employers the situation became more and more critical. Of 18,000 workers in the redeployed naval sector only 4,000 had new job offers - promises of new posts in an "urgent re-industrialisation zone" were dead letters. Of the 3,400 workers left 1,200 were technically unemployed for 4 years. Their

wages were progressively reduced and the firm no longer took on apprentices despite initial promises. In December-January social unrest erupted, with the CNT-AIT prominent, due to the workforce's anger and violence at the bosses' cheating and broken promises.

This struggle has a wider context. On the economic level it is the re-shaping of capitalism worldwide. Shipbuilding no longer fits in Western Europe. Puerto Real might well be a modern shipyard able to build ships of a million tons but it isn't on the right spot on the international capitalist chessboard. Also there is Spanish politics. After Franco's death the transition to democracy was negotiated by the old regime and the left parties (Socialist and Communist) to ensure the dictatorship's collapse wouldn't generate social movements re-activating revolutionary hopes. Thus the marginalisation of the CNT was to be a priority.

The UGT (Socialist) and CCOO (Communist) unions, by successive social pacts sold out struggle for a few billion pesetas. Today with the de-

cline of the Communist Party the CCOO want to recapture lost ground but has little credibility - political opportunism hides treachery badly.

## STRUGGLE PAYS

The direct action paid off in May when the authorities took measures to prevent a real catastrophe. Negotiations started between all parties. On May 26th in a last ditch attempt management tried a lockout but the resulting riot made them back down. Although the yard hasn't been fully reopened many partial demands were won. The conflict has put redeployment back on the



agenda - before it was regarded as a dead issue by the Socialist Party government.

It also shows the anarcho-syndicalist strategy of direct action and self-management of strikes by strikers themselves through general assemblies works. The CNT-AIT's influence was decisive. Radical mobilisation of thousands does not just happen. Many CNT activists were hurt, arrested, and subjected to beatings. The costs of bail have been set very high and some face years of imprisonment on charges of "inciting to violence". Of 9 prosecuted 8 are CNT members.

# DIRECT ACTION GETS THE GOODS

The Wall Street Journal has discovered US workers increasingly resort to direct action on the job to win demands - and it's worried! Page 1 on May 22nd announced: "More Unions Turn to Slow-downs; Workers Keep Getting Paid While Hurting The Firm by Obeying Its Own Rules".

At the McDonnell Douglas Long Beach, California plant, turning out passenger jets workers refused to install parts without blueprints, following work rules to the letter, enforcing all safety regulations, generally making life miserable for the bosses. Sanford McDonnell, chief executive, terms the direct action campaign "baffling and frustrating". Already, McDonnell Douglas has missed at least 10 delivery dates for jets, and is reportedly running 2 months behind on deliveries. They recently wrote to workers warning that the slowdown may hurt future business and cause them to miss up to 50 delivery dates. The workers turned to direct action after rejecting demands for concessions on pay, benefits and work rules.

At Babcock and Wilcox's Barberton, Ohio plant 2 years ago the company refused to reverse disciplinary action against a union activist. The workers didn't file a grievance or turn to the government for help. Instead, the Journal tells: "5 people left their jobs to argue the case...management told them to get back to work or leave and home they went. Another 5 workers went



...to argue the same grievance. This went on until the company had sent home 50 workers." Such tactics won a new concession-free contract.

Some 700 nurses at Boston's City Hospital a year and half ago launched a work-to-rule; refusing to work overtime, answer phones, move beds or do work outside their job classifications. Management caved in after 2 weeks, agreeing to a 23% pay rise over 2 years.

The Journal notes: "Union members instead of marching off the job, are now staying at work and battling the company from within...companies must keep paying workers participating in a slowdown, because they continue to do their jobs and adhere to the rules...Management consultants all say more and more companies are asking for advice on how to respond to slowdowns."

With the current spate of management-inspired strikes/lock outs in Britain, workers could learn a few tricks by checking their rule books. I remember one place I worked at which would have closed down in 2 hours if we had stuck to the rules!

Source: Industrial Worker



# The Cauldron of War

There is so much involved in the Persian Gulf the average viewer can be excused for being confused as to who's fighting who and for what. The fact that the US weighed in against Iran not long after supplying them with arms and after the Iraqis "accidentally" bombed the USS Stark says it all.

The Gulf War started in 1980 when Iraq attacked Iran after the 1979 Islamic "Revolution" that brought Khomeini to power. The excuse is partially racial; the Iraqis are Arabs; the Iranians Persian. Iraq regime hoped to annex part of Iran that is Arab rather than Persian (and very rich in oil to boot). Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein had problems with internal dissent and the war served to unite the country behind him. Khomeini also faced opposition in his early years from ethnic minorities like the Kurds and radicals. So the war proved useful to consolidate his regime.

## "HOLY" WAR

Unfortunately for Iraq, Iran has proved tougher than expected. While the Iraqi's are better-equipped Iran has greater human resources - that is cannon fodder - and have come to look stronger. Now that it can only hold the line Iraq wants to end the war. The Iranians, sensing victory and knowing that without a "holy war" things might start to go sore at home is determined to topple Hussein and install an Islamic regime along Tehran lines.

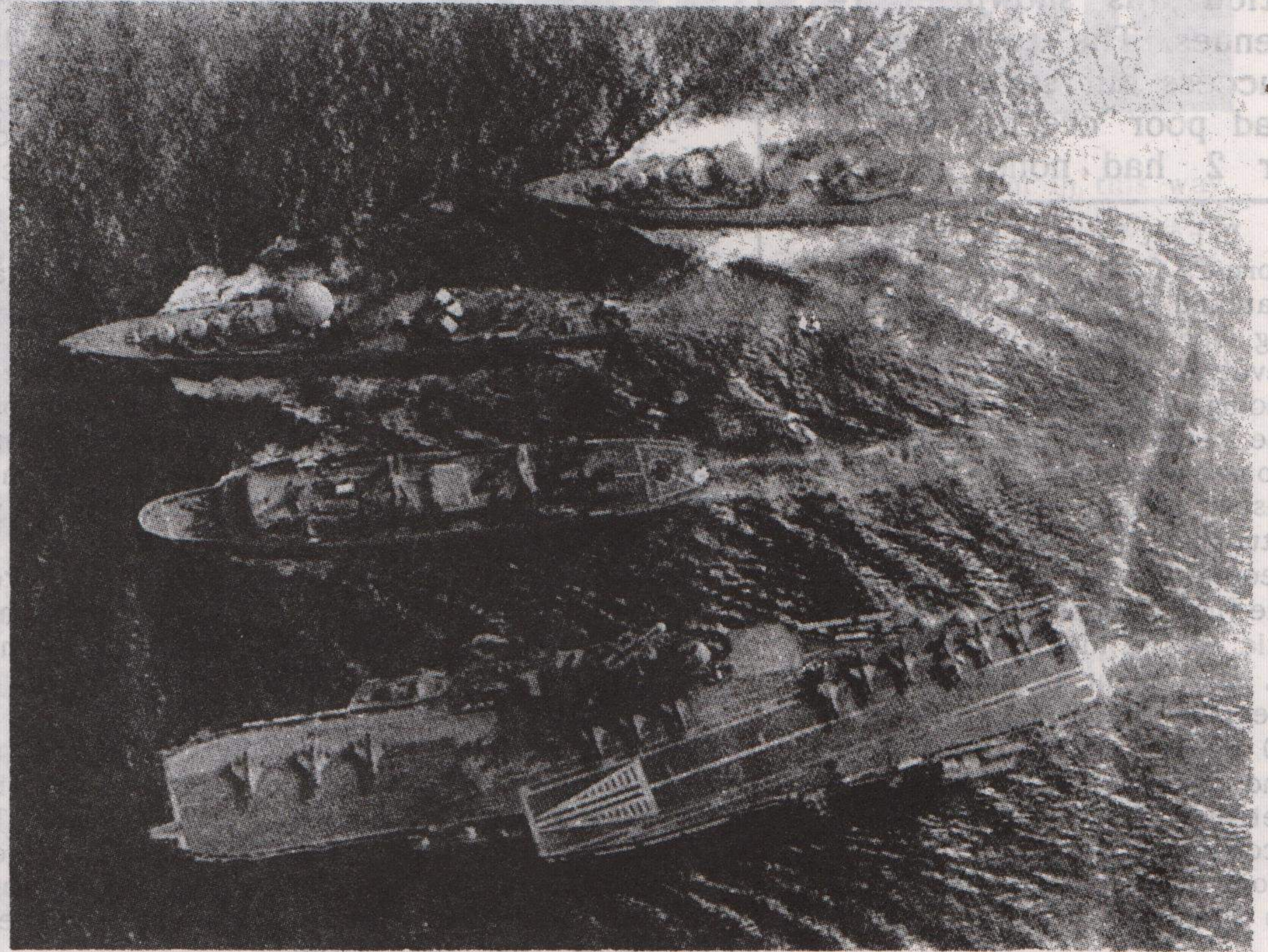
## TANKER WAR

Finding itself on the defensive in the land war Iraq attempted to spread it to the waters of the Gulf, in the knowledge that any threat to the flow of oil would involve other

countries and the super-powers. The "tanker war" has in fact raged for several years with both sides trying to hit the other's oil revenue without which neither could pursue the war. Iran is more vulnerable as all its oil exits via the Gulf whereas the Iraqis can export overland. So the Iraqis have attacked tankers of Iraq's regional allies - Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, etc - who are allied to Iraq as they fear Islamic fundamentalism which came to power in Iran and which is a powerful force across the entire Muslim world. This is the background to the massacre of Iranian pilgrims in Mecca. The tide of fundamentalism worries many governments including the USSR which has its own Muslim minorities.

Kuwait asked the US to re-flag its oil tankers hoping for protection from Iranian attack. The US readily accepted especially as the Russians also offered protection. Another factor was that after the Iran-Contra scandal Reagan has to prove that he can teach the Iranian "terrorists" a lesson. But most importantly the leader of the "free" world has to show he can defend US "interests" in the Gulf...oil and the vast wealth that flows from it for international capitalism.

New heights of hypocrisy and farce came with the UN Security Council calling for a ceasefire. Having for years armed both sides, Reagan, Gorbachev, Thatcher and the



French section of the Western armada

rest now call on them to stop using the very same weapons! It was merely a gimmick to isolate the Iraqis and provide a cover for possible military action against Iran later. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Britain is among 26 countries who have sold arms to both sides. During the recent tit-for-tat expulsions between the UK and Iran, Iran's military procurement office in London (responsible for purchasing arms across Europe) wasn't closed.

Now she has put the "Great" back in Britain Thatcher had to be involved somehow so she's despatched a few ships for the western armada. Mind you she has a lot of ground to make up to get back to the days when

British oil companies virtually ran Iran, when Britain could topple a government that tried to nationalise oil installations and install that great democrat, the Shah of Iran.

These, then, are the ingredients of the Gulf cauldron. Fingers are on triggers and a minor incident could spark a major confrontation whose consequences would be unpredictable. If the West were serious about wanting peace they'd withdraw the battleships, stop fuelling the war with arms and get Iraq to drop the "tanker war". The Gulf War has already cost well over a million lives - no more martyrs are needed to die for warmongers the likes of Khomeini, Hussein, Reagan, Thatcher and Gorbachev.

# Labour Bashing U.S. Style

As the British capitalist offensive goes nearly unchecked, the same can be said of America. The origins of the current wave of labour-bashing in the US can be traced back to the sell-out agreed by the United Auto Workers (UAW) with Chrysler (facing bankruptcy) in 1978 aided by Jimmy Carter's Democratic administration. Shortly after all the bosses jumped on the "poverty" bandwagon. From steel to textiles union after union granted concessions despite rank-and-file opposition.

In 1980 the Professional Air Traffic Controllers took the stage. After months of negotiations this small independent and rather conservative union struck, was broken and all the workers sacked. With PATCO smashed and the unions conceding left, right and centre, the bosses were off to a great start. The only "militant" response by the AFL-CIO (TUC equivalent) was a 500,000-strong demonstration in 1981 in Washington. Leftists, labourites and many rank-and-filers thought the stodgy AFL-CIO was becoming more militant and combative. Nothing was further from the truth. Anarcho-syndicalists argued that they merely wanted to give the illusion they were ready for battle. Six years have passed and the AFL-CIO has not made one dent in the bosses' offensive.

Retrenchment and reorganisation of capital has meant massive declines in basic industries followed by growth of the service sector. This has led to a drop in union membership (to less than 20%) and growth of a permanent underclass of "hamburger flippers" - marginally employed or permanently unemployed. There is little effort or enthusiasm by reformist unions to organise this sector as in Britain. Rather than class struggle, union bureaucrats call for state intervention to save manufacturing jobs; ask us to vote for "friends" of labour - those who smashed PATCO, railworkers etc; and collaborate with the ruling class. As John Grant (EETPU) put it: "What these companies want is a union that will do its utmost to avoid strikes, and that's what we offer them. We



Watsonville Cannery workers

give co-operation rather than confrontation" - some people never learn!

## FIGHT

A perfect example is local P-9 (Original) of the UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers Union), once employed by Hormel in Minnesota. After years of wage and benefit concessions, P-9 rejected a concessionary agreement. After arguing against it at local level and with UFCW representatives, the rank-and-file took matters into their own hands and battled back with some good "ole-time" tactics.

Direct action, rank-and-file participation and democratic organisation were the corner stones of their fight.

But in true reformist tradition UFCW leaders sabotaged the strike enlisting the AFL-CIO to isolate and smash it. As with the British miners the "official" labour movement would not let them win. A victory would be won not for reformist unionism but for militant class struggle unionism with much in common with revolutionary syndicalism. We all know this cannot be tolerated by those whose jobs rest on reformist "business unionism". The upshot was that the "Original" P-9 was placed under

"trusteeship" - under control of the UFCW heads - and a contract signed with Hormel (see DA 36 for details).

Some "Original P-9ers" have formed the independent North American Meat Packers' Union which along with some UFCW members and unorganised meat-packers recently held a rank-and-file conference attended by about 100 people. It was a success being the first time these workers could meet together to discuss common problems and another conference is planned. This is a positive step for one of the most battered and militant sections of the American working class.

## VICTORY

Unlike the P-9ers the mainly Chicana single mothers at Watsonville Canning in California successfully fought the company and Teamsters' union. While the final settlement reduced wages to the current industrial level, the strikers defeated all other company demands. Also every striker returned to work and all scabs were let go. In this day and age in the US this was a solid working class victory.

Source: Workers' Solidarity Alliance, US section of the IWA.

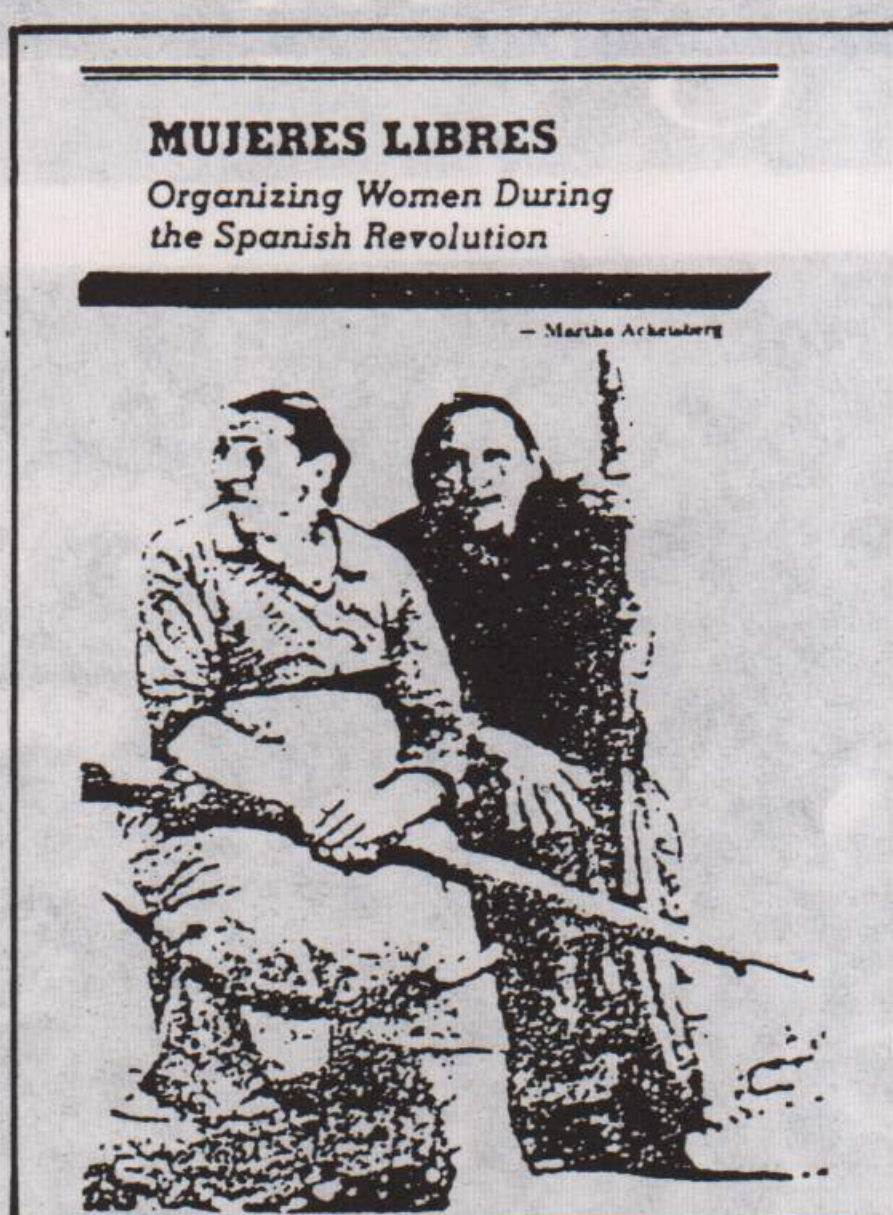


# —Mujeres Libres on Tour—

In July a video on women in the Spanish revolution was shown at 14 venues. The tour was a success but some venues had poor creches and 1 or 2 had none at all.

In East London, at the Four Corners Club, about 25 people watched the video, most staying for the discussion. This revolved around the situation facing anarchist exiles after the revolution; the number of women who made it to the anti-fascist front; and then the situation in Britain today. People seeing the video for the first time seemed sympathetic to the ideas expressed in it. Next night at St. Matthews Meeting Place, Brixton, 30 - 40 people watched the video and discussed the revolution's betrayal. Also a woman gave an account of her parents' escape from fascist-controlled Spain to France.

Then it was on to the North West leg made by 4 DAM women and 2 kids in a van. The women took turns to speak, 1 on the Mujeres Libres, the other on DAM. Crewe's meeting was in a posh community centre where the video was watched by 15 - 20 people. A good discussion followed on problems of isolation in Crewe and how the local bureaucrat-run sports centre kept people off the streets, tired them out and diffused any political activity. Next was Liverpool. The video was shown at the poly. The discussion covered practicalities of anarchism; women's situation today and difficulties of holding on to gains made by Spanish anarchists in the revolution. One comrade amusingly put down the Revolu-



tionary Communist Party full-time organiser who graced us with his presence at the end of the meeting.

In Manchester town hall, 30 - 40 discussed the video, its origins, bias towards anarchism and jargonised responses to situations. The next venue was Bolton Socialist Club, the most ideal place yet with its own creche, bar and large meeting room. 25 people attended. A lively discussion followed on the relevance of anarcho-syndicalism and DAM to women's isolation. An older woman comrade remarked that she'd organised and stood by her union all her life. A plush room in the Burnley Mechanics' Institute was the last meeting for the North West. The discussion covered Federica Montseny's role in the Popular Front government and today's economic situation.

During the same week 5 North East towns were toured by a Leeds DAM member. First was Bradford at the 1-in-12 Club, attended by 30 people. Many were enthusiastic about the film and showed interest

in DAM. At Huddersfield the meeting was attended by mainly DAM members and friends. Nottingham was next, attended by about 20 people at the International Community Centre. There were problems with publicity as people had been summonsed recently for putting up posters.

25 people came to the Leeds meeting, many new to anarchist ideas. People were interested in Spain under Franco's influence as compared to the inspiring days of 1936-39. York was the last meeting. The talk and film were well received by the 20 people there. The discussion centred around the problems women face today. Discussion centred around the problems of women today.

In Bristol, about 30 people watched the video and heard a DAM speaker. There were problems with the video getting lost in the post, but a last minute replacement was found.

Further showings and meetings are planned in the next few months for Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leamington, Oxford, Luton, Streatham, Croydon and in the Doncaster and Burnley areas. The success of the tour was made possible by the hard work put in by DAM comrades around the country. We hope this tour will encourage many similar events.

A pamphlet by Mujeres Libres has been produced by the DAM and a translation of a book is under way. If groups or individuals want to read or distribute the pamphlet which was produced to give background information for the tour, they can contact Brixton DAM, BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX, price is 60p. & p&p.

## Rebel in Paradise

by Howard Zinn

performed by Moving Target Theatre Company

After the banning of their "Make People Matter" campaign NALGO, the National Association of Local Government Officers, appear to be nurturing their new-found "notoriety". The "all gob and no guts" union sponsored a play about the life of the anarchist, Emma Goldman, to the tune of £10,000. Quite what inspired them to do so is hard to say.

The starting point is an argument between Emma and her authoritarian father over the Chicago martyrs, prompting her to leave for New York where she meets lifelong comrade Alexander Berkman. The play takes us through her political development, closely inter-

twined with her personal relationships with other well known anarchists of the time.

The tumultuous events of the class struggle in America are well described. Berkman's attempt on the life of Henry Clay Flick, boss in the Homestead lockout strike, who had hired 300 strike-breakers from Robert A. Pinkerton's private army, goes drastically wrong. His failure to kill Frick gets him 22 years (he served 14), and Emma is left to carry on the fight without him. Berkman's actions led to a rift between Emma and Johan Most. In fact many issues still being debated within the anarchist movement were covered - the use of violence, individual action and sexual freedom.

Emma then embarked on a national speaking tour where she meets the dodgy Ben Reitman, and their passionate love affair is well portrayed. Emma increasingly is the subject of harassment by the authorities, who term her the "most dangerous women in America". They finally get their chance to extradite her when she publicly advocates refusal of conscription upon America's entry into World War One. The play ends on this note.

It's a shame that the play, shown only in London and Edinburgh, probably won't get the national exposure it deserves, as through it the theatre becomes a vibrant and entertaining medium for communicating anarchist ideas.



### AUTHOR'S REPLY

Dear Comrades,

When I said that capitalism was the root of all oppression I was not saying that capitalism created all oppression but that it has used women's oppression like it has racism to its own advantage.

Women's oppression existed before capitalism and even if it were smashed women could still be oppressed, but the material base of women's oppression - that is women having no economic independence because they have little control over their labour power, that would be destroyed if capitalism was smashed and complete collectivisation and socialisation took place. If women had complete economic independence they would be in a far better position to fight sexist and reactionary attitudes that would not automatically disappear.

Capitalism doesn't create women's oppression, it has merely used it for its own ends, through the education system, the church, by keeping women in the home, etc, it has institutionalised it. Because capitalism is the strongest power structure patriarchy exists alongside it but is almost always subordinate to it, and as the material base of patriarchy would be destroyed by smashing capitalism and creating an anarchist society it is correct to say that patriarchy "stems from" capitalism.

Until capitalism is smashed women will never be free, no freedom is possible. This does not make women's oppression a secondary issue, but it is a completely wrong analysis to presume you can smash capitalism. and

## Letters

Dear comrades,

I would like to comment on the article "Forgotten Women". I thought it was a good article, necessary and raising important issues. The only part I'd dispute was in paragraph 2. It stated: "We don't agree with all aspects of today's feminist movement. Many of them see the root of women's oppression as patriarchy but we argue that capitalism, not men, gains from and is responsible for it. Women's oppression can't be seen in isolation but in its overall context - that is, all oppression stems from capitalism."

This is a mistake which I made myself until someone said otherwise. I would say all men gain from sexism. The oppression of women by men having power over women in the home and day to day relationships based on power and property. Of course capitalism and the ruling class do benefit more so on the oppression of women by keeping men and women divided in all areas of life but capitalism is not responsible for its beginning or creation. Capitalism perpetuates sexism.

It's right to say women's oppression can't be seen in isolation as all struggles are one but all oppression does not stem from capitalism. That's as if to say that before capitalism there was no sexism,

women weren't subjected to violence or rape and there were no other forms of oppression.

This is not what the comrade meant when the article was written, it's just a common mistake people tend to make. What it should have said, and I'm sure this is what the comrade meant, is that sexism and all other forms of oppression stem from a society based on a rank structure in all areas of life, of obedience and property in all their forms, on a system of power and submission relations on a day to day basis and of one class over another. Capitalism may be abolished but if the state remains as in so-called "socialist" countries, there will still be domination, repression, property and profit. And women will still be oppressed.

In solidarity, Ged.

Dear DA,

I write this letter in response to the article "Forgotten Women" in DA 41, July/August. So capitalism is the root of all other oppressions! Well I cannot agree with you. Whilst being able to see the benefits for capitalism of women's oppression, a "floating labour force" to be called out in times of need (like war), pushed back into the home in times of recession (as is happening now) to be housewives that "produce" the labour force, or simply a cheap and often un-unionised workforce.

Why do you have to see patriarchy as stemming from capitalism? Both are equally oppressive to women. Historically and otherwise there is no real evidence to suggest that

capitalism developed first. Although you can argue that patriarchy developed as a means of ensuring that men's property passed down to their rightful heirs, etc. It was already men's property wasn't it!

Although it can be argued that before you can change or destroy something you have to understand how it developed to its present state - the importance of history. Talking about patriarchy and capitalism, which comes first, is like talking about the egg and the chicken.

To state that patriarchy "stems" from capitalism is not just words, it effectively places the fight against patriarchy as secondary to "the fight" against capitalism which is a stupid mistake.

If you see patriarchy, women's oppression, sexism, anti-lesbianism, etc, as "stemming" from capitalism then you make the mistake of being myopic. And it all sounds very much to me like "yes girls, after the revolution we'd talk about that" - I quote: "Only after capitalism is smashed will women be free".

Capitalism won't be smashed unless patriarchy is smashed at the same time.

Whichever stems from where, they are both here now and neither can be broken unless the other is broken simultaneously.

As for the statement that men don't benefit from patriarchy! I think whoever wrote that needs to have a bloody good think about it!

Yours in question, Chris.



patriarchy at the same time, you will only destroy patriarchy by destroying capitalism and not the other way round.

Obviously as a revolutionary I do not think women's liberation is possible through reformism but at the same time I do not leave women's issues to a more appropriate time. In the here and now we should be fighting sexist attitudes whenever they appear like we should be fighting racist ideas and homophobia. A divided class only benefits those who have a vested interest in preserving the status quo.

The question of who benefits from women's oppression is one feminists have failed to adequately answer. Women's oppression is in capitalism's interest as it divides the working class, it uses the system where women service men, keep them in good physical and emotional state so they are fit to work, women also produce and rear children - the future producers for capital. This is the point I was trying to argue when I stated that capital not men benefit from women's oppression.

It can also be argued that women's oppression is in the interest of men, as it is nicer to come home from a hard day's work and have your meal cooked for you; but surely we are not that short-sighted, surely we believe that women's liberation is in the interest of both sexes? Men would benefit from women's freedom just like they will benefit from the construction of a new society, if that isn't the basis of our advocacy for struggle then what is?

In solidarity, Denise.

Dear comrades,

Following on from your article on Jewish anarchists in the East End in

DA 41. A journalist from a London evening paper was sent to visit and report on the goings-on in the anarchist clubs and meetings in the area. He recounted that one social evening ended with the singing of an anarchist version of the popular song "After the Ball". He was impressed by it, but unfortunately

didn't record the words for posterity. Does anyone know the words of the anarchist version of this song? If so please write to: Spectacular Times, Box 99, Freedom Press, Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX.

Solidarity, Larry.

## WE REMEMBER

Sixty years ago on August 23rd 1927, 2 Italo-American anarchists, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, were murdered by the state for their supposed part in an armed robbery at Braintree, Massachusetts. They were convicted, not on any evidence, but for the crimes of being immigrants and anarchist workers. Their persecution prompted mass demonstrations by workers around the world in an expression of unity and international solidarity not matched since. Even this wasn't enough to save them from the electric chair since the US was still ruled by the xenophobia

and red scare which had lynched the Chicago martyrs some 40 years earlier. In 1977 Sacco and Vanzetti were cleared by the Massachusetts State Governor who admitted they had not received a fair trial.

To commemorate their murder, the DAM History Group has re-published "The Story Of A Proletarian Life" by Bartolomeo Vanzetti, first published by the Sacco-Vanzetti Defence Committee, Boston, in 1924. For further details: DAM History Group, c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge.

## MEETINGS

South West London:

Racism And How To Fight It - Monday September 7th.

"All Our Lives" (video) - Women In The Spanish Revolution - September 28th.

Greens And The Class Struggle - Monday October 5th.

All meetings at Streatham Library, Streatham High Road, SW16, starting at 8.15pm. Creche available by phone notice - 274 6655. Wheelchair access also available.

Tameside:

The Economic League (Cranks or Spooks) - September 21st.

The State Armed (Release A Mulhart) - September 28th.

at The Highland Laddie, Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyme, starting at 8pm.

## JEWISH ANARCHIST GROUP

This newly-formed group welcomes new members - to discuss our heritage and debate on where we stand as Jews and anarchists. It is hoped to form a network of contacts and organise activities. Interested? Write to: Jewish Anarchist Group, c/o Box JAG, 52 Call Lane, Leeds 1.

## SONGS OF ANARCHISM AND REVOLUTION

A collection of traditional anarchist songs from around the world on audio cassette. It sells at £3 post-free.

Also items are now being collected for volume 2. If you have any recordings, or can sing ones you know on to a tape please send them to: Spectacular Times, Box 99, Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1. The first volume can also be ordered from this address.

# DAM Contacts

## North East

Doncaster ----- PO Box 96, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN4.

Huddersfield --- PO Box B20, Huddersfield, HD1.

Leeds ----- Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds, LS2.

Newcastle ----- c/o Tyneside Free Press, 5 Charlotte Square, Newcastle, NE1.

## North West

Bolton ----- c/o Bolton Socialist Club, Wood St., Bolton, Lancs.

Burnley ----- 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancs.

Crewe ----- c/o National Sec. c/o Cambridge DAM.

Liverpool ----- Box DAM, 82 Lark Lane, Aigburth, Liverpool 17.

Manchester ---- c/o Box DA, Raven, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.

Tameside ----- c/o 3 Stanhope St, Ashton-u-Lyne, Tameside, OL6.

## Scotland

Bellshill, Lanarkshire ----- Box DAM, c/o Clydeside Press, 37 High Street, Glasgow.

Edinburgh ----- Box 83, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh, EH1.

## South East

Brixton ---- c/o 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London, SE24.

Cambridge ----- Box DAM, Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge.

Central/North London ---- Box DAM, 234 Camden High Street, London, NW1.

Deptford ----- 17 Turner's Road, Limehouse, London E3.

East London -- c/o 84b Whitechapel High St., London, E1.

S.W London ----- c/o 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London, SE24.

Tower Hamlets ---- 17 Turners Rd., Limehouse, London E3.

## Other Groups

Bristol ----- Box DAM, 37 Stokes-Croft, Bristol 2.

Mansfield & Ashfield ---- 28 Lucknow Dr, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts.

For contacts in S. Wales, Midlands, East Anglia, Kent, etc, write to the National Secretary, c/o Cambridge DAM.

## Industrial

DAM Building Workers - c/o East, London DAM, 84b Whitechapel High St, London, E1.

DAM Civil Service Workers - c/o South West London DAM, c/o 121 Railton Rd, Brixton, London.

DAM Council Workers - c/o Box DAM, 234 Camden High Street, London NW1.

DAM Education Workers - c/o Bolton DAM, c/o Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St, Bolton, Lancs.

DAM Health Workers - c/o East, London DAM, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1.

DAM Postal Workers - c/o South West London DAM, c/o 121 Railton Rd, Brixton, London SE24.

DAM Railworkers - c/o Manchester DAM, c/o Box DA, Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.

## Other Contacts

Ainriall: ----- c/o Just Books, 7 Winetavern St, Smithfield, Belfast 1

Anarcho-Syndicalist Publications (ASP) ----- BM Hurricane, London WC1N. and P.O. Box 96, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN4.

Black Flag: ----- BM Hurricane, London, WC1N.

Luton Class War: ----- c/o Houseman's, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N1.

Organise: ----- c/o Just Books, 7 Winetavern St, Smithfield, Belfast 1.

## DAM - IWA

1. The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisation.
2. Our aim is the creation of a free and classless society.
3. We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery in all their forms and replace them by self-managed production for need not profit.
4. In order to bring about the new social order, the workers must take over the means of production and distribution. We are the sworn enemies of those who would take over on behalf of the workers.
5. We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is by independent organisation in the workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers' organisations must be controlled by the workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers' movement. Any and all delegates of such workers' organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.

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

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

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

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. This was formed in 1922 and has national sections in more than dozen countries.

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

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Deadline - Sept. 21st



# Direct Action

**MARCH FROM BROADWATER FARM TO 10 DOWNING STREET Sat October 3rd**  
**March leaves 10.00am (Seven Sisters Tube, 243, 123, 279, 259, 249, 76, 171) Rally in Hyde Park 3.00pm**



## Free Moses Mayekiso!

In August Moses Mayekiso, a leading black South African trade unionist and 4 comrades from Alexandra (the Alex' 5) face trial for high treason and sedition. Moses is general secretary of the newly formed National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) with 120,000 members, an amalgamation of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU) of which Moses was general secretary, and 2 automobile industry unions. NUMSA is the 2nd biggest union in the Congress Of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) with over 800,000 members. Moses played a leading role in founding COSATU. When he appeared in court in January COSATU general secretary Jay Naidoo and National Union of Mine-workers' leader Cyril Ramaphosa were among 200 trade unionists picketing outside. Moses' trial is thus immensely significant to the balance of class forces in South Africa. The state of emergency involving detention of over 5,000 and the murder of 100's has certainly hit community-based organisations hard but has not managed to crush the organised working class.

Moses is well-known to many British trade unionists. Last year he visited Britain at the invitation of the CPSA to do a speaking tour to publicise the independent trade unions. For his troubles he was strip-searched at Heathrow. As a socialist who has said: "The struggle in South Africa is a class struggle", he was also elected chairperson of the Alexandra Action Committee which is comprised of delegates from street committees and in turn from local block committees in Alexandra. It was one of many township organisations which filled the power vacuum as the collaborationist black councillors and police were driven out. Moses was therefore a symbol of the growing unrest in the townships as well as the growing strength of industrial workers. After his return to South Africa he was arrested and has been detained, mostly in solitary confinement, since June '86. As the state of emergency intensified the South African Defence Force were able to re-establish more control over the townships using naked repression and mass detention. Yet the organised working class on whom prosperity depends cannot so easily be "removed" or "occupied".

In the 1960's unions in the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) were rendered almost powerless by the banning of its leadership. SACTU's prioritisation of armed struggle meant activists were taken from the factories to waste their time in guerrilla camps. This left the unions vulnerable to state repression. So with the latest wave of unionisation the so-called "workerists" insisted on strong democratic workplace organisation based on shop stewards' councils. They argue

that the black working class must play the leading role in the liberation struggle, warning against replacing white bosses with black ones. The "populists", associated with the African National Congress and United Democratic Front, favour a nationalist class alliance against apartheid and were instrumental in pressing for COSATU unions to adopt the "Freedom Charter".

**"When the power remains with the workers on the shop floor, there is no head to cut off."**

Thus the "workerists" have learnt from SACTU's mistakes. As Moses Mayekiso pointed out: "When the power remains with the workers on the shop floor, there is no head to cut off." An indication that their strategy has paid off was the one day strike last October at the height of the state of emergency by 300,000 miners in protest at the health and safety conditions which led to the Kinross mine disaster. Strikes like this and the long OK Bazaars strike in retailing which involved over 1000 workers show that it's possible for workplace organisation to withstand state repression. During the OK Bazaars dispute, for instance, about 700 strikers were sacked, over 600 arrested and about 90 detained under the state of emergency regulations.

### CRUCIAL

The present period is crucial for the black working class. The state has detained around 2,300 trade unionists

including 40% of COSATU's officials, yet its affiliated unions are still growing in size and influence. The trial and possible execution of trade union leaders is no longer an industrial, but a political issue. The South African regime has yet to confront the trade unions head on but Moses Mayekiso's trial and the raids on COSATU offices signal that a generalised offensive may soon begin.

Botha will think long and hard before attacking the unions as the South African ruling class is divided over the future of apartheid. The white farmers and most of the white working class are moving towards the far right resulting in the growth of the Conservative Party, the Herstigte Nasionale Party and even the neo-fascist AWB. To retain electoral support Botha has to use repression. On the other hand important sections of capitalism, especially the English-speaking business community want to remove apartheid to save capitalism. The business community was prepared to recognise and negotiate with the independent unions before the state legalised

ment as a threat to their living standards.

### DECISIVE POWER

Whilst integration of the unions is not possible at present, this has not prevented bureaucratic tendencies developing. Some unions such as MAWU were sharply criticised for taking part in the state-sponsored "Industrial Councils". MAWU was also prepared to use the courts to defend its members' interests. For example, when seeking registration as a non-racial union, they successfully appealed to the Natal Supreme Court after the government would only let them represent African workers. The bureaucratisation of "workerist" unions like MAWU contrasts with the refusal of the nationalist or "populist" currents within the unions to collaborate at all with the state, taking a confrontational stand and thus suffering repression. So while organised workers can wield the decisive power in the liberation movement, political leadership is still with the African National Congress. There is no independent working class organisation politically advocating



Moses Mayekiso

them. These capitalists favour an industrial relations structure based on joint negotiating bodies and tribunals such as the Industrial Councils. Through this they hope to integrate the unions into the state apparatus. The recession and white working class unemployment prevents Botha moving down this reformist road. Most, though by no means all, of the white working class, due to their immense privileges over black workers, identify their interests with apartheid and see power-sharing, sanctions and disinvest-

the uninterrupted struggle for socialism rather than the "stageist" national liberation policy advocated by the South African Communist Party. Stageism is the idea that the revolution must go through a nationalist-democratic stage first (thus the need for a populist front of democratic forces) before it can move towards its second stage i.e. socialism at some time in the future.

It is clear that Moses Mayekiso's trial could be a decisive moment in the current

struggle. If the unions can respond, like when half of MAWU's membership struck over Moses' arrest, and if the "workerists" can mobilise in a political direction apartheid capitalism could be buried for



good. If the unions back down from such a confrontation the class struggle could well tail off like in Poland after Solidarity failed to challenge the political power of the regime in 1981.

**"The struggles by Black Trade Unionists have been an inspiration to us all."**

In Britain we should support the "Friends Of Moses Mayekiso" campaign in workplaces so that we can raise the question of working class power in South Africa. As the campaign says: "The struggles by black trade unionists have been an inspiration to us all." It is important that we point to countries like South Africa where the working class plays the leading role for social change, providing a powerful argument against the people who've written off the working class from history altogether and those who preach "new realism" in the labour movement and "broad democratic alliances" as the political alternative to Thatcher are the same people who support the nationalist class alliance of the ANC led by the black middle classes. DAM recognises that support for the struggle in South Africa must be based on black needs and take the form of workers' solidarity action rather than the Anti-Apartheid Movement's popular front based on moralism and concern for human rights. To this end we promote and support the building of direct links between British and South African workers as an important internationalist response to multinational capitalism. By publicising and supporting strikes, by adopting detainees and campaigning for the unconditional release of the "Alex 5" we can begin to make concrete the slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all".

The Friends Of Moses Mayekiso can be contacted for further information and for propaganda material c/o Terry Bell, "Friends Of Moses Mayekiso", Acorn House, 314-320 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X.