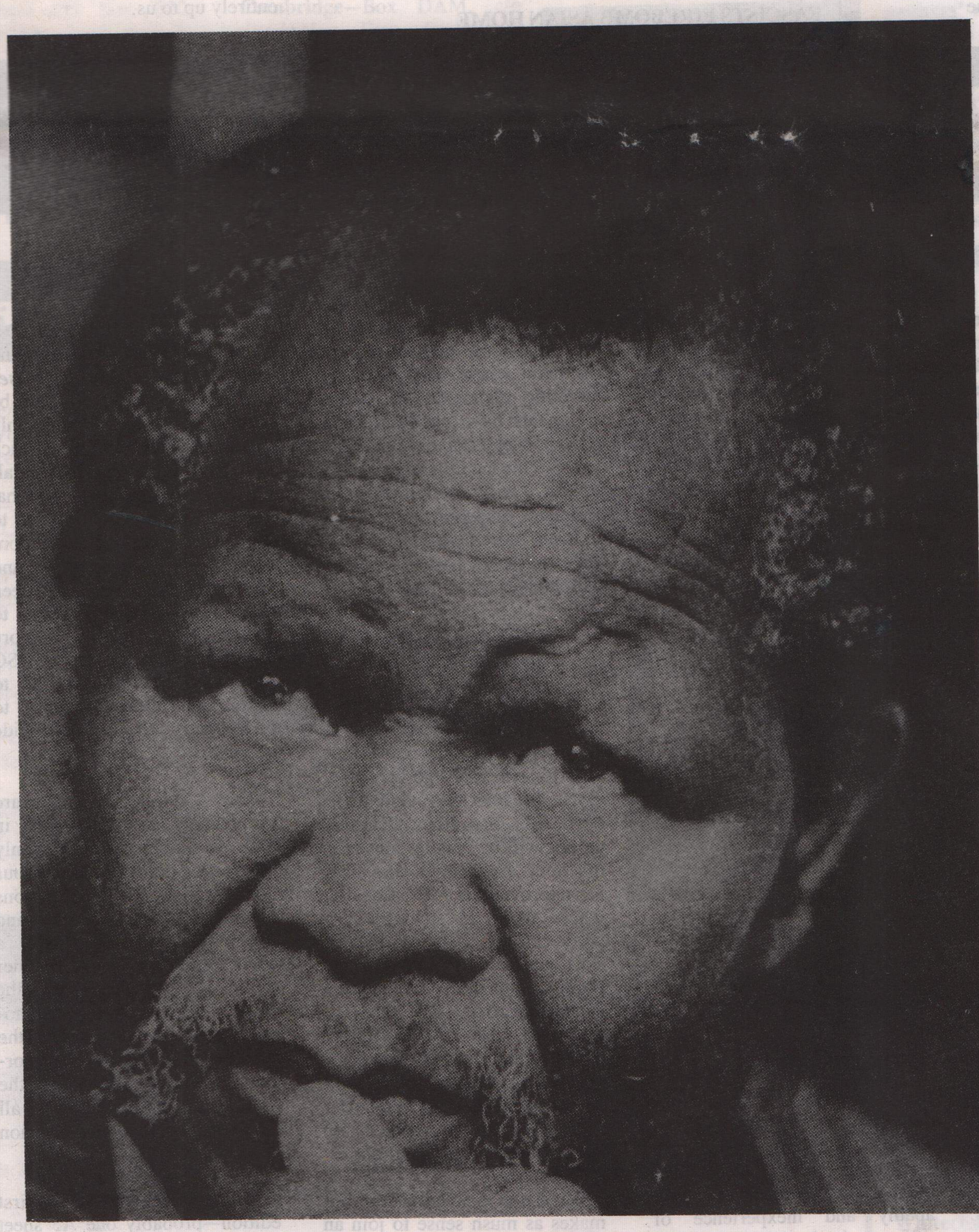
DIRECT ACTION

The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism | No. 51 | September 1988 | 25p

Housing Bill Page 6



ANC MANIPULATORS



ANC president Oliver Tambo

Anarcho-syndicalists have every reason to despise Stalinist manipulators. In Britain they have rigged themselves into full-time positions in many unions where they are noted for backstabbing and bureaucracy, especially in the construction union UCATT. For every step forward the workers win, they will try and drag us back ten.

In the unions they argue that they 'must have the membership with us', but in the fight against apartheid they denounce those who promote class war as 'adventurists'. They kill, torture, plot and campaign against real freedom, and so can never be trusted. They will throw up even the weakest of bourgeois demands as the first aim of any revolution, with the intention of making it the sole aim.

We know the workers of South Africa don't need us preaching and warning them about the dangers of rattlesnakes in their midst. However, the workers of Spain, especially our comrades in the CNT, can testify about the treacherous attitudes of the Communists during the Revolution in May 1937. These murderers are enemies of freedom and of the workers, and should be treated accordingly.

South African workers have a long history of struggle and self-organisation and supporting themselves, and are perfectly capable of achieving their aspirations without interference. Professional 'revolutionaries', union bureaucrats, conspirators and statesmen have no constructive role to play, for *the struggle in South Africa is a class struggle.*

The 'leadership' of COSATU is increasingly allied to the UDF and the ANC, leading to a future of inaction and impotence from a black government, *not* a social revolution achieved by direct action. However good their intentions, ANC exiles hob-nobbing with bourgeois scabs like Kinnock, Willis, and others of their ilk can *not* represent the will of the millions of South African workers...but when have Stalinists *ever* had good intentions.

See **All Tanked Up** *article on page 5.*

THUG OFF!

Racist attacks are a way of life for many black people living in our community today. They come in many different forms, such as the catalogue of crimes on the Woolwich Common Estate that has been recently publicised by the media: stones and milk bottles thrown at black tenants; front doors set alight; fascist groups boasting about their activities. Elsewhere, black people are open to abuses such as being spat at, verbally abused and physically attacked, which at its peak has included stabbings.

On 20th July a black family were walking back to the Woolwich Common Estate, when they were verbally abused by a gang of young white youths. As the family walked past them, they were pelted with stones, one of which hit a small child.

In another possibly more sadistic incident, a 10 year old Asian boy was bundled into a car by a man who claimed that the child had been throwing stones at his car. The kidnapped child was taken by the man to Woolwich police station where he was interviewed by police officers. He was then sent home with the man who had taken him there in the first place. The entire incident lasted a total of four and a half hours, and at no time was his mother informed of his whereabouts.

STATE RACISM

This, and many other racist incidents, brings into question police impartiality and their own racist tendencies. The police are *supposed* to serve the community and all the people within in it. They are, *they say*, an independent force, their main duty to be to resolve conflicts between different parties. However, the police force has a monopoly on both legal authority and violence, which it uses whenever it can get away with it, especially on minorities.

Recently, an asian man on the Thamesmead Estate, was attacked by a gang of racist thugs. He was then violently assaulted by police officers who dragged him out of the hospital he had been admitted to as a result of the first attack. In the second attack he suffered, with other injuries, a broken collar bone. He is now suing the police for assault and false imprisonment.



FASCISTS FIREBOMB ASIAN HOME

He is not the only person to have been attacked by racists and the police. This story of state racism and police brutality is far from uncommon, for the police are the enforcers of morality and behaviour and the values of the state, resulting in the repression of black people and the working class as a whole. They teach their morals not by example, but by wielding the big stick of oppression. To resist racist violence and police brutality we, the community, must organise and form support groups based around housing estates or streets. Black people should inform their neighbours whether black or white, of any racist atacks and kick the racists out of the area. Local councils won't do anything about it—it's entirely up to us.

STATE DOLES IT OUT

After the April Social Security changes, the next attack on claimants is the new Adult Training Programme (ATP)—to be introduced in September. Already the first effects are being felt - increased Restart harassment and follow-ups from Unemployment Benefit offices. The ATP will give people the wonderful opportunity to work five days a week for dole 'wages' plus £10 a week. Training of two days will supposedly be included in the scheme—training to sweep floors, make tea, dig holes and fill them in again, accept pitiful wages.

Faced with this blatant strategy to harass claimants, undermine wage rates, and introduce conscript labour, the TUC's response has been to agree. Thanks are certainly due to the TUC for another epic struggle in defence of working—or in this case—not working people. However, the T&G, NALGO, and NUPE have refused to co-operate with the scheme. It is vital that this refusal to co-operate is translated into practical steps to delay the scheme's introduction and reduce the number of places available. Many of the planned ATP places will be with councils—often Labour—these *must* be vulnerable to pressure.

But apart from the above, there is no concerted opposition, nor was there any clearly visible opposition to the April cuts. The CPSA claims to have had a long running campaign against the cuts, although I confess to not noticing it. This lack of response to the cuts is symptomatic of the near complete inactivity of the TUC about the needs and rights of unemployed people. To be fair, some unions produce useful literature, the TUC fund a decreasing number of unemployed centres which have some value on the 'advice and things to do' line but action is usually non-existent, or ridiculous—ie. Hands Across Britain. In short, the unions are incapable or unwilling to substantially change the quality of life for most unemployed people and are entirely incapable of increasing giros by one single penny, let alone campaigning for a fairer benefits system.

SO WHAT IS BEING DONE?

The increasing pressure on claimants and the shit conditions of many new and existing schemes demands a response from the people most affected by them, ie. claimants and MSC workers must get organised. Let's examine the two groups separately, although there is obviously a great deal of overlap between them, especially given that many unemployed claimants will soon be hassled onto schemes.

At present, the claimants unions and the various advice and pressure groups do most of the useful work—saving industrial giros, advice, support, information, handy hints, becoming a recognisable voice for claimants, etc. But the advice agencies are constitutionally, and by liberal prejudice, limited in what they can do. Claimants Unions, on the other hand, are



ON THE SCRAPHEAP

patchy, varied in levels of activity, short of money, and fighting not only against the DHSS, UBOs, HB Offices, etc. but against claimants' own apathy and inexperience of self-organisation. Nationally, Claimants Unions have only been capable of sporadic communication, but even so, the situation is getting better.

In any case, even if claimants unions were well established in every town, which is far from the case, they still come to a full stop quite some distance short of the point where most decisions affecting claimants are made. Claimants have no political or economic clout, and no ability to strike. This inability to make any impact will continue until claimants unions are established in many more towns and start to act in a coherent manner nationally.

MSC GROUPS

The MSC workers' position is both better and worse. Better in the sense that they can—June 15th for example—go on strike, worse because they tend to be even less organised. Existing unions will be making moves in this area, especially as the TUC has approved the ATP. Equally, where there are strong CUs, work can and is being done to start autonomous MSC workers groups, with the CU's having a supporting role—the use of resources, etc. It is to be expected that a recruitment drive by the conventional unions will be precisely that and will offer little in the way of practical help in improving pay or conditions.

We are in a situation where it makes as mush sense to join an entirely new autonomous MSC group as it is to join existing unions. All that is necessary is the background work to start these groups.

ORGANISING

To which end Claimants and MSC DAM Workers *(see addresses on page 9)* will be producing a bimonthly newsheet—free to all—which will be sent to any individual, CU, or any other group that wants it. Its function will be to publicise national action, encourage debate and communications between claimants groups, aim to encourage many more autonomous CUs and MSC groups to be created, and to encourage these groups to participate in nation-wide actions.

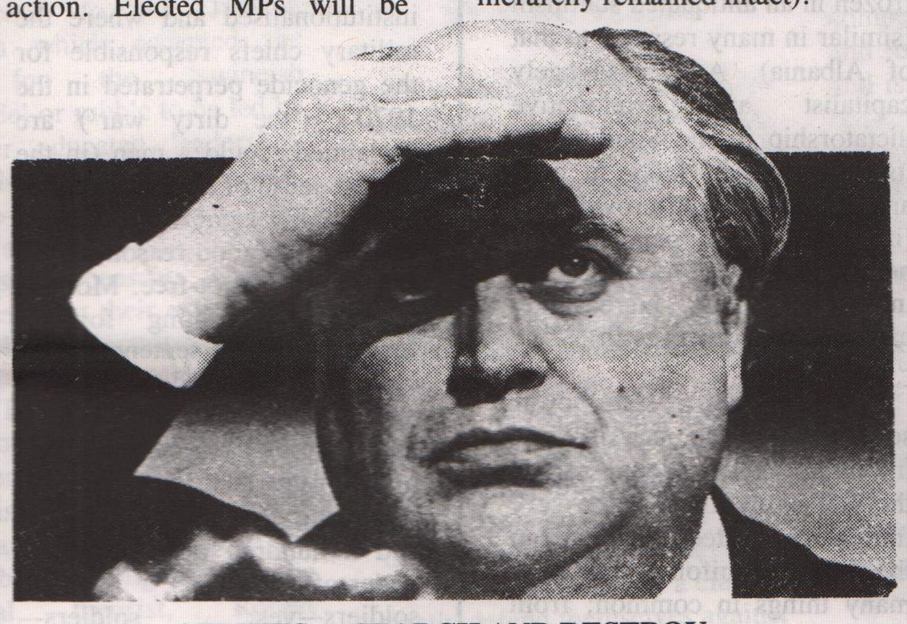
The ruling class are exceedingly well organised in their escalating class war. Only by creating our own autonomous non-hierarchical organisations committed to direct action and federating nationally into a coherent and efficient manner will we get anywhere against the boss class. As anarcho-syndicalists we emphasise the need for all such groups to be organised without leaders on the basis of full participation by all members in activity and decision making.

To assess demand for the first edition—probably one A3 sheet (like *Counter Information*) could any claimants groups, or anyone else—group or individual who would like to contribute or who wants copies please get in touch.

NO HOPERS

Faced with falling membership and the spectre of a breakaway alliance by 'right wing' unions (while the 'left wing' also talks of alliances and mergers), Norman Willis has proposed restructuring the trade union movement. With the TUC Congress at Blackpool looming, some sort of 'unity' bargaining must already be going on behind closed doors.

The relationship with Labour continues despite the Tories' third victory putting electoralism off until 1992. As municipal workers face slaughter by privatisation Labour authorities will ensure that nothing will happen to challenge the Tories, such as rank and file initiatives or direct action. Elected MPs will be



STRIKES — SEARCH AND DESTROY

lobbied to try and maintain existing equal pay and anti-discrimination laws etc. despite their glaring inadequacies. Only extensive organisation, organisation and struggle bring change—not legislation from above. For example, abortion is always under threat, and unemployment over the past decade remains chronic, despite the 'concern' shown by all parties.

'NO STRIKE' DEALS

Women and part-time workers are almost officially recognised now as being not 'organised' so yesterday's deaf ears are today's understanding bureaucrats, with an eye on falling bank statements and careers—the 'new realism' that drives the TUC machinery now. For the low paid, the bureaucratic unions' images are poor and even the better paid/organised in industries are kicking at their representatives. Whether this will simply be smothered by the hierarchy or breaks free remains to be seen.

Proposed mergers, amalgamations and single union 'no strike' deals will mean revival for the bureaucrat class but a dead end for the members. Anarcho-syndicalists see no use in becoming candidates for full-time paid officialdom, and those serving as shop stewards do their best to remain on the jobsite and keep out of the union offices where politicians lurk. The Marxists, as usual, seem happy to lobby the TUC Congress as a competing bureaucrat class. Those who like soap operas will watch it all on TV like the House of Lords televised farce a decade early, as so many union leaders present will elevate to the Lords in the end for services for to the Queen, government and industry.

Where class struggle lines are clearly drawn, for example, in South Africa, Korea and Haiti, there isn't the luxury of such 'democratic' dramas. Real life has thrown up independent industrial and community organisations as opposition leaders are jailed, exiled, or killed. Here a union boss faces no criminalisation as they're no threat to the state (jailed miners and printworkers being isolated examples; but even then the hierarchy remained intact).

All these years after agricultural labourers were transported to Australia for organising to improve themselves at Tolpuddle, those at the very top and bottom remain in the same place. Some rebellious workers have tried to run their own struggles—a lot more must do so if real change is to come.

Supervisor Shredder!



"The supervisor used to give us a hard time, always hanging over our shoulders telling us to *hurry up*."

"Now, our problems are solved!"

Shredded Supervisors Don't Talk!

Surety Shredding, Inc.
The latest in pest extermination for the office.

Kicking Up A Stink

Good prospects for victory, group solidarity and large numbers of pickets enjoying the warm weather is ensuring a high level of morale for the 800 strikers at the Yardley factory in Basildon, Essex.

The production workers, nearly all women walked out on 28th June after rejecting a management pay offer of 5½% which, on a take home wage of £78 is only worth about £3.

The Yardley company said that they need to pay low wages to provide job security. Saying that in itself is an insult to the intelligence. But worse, they recently sacked 131 workers who had staged an overtime ban (ie. they worked their proper hours), and so the company conveniently forgot their talk of 'job security' when it came to the hundreds of 'temporary' workers who can be hired and fired at the drop of a hat!

FALSE ALARMS

The strike is starting to bite now. Yardley should be on full production of their soaps, perfumes, talcs and cosmetics at the moment in preparation for Christmas. The manager, Mr. Smith, is slowly becoming a nervous wreck. Office cleaners report that there are two empty Scotch bottles in his waste paper basket every day. When fire engines roared up to the Yardley factory in July, pickets speculated that Smith's breath had caught fire. But sadly it was a false alarm.

After three weeks of this dispute, Yardley, under orders from their parent company Beecham, offered the strikers 7½% over 18 months with a loss of tea breaks. Anyone can see that this is a worse offer than the one the strike started over. So, not surprisingly, a mass meeting of 540 strikers unanimously rejected it.

BOSSES SCORE OWN GOAL

On 28th July the company announced that it would have an 'Open Door' for strikers to go *in to work. That plan backfired because catering staff, engineers, chargehands and office staff came out* in sympathy for the day!

Yardley import a handful of scabs from their Bond Street showroom as a publicity exercise to try and give the impression that the factory is running normally. But virtually nothing is being produced. Similarly, one artic lorry 'symbolically' crossed the picket lines regularly after an elaborate procedure where drivers and vehicles are switched to foil strikers' attempts to find out where they are coming from. Only one of the Basildon workers is scabbing although her life will probably be hardly worth living once that the strike is over.

LAVENDER LADIES

The Transport and General Workers Union has so far provided between £10 and £20 per week strike pay. The Yardley strike committee produce a very good strike bulletin which is informative and raises morale. Four strikers dressed up as Victorian 'Yardley Lavender Ladies' and leafletted the Bond Street showroom, getting a heartwarming response from the shoppers.

Meanwhile, the picketing goes on 24 hours a day at the Yardley factory on Basildon Industrial Estate and supporters are made very welcome. Cash donations for the strike fund will be very much appreciated.

SCUPPERED

THAT SINKING FEELING

According to the *Guardian*, there have been various recent developments in ship torpedo guidance systems. The latest system prevents radar-based missiles from returning to the ship that fired them in the case of it not being able to find the original target. How does it work? The answer is quite simple—make the torpedo blow itself up if it turns through 180 degrees before hitting a target. So far, so good. On a recent testing of this new torpedo, however, a torpedo was fired but got stuck in the torpedo tube. The captain decided to abandon the test and return back to base. He then turned the ship around and the torpedo exploded in the tube. They don't make them like they used to!

VSEL STRIKE

Britain's biggest strike this year is now going into its third month. 12,000 workers at the VSEL nuclear-powered submarine yard in Barrow-in-Furness have been out since the beginning of June in opposition to the employers' plan of one fixed holiday period each summer.

So far the VSEL strike has resulted in over half a million days lost. On the other hand, that is also half a million days where the workers are in charge for a change. Half a million days when you don't bite your tongue when the supervisor shouts at you. Half a million days without any industrial injuries or industrial diseases contracted. And for the rest of the human race a great relief that half a million days are lost on building those damn nuclear submarines.



'WHAT A SHAME THAT OUR WEAPONS GET USED THIS WAY!

DAM

For the record, the two week Ford strike this year cost that company 450,000 days lost production. For the whole of Britain last years total was 3.5 million days lost due to industrial disputes—1.5 million days which were due to the three week strike at British Telecom.

SPOT

New Striking Posts

Business is booming for the Post Office. On average now 51 million letters are handled everyday. To cope, they plan to create 37,000 more jobs over the next 10 years. There is a trial in Peterborough and Tyneside at the moment with Sunday collections and deliveries—ie. seven day working to handle all the mail.



Strikes are also at a very high level. There were 213 last year. At any given moment you can be sure that at least one office around the country is at a standstill. For example, recently postmen and postwomen in Harrow, Chelmsford, Southend, York and North West London have all had the pleasure of giving two fingers to the governors and walking out the gate.

In August all postal workers were balloted for industrial action to oppose the Post Offices latest stunt called 'Difficult Recruitment Area Supplements' (DRAS). The DRAS scheme is quite complicated but it is sufficient to say here that it is managements aim to introduce it for divide and rule purposes. A national postal strike is a possibility. Watch this space for news.....

FLAMING HOT

With the Olympics about to start in Seoul this summer, the South Korean government is desperately trying to show to the world that it is politically stable. In reality, the country is in complete political turmoil with riots and demonstrations all the time, both against the repression by the state, and the border that divides the country into both North and South.



CYMBALIC PROTEST?

Once again Korea is in the news. Korea has always suffered foreign inteference and the resulting inhuman social, economic and political consequences. The classic buffer state between East and West, fought over by czarist Russia and Mikado's 'Land of the Rising Sun' at the beginning of the century, experienced a ruthless colonial Japanese occupation between 1905 and 1945.

In the summer of 1945 the Japanese army collapsed and through Manchuria came Soviet armoured divisions under Marshal Wassilievskij which advanced from northern Korea up to the Yalu and Tumen rivers. The US Army landed in the south. The two 'liberator' armies stopped face to face at the 38th parallel. Two conferences, held in Moscow in September and December 1945 decided on the re-unification of the peninsula, but this never came to pass.

For their own two reasons the two ex-allies distrusted one another. In 1949 the Chinese Revolution changed the strategic balance in the Far East and the Communist bogey threatened Japan, now an ally of Washington. War broke out. It lasted 3 years (1950-1953), cost hundreds of thousands of dead (exact figures were never released), and left everything as before. It also took the world to the brink of nuclear war, under the leadership of General McArthur. The US seriously contemplated the use of nuclear weapons when the war was going wrong for them, and went as far as to drop 'fake' nuclear bombs in the North, as well as dumping massive amounts of conventional explosives.

IRON FIST

In the North a rigidly stalinist government, looking equally to Moscow and Peking, undertook huge initiatives to modernise the country. It brought in agrarian reform in 1946, nationalised the mines, manufacturing industry and the services, and introduced peasant cooperatives. Palace power struggles were vicious but short-lived, and took Kim il Sung to the presidency (and to the head of the National Assembly). This old fanatic has remained one of the world's most tenacious dictators (having been head of state since 1952), and rules the country with an iron fist, while dreaming of uniting the country like Vietnam in 1975. But the situation in Korea is different. North Korea is economically much weaker and has less than half the population (18 million against 40 million) compared to South Korea. Also just behind the Seoul government there is the US bastion of Japan.

South Korea has never known political stability comparable to the North's. From the beginning with the brutal dictatorship of Syngman Rhee, corruption, police terror and huge social inequalities have characterised the life of the country. Today, thanks to an unprecedented exploitation of the working class, South Korean industry is the strongest of the emerging Far East (Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore), to the point of seriously competing with the Japanese colossus. But the social costs of this have been enormous. Poverty, unemployment and pollution undermine the basis of this ramshackle and frenetic economic miracle. A series of authoritarian and anti-democratic clampdowns has been the only response to the growing protests of workers and students, alongside a strengthening of the ranks of the military and of the strategic ties with the US.

Now, the South Korean president, Roh Tae Woo, wants to enhance the country's international image and attract further multi-national investment by ostentatious hosting the Olympics. But not everything has gone to plan.

BRUCE LEE

The students have responded with a series of mass demonstrations to these imperial designs to strengthen the dictatorship and the exploitation of the people. From the Yonsei University and other colleges in the capital and from Pusan, 40,000 students began to march towards the frontier post at Panmunjom to meet with delegates of the North Korean Communist Youth to discuss the country's re-unification. Roh Tae Woo met this massive democratic mobilisation with iron and fire. 60,000 armed police armed to the teeth attacked various sections of the march, surrounded the various 'rebel' colleges, attacked passers-by, the curious and photographers in the street. More than 1,000 arrests and 200 injured were the results of the clashes on June 12th. One of the students, wounded in the head by a tear gas canister, is in hospital in a coma.

The Seoul forces of 'law and order' are together with those of Pinochet amongst the most efficient in the world. They are composed of special units of 'snatch squads' (Black Dragons) and karateka fighters who can shatter bricks with their bare hands. The brutality with which these government Bruce Lees meet demonstrations can easily be imagined. Against them the desperate courage and rudimentary molotovs of the students are no match.

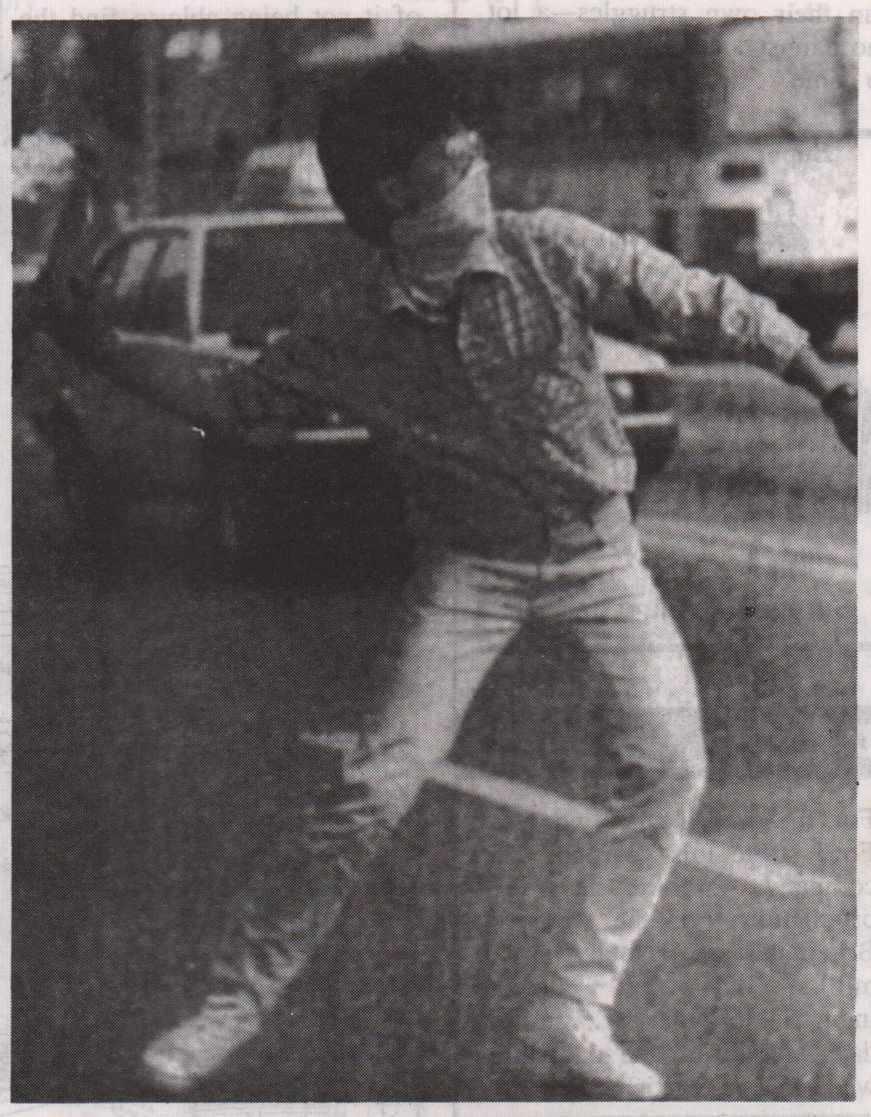
The march on Panmunjom has failed for now. Only 27 demonstrators reached the border, and the police stopped them in time. But the last word has not been spoken. Before the Olympics start in September it is possible that the opposition will try again.

STATE POWER

South Korean public opinion has understood perfectly well who the enemy is, and in May a series of attacks shook the US diplomatic representatives. But George Shultz, the pathetic travelling salesman of US imperialism rushed to visit the country as though nothing was wrong. Will he recommend moderation and reforms to his asian satellite, as he did in Israel (with not the slightest success)? The drama of a people arbitrarily divided and oppressed at the same time by two dictatorships will continue. A barracks regime in the North frozen in an antiquated stalinism (similar in many respects to that of Albania). And a savagely capitalist and exploitative dictatorship in the South, with its repertoire of kung fu cops and scalding anti-crowd gas (ironically called 'pepper snow' here, and a fact of life that Seoul inhabitants have increasingly had to come to terms with).

The two faces of state power so different on the face of it and in their declarations, show themselves in Korea to be very intimately related. Apart from the different uniforms they have many things in common; from their death squads to their forbidding prisons, from their disregard for the sentiments and real needs of citizens to their cult of power and militarism.

Source: UMANITA NOVA



PUTTING THE SHOT

Real Men..?

'I hit all my women' said murderer and ex-world champion boxer, Carlos Monzon, in a matter-of-fact way. But this time the 'archetypal Argentine male' went too far. Not content with viciously beating his last wife—he killed her. The Monzon case, leaving aside the sensationalist tone given to it by the mass media, is symptomatic of the general state of Argentine society. It's a mirror which reflects the degradation of the human condition in a country where nonsense passes for common sense.

Only in a country where the category of 'desaparecidos' (disappeared ones) was institutionalised and where the military chiefs responsible for the genocide perpetrated in the 1970's ('the dirty war') are acclaimed, could a man (in the loosest sense of a term) boast of his brutality against women and expect (with good reason) to get away with it scot-free. Monzon is perhaps waiting for an 'obeying orders' sentence in his case as well. And really, the argument of the '70's ex-champion has a certain logic, of a sinister sort, in relation to Argentine law. If Astiz, Ruiz and a hundred other officials, under-officials and soldiers—yes, soldiers—responsible for multiple assassinations, tortures and assaults are at liberty (and enjoying privileges furthermore), Monzon can ask himself: 'Why should ?I go to jail when I've only killed one woman'!

And in any case, recent history shows that 'celebrities', especially sportsmen, can easily escape the punishment sanctioned by law when they commit a crime. Not long ago, Veira (Technical Director of one of the most important football clubs in the country, San Lorenzo) violated a minor. Despite the efforts of the boy's family, Veira is still at liberty, and naturally is still acclaimed by San Lorenzo fans. Soldiers involved in human rights violation; football fans who acclaim a child molester; Rosario inhabitants who obstruct the Plaza de Mayo Mothers on a demonstration; Monzon's fans who take the side of the ex-champion - the moral degeneration isn't restricted to the higher political echelons, but has permeated society at large. People without morals have come to dominate. Murderers are promoted while detainees are condemned.

Source: Gruppo Impulso, Rosario, Argentina.

ALL TANKED UP

The 2nd COSATU Congress in July was notable for two things: on the one hand workers raised a banner proclaiming 'Socialism is Freedom', and on the other the Stalinists, through a carefully orchestrated manoeuvre, attempted to exorcise socialism as an object from COSATU's principle.

Workers were scolded by the President of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO) and by the UDF, backed up of course like a well planned intervention, by a statement from SACTU, for having the termerity to raise socialist revolution as an immediate objective. Going hand in glove with the attempt to smash socialism went a very specific attack, in the most unprincipled manner on certain socialists.

FOUR PILLARS

The COSATU congress manoeuvre was not an isolated act. It comes in the wake of a sharp right wing turn on the part of the ANC and the SACP—a turn necessitated by the very nature of ANC/SACP politics. With their self confessed four pillars conception of the struggle, the ANC explicitly assigns equal importance to what they call the military, mass, underground and diplomatic struggle. What this means is that the ANC is committed to combining mass action with appeals to bourgeois imperialist governments to force Botha to the negotiating table. Not having a clear class strategy the ANC oscillates between radicalism and reform depending on the state of mass open struggle in South Africa.

In 1985, the rise of militant youth and workers raised decisively the need for socialism as their only alternative to apartheid capitalism. With the decline in mass activity in 1986 and 1987, as the state succeeded in temporarily smashing resistance in the townships the radical rhetoric of the ANC has changed. Now it is the diplomatic struggle which assumes most prominence (from Schultz to Dakar) and the strategy of isolating Botha by building a 'broad front of all democrats' (from Worrall to Franklin Sonn to Van Zyl Slabbert) is that there is one thing they fear most—socialism. And so the talk about socialism among the youth and workers must be stopped.

Together with the attack on socialism as an immediate objective of the SA revolution must go a direct *attack on the socialists*. That is what lies behind the attack at the COSATU July Congress. This is what lies behind the re-emergence in the SACP of the 2 stage theory and of Internal Colonialism. And this is what lies behind the adoption by COSATU of the Freedom Charter - not as an attempt to politicise workers, but as a bureaucratic manoeuvre to drive out the socialists.

STALINIST METHODS

Just before the July Congress, a split occurred in CCAWUSA (Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa) after merger talks had been held with HARWU (Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union) and RAWU (Retail and Allied Workers Union). While the Natal, East Cape and Pretoria branches of CCAWUSA carried through the merger with HARWU and RAWU, the majority section of CCAWUSA (including Johannesburg and Western Cape) charged the minority with conducting the merger in an unprincipled unconstitutional way. The majority section cited as examples unsubstantiated membership figures given by HARWU and RAWU, that CCAWUSA, as by far the largest of the three unions, should retain its name and orientation (which had been decided at a previous CCAWUSA congress) and that they could not accept the Freedom Charter as their programme given the range of political affiliations of CCAWUSA membership.

Underlying these issues was the simple fact that the reasons for the split were not constitutional or moral, but political. The old CCAWUSA was labelled 'workerist' and part of the camp of those who opposed the pro-UDF drift in COSATU. On the other hand both HARWU and RAWU were known as 'populist' unions with a leadership being Charterist. The split in CCAWUSA has taken place because what was necessary from the ANC/SACP viewpoint was a take-over of CCAWUSA, a manoeuvre to trap the organised workers under the banner of the ANC.

And because Stalinism's success at the second COSATU congress what is clearly on the cards, is that COSATU will officially recognise the new merger—no matter how unprincipled. COSATU's acceptance of the FREEDOM charter will be used as formal justification for this recognition. And so the ANC/SACP take over of COSATU is being carried through remorselessly.

POLITICAL ANGER

After the revival of trade unions in South Africa was initiated by FOSATU its antecedents, after it took four years to drag the populist unions into the federation, the ANC/SACP elements are now the leading union bureaucrats who are fully prepared to sacrifice the South Africa working class at the altar of populism. The victory against CCAWUSA is a must for these Stalinists. Let us say here quite categorically, that syndicalist narrowness in matters political has only strengthened the hands of the populists. With the terrain of mass political action left open to the workers, the workers were allowed to continue under the illusion that the ANC is the only political organisation capable of harnessing the political anger of the masses, and it is the only organisation capable of taking state power.



COSATU

We can only here, once again, assert our belief that only the direct politicisation of the unions in mass action can counteract the lure of the populist demagogues. But be that as it may, what is at stake here is for all socialists, whether in COSATU or not, to rally behind the legitimate majority section of CCAWUSA as a crucial test case wherein the socialists can begin to fight back.

To the syndicalists: For years you have built progressive unions from the '73 Durban strikes to FOSATU and then COSATU. And this while SACTU slandered you as imperialist agents. Not that the Freedom Charter has been endorsed as a guide, now that populists have shown their preparedness to use any dirty tactic (even splitting unions), now that socialism is being removed from COSATU, you face the very real threat of having your trump card (the unions) removed from your grasp. While we reserve the right to fight you when you want to keep the workers out of mass politics, yet we recognise that the building of proper democratic organs of workers is vital. Unity of socialists is required because the very rationale of your existence requires that socialism be an immediate objective. Without access to COSATU and its member unions you face a future of political extinction. You may feel this prediction is far too gloomy, and we agree with you - *But only if you are prepared to fight the populists on political ground, otherwise you will succumb to the lure and you will capitulate.*

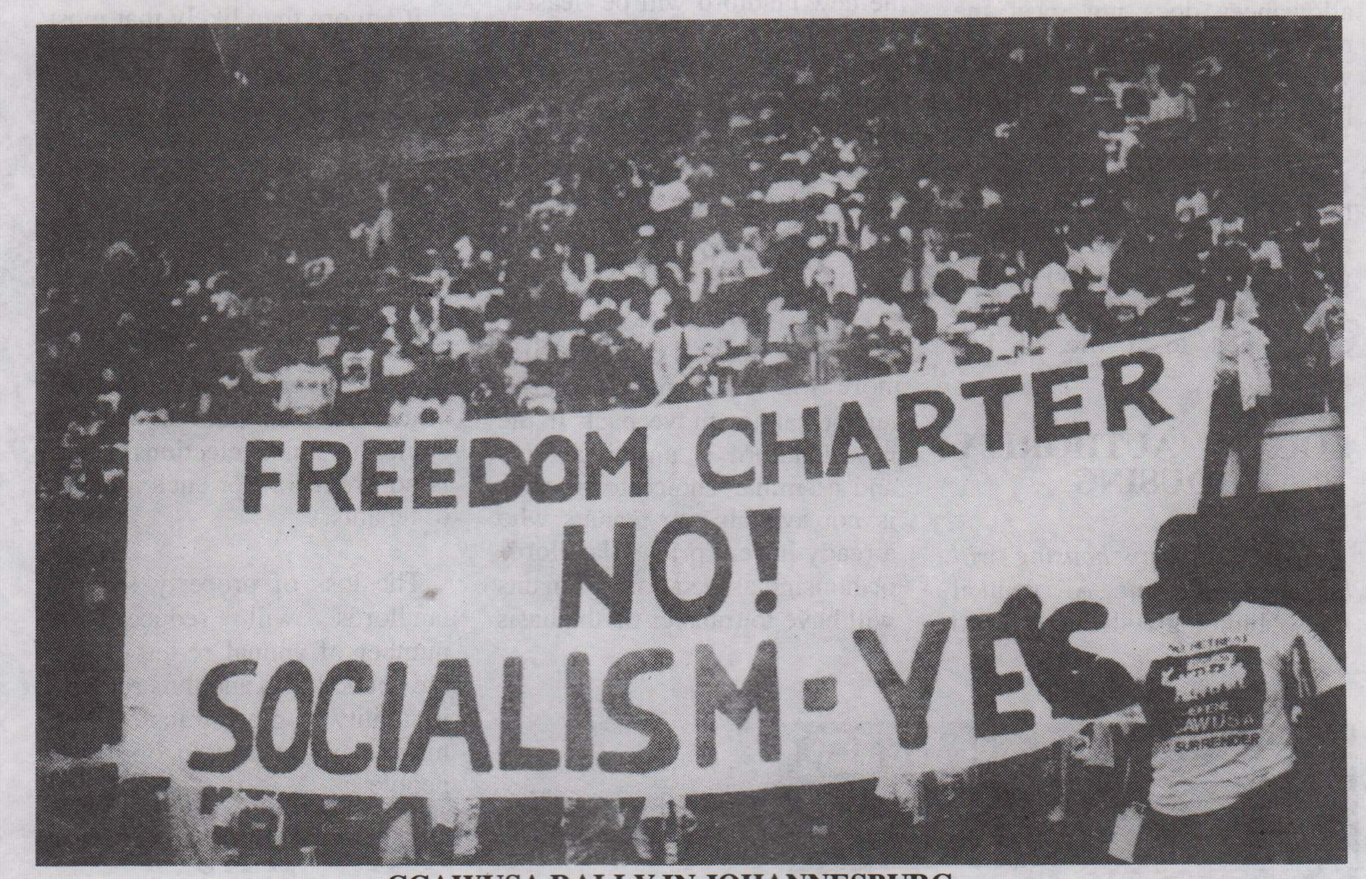
HIDDEN AGENDA

To all entryists: For years the logic of your argument of transforming the ANC from within committed you to every twist and turn of the ANC. You proclaim yourselves to be socialists and anti-petite bourgeois nationalists. You believe in the need for a Worker's Party but only via transforming the ANC. Yet you are in danger of becoming the fingermen of the Stalinists. Because you have a secret hidden agenda, which includes sympathies for Trotsky, you are often best able to expose and identify anti ANC/UDF elements. And that makes you potential star-performers doing the dirty work of the SACP and the ANC. This is certainly not going to win you any favours from the ANC/CP who will more likely reward your endeavours with death eventually.

The very logic of your commitment to transforming the ANC, requires that you set yourselves up as a pole within the ANC. A pole around the need for socialist revolution is the only way of driving a wedge between the reformist leadership of the ANC and its masses of supporters. Instead of being scared of 'prematurely exposing yourself' your silence in defence of socialism only strengthens the hands of the hard core nationalists and Stalinists—which will make your own work impossible when they deliberately isolate you. Instead of being a pole within the ANC you face the danger of being indistinguishable from the nationalists and Stalinists.

DEFEND CCAWUSA. DEFEND DEMOCRACY. BUILD SOCIALISM NOW. FORWARD WITH A SOCIALIST PROGRAMME OF ACTION. SOCIALISTS UNITE!

This is a reprint of a leaflet circulated in South Africa in August 1987, taken from Azania Worker, BM Box 4863, London WC1N 3XX.



CCAWUSA RALLY IN JOHANNESBURG

SOLIDARNOSC

At the congress of the International Workers Association in Bordeaux last April the Lower Silesia region (Poland's coal mining area) of Solidarnosc stated it's syndicalist roots and sent warm greetings to the congress (see *DA 49*). At the Northern European IWA conference in London this month we look forward to seeing if Solidarnosc want closer links to the IWA.

HOMES FOR ALL?

Now that house prices are rocketing sky high, and the housing market is rapidly contracting, more people are going to need rented accommodation than ever before, but the Government's new Housing Bill is guranteed to make renting a nightmare.

It is claimed that there isn't enough money to spend on housing, and yet the present government is presiding over a record housing spree. But only £1 in every £10 is spent on repairing, improving or building new homes. The rest goes in mortgage interest tax relief. In 1986 of £4,750 million given in tax relief, £2,000 of this went to those earning more than £30,000 a year.

Total government investment in housing construction, repair and improvement has more than halved since 1979/80—from £6,900 million to £2,600 million in 1985/86.

CHOICE

The Housing Bill will stop council house building; encourage council tenants to choose another landlord; increase rents to 'market' levels; reduce tenant security (In fact local authorities will not be providers of homes but 'enablers').

Rent controls will end and all new lettings will be Assured or Shorthold tenancies.

ASSURED TENANCIES

These can be either for a fixed term or periodic. The tenant has the right to renew once fixed term has ended. There will be a scrapping of rent controls, to let the market price prevail, so that in some areas, rents may double. Also, rights of succession are removed, which would particularly hit women living with elderly relatives.

SHORTHOLD TENANCIES

These on the other hand, last for six months with no right to renew. For existing tenants, government assurances that their position will be unchanged , should be taken with a pinch of salt.

PRIVATE SECTOR

The scrapping of rent controls and reduction of security for tenants is meant to revive the public sector.
This is not really tenable, the experience of 1957, when rent controls were scrapped and reduced security saw, within 8 years a reduction of 1 million properties, as landlords sold up to home owners. This period is also infamous for Rachmanism.

In fact, potential landlords can get a higher return on their investment by putting their money elsewhere.

Plans for rented property will push rents through the roof and create more homelessness.

HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

Housing associations may be thrown up as an alternative. 75% of their tenants receive Housing Benefits. The Bill plans to reduce the governments subsidy to Housing Associations. Currently this subsidy is 90% of the cost of the scheme. This is to be cut to 50%, with the rest coming from private sources.

The actual amount will vary by scheme and area. But the use of private finance will mean higher rents with current fair rent controls being abolished on new lettings.

This will have dire consequences as housing associations will have to raise rents and lose the ability to help those with most need, or they may cease new developments (They currently build 12,000 new homes a year).

Given that many new tenants will be dependent on Housing Benefits, if there are cuts or allowances does not meet the new higher rent levels, there will be an increase in arrears and possible evictions.

Those who are currently homeless or living in poor accommodation, will probably not be able to move into Housing Association property and will be condemned to a life of bad housing.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING

Local authority housing will be most badly hit. All council house building will be stopped as councils become 'enablers' rather than 'providers' of public housing. This means that councils must identify local needs and encourage other landlords to finance and provide for those needs.

The government also wants to reduce local authority housing stock through 'tenants choice' and Housing Action Trusts.

'Tenants Choice' is the term for the proposed right to Council tenants to change their landlord. The new landlord may be a housing association, a private landlord, or a housing co-operative managed by the tenants themselves. They will transfer on the basis of an assured tenancy where rents are likely to be higher and security of tenure reduced.

But as you would expect, the 'advantages' are stacked in favour of the landlord and against the tenants: It is the landlord who decides which properties s/he is interested in, the Council has to give the landlord the names of tenants living in the property; Landlords make contracts with the tenants, proposing take-over and stating terms and conditions; unless more than 50% of eligible tenants reject the proposal, the transfer goes ahead; anyone who does not vote will be counted as a vote for the new landlord; those not wishing to transfer to the new landlord will be 'leased back' to the council but their homes will pass to the new landlord one by one as current tenancies end. And the relatives will have no succession rights.

HIGH RENTS

As for tenants choice, it's more like Hobsons Choice—a tenant cannot move back if the new landlord is unsatisfactory, and a similar choice to transfer is not available to tenants who already have a private landlord or housing associations. Tenants will have to transfer on the basis of assured tenancies so that high rents may be charged at the same time as tenant's security is reduced.

Housing associations themselves are not keen on taking on large numbers of council properties as they believe that they could not do as good a job as councils without massive investment.

It's more than likely that most interest will come from speculative landlords or developers, as all ready seen in London. They are keen to acquire property with high capital value, on the cheap. Tenants will thus be exposed to possible harassment or tough lines on rent arrears/evictions.

Also, given this governments attitude to fair ballots when it comes to union elections, there is no provision for such a ballot of tenants.

The loss of property to new landlords will reduce the number of annual re-lets which the council gets and thus reduces its ability to grant transfers and make new lettings to homeless people.

HATS

As for Housing Action Trusts (HATs) they are to take-over large areas of run-down council housing; improve the properties and then dispose of them to other landlords. Initially there will be HATS in 6 areas; Lambeth, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Leeds, Sandwell and Sunderland. They will consist of unelected people, appointed by the Minister. Tenants in the affected areas will have no say whatsoever about whether they want their properties taken over. Not only will they be responsible for improving properties, they will also resume responsibility for planning, environmental health, improvement grants etc in the area. But they will not have responsibility for housing the homeless.

HATs thus pose a number of problems. When the improved properties are transferred to other landlords, tenants will have assured tenancies.Tenants have no power of veto over HATs. In order to recoup money invested, HATs will be encouraged to sell properties and sites. This may lead to reduction of housing opportunities for local people. And important areas of housing stock will not be available to house the homeless, those on waiting lists and the badly housed in high stress areas.

CONCLUSION

So, the Housing Bill, the opportunity for choice, in reality will increase homelessness, reduce tenant security, undermine housing associations, reduce council housing to welfare housing and it will make millions of peoples lives a misery.

It will undoubtedly increase the gap between rich and poor.

AND THE GOOD NEWS

The well organised tenants at Hulme in Manchester have 'persuaded' Housing Minister William Waldegrave, not to include their estate among those being transferred to the HATs.

In May, Waldegrave met the tenants federation, which told him new jobs were needed as much as new homes. The tenants felt that the current situation is preferable to being taken over.

However, whilst Hulme has not been included in the first round of HATs, Waldegrave is keeping open plans to include estates in Bradford, Newham and Manchester.



...STAGE 2



WESTMINSTER HOUSING POLICY STAGE 1...

FIGHTING SLAVERY

'The emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves' was the slogan adopted by the First International . To some revolutionaries it has always been just a slogan but to anarcho-syndicalists it means what it says. Marxists of various hues have always put conditions on the idea—ie the workers can emancipate themselves only if they accept the guidance and leadership of a 'conscious minority', a revolutionary party.

In many ways this reflects the differing conclusions revolutionary socialists drew from the French Revolution of 1789. Marxists and Leninists look back to the Jacobin tradition which accepted the need for the 'swineish multitude' or rabble to be led by a better educated leadership. Anarchists and later, anarcho-syndicalists, look back to the 'enrages', those ordinary workers and peasants who did not accept that their experiences could be understood by the leaders from another social class. The inevitability of the need of authority became a common characteristic of the capitalists, democratic socialists and marxists. It was called the inevitability of oligarchy by the political theorist, Robert Nichels—people need and like to be led and told what to do and any revolution throws up some form of leadership.



SLAY IT AGAIN SAM!

National Union of Seafarers' leader Sam McCluskie is going to cut a record with Labour MP John Prescott in the hope of raising some cash for the sacked P&O seafarers. The record will be called *Why Don't They Leave Us Alone.* No doubt there will be large queues outside every record shop in Britain to buy that one. The Direct Action Editorial Collective would like to suggest that Sam McCluskie cuts a record entitled *Why Am I Such A Useless Sod.*



SYNDICALISM

The reaction to this idea which inevitably meant middle class types determining and interpreting working class action, was the growth of anarcho-syndicalism. The working class sought a new means of bringing about the revolutionary transformation of society without leaving a vacuum for a self-appointed elite to step into. Instead of looking to middle class political traditions, they look back at their own history and actions. They saw the need to organise as a class to firstly defend themselves against attack and secondly to take the struggle forward to challenge the basic assumptions and ideology of the ruling class.

The early growth of syndicalism was typified by the total rejection of the idea of a 'conscious minority' putting faith in the workers themselves once the structures could be built to give a basis to the spontaneity of revolution. The basis was seen as being the union, the basic organisation of the working class, but the union in its broadest sense, not a simple economic defence organisation, but a positive and wide ranging organisation that would enhance the economic struggle with its political background.

First the Russian, then the Spanish revolutions caused many to reappraise this strategy. The perceived success of the Bolsheviks along with the defence of the CNT saw many argue for the need for a conscious anarchist minority to challenge the dominant capitalist ideology as well as the leninist one. Many anarchists who rejected syndicalist strategy came close to advocating an anarchist party following the structure of the Bolsheviks and adopting 'democratic centralism'. At the least they wanted a tight-knit political group that could vie for ideological leadership of the working class movements, competing with the reformists and leninists. The problem was and is, that authoritarian brands of socialism thrive on this sort of situation while libertarian brands wither and die, or are transformed .

STATE BULLETS

By the creation of an anarchist vanguard, there grows a division between the working class and the control of their organisations. It would be much the same as today, with people dependent on 'experts' to interpret and judge situations for them. It leads to a situation of a syndicalist union having to fight the day to day battles—striking and suffering hardships but with the final decisions residing with a separate political organisation, one that would not only be wholly accountable to the rank and file. Ultimately it would mean that when a revolutionary situation arises once again the workers would face the bullets of the state only to have a new elite in control.

We must have the guts and the faith to stand together as a class and trust our own instincts. We have to build a structure within which we can reject minority control and build on the true democracy of direct participation, involvement and responsibility. Only then can we attempt to break authoritarian dominance. We may only have one chance at revolution so we cannot afford to fail—we must be prepared. The working class has won wars and revolutions for everybody but themselves.



The working class is changing some of its occupations these days. This slow process is constant as we have nothing to sell but our labour, and submit to new wage-slavery occupations. The bosses close an office, factory or mine in one part of the world and open another where the wages are lower and the workers more passive. Those thrown out retrain for something else and the new wage slaves from the younger generations are advised at school or forced to 'choose' their industry by Job Training Schemes and so on, until they are 65 years old and can 'retire'.

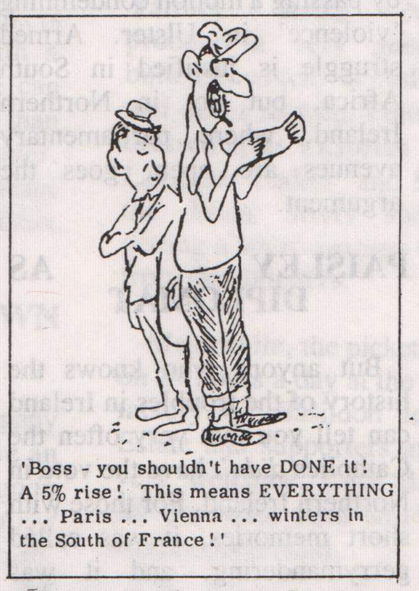
All the media drivel about 'populist capitalism', 'the market', and so on is the propaganda of the bosses. Once it was the role of religion to tell us to keep our place as monarchs, governments and employers with their trade wars were divine. Now the media has taken over from the pulpit; in some areas of the world theme have combined the two and religious bigots control the media.

So nothing really changes for us working people. The source of our income is wages and/or social benefits; the level of our incomes always finds us in the lowest groups; and our individual influence, responsibility and power at work and where we live is so small as to be insignificant to the authorities—the powers that be. We are 70% of the population here, and in most of the world—the ripped off majority. Now as so often before we are divided by occupation, gender, race, scales of pay and conditions, yet although to different degrees, we bear the weight of exploitation and subordination.

NEVER SO GOOD

Employed workers are not in acute deprivation; home ownership through mortgages is wider spread than in the past; so to is car ownership, and even possession of shares in newly privatised corporations. The well-paid and middle class commentators who tell us that we've never had it so good as under the tories would not, and could not, survive on the income of a working person—a decline in their own living standards is something that the yuppies run away from—but it's OK for us!

Access to colour televisions, videos, foreign holidays, cars and so on does not buy back the time that the bosses have stolen from us. Rises in wages (always below inflation except for the MPs, cops, the military and other statists) do not make up for deteriorating education, health, transport and other social services that define the living conditions of the majority. The unemployed,redundant workers and claimants on fixed incomes, low paid men and women, young and old, white and black, all battle every day in conditions of great poverty and face the prospect of leading a deprived life after retirement. Yes, class divisions still exist within Britain, but only when we combine to defend our incomes and standards of living will we overcome the isolation and separation which allows so many to be ground down into submission. The class war certainly exists for the statistically minded. Ponder on these figures for industrial and work-related 'accidents' which with real workers control could be prevented.


'Boss - you shouldn't have DONE it! A 5% rise! This means EVERYTHING ... Paris ... Vienna ... winters in the South of France!'

Every year at work at least:

- 600 people are killed.
- 12,000 people are injured.
- 400,000 people take off more than 3 days through injury (not all skivers of course!).
- 900 people die from diseases caused by work.
- 3,000 people die early each year from the stress (poverty, social pressures from family and neighbours) of unemployment.



" It's an emergency, Doc... They need the drill right away..."

No figures for dead or injured bosses are available, but we do know that company directors got 30% pay rises in 1986 while workers got 5%. It must be really tough at the top...

THATCHER'S HYPOCRISY

The shenanigans at the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church and Thatcher's pronouncements on the IRA during her Australian visit are proofs of the hypocrisy and spinelessness of the establishment when it comes to the Irish question.

The conference in Lambeth passed a resolution saying that people were justified in taking up arms against an oppressor when other means of social change weren't open. When it was realised that this could apply to Ulster as well as South Africa or Palestine, the conference rushed to cover itself by passing a motion condemning 'violence' in Ulster. Armed struggle is justified in South Africa, but not in Northern Ireland, where parliamentary avenues are open, goes the argument.

PAISLEY AS DIPLOMAT

But anyone who knows the history of the troubles in Ireland can tell you that very often the Catholics *didn't* have the vote in Northern Ireland. For those with short memories, it was called gerrymandering, and it was operated by great diplomats such as Ian Paisley. Catholics were second class citizens when it came to jobs and houses as well (and still are to some extent). Northern Ireland operated its own form of apartheid.

When the Catholics began back in the late sixties to campaign *peacefully* for the same rights that the US Blacks were campaigning for, they were met with a literally murderous repression from the loyalist police, who went on rampages through the Catholic ghettos with Protestant mobs. Not unnaturally, areas such as Bogside began defending themselves with stones and molotovs. Riots and no-go areas were the order of the day. A famous slogan of the times was 'YOU ARE NOW ENTERING FREE DERRY'.

SECTARIAN BLOODBATH

The British army was sent in in 1969 as much because the police had been chased out of the Catholic ghettos as for the vaunted reason of preventing a sectarian bloodbath. All accounts agree that at first the Catholics welcomed the troops as peacekeepers. But the honeymoon was short-lived, as the Catholics realised that the troops were being used almost exclusively in their areas. Only then did the IRA become active. Only after 1969 did the IRA emerge, at first as a *defensive* force, as the youth who had fought off the loyalist police began picking up rifles.

These are the historical facts. When Thatcher says that the IRA are simply murderers who have taken up the gun because they cannot win at the ballot box, she is altering history. The Northern Ireland statelet took up arms against the civil rights movement BEFORE the IRA even existed in any real form. She's also wrong on another count, since Sinn Fein do win at the ballot box quite regularly.

IMPERIALIST FORCE

Anarchists do not support the IRA. We are internationalists, not nationalists. We are libertarians, rather than worshippers of a Green State as opposed to an Orange State. But having said that, we recognise who is responsible for the troubles in Northern Ireland and for every death over the last 20 years. The British State has been an imperialist force in Ireland for centuries, and the present troubles are merely the latest fruits of that imperialist history.



SECONDARY EDUCATION?

Only when the British withdraw will the way be open for the killing to stop.

This is not an easy position for anti-unionists to argue in Britain, especially when the IRA seems at times to have an uncanny ability to blow up the wrong people. It isn't easy to counter the ill informed pub talk about 'murderous bastards', 'bring back hanging', 'tow it out into the Atlantic' etc. Nevertheless, it is the only position that revolutionaries and class conscious workers can take, no matter how uncomfortable. The alternative is to be a party to the bloody shambles Thatcher and her class have constructed in Ulster over the years. And as the miners found to their cost, the methods tested in Ulster will be used on workers on this side of the Irish Sea if necessary.



ON THE BEAT

ECONOMIC INTERESTS

After 20 years of hypocrisy and repression, the British Government has no solution to the mess it has created. Still the cry goes up to re-introduce internment (last tried in 1971). British policy is an uneasy combination of repression and trying to buy off moderate nationalists (hence the Anglo-Irish Accord). Meanwhile, the cost of propping up the Northern Ireland statelet may be starting to outweigh the advantages that have until now kept Britain in Ireland. Hence the warnings that bastions of loyalist ascendancy like the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast can no longer take it for granted that Britannia will write a blank cheque. When the costs do outweigh the dividends, Britain will pull out of Ulster militarily, although it will continue to have large economic interests, which it hopes will be safeguarded by the Green Tories in Dublin. All Thatcher's sanctimonious pronouncements on democracy and her promises to the loyalists will count for nothing. The loyalists will be ditched without hesitation. But before then thousands will have died and been maimed in Britain's very own West Bank.

GERBIL

As the Great Education Reform Bill (GER Bill—Gerbil) wends its way through parliament it has become discredited in its actual claim to allow parents a greater say in their children's education. It is actually laying down more restrictions on what can and cannot be taught in schools, with parental power restricted to decisions on how many times to cut the grass, mow the lawns etc.

The latest example of this is the debate on religious education. The government, through one of their stooges in the Lords, Baroness Cox, is trying to make religious education the basis of school life.

This has been opposed by other religious groups and by part of the Church of England hierarchy who saw it as part of a wider attempt to use Christianity as a justification of Thatcherism, especially in light of Thatcher's speech to the Church of Scotland, when she claimed the Judeo-Christian tradition as the backbone of British life.

Authoritarian governments attempt to use religion even more directly to legitimise themselves. Although not as obviously as it did 100 years ago, religion in schools seeks to create a basis of subservience, the idea being that there is a higher authority who determines our lives, be it temporal or spiritual.

Jesus Wants to Return As a Janitor

He's going to clean this place up!

His Words Will Flush Your Problems From His Kingdom



ATHEISM

It is more worrying for those of us who are atheist. This is not always recognised as a valid position in schools and no provision is made for children not to attend religious lessons or morning worship. They are normally left in the corridor and treated as lepers. Many parents, rather than allow this to happen give in and do not insist that their children are exempt.

It would not be so bad if comparative religion was taught, with each faith being explained in an objective way and including a study of humanism and atheism. But, given the nature of state education and the increasing centralism of government this is a non-starter even if the Tories have their way, in schools with a majority of non-christians.

Many teachers are opposed to religious education but are unable to do much about it. It is time it was recognised that only a small minority are actually practising Christians and for many of these it is a social, not a religious act.

There is little we can do at the moment apart from counter-religious teaching with our own critique exposing religion as a means of keeping the working class servile. A step towards this would be the re-establishment of the old communist Sunday Schools that thrived in some areas before World War I.



LETTERS

Dear Direct Action,

As an anarchist I was disgusted by the two articles relating to the 'Irish situation' in DA 50, *and it would appear to me that the DAM is either full of liberals or political cowards, who are so busy hedging their bets that all they can produce is articles such as* 'What a Shame' *and* 'I-I-IRA'.

The 'What a Shame' *article smacked of the worst form of liberalism ever, bordering on extolling the virtues of the international laissez-faire capitalism. It may be true that the British state has no immediate aims or advantage in breaking down the sectarian divide amongst the working class of the North of Ireland, and this is especially relevant to major employers such as Harland and Wolff. To claim that the privatisation of H&W would be beneficial to the break down of the sectarian divide is a joke. Just because some liberals in the USA have pushed through some principles based on 'fair employment' means absolutely nothing. We are talking about some of the most powerful multi-nationals in the world, who helped topple Allende in Chile, prop up South Africa, trade with the communist states, regardless of cold war or actual war, have union organisers murdered in Central America, close down whole towns and rip up whole forests, etc., etc. These people are not interested in liberal demands, they are interested in one thing—profits.*

To maintain and increase profit it means a placid or subdued workforce if privatised H&W will lose a large percentage of its workforce, which will inevitably cause problems, DA *is arguing that for the sake of the MacBride Principles the new*

continued on page 9.

continued from page 8.

multi-national is then going to sack half of what's left and replace them with catholics. Bosses care not whether their workforce is black or white, male or female, catholic or protestant as long as it is stable and economic. If a USA multinational takes over H&W, it may implement the MacBride principles, but this will be an excuse, the reasons will be to break workplace solidarity, cut wages and increase profits.

The 'I-I-IRA?' *article would have been better headed* 'I-I-Ira!' *It totally backed down on any position on the IRA and so leaves the DAM supporting the IRA. The DAM over recent years has had increased presence on Irish demos, I would have thought this was based on an anarchist principle of opposing imperialism, oppression and for internationalism, but obviously I was wrong, the DAM was just being politically right on.*

The IRA is a nationalist organisation with no class analysis and no internationalism. People may point to words and statements about socialism but we all know that action speaks louder than words. If the IRA was a revolutionary organisation it would use the tools of the armed struggle to unite the working class both of Ireland and of Britain. It does not because it sees the armed struggle in a purely militaristic viewpoint because it is not revolutionary.

When has the IRA carried out any operation in support of protestant workers in struggle, did the IRA carry out any acts of sabotage in support of the miners or any other major struggle being waged by the British working class? Did the IRA carry out ny actions in support of the Dunnes strikers in Dublin who were fighting against the selling of South African produce? Has the IRA carried out any actions against the oppressive nature of the catholic church in Free Ireland, or done anything for the position of women in this most backward of European countries regarding such basic rights as divorce and abortion?

I do not want to hear that the Sinn Fein campaigns on these issues, revolutionaries do not separate the armed struggle, the political struggle, the economic and social struggles.

In order to support the fight against oppression in Ireland it is important to support and unite all struggles against state, capital, sexism, church, etc. that go on, with a clear libertarian revolutionary goal not simplify it into support or not for the IRA.

In solidarity,
MA

DAM AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

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

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

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

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

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

8—The Direct Action Movement is resolved to initiate, encourage and wholeheartedly support the creation of independent workers' unions based on the principles of anarcho-syndicalism.

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

Note: The new point 8 in the Aims and Principles of the DAM was added at our national conference this year as a clarification of what we believe anarcho-syndicalism to be.

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 int ernational, which was formed in 1922 and has sections in France, Spain, Italy, West Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Bulgaria, USA, Japan, Australia, Brazil, Argentina and Venezeula.

DAM

DAM CONTACTS

NORTH EAST

Doncaster—PO Box 96, Doncaster 4, South Yorkshire.

Huddersfield—PO Box B20, Huddersfield 1.

Leeds—Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds 2.

For contacts in Newcastle, Teeside and York write to North East DAM secretary, c/o Leeds DAM.

NORTH WEST

Bolton—c/o Bolton Socialist Club, Wood Street, Bolton, Lancashire.

Burnley—5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancashire.

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

Manchester—c/o Box DAM, Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.

Preston—c/o Black Cat Press, 16-18 Lancaster Road, Preston.

For contacts in Crewe and Cumbria write to North West DAM secretary, c/o Burnley DAM.

SCOTLAND

Edinburgh—PO Box 516, South West DO, Edinburgh 10.

Glasgow—Box DAM—c/o Clydeside Press, 37 High Street, Glasgow.

SOUTH EAST

Brixton—c/o 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London SE24 0LR.

Cambridge—Box DAM, c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge.

Central & North London—c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX.

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DIRECT ACTION

EXETER ORANGE ORDER MARCH
September 17th
Counter Demo
contact: Plymouth Anarchists, PO Box 105, Plymouth, Devon.

BLACK AND BLUE

The following article is taken from a pamphlet produced by the ASF in Australia (Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation—Australian section of the International Workers Association) in response to the current celebrations about the 'discovery' of Australia and the ensuing 'progress' that was made. However, the truth about what happened is somewhat different.

1788. 200 years ago, the European invasion of Australia began. The First Fleet had come to stay. 11 years earlier, Captain James Cook had declared that Australia was 'terra nullius'—an empty wasteland. That legal lie set the tone of the next 200 years as the colonisers steadfastly refused to recognise the rights of the original inhabitants—the aborigines.

Before the arrival of the Europeans the aborigines occupied the whole continent, there were perhaps 700,000 of them. Their ancestors had lived there for more than 40,000 years, their civilisation and culture, the oldest in the world. Rather than develop material wealth, they developed a rich culture and nurtured spirituality.

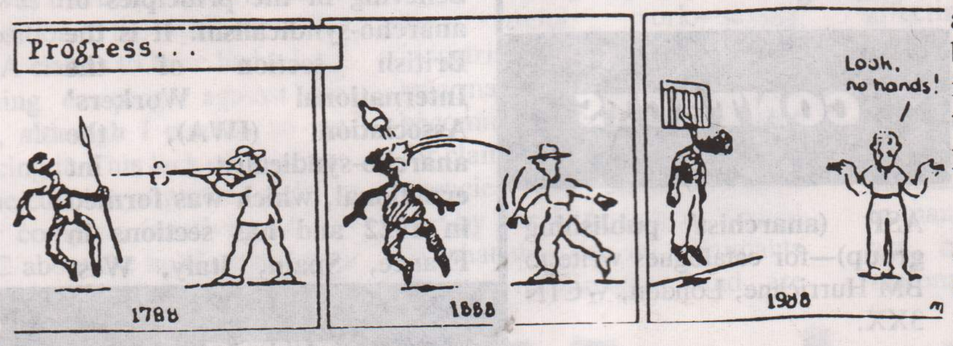
CUSTODIANS

The land is their spiritual base, the source of life. They belong to the land, to a particular region and a group of people. They are the custodians of the land. They must look after it so that it continues to provide food, clothes, shelter, and all things necessary for life. Each tribe was responsible for only the land to which they belonged. The land belonged to one tribe, had no meaning for another, so there was no need to fence or guard land or develop weapons to defend or steal it.

The invaders had different ideas. They believed in the supremacy of possession. Their culture had developed around ownership. Land was something to be fenced off and guarded, and could be sold or stolen. It was a commodity, and they had developed powerful weapons to support their ideas.

Non-aboriginal Australians are encouraged to believe that the European occupation of the land was essentially peaceful, a passive infiltration onto the land, and the aboriginal population declined naturally, victims of the evolutionary process. Nothing could be further from the truth.

At no time did the invaders bargain, negotiate, make payment or show any willingness to respect the institutions of the indigenous peoples. Instead they began a silent war. Silent because it was never openly declared or concluded. It was genocide—a conscious attempt to eradicate an entire race. Aborigines were shot, hung and poisoned. They were also chained and imprisoned in special camps.



EXTERMINATED

Because the official historians have never acknowledged the genocidal practices of the colonials, they have never told us of the prolonged and active resistance of the aborigines. Only now that aborigines are documenting their own history is the extent of that existence becoming more widely known. But all their cunning, skill and bravery was no match for the technology of death.

By 1850, the New South Wales aboriginal population, estimated originally at 40-45,000 had been reduced to only 6-7,000. In Victoria, of the estimated population in 1839 of 11,500 there were only 806 in 1886. And similarly for all regions, as the new Australians attempted to wipe out the old. More than 90% of the aboriginal population was exterminated one way or another.

Those aborigines not killed outright were rounded up and put into camps, sometimes called reserves, stations or missions. The aim of these camps was to repress tribal society, organisation, law and custom. Families and tribes were separated, and children were taken by force to be assimilated into European style custom and culture.

Many aboriginal people today still live in such camps. Hundreds of miles from their tribal lands they have nowhere they can go. They are forced to spend their welfare cheques at the camp store that supplies western-style food and clothes at inflated prices. Until the last decade aboriginal women were being forcibly sterilised. Many aboriginal families are still waiting for their children to return.

ATROCITIES

1988 and the Australian Government is urging everyone to participate in its invasion bicentenary celebrations, without great success, (many activities being greeted with either an active boycott or large-scale apathy). For aborigines, their only reason to celebrate is that *they have survived.*

And that survival has not been easy as the following statistics show:

Aboriginal unemployment is about 60-70%—7 times higher than for non-aboriginals. For young people the figure is nearer 80%.

The infant mortality rate for aborigines is 4 times higher than for non-aborigines.

Aboriginal women are 8 times more likely to die in childbirth than non-aboriginal women.

Life expectancy for an aborigine is about 50 years. That's 20 years less than for non-aborigine.



Only a small number of aborigines complete education, only 1 in 10 complete year 12.

In some states like Western Australia aborigines make up 40-50% of the prison population. Nationally they are 14% of the prison population while being only 1.7% of Australia's total population. The Australia legal system has legitimised oppression.

More than one hundred aborigines have died in police custody since 1981.

ALIENATION

Many aboriginal people have poor physical and mental health. Alcoholism, asthma, arthritis, diabetes, epilepsy, depression, anxiety, heart disease, high blood pressure, serious infections and petrol sniffing are the most common health problems.

Petrol sniffing is particularly common among young aborigines living in the outback, where in some settlements nearly 50% are regular petrol sniffers.

Before the European invasion aborigines were a healthy active people with virtually none of the illness or problems they have now. Their present state of health is directly related to their alienation from the land. Their source of identity, well-being, food and shelter.

LAND RIGHTS

Confronted with all these problems a growing number of aborigines are working within their communities to provide aboriginal run and controlled services. Health, housing, childcare, legal and social services, as well as youth and education programs are being run by and for aborigines. Also in the northern territory, the aboriginal media service runs both a radio station and the new satellite television station 'Imparja'.

While the many aboriginal organisations have different priorities and tasks in their immediate fields, they all agree on the urgency for the rights of aboriginal control over traditional lands, with compensation for the land now used by non-aborigines.

EXPLOITATION

The call for land rights is coming from the entire aboriginal population, spread across this vast continent. On reserves, in fringe-town camps, in the inner city suburbs, out bush, the aborigines have one voice. And despite campaigns of the mining companies a growing number of Australians recognise the justice of their claim.

Two of the major forces opposing aboriginal sovereignty are the mining companies and powerful pastoralists. Violent repression of the aborigines has accompanied the expansion of these industries since the early 19th century. they support, and are supported by, the reactionary political organisations and politicians. Millions have been spent on a multi-faceted campaign to deny aborigines land rights.

Already the advances made by the aboriginal communities in self-determination show that the way back to health is through the regaining of personal and collective autonomy and identity. Each step towards this goal is a step forward for humanity.

Source: ASF—Australia

[redacted]

At the 18th Congress of the IWA an international day of action in solidarity with the aboriginal people of Australia was agreed to. This will take place on September 8th. Actions will be taken at Australian embassies, consulates and businesses.

Details of actions and photos should be sent to the ASF at PO Box 1052, Preston, Victoria, 3072