DIRECT ACTION



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HOTTING UP

Union Militants Roll Up Their Sleeves

This summer is likely to see the biggest upsurge in militancy for years, mostly over pay. The Tories look set to face a 'Summer of Discontent' putting union militancy back on the political agenda. April and May have seen strikes on the docks, London Transport, the BBC, and more disputes in Local Government. Railworkers were set to come out at the same time as the London Transport strike, including unofficial action on the buses to coincide with the tubes, while action over pay by Local Government Officers seems inevitable.

We welcome this, and the level of rank and file organisation that militancy generates to sustain itself. But no-one should be complacent — we have another opponent besides the bosses and their government. Ron Todd's antics before the ballot on a strike action by the dockers are a reminder of the other side of our present reformist trade unions.

The Tories' inability to curb inflation, along with tax cuts for the rich is fuelling pay militancy which is colliding with attempts to introduce re-structuring of the labour force and 'flexible working practices', and with the simple fact that many public service workers *are unable to do their jobs* ***now***, let alone after 'flexibilisation'. This is a climate where strikes can spread, rather than be confined to small groups of workers.

The anti-union laws will not stop any big strike by important groups of workers — a prosecution could create martyrs and a political dimension to any strike the Tories and bureaucrats fear. Remember, the TUC does not want to bring down the government — it wants its party, Labour, to win the next election, so there must be no embarrassing association with a general strike, which would alienate the middle class voters they need. Anti-union laws confirm the bureaucrats as a bosses' fire brigade. To save their funds from sequestration they will sit on demands for ballots and end unofficial strikes, giving the bosses time to prepare and hampering solidarity action.

The rank and file organisations which mass militancy will generate have another task if gains are to be made. Rank and file unionism, however militant, is not enough to defend our class from the bosses. If they lose this round they will attack us again, and once mass militancy has subsided it is very easy for the bureaucracy to regain control of the situation.



While we're on the move we can ignore the bureaucrats and make them support us, but once we're back at work they'll have their revenge, if we let them. We must restructure our organisations while we have the initiative, building horizontal links with others in our industries and with strike support groups, breaking down the artificial barriers between different firms and unions. We must ditch the bureaucrats, not elect new ones, and create structures which are accountable to us, giving us control over our officers, our funds, our solidarity and our politics.

DROP THE CHARGES

'Today thousands of demonstrators marched... err, sorry, we're not covering that item' — **BBC Evening News, 18th March 1989. The missing news was that over 15,000 people, answering the call from the Scottish Federation of Anti-Poll Tax Groups, marched through Glasgow to demonstrate in favour of mass non-payment of the Poll Tax. Along the route, a back street trail from Glasgow Green to Alexandra Park, it seemed every hoarding had been flyposted for the demo, the few populated streets displayed *'Pay No Poll Tax'* window posters, people waved from houses and buses, and lorry drivers put placards in their cabs to show their support.**

Groups arrived from all over England and Wales — one from as far away as Southampton. Community groups predominated but there was solid trade union support despite the fact that the Scottish Trade Union Council (STUC) had instructed all its affiliated organisations *not* to support the march and build for their April 1st token defiance march in Edinburgh.

The STUC instruction is the latest in a stream of attacks and misinformation (*'don't worry, we'll do something later'*) by the Labour Party/Trade Union leaders on the non-payment movement. Until recently this allowed the Tories to keep quiet and get on with the job of screwing more profits out of us... However, an increasingly visible contempt for orders issued by Labour bureaucrats has caused the government to doubt whether their chief poll tax collectors (Labour controlled local authorities) can deliver the goods.



This is despite the fact that Labour authorities have threatened some who refused to register with warrant sales (notably a four year old boy in Stirling — just about sums up how accurate the Community Charge Registration Officer's (CCRO) records are), wage arrestment and the seizing of bank accounts. In practice very few have been carried out partly to stop their 'socialist' mask slipping even further, partly because of the many inaccuracies in the registration (2,000 plus wrongly listed at Edinburgh's Pollock Halls), but mainly due to the real threat of community and workplace resistance.

Trade Union leaders are struggling to shackle resistance and have begun victimising activists. Edinburgh NUPE No. 1 branch had two shop stewards suspended for a year after the branch affiliated to the Lothian Federation of Anti-Poll Tax Groups. Activists in the EIS teachers union in Midlothian are also being threatened with disciplinary action. The STUC has informed the shopworkers union USDAW in Edinburgh not to defend any members sacked by Sainsbury's at Cameron Toll shopping centre if the reason is that they have had a wage arrestment for non-payment of the Poll Tax. Members of Prestonfield Community Resistance to the Poll Tax has got the support of other groups to mount regular pickets of the Sainsburys and call for a boycott of the store.

These attempts at control are desperate measures confronted by rising grass roots anger. In December, Poll Tax activists forced John Lewis Stores to withdraw sacking threats against non-paying staff by simply stating that they would picket the stores over the Christmas period. NALGO Against the Poll Tax activists report a willingness to consider strike action against the Tax, local CPSA branches in conjunction with Lothian Claimants Union have produced a joint leaflet aimed at claimants and benefit staff calling for non-payment and for staff to refuse to dock the benefits of non-payers.

OFFENSIVE

Now the Tories are being forced on to the offensive with full page pro-Poll Tax adverts disguised as interviews with government ministers and TV ads to direct debit your Poll Tax payments. The Scottish Office is preparing a series of special interest leaflets covering students, tenants, the appeals procedure and the registration process. Unfortunately (for them) community and workplace groups have beaten them to it giving the pro non-payment viewpoint.

Where anti-Poll Tax groups have gone on the offensive they have been successful. On April 1st the STUC organised an anti-Poll Tax march through Edinburgh, with an estimated 20,000 turning up and stopping traffic in the city centre for an hour. The presence of the Federation of Anti-Poll Tax Groups who had not been approached by the STUC and were refused a platform at the rally along with Anti-Poll Tax Groups from England and Wales turned the STUC's April Fool's protest into a non-payment march. Speakers addressing the rally were constantly heckled for anything less than a call for non-payment and Labour Mps who bothered to show up were too scared to speak.

The registration process has started now in England and Wales and contrary to reports, registration is still not complete in Scotland.

Fines are just starting to bite in Lothian, apparently fines of £200 and over have been suspended because there is too big a backlog of cases to deal with! Direct action is planned in support of individuals being threatened with warrant sales.

MARITAL AIDS

NALGO members in Birmingham are refusing to distribute a leaflet called *'Preventing Aids — Your Responsibility'*, written by the city's Medical Officer for Environmental Health, Dr Surinder Bakshi, and have called for his resignation. The leaflet urges parents to *'encourage your children to share your family's moral and religious values'*, and states that *'couples who are not infected, do not use drugs and have mutually faithful, single-partner sexual relationships are protected from Aids'*. The leaflet makes no mention of safe sex, and is simply a crude attempt to promote monogamous heterosexuality. By implication it blames people with Aids for their condition, and equates high risk groups with lack of 'morality'. More union action against this kind of bigoted rubbish, please.



BAD FORM

Those lovable lefties at Southwark Council have pulled off quite a few nasty tricks recently. In preparation for compulsory competitive tendering, they have restructured the way the council treats its employees. Ann Matthews, council leader, has stated that they want to distance the councillors from being employers, so presumably Labour won't have to take the rap for the way they're co-operating with so much of the government's anti-working class legislation. However, what really takes the biscuit is the way they have handled the Poll Tax. With the class analysis that Labour's mandarins have become famous for, their first move was to petition the Queen for the right to levy their own taxes!



Since then, many of their leading lights have stated their hostility to the tax (but who'd trust a politician anyway?). so why did they send out their Poll Tax registration forms at the beginning of April, when every other English council is waiting until May 22nd? Now, the council has been warned that these forms have no legal status whatsoever, and have been criticised for the threats on the form, that residents are required to return them within 21 days. The local anti-Poll Tax campaign, SCRAP (Southwark Community Resistance Against the Poll Tax), have been publicising the council's cock-up, and spreading the campaign at the same time. The good news is that at present only 10% of the forms have been returned.

Meanwhile, in neighbouring Lewisham, the Poll Tax has already been privatised. Worried about Union opposition to the tax, and also trying to distance the Labour Party from responsibility for its collection, the council took a leaf out of Westminster's book and put it out to tender. The contract was won by Midsummer Computers, based on the Isle of Dogs, who also happen to be administering Westminster City Council's Poll Tax. They may be recruiting casual staff in the Summer, which is when the timetable for registration has got to canvassing, and obviously their main targets for that will be students. Rumour has it that it will be through Alfred Marks Employment Agency. More on Midsummer and their plans later, the local campaign in Lewisham is researching them.

What the two examples above show is that the Poll Tax is now here in England and Wales, as well as Scotland, and the fight against it must be stepped up, in the streets, the estates and the workplaces. There is no point in relying on the Labour Party, even if it had the will it is powerless — only mass collective action can defeat the Poll Tax.

London Against the Poll Tax demo and rally: Sunday 4th June, Westminster Central Hall (Tubes: Westminster/St. James Park). Join the non-payment contingent.

LABOUR SHORTAGE

Ever wondered whose stupid idea the Poll Tax was? The Eurocommunists seem to be sure the answer lies in 1381, probably because they want to consign lower class revolt to the distant past. The truth is actually a lot more recent, but it's not widely known. In each of Britain's colonies a Poll Tax was introduced, something internationalists should be aware of, and if you look at the way it worked all the liberal objections to the Tax fall down under the weight of its class nature.

The role of the Poll Tax in the colonies was as a means of labour control.The majority of those who had the 'benefits' of British imperialism forced on them relied on subsistence farming for a living, although a great deal of technological advance had been achieved in many of the lands. This didn't excite the imperialists much, they were more interested in mineral wealth, but they needed cheap labour to reap the vast profits. Their problem was how to get people who had no economic reason for working long hours on subsistence wages down the mines. Their solution was to create one, using a Poll Tax (although the vote wasn't in it). To pay the Poll Tax subsistence farmers had to grow cash crops and make a surplus, or go down the mines to earn wages to pay it.

In *DA 57* the imminent labour shortage caused by a fall in the number of school-leavers was noted. The last labour shortages which required state regulation were during the 1914-18 and 1939-45 wars, and the means by which state regulation was established should be of great interest to us. They stem from the introduction of the National Insurance Scheme and the Labour Exchanges in 1909, measures bitterly opposed by the Anarcho-Syndicalists and Industrial Unionists, who were the revolutionary wing of the British labour movement at the time. Needless to say, the Labour Party was in favour of this system.

POVERTY

The initial effect of the NI Scheme, which included for the first time unemployment insurance, was intended to separate the 'deserving' from the 'undeserving' poor. The 'deserving poor' were workers employed in trades where work was regular, but who suffered occasionally from unemployment due to the workings of capitalism. The 'undeserving poor' were workers in trades where jobs were casual, pay inadequate, unemployment, poverty, ill-health and 'sweating' endemic. The latter category also included those agitators — blacklisted union activists — upon whom any discontent among the former was blamed, as the Edwardian mind could not conceive of regularly employed workers having genuine grievances.

Unemployment insurance was introduced to prevent the 'deserving poor' from falling into the poverty trap and coming into contact with radical ideas. The Labour Exchanges were designed to get them back into work where the capitalists needed them as swiftly and smoothly as possible. The latter were also designed to improve the system of blacklisting suffered by militants, making it national and using the new NI numbers for improved identification. The Economic League's 'labour screening service' is notorious in the construction industry as the National Insurance Blacklist. In spite of the benefits of the Welfare State, it is founded on what remains a system of social control.



IN TUNE WITH THE MASSES?

Without this system the Defence of the Realm Act passed in 1915 to regulate the wartime labour supply and prevent strikes (accompanied by the incorporation of the trade union bureaucracy into the state apparatus for the duration) would not have been workable. With a new labour shortage imminent in different circumstances, a new means of labour regulation and social control is needed — enter the Poll Tax.

UNDERCLASS

The Poll Tax, like the riot police, has been imported from colonial rule to tackle British problems. What it will do is institutionalise the formation of what sociologists call an 'underclass', that is a class which does not have (even nominally) full citizenship rights. Such a class bears a strong resemblance to the old 'undeserving poor', and has been forming in Britain for some years. The majority of working class black people are already a component of such a class because of police harassment, racial attacks and immigration controls. So are the Irish in Britain, subject to the PTA, forced into casualised industries like construction with its appalling safety record, the lump and the blacklist. Sheer poverty puts the majority of one-parent families (overwhelmingly female) in the same category, the Poll Tax will add the rest of the casualised and low-paid sections of the working class who can't afford to pay it.

Its authors hope it will split the working class into an underclass and a stratum of regularly employed, comparatively well-paid, racist Tory individualists. The other aspect of the Poll Tax neglected by most critics is the potential it has to act as an incentive for moving labour around the country. The Poll Tax will be highest in the inner cities, particularly London, and it will be lower in areas like the Green Belt around London where there is already a labour shortage. Anyone unable to pay a high rate of Poll Tax, but unable or unwilling to break the law, will be encouraged to move to where the Tax is lower.

SINISTER

At this point the most sinister aspect of the Tax comes in, for the payment of the Tax in the colonies was accompanied by the issuing of a card to prove payment. That card was called a 'Pass', as in the South African Pass Laws, and it is highly unlikely that such a Pass or ID Card will not be introduced. The avenues for doing so include plans to issue students with such cards as part of Poll Tax implementation, Football ID Cards, and 1992, as many European Community states already issue ID Cards. This will build on the existing National Insurance system to create a comprehensive means of labour regulation and social control. Like the original NI Scheme, the Labour Party isn't really opposed to the Poll Tax either.

They are making noises against it, on the usual liberal grounds, but their councils are implementing it, and no way would a future Labour government repeal it. With the internationalisation of capital which will be aided by the Single European Market in 1992, the ability of capitalists to set up shop where labour costs are cheapest will force Labour and trade union leaders to help drive down wages and costs to preserve jobs. Labour has supported 'training' schemes as a means of reducing unemployment and creating a low-waged economy in the recent past, it is just going further along its natural path of development.

The alternative to this strategy is to fight, but class war is anathema to the labour movement bureaucracy, which relies on a healthy, strong capitalism delivering the goods. Where they differ from the capitalists is in believing that all should get a share of the wealth the workers create, not just the bosses. They also believe that capitalism works best when workers benefit from profits and when there is class harmony. The Labour Party is not like any other party in Britain, it has no centralised theoretical elite, it has to rely on others for its ideas. Nowadays its got the Eurocommunists and their journal *Marxism Today*, but it was inspired by the Fabian Society originally — a collection of disgusting middle class do-gooders who worshipped bureaucracy, despised the working class, and believed that society worked best when all aspects of life were regulated by the state. The state has now been supplanted by the market, but it's the same philosophy of trying to make capitalism work better for *both* workers and bosses.

New Realism is just the same old Business Unionism, the TUC will head off fights against attacks on our class, and use our opposition as a tool for negotiating the attacks to work in *their* interests too. So Labour won't restore the National Dock Labour Scheme if the Tories succeed in smashing it, because breaking the dock unions will considerably reduce import and export costs for business, and make Britain that much more attractive to international capital. So Ron Todd sent his members back to work, and used their walk-outs as a bargaining tool to try and preserve union membership levels, while letting through the real reason behind scrapping the scheme — reduction of labour costs.

Similarly, as public services are placed on a business footing, and oriented towards business interests by Compulsory Competitive Tendering and privatisation, Labour and the TUC won't fight, or seek to renationalise anything. Public service unions like NUPE (National Union of Public Employees), NALGO (National And Local Government Officers' Association), and possibly COHSE (Confederation of Health Service Employees) are merging into one big business union for health, education and local government — in order to win single-union deals with privatised services and maintain membership levels, ensuring corporate survival. This union will be one of the two biggest unions in the country, but its ascendancy will not signal the end of the industrial working class, but the adaption of the existing labour movement to the most recent developments in capitalism.

Capitalism is about profits, Labour politicians and union bureaucrats use the strength of the organised working class as a bargaining tool to maintain their share of power and perks. What we, the workers, need to do is adapt to capitalist development in a completely different way, by reclaiming the labour movement we built. And when it's in our hands it's got to be as internationalist, class-conscious and aggressive as the bosses are — the choice is Anarcho-Syndicalism or surrender.

LOCAL HEROES

Local Government white collar workers are often confused with Town Hall mandarins, have anger at Council and Government policies taken out on us, and are dismissed as not being real workers. In reality 11% of us are eligible for Income Support, 40% of us are below European Community definition of low pay, and in terms of class consciousness many of us have no illusions about the state, and we have forced NALGO, the biggest local government union, into some of the most advanced political positions in the TUC.

Some of the jibes stem from the fact that we have never had a national strike, a fact which dwindles somewhat when you consider that there have only been half-a-dozen national miners' strikes. This year that could change, anyway, NALGO submitted a pay claim of £1,200 or 12%, whichever is the greater, but that only won a vote against a flat-rate-only pay claim by a margin of one. Clearly the situation reflected in the above statistics is getting too much, and it's about time.

To add insult to injury the employers have now made us their final offer — 6% and strings which will cripple any national, collective power NALGO has. The strings include:

- the end of national pay grades, with each authority being at liberty to set their own. This is accompanied by the end of national and regional pay and grading appeals.
- the end of automatic annual salary increments, and the introduction of performance reviews to determine eligibility. This will mean *individual* pay negotiations each year, and a system of reward and punishment to encourage toadies and control troublemakers.
- the introduction of flexible and weekend working, with each authority to determine its own rates.

RHETORIC

If this is forced on us it will mean the salaries of the lowest paid being held or driven down, while the salaries of Chief Officers, the real Mandarins, are being pushed up in line with the private sector through 'recruitment and retention' packages — company cars, bonuses, working from home (I'm serious!). It will also break up the basis of the national union structure in local government, when it is patently obvious that it is central government which is behind, or able to influence, the policies predominating nationally. There is no way a local fight can defeat a strategy which is determined by the government, and controlled from Westminster through rate-capping and the Poll Tax.

The government's hand is obscured by the fact that Labour-controlled authorities continue to spout meaningless socialist rhetoric while carrying out Tory policies. The general argument is that workers have only made gains during times of prosperity (ie. when the capitalists have been forced to throw us some crumbs); so times are hard, but it is essential to stay in power in order to carry on the work of redistributing wealth (to Chief Officers, Socialist Business Consultants, etc.); the real problem is the outmoded attitudes upheld by the unions and the solution is to prioritise service users (i.e. attack union organisation); the only people who could possibly want to disrupt this are political extremists. Union activists are associated with the Labour Party, and get it in the neck from all sides.

FALSE LOGIC

All that's really new about this is the zeal with which the Labour Party is taking it all on, locally as well as nationally. Essentially, the current situation is making the false logic of reformism glaringly obvious. How do you redistribute wealth when you are presiding over a mushrooming bureaucracy, paying 'socialist consultants' £500 a day to come up with reports full of the obvious and bullshit, and merrily attacking some of the worst-paid workers in the country? The real reason Labour authorities are clinging to power is that because they see the state as the only instrument by which they can achieve anything, without power nothing can be achieved, so it is necessary to cling to power even at the expense of any achievements made.

All this is compounded by the structure and attitude of our main union. NALGO has never entirely lost its origins as a staff association, and there are strong tendencies to look at problems not collectively, in terms of class action, but in terms of the problems faced by individual members or particular sections of the union. Any idea of potential unity right across local government is ignored, and any strategy is looked at in terms of whatever will not alienate the most backward section of the union. With a top-down structure there is very little potential for testing the myths assumed by the bureaucracy, or for communicating amongst ourselves to find out what other branches and districts really think.

The result of all this is a feeling of isolation and uncertainty about all but the most local sectional issues, and a general apathy towards the workings of the union nationally, and even at branch level. What faith are you going to have in a union whose negotiators tell you Scale One (the lowest grade) doesn't exist in London, and you're on it in London. These strings were predicted last year, so was the need for all-out indefinite strike action to secure the pay claim and beat the strings, instead of the donation of five days' pay to the bosses proposed last year. Nothing has been done to campaign for effective action, and with the kind of warning we've had the scope was enormous, so the bureaucrats are clinging to the myths that indefinite strike action scares the membership off. They will blame the membership if we lose, *we* know who's really to blame for the state of our unions.

ISOLATED

We suspect most shopfloor activists feel as isolated as we do right now, but there are some good signs, the vote for flat-rate-only was one. The mood seems to be one of uncertainty rather than apathy or despair, so if there's a fight people will probably get into it, the problem is how do we start one? To break out of the isolation some kind of industrial network or stewards' combine needs to be started, including NUPE and GMB members, and strategies have got to be developed from the shopfloor across branches and districts. All is not lost, the labour shortage coming in the 1990's and the commercialisation of public services involved in Compulsory Competitive Tendering and privatisation will put a premium on semiskilled and professional workers, and give us the ability for the first time to hit the bosses in the pocket.

But these things are not inevitable, they will have to be fought for, so if anyone out there's got ideas and abilities needed to build a fighting organisation in public services, we'd like to hear from you. (No would-be leaders or patronising lefties, please. No racists, etc. Otherwise, we don't care about political affiliation.)

DAM COUNCIL WORKERS



ANSWERS ON A POST CARD TO ...

IT'S A GAS

The Hackney Empire has always had competition from its neighbour the Town Hall, in fact, I wouldn't be surprised if Council financial aid wasn't ensured by the need to deflect attention from some of the carryings on. Remember Councillor Pierre Royan and his performing starting pistol? To quote Belfast Sinn Fein Councillor Alex Maskey, to whose presence Royan was objecting, *'How do you follow an act like that?'*

Well, one Thursday in April the building had to be cleared when someone let off a tear gas canister in the lobby. It was discovered at this point that the offender was a gentleman wearing a black crash helmet, and carrying a sawn-off shotgun, who had interrupted a wedding in the Registry Office to demand blank Birth Certificate forms. On receiving the forms he covered his retreat with the tear gas. The police are not acting on rumours that the raider was acting on behalf of neighbouring Haringey, which has an appalling budget crisis due to government cuts and gambling debts.

NUCLEAR REACTION



Anti-nuclear groups and individuals are asked to support the blockade of the proposed site for the Hinkley Point 'C' reactor on Saturday 24th June at 10 am. Despite overwhelming public opposition the government is expected to go ahead with Hinkley C, therefore the emphasis will be on direct action. People are asked to form themselves into affinity groups before their arrival and plan actions for Saturday and Friday too if they want. Please come self-sufficient (food, tents, etc.). There will be a meeting at 2 pm on Friday 23rd at Otterhampton Village Hall, Combwich, Somerset. Please come or send a representative from your group. It is hoped that people will be able to camp nearby on the Friday night. Please remember it is the government and the CEGB we are fighting, not local workers who presently have few employment options in this area. Information, leaflets and posters are available from BLAH, c/o Box DAM, 37 Stokescroft, Bristol, BS2.

COMING OUT FIGHTING

At the recent IWA Conference in Koln, West Germany (see *DA 56*), Paco Cabello, International Secretary of the CNT-AIT of Spain, was interviewed by a member of the German FAU. He spoke about the different unions in Spain, and the recent General Strike.

PC: In Spain there are four million unemployed, as recognised by the Ministry of Labour, out of a working population of ten and a half million. A further six million are below the official poverty line. There are some deprived areas — such as Andulasia, Estremadura and parts of Castille — where a quarter of a million people live on agricultural subsidies. They have to work 60 signed days a year to receive the subsidy, which amounts to just 20,000 pesetas (£100) a month, and may have to maintain a large family on that income. They have to work in all kinds of bad conditions to receive even that from the state. That's the situation in rural Spain for day labourers (jornaleros), the rest of the working population is not that much better off — the minimum wage is 45,000 pesetas (£225) a month.

For the CNT this situation is not only the responsibility of the bosses and the government, but also of the UGT (socialist trade union) and of the CCOO (communist trade union). Since 1976 these two unions have continually signed Social Pacts which have gradually cut wages and eroded union rights. Since the 1977 Moncloa Pact, 16-17% of purchasing power has been lost. The CCOO and the UGT have exchanged this for union subsidies and positions of power. They have negotiated with the working class as though we were some sort of product to be exchanged, and they have used the union elections to gain some kind of representativity.

These elections were inherited from the Vertical Union elections of Franco's time; they are the same as those before Franco's death. Workers vote and delegate representatives for four years who do pretty much what they like without having to consult the workers' assemblies. The CNT has always been against the union elections, and has had three campaigns against them, the last of which was in 1986. These elections take place for one to three months in each workplace. The level of union membership is low, perhaps the lowest in Europe — about 10%. The 'majority' unions take advantage of the elections to say that they are in fact the majority unions, when in one particular firm they may not have any members, only votes, and the Works Committee may be dominated by them.

The CNT proposes Union Sections as an alternative. Briefly, they are elected by the workplace assembly, are always recallable, can not decide anything alone, and act on what the workforce decides in the workers' assembly. The CNT's position in terms of Union Sections is being constantly strengthened, and the CNT has got rid of the ambiguities in the law over them.

Q: Are the workplace assemblies of all the workers, or just the CNT members?

PC: Everyone is invited and the assemblies are open. As a union section in any company, the CNT is entitled to an office in the building, and can designate a member to spend a certain amount of hours on union tasks in work time. A Works Committee has a delegate for four years and each has plenty of time to devote to union matters, but it isn't used to defend workers. As they don't need members — they can just be voted in — all class consciousness is lost. The workers vote and they will do the work. They also create divisions in the working class and in day-to-day struggles, as they are fighting among themselves for their own superiority. That's what the Works Committee is all about.



The CNT Union Section, however, is formed by CNT members in the firm who are elected for concrete tasks, are always recallable, and they defend whatever the workers' assembly decides and nothing more. They have some time to sort out problems but this depends on the number of workers in the firm. If there are ten workers, the delegate gets two hours a week; if there are 10,000 he/she has 40 hours a week. So the CNT supports the assembly, not only of CNT workers, but other workers as well. The CNT makes its opinion clear and accepts any agreement taken, as long as it does not go against CNT tactics and Aims and Principles.



ON THE RECENT GENERAL STRIKE

PC: The CCOO and the UGT were frightened by the PEJ (Young Workers Plan) — apart from its terrible implications, it also meant the end of unionism. These two unions were trying to recuperate all that they had lost in ten years in two days. So they got together and called a strike for the 14th of December against the government's economic policy and the PEJ.

The government was angry and frightened. Many PSOE (Socialist Party, in power) members in the UGT were against the strike, which increased tension between the PSOE and the UGT. Lots of PSOE members have been expelled as a result. Many other unions supported the strike including nationalist and regionalist ones — the Basque ELA-STV and the left-wing Intersindical of Galicia both pledged support.

The CNT called a National Plenum of Regions before the strike to discuss the problem. The strike in itself was symbolic, and will not change a lot, a strike which is not indefinite (what the CNT calls for) will not do much good. But we thought that we should support the stoppage and get our own propaganda out. We are against the PEJ and the government's economic policy, like the CCOO and the UGT, but we are also against Social Pacts, unemployment and the State. The CNT supported the strike and tried to explain our position in the workplace. On December 14th Spain was paralysed - there weren't any planes, buses or trains; no-one worked.

On December 13th television staff cut the programmes spontaneously, on their own initiative. This was when the newsreader was saying that minimal services would be maintained throughout the day! The bosses, the CCOO and the UGT had decided that news programmes, cowboy films and football would be available the whole day.

Q: Did the CNT have any influence due to its criticism of other unions?

PC: The CNT did have some influence where there were large demonstrations and where the CNT had meetings to present alternatives. In Salamanca, for example, the CNT held two big meetings, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and the whole main square was full, with about 1,500 to 2,000 attending. This was on the day of the General Strike. The meetings were called by the CNT but anyone could attend. The CNT had big meetings in other places such as Santiago, Asturias, Catalonia and Cordoba.

Q: Has there been a change in young people?

PC: Young people have become a little more active. The CCOO and the UGT have presented five main demands to the government and are sticking by them. The PEJ has been shelved, but at any moment may come into play again. That is a limited success though. The minimum wage has been raised, not enough, but it has risen, and in comparison with last year it is a big rise. The CCOO demanded a 13% rise, the UGT 11%, the government gave a figure of 6% and finally 9% was given.

There aren't many young people's organisations and the ones that do exist are little organised. They may seem strong in relation to other countries but in fact there is not a great youth movement in Spain. Thanks to the PEJ, students and young people have started to get moving. Before the general strike there was a big demo in Madrid. This showed that young people had understood that it was bad enough working for the state, but being a young worker was even worse. Things are becoming increasingly active. One CNT slogan often used was *'PEJ for the Guardia Civil!'*

Q: What effect has the General Strike had on the working class?

PC: Workers took part because they had had enough of the injustices committed against them. There were small sectional strikes after the General Strike, but they didn't amount to much. There was more agitation than before, but no revolutionary situation. It is important to say that scabs were monitored by pickets and stopped from working.

CNT



AIT

Workers have come to the CNT who already have a certain amount of experience and who are concerned with working class militancy. Members of the UGT and the CCOO are now more aware and realise that they are not satisfied with their unions. They may come to the CNT. Young people were not in a union before because they had no work, but now they are more interested in what's happening politically. Some young people will join the CNT. The CNT is an anarcho-syndicalist union and its aim is to transform this society, but not everyone in the CNT is an anarchist. The CNT is an anarcho-syndicalist organisation of workers, not an organisation of anarcho-syndicalist workers.

COURT CASE

In a judgement on 8th April it was ruled that only the CNT-AIT, and not the minority split using the name CNT, may use these initials. The judgement was based on the fact that the 'Congress of Unification' engineered by the split was not convoked by the majority of the CNT unions, as laid down in the statutes, and was therefore invalid. The 'renovadas' have now adopted the name CGT.

EASTERN PROMISE

The Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact countries are going through a period of crisis and change more far-reaching than any similar period since the last war.

Recent elections in the Soviet Union have seen defeats for the conservatives with reformists and dissidents securing victories. Even in those constituencies where only one, conservative, candidate stood, ballot papers were spoiled causing the need for a re-run.

The political changes in Russia as usual have had reverberations throughout the Warsaw Pact. Both Hungary and Poland are to hold elections and there is even talk of multi-party pluralist democracies developing.

Of course, the Western analysts and media have interpreted this as a grass-roots upheaval. They argue that the people of Eastern Europe have realised the bankruptcy of communism and are demanding a western style economic and political system. This is part wishful thinking and part propaganda for home consumption. The truth presents a more complex picture.



The Bolshevik seizure of power and its consolidation throughout the Stalin era produced in the Soviet Union a society dominated by the State bureaucracy. It also brought about massive industrialisation resulting in an upheaval of society on a scale never before seen. Stalin's death saw a power struggle with various elite groups aiming for political control. The Soviet economy was a shambles, working on a system generally known as *'Blat'*, a sort of 'I'll scratch your back, you scratch mine' agreement between those responsible for the various branches of industry. While supplies were passed under the counter and through favours, Kruschev attempted to reform and rationalise this chaotic practice but the bureaucracy proved too strong, and Stalin's shadow still loomed large. The Brezhnev years saw corruption flourish, resulting in the stagnation of the economy and an increasingly conservative bureaucracy unwilling and unable to bring about any political change. Opposition increased both underground, grass roots as well as the much publicised dissidents and within the Communist Party itself.

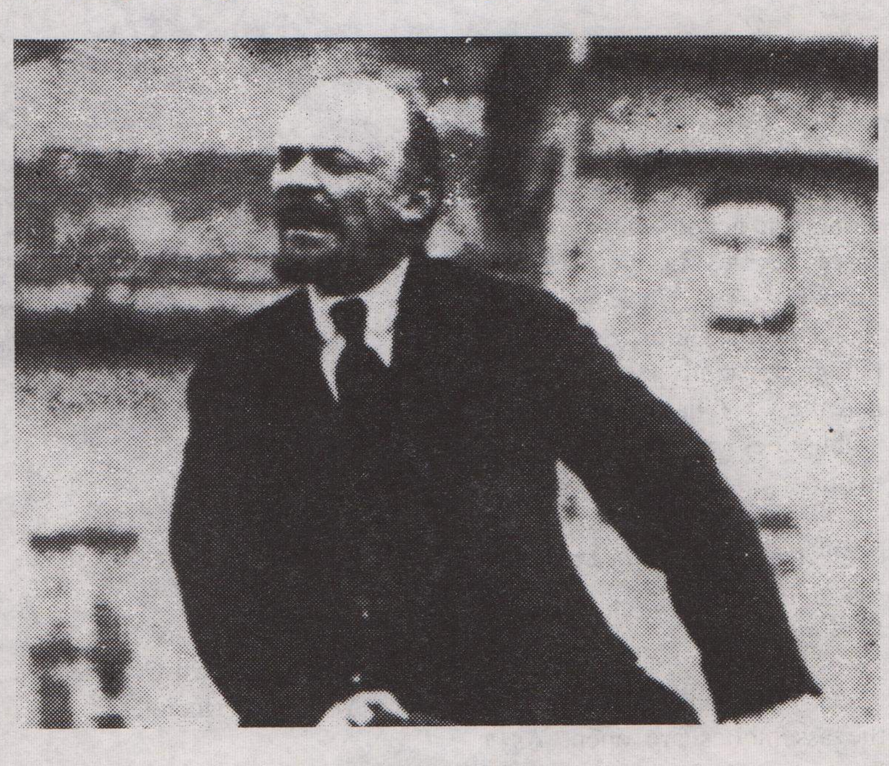
ELITE

The emergence of Gorbachev is seen as a victory for these reforming elements who recognised the need for radical change if the Soviet system was not to reach crisis point. The power struggle, which is still going on, is taking place between the old guard, whose base comes from within the Party/State bureaucracy or the military, and those Party members who were responsible for the economic management of the country. In challenging the old bureaucracy they are claiming the right as the most important sector of the elite to groups to have the greatest say in the running of the state.

In mounting this challenge the reformers had to create a new power base to undercut the present system. They preached economic liberalism, political openness and more democracy to build up an alliance firstly with the lower party members and now with the working class bringing pressure to replace the old closed system with a more open, democratic one.

The reformers though have no intention of relinquishing power to the Russian working class. Their democracy will be as strictly controlled as ours with limitations on how much change can be carried out.

In some ways this reflects the struggle that took place in western Europe 200 years ago as the rising bourgeoisie allied themselves temporarily with the working class to challenge the old absolutist states. In Britain this process passed off relatively peacefully except in occupied Ireland where it set off a chain of events in which Irish nationalism was to become the dominant force for change. In France it brought about a revolution and in other European countries crisis and conflict erupted. Obviously, the rising Soviet elite faction would prefer to go down the British path and strangely the situation in the Baltic states with the rising nationalistic feeling against 'Russiafication' mirrors the Irish/British experience.



KAPTAIN KREMLIN

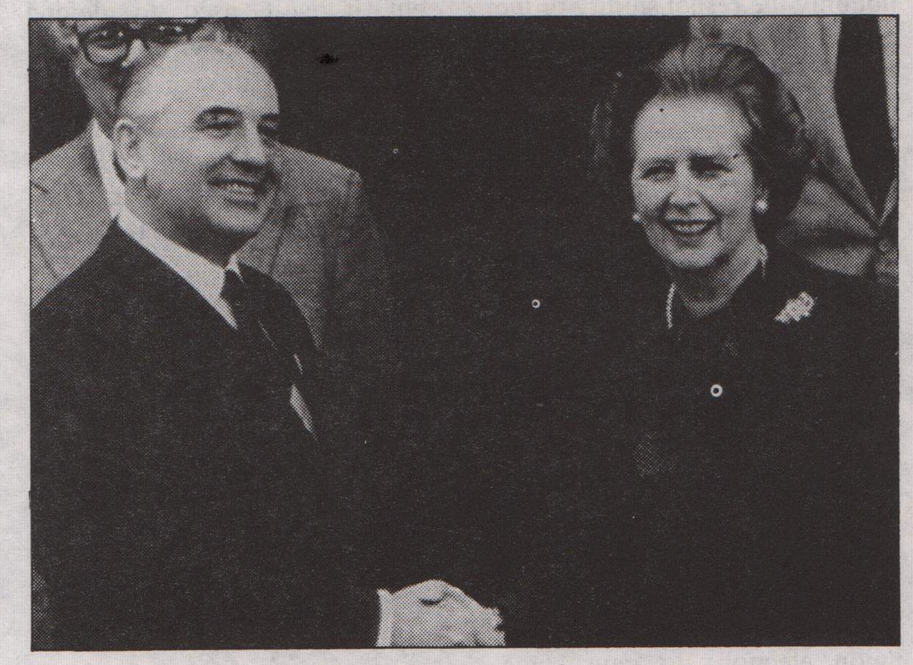
DEPOSED

The problem for Gorbachev is to keep a tight hand on the reformism pushing through the much-needed charges while controlling any grass roots movements channelling their anger into carefully prepared avenues and cul-de-sacs.

In the rest of Eastern Europe similar forces are at work but reformers can draw on nationalistic feelings to strengthen their challenge.

After the last war the Soviet system in the form of 'people's democracies' was imposed by virtue of military occupation. In many cases, communists who fought in the resistance against the Nazis and who often took an independent line, were deposed in favour of those Party members who had spent the war in the Soviet Union and who were firmly under Russian control. The problems caused by this were many and various crises developed with Russian domination having to be reimposed sometimes by military force.

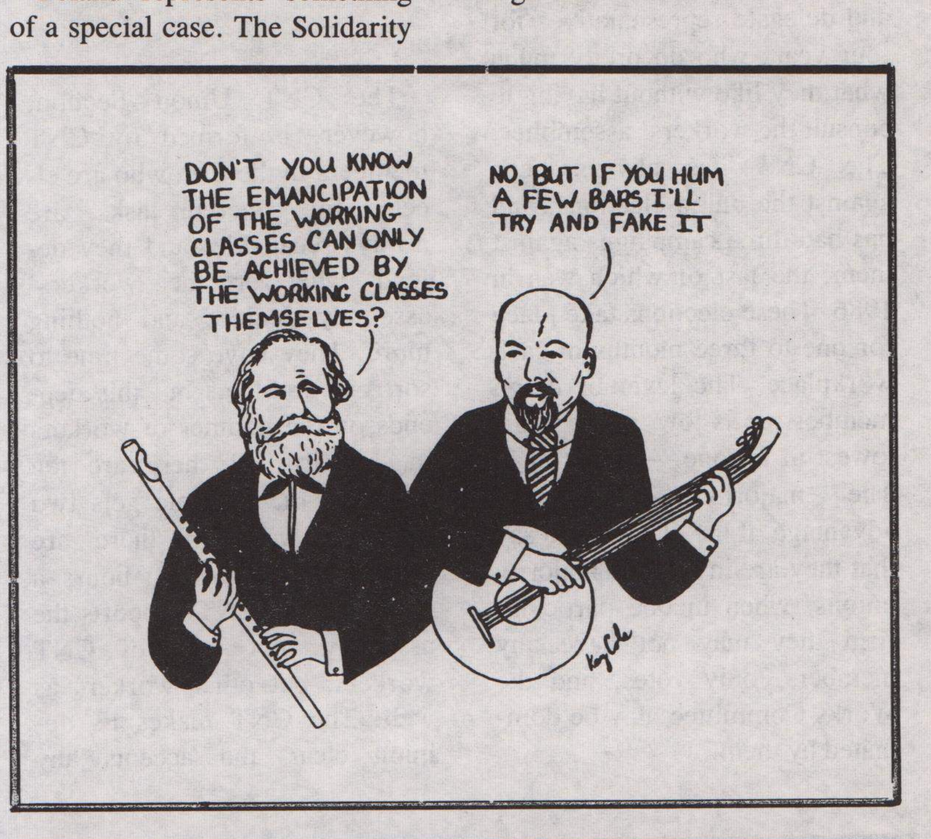
At the present time, Hungary and Poland are at the forefront of change. Hungary in some ways has moved ahead of the Soviet Union and its reformers have seen the Gorbachev initiatives as giving them the green light to move with more openness and at a quicker pace. Although they have to tread a fine path between the two dangers of Russian intervention and a popular uprising. Tenuous links are being made with the West but these, at the present time, are between vested interests. The capitalist West see a new market for consumer goods, the state-socialist East sees a possible economic expansion.



ARMS TRADE

Poland represents something of a special case. The Solidarity union movement proved to be a working-class initiative out of communist party control. It challenged the state hierarchy from without and the recent attempts to introduce greater democracy is seen as a way of bringing the movement into the state system and so neutralising its threat. this may yet prove difficult as the evidence suggests that the rank and file have lost confidence in Lech Walesa (see *DA 57*), who has lost his credibility, and many are taking a revolutionary syndicalist stance and so will be less susceptible to state machinations.

It is these people who can show us the way. What is needed is to develop links between the working classes of East and West, between dissidents of both sides. The reformists of both East and West have a common interest in stability, the revolutionaries have not. The working class of eastern Europe will not be impressed by the Marxist-Leninist left explaining to them the real meaning of their struggle with special reference to Lenin or Trotsky. Any true revolutionary movement will take on a syndicalist identity if it is not to fall into the trap of equating western capitalist democracy with working class emancipation. It is up to us to build links internationally. Europe is in a period of change and only a true international revolutionary organisation can hope to create and maintain these links, that organisation has to be the IWA.



KOREA OPPORTUNITIES

The last couple of years in South Korea have seen the working class in the computer and electronics industries fighting back against the bosses on a much larger scale than ever before (see *DA 55*). With the advent of 'democracy' in South Korea in 1987, workers have started to organise against bad conditions and low wages, and in several cases have managed to get a substantial increase in standards of living as well as union recognition.

Electronics • giants such as Motorola, Hyundai, Samsung, IBM, etc., have been increasingly moving their manufacturing plants to places such as Korea where the workers are more placid and accept much lower rates of pay than workers in Europe and the rest of the Western World. For example, Motorola Korea, a subsidiary of the American electronics company which makes parts for popular home computers like the Atari and the Amiga, made profits of over 8.8 billion dollars in 1987, whilst it paid its 5,000 employees only one dollar an hour. But workers are now fighting back.

Motorola conceded union recognition in April after a particularly long and bitter strike. In 1987, the South Korean government conceded union rights to the 5,000 workers at the Motorola plant in Seoul but this was not acknowledged by the management. The union organisers were sacked and 'kusadae' (save the company) squads were set up to smash all opposition, using clubs, iron bars and cattle prods.

During January there were several large demonstrations against Motorola by workers from various industries as well as the strikers themselves, and the 'kusadae' stepped up their action. One such incident resulted in four strikers dousing themselves in butane gas outside Motorola's headquarters in protest against the management. One of the management came out of the building and deliberately set light to them. All four needed hospital treatment for severe burns.



Eventually the management conceded, resulting in union recognition for the workers, the first Motorola plant in the world to be unionised. The sacked workers were reinstated and the workers were also given their own union offices. Other companies, such as IBM, conceded union recognition to save production after hunger strikes and occupations by workers and union officials caused too much bad publicity for IBM internationally, as well as the heavy profit losses that resulted. Tandy decided not to bother and closed down their plants instead and have now moved to more 'peaceful' areas of Asia to make their profits.



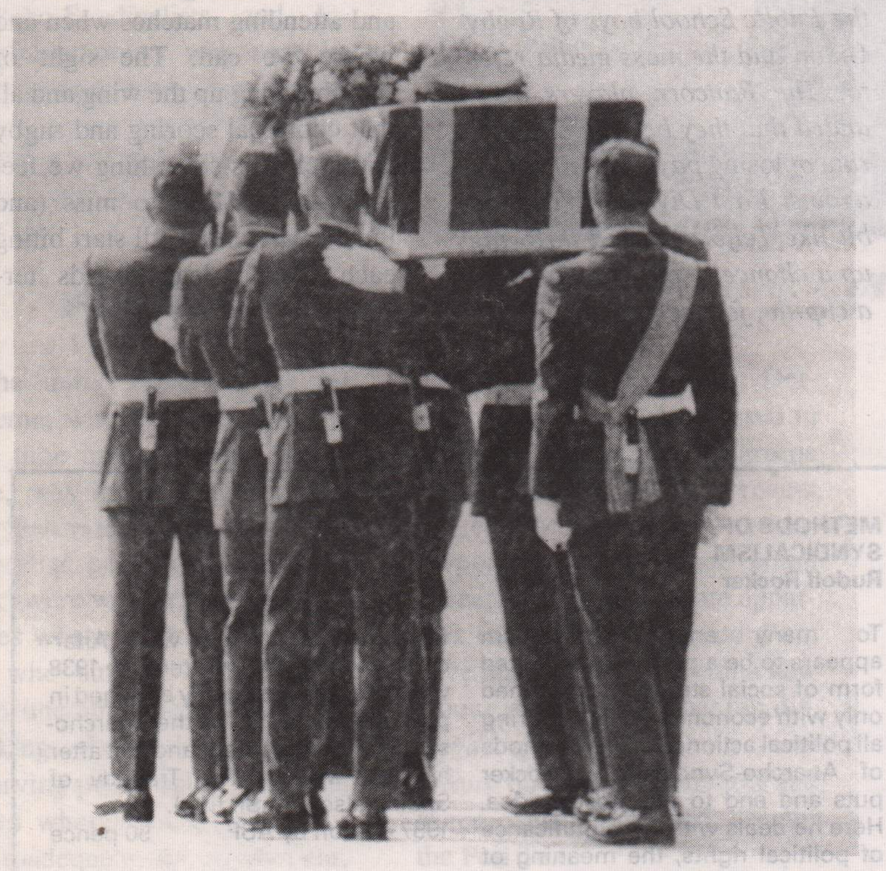
TEARJERKERS

Since the unions started to organise in 1987, over 1.5 million workers have gone on strike (one in ten of the workforce) and wages in manufacturing industries have risen by over 16% as a result. Capitalism's internationalism, moving production to the cheapest place possible with the least volatile workforce, (as we will see to great effect in Europe come 1992), has been severely set back in Korea at least, and if the current trend continues, this could quite easily spread to the rest of South-East Asia.

CANNON FODDER

The British Army is experiencing a manpower crisis, leaving it over-stretched in its operations in Ireland. There has been a decline in recruitment for some time, but this has become acute since last Autumn — around the time of the IRA's bombing of a British Army coach at Ballygawley, Co. Tyrone, in August. A spiral of inability to hold down IRA operations, IRA successes, and further falls in recruitment and morale looks set to continue indefinitely. This comes in the wake of the failure of Ulsterisation to reduce British Army commitments, because IRA attacks forced the RUC to demand heavier British Army support.

IRA strategy is currently geared to simultaneous attacks in the same brigade area, mixed with diversions and a few hoaxes, to increase the pressure on the over-stretched occupiers. It has led to battalions operating with platoons at two thirds strength, the stripping of headquarters' companies and the band of the Coldstream Guards to get front-line units up to strength. It also may account for the willingness of the RUC Special Branch to give information on IRA suspects to the UFF for assassination before they are absolutely sure of their targets, in an attempt to take out key guerillas.



JOIN THE PROFESSIONALS

This doesn't now mean that the war is now winnable for the IRA, but it does pose the British government a difficult problem of how to maintain control. One solution may be further recruitment to the Ulster Defence Regiment and the RUC, but the former's intimate connection with loyalist paramilitaries has just been highlighted internationally by the South African arms scandal. RUC morale reached breaking point in 1987, forcing increased British Army commitment and more 'shoot-to-kill' operations, and the effective end of Ulsterisation. The peelers want no part of a front line rôle.

Undoubtedly, more pressure will be put on the government of the 26 Counties to step up 'security' measures. Combined with pressure from solidarity movements in Britain and the 26 Counties in this, the 20th Anniversary Year of the troops going onto the streets, it might force some political initiative, cosmetic or otherwise. There are also the loyalists to consider, and the shadowy US forces behind the 1985 Hillsborough Agreement may be dragged in if Britain can't hold. what is certain is that there are no military solutions, and that IRA strategy will be a success only in so far as it breaks the political will of the British state to stay in Ireland.

IT'S A MIRACLE!

A South African court packed with 500 supporters celebrated the acquittal of Moses Mayekiso and four co-defendants on all charges for which they have been tried for the last 18 months. Since their arrest three years ago they have spent more than 30 months in jail, originally on charges of treason, which carries the death penalty, which were dropped due to lack of a case. The defendants and their supporters held a spontaneous mass meeting immediately after the acquittal on Monday 24th April.

Moses declared his satisfaction with the result, which was a victory for all black workers, not just the five members of the Alexandra Action Committee Executive. He also stated his intention of getting back to the task of building democratic, accountable organisations in the workplace and community for the purpose of destroying apartheid and capitalism.



Without this there could never be justice in South Africa, and he thanked all their supporters in South Africa and internationally, who made victory possible. That victory is one not just for the black workers' movement in South Africa, but for workers world-wide.

LETTERS

Dear DA,

It think that the Anti-Nuclear Network, in their reply to my letter, have slightly misunderstood my criticisms of their seemingly simplistic attitude towards the problem of nuclear waste.

I never said that there would be A solution, I said that we *should find the best* possible *solution and* force *it on the state (like we try to force other short-term reforms). I also stated the alternative to reforms...*

Perhaps I could have been more clear too... When I was involved with HANG (Highland Anti-Nuclear Group) opposing nuclear dumping, expansion at Dounreay, etc., we said that a short term *option was on-site aboveground storage. This would take away waste transport and dumping and ensures that it could be monitored easily (even in a post-state society the same would apply). Of course, this was rejected by the nuclear 'experts' at Dounreay.*

It's a bit insulting to say that I was taking the government's point of view considering I also said that closing the nuclear industry would be part of any 'solution'.

And what do you mean when you say 'Try to limit the damage'*? Couldn't what I've said above mean that? Or should we just shut the plants, lock the gates and let it rot for however long (fine for those of us who don't live near one)?*

The role of anarcho-syndicalists is to try and improve the immediate living conditions for working class people at the expense of the bosses and state, while preparing as a class, to take control of our society — by us, for us. No middle ground.

That is the basis of all our arguments, including mine, on this issue, ie., suggesting that we *should try and do something for* our *benefit, not what's acceptable to the bastards that rule us. What's wrong with that?*

The effects of capitalism are going to be around for many, many years too. We can think of at least one solution.

P, London

Dear DA,

In response to the recent letters and articles in DA *on the subject of nuclear power, I find it depressing that so many people take such a dim view of the technology involved. Yes, nuclear power stations do pollute the planet to the extent that it is nigh on impossible to minimise their effects safely, but this is due to the way that nuclear technology has been misused by capitalism, not necessarily due to the* nature *of nuclear technology itself.*

When it was first realised that there was a tremendous potential for energy to be liberated from splitting the atom, capitalism decided to use it for its own ends, ie., nuclear weapons. For capitalists, the US in particular, it was the best advance in weapon technology ever, and was (and carries on to be) exploited to its full destructive potential. It is evident from the results of the B29 bombers dropping nuclear bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, when Japan was virtually defeated anyway, that the US government didn't give a toss about what would happen to the people there, and still didn't after the genetic problems that it caused were realised.

As a spin-off of this, the concept of nuclear power stations was developed, and during the sixties was put into practice, resulting in power stations such as the Magnox reactors. These reactors have not stood the test of time in respect of the 'safety' regulations and many are now to be decommissioned as a result. The reasons for their badly conceived development are twofold. Firstly, due to the nature of capitalism, money was not spent on making the stations as safe as possible, this would result in a reduction in the amount of profit made, which as we all know, is an anathema to capitalists. Secondly, just for a change, the technology was put into use before it was understood properly, and the long term consequences had not been examined in enough detail.

Nowadays, some twenty years later, things have not changed that much. Corners are still cut on safety (witness Chernobyl) and even now the dangers to the environment are ignored despite public concern and the ever-increasing amount of environmental research reports that clearly demonstrate the harm being done using nuclear technology in its present guise. Thatcher, for example, and her government's new found green image, are in favour of the new fast breeder reactors that are to be installed at Hinkley Point, despite the arguments against it from all sides.

The problems of nuclear waste have also been neglected by capitalists. At the moment the waste is either buried underground encased in concrete which will eventually disintegrate, allowing the waste to slowly permeate the soil, to be finally distributed through the water table, or to dispose of it in the ocean in barrels where, again, it will eventually be released into the ecosystem. There aren't any obvious solutions to getting rid of the waste which aren't *going to cause problems, but sticking your head in the sand saying* 'There are no acceptable solutions' *is not going to help anyone. What is needed is a way of disposing of the waste we have at the moment as safely as possible (but it obviously won't be 100% safe), causing the minimum damage possible. In doing this it must be ensured that this methodology is not used by capitalism to excuse the creation of more waste on the basis that it's not quite as dangerous (ie., let's produce twice as much because it's half as toxic).*

Looking at how the nuclear age has been developed by capitalism it is not surprising that people make sweeping generalisations and dismissals of nuclear technology such as 'how can we close down the nuclear industry as soon as possible?' *(Letters,* DA 57*). While the nuclear industry at present* is *totally unacceptable and efforts should be made to stop the implementation of nuclear power stations as they are used at present (as well as closing down the existing ones) we should not make the mistake of consolidating these actions by attacking the technology itself as well until we are certain that it can not be used sensibly. There* have *been benefits from nuclear research such as X-ray machines, etc., so it should not be dismissed out of hand. Come the day when* we *control society it is quite possible that research could lead to a method of liberating energy from sub-atomic reactions but* without *the incredibly dangerous side-effects we are subjected to at present. It may not do, but given the right attitude there is that potential.*

RN, London

Dear DA,

It was interesting to see that the only article about Rugby League to be produced for Direct Action *should have been written by someone who has no knowledge of the game, but who is clearly immersed in the establishment wing of the game — Rugby Union.*

Firstly, 'rucks' have not taken place in Rugby League since the start of the century. League developed without all the boring parts of the Union game — including 'rucks'. Although I have heard Londoners use the term, so I suppose this is yet another example of London imperialist language.

Secondly, 'professional rugby players'*? Well yes, Rugby League players do get paid, for example Second division losing pay can be as much as £10, yes ten pounds. Of course if they win they can earn £50. It is hardly a living wage is it? Most players, therefore have full-time jobs, for instance, in Doncaster and amongst other Second Division teams, many of the players are miners. But even amongst the top clubs, Jonathon Davies has to do PR work for Widnes, and Alan Tait is groundsman. Unlike soccer, they are not full-time sports players. Rugby Union, however, may claim to be amateur, but many top players have trust funds, etc., and in England, many of the players are definitely of the 'hooray henry' variety.*

Thirdly, the pay dispute you were referring to, well as already stated Rugby League is not the 'professional' game that the Public School boys of Rugby Union and the mass media refer to. The Runcorn players demanded that they be paid a higher rate of losing *pay for their match against First Division Wigan. A bit like Telford United throwing up a chance to play Liverpool in a cup-tie, for the sake of £10. All of these players have now signed for other teams, and their places taken up by reserve team players and new signings.*

And as for that photo! Clearly a Rugby Union tackle (he wasn't biting his leg!).

It is sad that an anarcho-syndicalist paper should not be in touch with the truly working class game of Rugby League. The game is fast, exciting and full of thrills. The sight of Offiah racing up the wing; the sheer delight of watching a player like Andy Gregory playing competitive, brilliant Rugby; Ellery Hanley showing rugby athleticism at its best; the cool goal scoring abilities of people like Laydon, Noble, etc. As we know, League is not only a working class game, but is decidedly a northern game, hence its low profile in all the media. It is only when players like Offiah, Davies and Moriarty leave the stultifyingly boring Union that the media sits up and takes notice. As the 'defectors' themselves have had proven to them, League is a much faster and exciting game. Direct Action *should not mirror the establishment attitude to League. If you ever get the chance to watch a game, I advise you to go. Enjoy yourselves. Sport, like politics, doesn't have to be mind-numbing.*

See you on the terraces.

Anon

REPLY

DA much appreciates the great insight this letter has given us to the most interesting sport that is present day rugby league. The writer can be assured that the *DA* collective will be taking a much greater interest in the intricacies of the game in future, and attending matches when and where we can. The sight of Offiah racing up the wing and all that cool goal scoring and rugby athleticism is something we feel we cannot afford to miss (and the bit where they all start biting each other's legs sounds terrific!)



METHODS OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM
Rudolf Rocker

To many anarcho-syndicalism appears to be a narrow and limited form of social struggle, concerned only with economic goals, ignoring all political actions. In 'The Methods of Anarcho-Syndicalism', Rocker puts and end to this absurd idea. Here he deals with the significance of political rights, the meaning of the various forms of strike action for the workers, sympathetic strikes, general strikes, boycotts, sabotage and the social strike.

The pamphlet is in fact a chapter from the much larger work 'Anarcho-Syndicalism' written in 1938 when Rocker was totally engaged in propaganda work for the anarcho-syndicalist movement and just after he had written 'The Tragedy of Spain' (also an ASP title).

1987 edition by ASP 50 pence

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THE NETHERLANDS

KURDISH REFUGEES

One of the least known battles for national self-determination has reached Britain. Over 360 Kurdish refugees have arrived here from the Turkish occupied part of their land since early May, and another 2,000 are expected to follow. This is in the wake of attacks and pogroms against Kurdish villages by the Turkish state - Kurdish identity is officially outlawed, including their language, and thousands are in prison.

The refugees have been sent to Hackney in London where there is a large Kurdish community as the detention centres are full. Home Office officials have literally bundled them into taxis to Hackney. They are mostly sleeping rough in churches and halls, food and washing facilities are scarce, as is bedding and accommodation. The seriousness of the situation is even recognised by the DSS, whose local office was open on the Saturday!

Kurdish Refugee Support Committee, c/o TUSU, 489 Kingsland Road, London, E8, 01-249 8086; and the Kurdish Workers' Association, 531a Kingsland Road, London, E8, 01-254 7558.

Many thanks to the comrades who sent donations to *Direct Action*. The following is a list of all the money banked in March and April. May's donations will be featured in *DA 59*.

Manchester DAM - £70; C&N London DAM - £10; Norwich DAM - £38; POM, Bradford - £20; Doncaster DAM - £5; A, Deptford - £10.

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DAM Civil Service Workers — c/o East London DAm.

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DAM Railworkers — c/o Manchester DAM.

CONTACTS

ASP (anarchist publishing group) — BCM Box 3714, London, WC1N 3XX.

Black Flag (anarchist monthly) - BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX.

Anti-Nuclear Network — Box 30, 187 High Road, London, N22.

Haringey Direct Action Group — Box 30, 187 High Road, London, N22.

Organise (anarcho-syndicalist group and newspaper based in Ballymena) — c/o Just Books, 7 Winetavern Street, Smithfield, Belfast 1.

Deadline - 16th June

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.

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

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

Send to DAM National Secretary, Second Floor, 27 Priory Road, Sheffield, S7 1LW.

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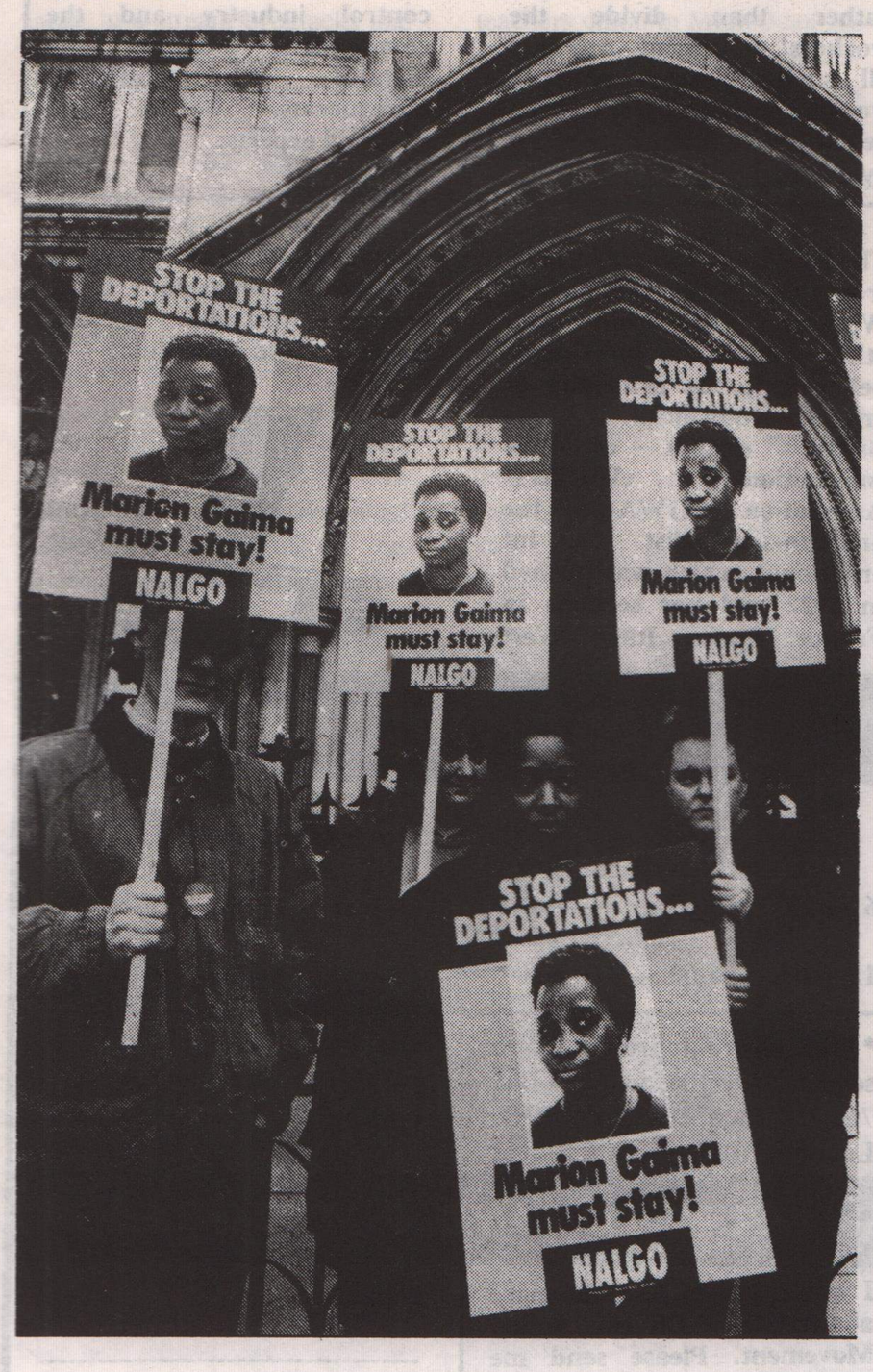
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DIRECT ACTION

POLL TAX
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Saturday 1st July
Central Manchester

STAYING POWER

NALGO member Marion Gaima, from East London, has won her long battle against deportation (see *DA 52*). Marion won a judicial review of her case after an appeal against the decision of the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, to deport her to Sierra Leone was lost earlier this year. The review found that there was a case for political asylum, and urged Hurd to reconsider his decision and use 'discretion' on those grounds. Hurd's decision was, of course, influenced by the thousands of letters he received in support of Marion, and continuing demonstrations at High Court hearings, in spite of dirty tricks like switching the day of the hearing at 4pm the day before.



Marion's victory follows those of NUJ member Som Raj and fellow NALGO member Lisa Huen, and demonstrates that anti-deportation campaigns backed by trade unions have a good chance of success. This strengthens the hands of anti-racists in the labour movement, having made immigration controls and state racism a trade union issue, and by implication established that unions have obligations to their members which go beyond 'bread and butter' issues. The anti-deportation campaigns have been built and won on a practical basis, not by being politically correct, but the government is moving to diminish the effectiveness of fighting individual cases.

In the week of Marion's victory it is estimated that around 80 black people were quietly deported, illustrating a dramatic increase since the 1988 Immigration Act came into force. 3,050 people were deported in 1988, up from 1,990 in 1987. This increase in deportations is mostly the result of overstaying a visa becoming a criminal offence, punishable by a £500 fine or six months imprisonment, *plus* automatic deportation. There is a right of appeal only against the fine or other sentence, *not* on the deportation. The right of appeal against deportation on compassionate grounds has also been removed, so has the automatic right of a spouse of a British national to residence. These measures severely restrict the potential for building individual anti-deportation campaigns.

The successes of the anti-deportation campaigns have certainly been a factor in developing these new measures. They have also put the fight against state racism by labour movement activists at a crossroads. The vast size of the problem has always needed to be tackled, the series of victories won by the trade-union-backed campaigns has proved that there is substantial support for opposition to immigration controls, and raised awareness of the problems facing black members. National backing for Marion Gaima was only won from NALGO last year against the objections of the NEC, based on an argument that if Marion got backing, everyone would want it. It is now both possible and *necessary* to take the fight against immigration controls into a new phase.

Hurdles within the labour movement still have to be faced, so far the individual cases fought have enabled the bureaucrats to contain them within their framework of catering to the needs of individual members, collective action will be as difficult to win backing for as it is for more straightforward trade union issues. But direct action has got to replace the feeble pleading of the bureaucrats, it is patently obvious that after years of inhuman treatment Hurd did not concede Marion Gaima's right to stay out of compassion — he bowed to pressure. The pressure has got to be increased to win in future.

Anti-deportation campaigns deserve the support of all workers, not just out of principled anti-racism, but also as a means of putting workers' interests, not those of the bureaucrats, on the agenda. Unlike New Realism, they are part of bringing the labour movement into the 1990's, not just bargaining on sectional issues, but taking direct action on class ones. For now, celebrate Marion's victory, but don't just celebrate — *organise!*

BREACH OF THE PEACE

'A soldier who disobeys an order to fire breaks the oath which he has taken and renders himself guilty of criminal disobedience. I cannot ask officials and soldiers to disobey; for when I am in power, I shall in likelyhood make use of those same officials and those same soldiers *(our emphasis).If I taught them to disobey I should be afraid that they might do the same when I am in power.'*

Leon Trotsky? Cory Aquino? Lech Walesa? No, actually it was that hero of 'anarcho-pacifists' Mahatma Gandhi. He was commenting on the refusal of Indian soldiers to fire on a mass demonstration of striking workers and peasants on rent strike at Peshawar in 1932.

