

# DIRECT ACTION

**Industrial  
Strategy**  
See Page 5

The following report was  
1989 Annual Conference of the  
by the Industrial Strategy C  
sion came into being after th  
year decided that it was need  
ferent strands of thought &  
developed over the year  
strategy of the DAM was  
political organisation an  
into the workplace, to b  
sphere of economics. W  
ndicalist Union. W  
drawn up a

The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism

No. 62

January 1990

30p

## PUBLIC IMAGE

One of the more nasty aspects of the current ambulance dispute must be that darling of the media and fine example of left wing reformist trade unionism, NUPE's chief negotiator Roger Poole. He has, it seems, been chosen by NUPE to front their strategy for winning the dispute by being as 'charming' as possible in the hope of winning public support for their claim.



In doing so Poole seems to have brought this tactic to a new low. Instead of concentrating on the issues, the 6.5% pay offer, attempts at privatisation through the hiving off of non-emergency work, the attacks on national bargaining and taking these issues to other groups to win their support and widen the dispute, he has resorted to crude nationalism. Interviews with him are littered with references to Britain, eg., British ambulance men, British public, give the British public a service it can be proud of, and so it goes on.

At a rally in Nottingham on the 4th of November Poole went as far as to praise the British Bobby. He first thanked the police for voicing their concern at having to do work normally done by ambulance workers and then went on to express his fears for the poor young constables having to live with the fact that they were unable to help someone dying of a heart attack because they were doing a job they weren't trained for. We must presume he is talking about the same poor constables who murder people in cells every year and live with themselves, and the same poor young things who brutally attacked pickets at Wapping and terrorised mining communities during the 1984/85 strike and still managed to live with themselves.

Then again, when we hear these things we should not be shocked, after all, the whole axis of reformist trade unions is

moving away from the idea that disputes are won by the strength of working class organisation based on solidarity, to the idea that you win by convincing the public that you have a 'just' claim. For the folly of this way of thinking you only have to look at last summer's 'media-friendly' railway strike. Then, the NUR's campaign won much praise in the media and the strike had plenty of public support. But at the end of the day a group of workers, who after all had paralysed large sections of the country, including the capital, went back to work having 'won' a £3 increase and having not secured any agreement on the main issue of the strike — the retention of national pay bargaining and conditions. They now face having new draconian conditions imposed on them by management in February. What price friendly editorials in the paper and public support now?



It is not just the tactics employed in the ambulance dispute which is worrying, the rush by NUPE to accept binding arbitration in return for a 'no-strike' agreement also gives cause for concern. Indeed, they seem to see such an agreement, if it could be reached, as some kind of victory. Back to Mr. Poole again who, on BBC dinner time news, offered to sit down with the Health Secretary and 'work out a form of arbitration so that British ambulance workers never again have to take industrial action'. How quick these social democrats are to sell the basic right to strike.

Nor should we be fooled into thinking Poole is making out a special case for ambulance workers because of the nature of the work they do. In an interview in *The Correspondent* (5/11/89) he stated that it's time Thatcher 'realised that trade unions have changed fundamentally in the last decade... (they) are now interested in the future and want proper arrangements for determining pay without ever having to take industrial action'. And there lies the rub because Poole is not some isolated union leader speaking off the top of his head, he represents the authentic voice of trade unionism after ten years of Thatcher. A movement that sees not collective strength but agreements backed by law as the guarantee of workers' rights, who seek a society in which capital, the state, and the unions will sit down to work out problems and run capitalism in the

most efficient manner possible.

This is what lies behind the Labour Party's policy of 'positive rights for workers' with its works committees and places for workers on the Board and that's what lies behind the so-called European Social Charter. As 1992 approaches and national economic borders come down European capital will need to undergo massive restructuring. To do this they are going to need the help of reformist unions to manage these changes. And, as the drive for European unity speeds up with the threat of German re-unification, the need to involve the British trade union movement will become more urgent and the pressure will mount for the Thatcher government to accept the European Social Charter and a role for the trade unions they had once sworn to destroy.

But nothing in this world is for



free and the unions would have to pay for being allowed back in from the cold into the decision making bodies of the country. The price to pay will be that workplace orientated strikes and the unofficial strike, the backbone of union militancy, would be crushed as the unions join forces with the state to police the workplace.

Of course, as workers, we will only be subject to this social-democratic dream if we allow it to happen, to avoid it however will be no small task. Workers would not only have to break with reformist unions but also the whole baggage of reformist politics. To take on the unions and the state workers will have to begin organising in the workplace independent of the reformist unions and work out a clear vision of the alternative to present society. It is that vision of a new and better world that will once again allow workers to plan long term strategies and go on the offensive, and not just to react to attacks from capitalism in the form of defensive strikes. In short, it will enable us to see just what we are fighting for, not just against.

With Marxism now dying before our eyes in Eastern Europe, anarcho-syndicalists are well-placed to help build that alternative vision, and with revolutionary unionism as its cornerstone, we can offer an alternative to social-democratic unions, we are also well-placed with our international organisation to help in the essential task of building links at workplace level throughout Europe and beyond. Of course, it would be stupid to underestimate the task facing workers to break free of capitalism. It would also be stupid to underestimate the role anarcho-syndicalism could play in that struggle. For what is the alternative? Well, what better way to finish them than with our old friend Poole, who in return for binding arbitration, offered 'a copper-bottomed guarantee that his members would never take industrial action'. What a strange thing it would be if just as workers in Eastern Europe have won back the right to strike, here in the West we lost ours — courtesy of the Pooles of this world.

# RED DEVILS

**'What's your problem, pal?', said the bouncer to anyone who tried to get into Manchester Free Trade Hall early on Saturday 25th November. Eventually they let us in, and it was a chaos of inefficient registration, lost credentials, and a virtual treasure hunt to get all the relevant bits of the agenda. The tank called the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Organising Conference got into gear and clanked on its way.**

The high point of ABAPTOC was the ambulance workers' address at the beginning, and it went down hill from the following boring speeches by 'local labour movement' figures. These included the Deputy Leader of the City Council, and you're not telling me he voted against Poll Tax implementation and stayed Deputy Leader.

I knew I should have gone home to bed when I saw this member of Militant reading *The Sun* in the cafe where I had breakfast. The main speeches were by Dick Douglas MP, Tommy Sheridan, a woman from the NUS National Executive Militant always wheel out in London when they need a black speaker, and Militant's (sorry, Broad Left) candidate for General Secretary of NALGO.

There were two debates. The first was between Workers' Power and Militant as to whether we should start calling for an indefinite General Strike now, or call on the TUC to organise a national demonstration on Sunday 1st April. This was terminated when the chair reckoned a semblance of open debate had been established (or was it when the ITN cameras left?).

Out of the blue Tony Mulhearn was announced to talk about the Surcharged Liverpool Labour Councillors (I think he mentioned the Poll Tax once). He told us proudly how much money they'd raised, and how with a little bit more they were threatening to go back and do it all again. 'You should have gone to prison!' What about Hatton's royalties?

The second debate was around a suppressed, or nearly so, amendment calling for the orientation of the Federation towards the participation of the 'most oppressed groups in society'. The provisions were for the affiliation of black, gay and lesbian, and women's organisations, and for the exclusion of any group or individual involved in racist, sexist or homophobic activity.

Militant first of all tried to keep it off the agenda, then consistently misrepresented it as excluding anyone for racist, sexist, or homophobic behaviour. This only got debated by general outrage at Militant's attempts to suppress it. Some lunatic got up to yell that he didn't mind fascists affiliating as long as they were in favour of non-payment, and though he may not have been a member of Militant, he was not ejected by the stewards, and their desperate

attempts to suppress him suggested embarrassment, rather than opposition.

Although these two issues were foci of the debate, there was no separate debate on each amendment to the Constitution, as would ensure clarity and keeping to the point. There was at least one Militant speaker for every non-Militant speaker.

Before the voting, the last feature was Tommy Sheridan's minder, Jack, telling long boring stories in the guise of a financial appeal. If every group sending delegates had coughed up the required tenner, and assuming the 2,000 delegates represented 1,000 groups (and some delegates were from both their trades union branch and a local anti-Poll Tax group, others sent only one delegate), that makes £10,000 in registration fees. Expenses were around £3,000 for the rally, sorry, conference, add an average of 50p per delegate for the collection and



TONY MULHEARN AND FRIEND?

there is between eight and ten thousand pounds to account for. Some of us gave our money to the ambulance workers instead, but then someone yelled out 'Who do I make a cheque out to?'. A side issue is that Militant told a lot of people (verbally) that registration was £20 per group (£10 per delegate), and you can guess where the extra tenners have gone.

Then we had the grand finale of this gameshow. This was when I began to feel pity as well as contempt for Militant's rank and file. Wind-up toys they might be, but their leaders treat

them like shit. Even after Sheridan's 'steering committee recommendations' speech, they were just as confused by the mixed-up debate and agenda shortage as we were. One even got up and asked if they could be told how to vote by the 'steering committee' before each vote was taken! That was too blatant even for their leaders, but about this time some Socialist Organiser supporters started a constant barracking, from the safety of the Haringey/Lewisham Militant-Free-Zone, of 'Tell us how to vote, Tommy!'

The chair of the rally, Maureen Reynolds, ought to be sent back to cadre school for incompetence. She is now Federation Treasurer. One vote's result was announced without her even looking up from her papers, another was not announced at all, the classic was 'That's carried, now let's see votes against.'

So the National Secretary is Steve Nally, a man with all the charm of a blocked drain in August, and the Chair is Tommy 'Mr Credentials' Sheridan. Of the other Nine members of the Steering Committee, the three who are not members of Militant were elected unopposed.

What came over most strongly from this Militant Rally masquerading as an Anti-Poll Tax

Conference was the irrelevance of it all to the fight against the Poll Tax. What it was actually all about is the flagging fortunes of this social democratic cult. Militant has peaked in the Labour Party, and activists like Sheridan are being expelled. It has created a situation in the Civil and Public Services Association where its sectarianism and stupidity has alienated and demoralised the rest of the left, leaving the field clear for the right wing. To know Militant is to loathe it. The result is a situation where it is looking for new sources of members and finance to bleed dry.

Dave Nellist, Militant MP for Coventry South East, let the cat out of the bag at a meeting of the 'London Steering Committee of Anti-Poll Tax Unions' last month when he appealed for 10 more members in the Labour Party for every Tommy Sheridan expelled. Bugger unimportant side issues like the Poll Tax, recruitment is what counts!

The bizarre introduction of Tony Mulhearn into the semblance of a debate on strategy also makes sense if you take it in the context of Militant's opposition to any activity bar 'orderly' deputations to Labour councils. The implication is that what we need is for Militant to take over Labour councils in our areas and do a 'Liverpool'. Direct action, as far as Militant are concerned, is only the name of a paper they're told advocates violence against them (see DA 61 for what was really said). Against a background of left-wing criticism of the Labour leadership's reliance on media image (see article on ambulance dispute for the trades

union equivalent), rather than workers' strength, Militant have used the Poll Tax to stage their own sterile media event. They are seeking to promote themselves not by fighting the Poll Tax, but by claiming to speak for the campaign against it.

Anti-Poll Tax activists will see through them, but then Militant don't want anyone who's committed to anything other than their cult, and regard political consciousness as a definite disadvantage. At a local level they are irrelevant where there are people doing anything, although they can prevent a campaign getting off the ground where there's not yet one.

What the people who have been fighting the Poll Tax, while Militant have simply told themselves how much they are doing, need to sort out is how do we set up the kind of national structure we need to take the fight forward?

NR Hornsey & Wood  
Green APT

## ONE FINE DAY

**It may have just been a coincidence, but the same day as Haringey Anti-Poll Tax Union staged the biggest rally of the campaign in England so far, the local Poll Tax estimate was cut from £642 to £554. We take it as a victory — £88 down, £554 to go!**

A capacity crowd in the thousand-seater Hornsey Town Hall on November 7th heard a number of speakers, including local activists from Haringey and Edinburgh, denounce the Poll Tax and describe the fight against it, how we can win. NALGO National Local Government Committee Vice-Chair re-stated the union's position that council workers will not be shock troops except as part of a mass campaign.

The 'star' speaker was Tony Benn, AWOL from the debate on the Local Government and Housing Bill at Westminster. He spoke well for 10 minutes, coming close to advocating non-payment, and stressing the illegal, direct-action-based nature of all previous fights for workers' rights. He then told jokes for ten minutes, then waffled for a further ten around the whole 'shopping list' of left wing demands.

The meeting gained hundreds of street reps. for the campaign, and made a surplus of around £500. Attempts to follow the rally with a demonstration around the issue of fines have had to be postponed, however. The idea for a demo shortly after the 'completion' of the register on 1st December came originally from the SWP. They had argued against the rally, on grounds of practicality, and we pulled it off. But when the demo idea, as a follow-up to the rally, was accepted, with reservations about practicality, they did as much to organise it as they did the rally — sod all.

Fines are a real issue in Haringey, where the Labour council has been fining people, mostly in Noel Park and Hornsey Vale where there are a high proportion of council tenants, for not registering. These areas have been picked out because the council has enough information

on council tenants to positively identify those who have not registered. A well-supported demo could have forced the council to back down on this issue. As it is, the argument that the council has all the information necessary to register people anyway has proved successful.

That other bunch of opportunists, Militant, are less of a problem locally, but they have set up their own paper group, called West Green Anti-Poll Tax Union, in Tottenham. The group's second attempt at a meeting (see DA 61) came to naught, with no-one but themselves and genuine Tottenham Against the Poll Tax activists attending, again. They are claiming, again, that TAPT has deliberately sabotaged their meetings, which is not true. They claimed to have been in existence for six weeks, yet had motions to establish a committee, a group, etc. TAPT has been in existence for 14 months, where were they? They will be invited to take part in all TAPT activities, but they are not interested in fighting the Poll Tax, just conning money for Militant out of people.

Finally, 1000 leaflets were handed to workers in Haringey's Finance department on Friday 1st December by 15 local activists lobbying peacefully to mark the official 'completion' of the register. Porters locked the side doors normally used by workers in the building, which includes the Poll Tax Section, forcing them to walk through the protesters, and take a leaflet! The SWP cooked up all sorts of horror stories to try and stop the lobby, but still turned up to sell papers. Needless to say, no-one is taken in by any of these opportunists.

NR Hornsey & Wood  
Green APT

# STUFF IT!

These last two months have seen an upsurge of anti-Poll Tax activity throughout Scotland. The Labour Party is so worried that it has asked non-payment campaigners to stop their activity through its mouthpiece John Maxton. Apparently we are hurting people least likely to defend themselves — the poor. Our answer: Stuff it! We will only stop when the Poll Tax is abolished.

Following the 20th September occupation of Lothian Regional Council in Edinburgh (see DA 61) the council meeting was rescheduled for the 3rd October. Initially the ruling Labour group wanted to restrict the number of public benches fearing a repeat performance. This was however rejected by the Tories, of all people. 70 anti-Poll Tax activists attended this recalled meeting with many more outside. The meeting started as if nothing had happened, the SNP councillor was asked to sum up his motion opposing warrant sales. This went to a vote, with Labour voting against it with the exception of two Labour councillors who oppose all debt recovery procedures over the Poll Tax. Both have been disciplined since, one being suspended for two months, the other indefinitely.

The meeting was taken over by the campaigners, with chants and attacks on the Labour Party councillors. They left the hall and called the police to clear the Chambers.



Once the hall was cleared, the anti-Poll Tax campaigners spotted a Royal Mail van loading final Poll Tax demands, just outside Lothian Regional Council. After the drivers were asked (unsuccessfully) not to load these letters, the van was blockaded until the police cleared the van.

Anti-Poll Tax campaigners then went to the Poll Tax payment office and occupied it for half an hour despite police threats.

On the 24th October, 60 anti-Poll Tax campaigners occupied the offices of Gray Scott and Company, Sheriff Officers in Aberdeen. This was in response to the pointing of goods, a kitchen unit and a three piece suite of a 67 year old widow from Macduff who refused to register. After almost five hours occupation, Grampian Region's director of finance asked the Sheriff Officers to suspend the pointing.

This action was undertaken by activists all over Scotland and point the way forward. No Sheriff Officer must be left in any doubt that we are not going to allow them to frighten people into paying the Poll Tax. This point was further driven home in November.

On the 13th November occupation of Sheriff Officers premises were organised throughout Scotland in order to give warning that any warrant sale will be physically opposed. These took place successfully in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow, Galashiels, Stirling, Falkirk and Glenrothes.

In Edinburgh one of the anti-Poll Tax campaigners, disguised as a Gas Board employee, rang the door bell. Once the door opened around 60 people rushed through the door. The offices of H.M. Love were occupied for an hour and a half.

In Glasgow, 55 people occupied the offices for 45 minutes,

in Dundee 20 held out for an hour, and in Galashiels 25 people held out for two hours. No details are known of the other occupations at the time of writing.

Although all these actions were conducted in a peaceful manner the Sheriff Officers in Edinburgh have brought actions against 15 anti-Poll Tax activists. The charges range from impersonating a Gas Board official, to breach of the peace.

On the 18th November the Scottish TUC organised a demonstration against the Poll Tax. Although seen as a poor attempt to disguise the official Labour movement non-activity on the issue so far, the Scottish anti-Poll Tax Federation marched along. The non-payers outnumbered the march two to one. The rally was a joke, Campbell Christie was on the platform addressing a crowd of 10,000 in a small park with no PA system. Militant organised their own rally inside a hall. Most sensible people just went to the pub.

S, Lothian Anti-Poll Tax Federation.

# ROTTEN ORCHARD

The recent exposure of the now disbanded Serious Crime Squad in the West Midlands region has aided both the Birmingham Six campaign, and the Martin Foran Defence Campaign. Certain individuals were released earlier this year: Paul Dandy, Ronald Bolden and Keith Parchment, when the prosecutions instigated by the SCS could no longer be sustained. Also the legal system was made to realise that the Squad had received such a large amount of adverse publicity that quite simply, juries were loathe to convict people who had been charged by them. Fifty-three officers and ex-officers have now been demoted to desk duty, and a couple of them have been suspended.

Ultimately, this unit was an elite group of police officers who seemed to specialise in fitting up suspects, maybe the proverbial 'rotten apple' defence should be changed to a concept of the rotten orchard. The complex conspiracies the unit could resort to are well exposed in Paul Foot's book *Murder at the Farm*, an account of the framing of four men for the murder of newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater in 1978. First published in 1986, this book details the manner in which a 'confession' was first obtained, using the well known tactics of denying a suspect access to a solicitor, mixing pressure, threats and possible concessions if the suspect confesses, along with physical violence. Once a statement is achieved the officers close ranks to fabricate evidence, even employ a couple of dodgy witnesses. Added to public outrage against a certain crime, a guilty verdict can be more or less contrived. This is not justice, but a legal system controlled by a ruling class, and the case of Carl Bridgewater is a prime example.

So far, one of the men has died of a heart attack since being in prison, two others are seriously ill, yet there seems little chance of them being released. The 'confessions' two of them were said to have made in police custody (later retracted) have not been substantiated by any forensic evidence, the 'getaway' car they were meant to have used was never found, the gun they were meant to have used for the murder was not proven to have been the murder weapon. Four prosecution witnesses have changed their evidence, and another has been discredited. At present a great deal of the prosecution evidence relies now on the word of a police informer.

Significantly, two SCS officers are involved in this case. Detective Constable Davies was involved in the Birmingham Six case, and in Martin Foran's first framing in 1978. The second officer is Detective Sergeant Michael Hornby, who played a major role in the Birmingham Six case and countless others. A Home Office minister admitted in Parliament that Hornby had been the subject of 'numerous complaints'.

The names of Pat Molly (who died in prison), Vincent Hickey, Michael Hickey, and James Robinson must be remembered as having been framed by the Serious Crimes Squad. Michael Hickey's mother, Ann Whelan, has campaigned for years with

little support apart from help given to her by sympathetic 'crusading' journalists such as Paul Foot. At the moment there is an attempt to unite campaigns centred around police framing in this region in the demand for a Public Inquiry into the activities of the SCS. This would be welcome, but may literally take years to conduct, even if it began tomorrow. Moreover, the Inquiry Lord Gifford conducted into Broadwater Farm has unearthed some good material to show how repressive state forces have been in that area, but so far the Inquiry has not led to anyone being released from jail.

As anarchists we know that there'll always be attacks on the working class from a legal system which is run in the interests of those in power, and we must support all campaigns against police 'framing' whilst encouraging prisoners solidarity groups such as the Black Cross. In the past such work has sometimes been derided as 'charity' and certain of our Trotskyist comrades have called such activity 'an ultra left marginal' issue (Notice how they've changed their tune after the release of the Guildford Four and are now trying to jump on the Birmingham Six bandwagon). Firstly there are prisoners such as Martin Foran and John Perrotti who as well as fighting back against the authorities are themselves ready to help other prisoners, it's not our charity that they need but our active support because they are not intending to be 'victims'. Secondly, any active revolutionary risks jail to a certain degree, and there may come a time when they find that they can't be dismissive of such solidarity work.

MS



Hugh Callaghan



Bill Power



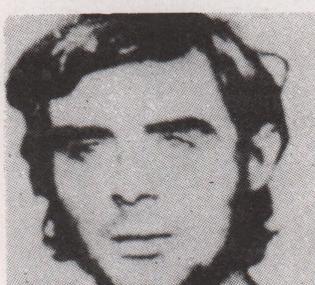
Dick McIlkeny



John Walker



Gerry Hunter



Paddy Hill

## LIGHTING UP TIME

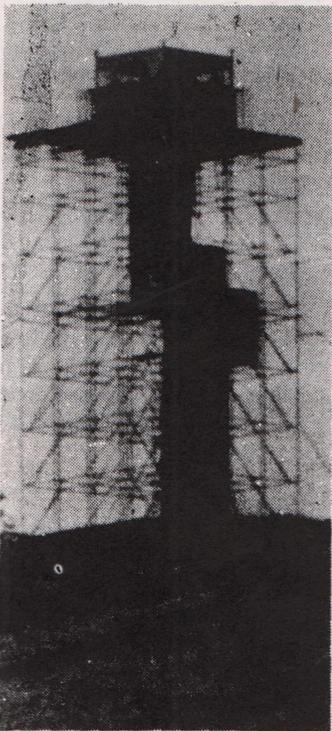
The Poll Tax is fast becoming a burning issue in East Anglia. On August 12th 500 people marched to Norwich City Hall and burned over 200 registration forms (see DA 60), whilst Saturday 4th November saw a 300 strong 'Anti-Tory March' through the streets of Norwich. This time not only the Anti-Poll Tax Union and all its constituent community groups were represented but also health workers campaigning against the Tory sell off of water and students campaigning against the intended replacement of grants with loans.

Whilst all this was going on in Norwich, in Cambridge it seems that bonfire night festivities don't end on the 5th since a good old blaze was started when the local Poll Tax registration office got petrol bombed on the night of the 6th. The local Tory MP was on the telly saying that the petrol bombing was 'not the British way, and certainly not the Cambridge way'. Perhaps local could persuade him otherwise by having another bonfire and sticking him and the Cambridge Community Charge Registration Officer on top!

# OFF THE WALL

November 27th and it's two weeks after the 'Peace Train' from Dublin to Belfast and back again was blazed across the TV screens, as an attempt by 'the community' to show their horror, and if you are of a liberal persuasion 'annoyance', at the disrupted rail service between the two cities as a result of IRA bombs, suspect bombs, paper bags and empty beer cans being left on the line. Today two buses, one from the north and one from the south, met at a border crossing in Co. Tyrone. They were there to protest about the deliberate closing of cross-border roads, which have been bombed, dug up, obstructed with iron rails and concrete-filled oil drums. Only this time not by the IRA, but by the British Army. (The same brave boys who are doing their best to keep open the rail link are bombing the road links.)

The South Tyrone-North Monaghan Community Association have decided on a programme of public works, only this form of enterprise has not, surprisingly, been seized upon by the government agencies in a further attempt to 'massage' unemployment figures in the border areas. This programme involves re-opening the eleven 'unapproved' roads that used to cross the border in that area and link communities that refused to recognise partition. The army, watched from a respectful distance by the RUC (who are busy being non-sectarian these days), have then been following up with government-approved vandalism-destroying the work of the locals 'in the interests of security'. As one local put it, 'if they're going to shoot someone or bomb someone, one of the hills will do. Who needs roads when you can walk across a field, it has nothing to do with security and everything to do with punishing a community...'



With 1992 approaching, the aim of a frontierless Europe is being bandied about by governments, including Thatcher's. With the spectacular scenes in Eastern Europe as the Wall comes down and the promise of freedom of movement for the citizens of those countries, it must be comforting for the world to know it isn't wall-free just yet, and that one wall still

exists that divides East from West (Belfast in this case). And more comforting still for the European anti-terrorists that a frontier heavily-armed and guarded around the clock still exists for them. For the working class of Europe 1992 means only more freedom of exploitation, for the working class of Ireland it is a sick joke. For the people of the border areas it means the continued prying of surveillance cameras and helicopters, for the prospect of a unified Irish working class it simply means there can't be one.

The border stands in the way of physical unification, it reassures the unionist community and protects the Orange state, it is a mental barrier to unification. The British state, and its army, must get out of Ireland. Their forces here — the RUC and UDR — must be disarmed and disbanded. The British policy of containment and 'normalisation' has been shown for what it is by Peter Brooke's statement. It's long past time to go.

Thursday 19th October and four people convicted of bombing two pubs in England in 1974 go free after spending the last 15 years of their lives held hostage by the British state. In other prisons in England six men are still being kept by the British state as a ransom against those resisting the British occupation of the six counties. Again this week their request for an appeal has been refused by that state, despite the inquiry by members of the state gestapo investigating three of the very 'officers' who extracted confessions from the six while in detention in Birmingham.

Lord Denning, after an apparent U-turn, has suggested that an inquiry should be made into the cases of the six. Various 'notables', who have no doubt decided that fifteen years is long enough to extract their pound of flesh have also called for the opening of an enquiry.

The recent series of leaks to the British press of documents containing the photographs, names and addresses of 'terrorist suspects' and in one case their political 'sympathisers', seem to have awoken some sort of interest in events in Ireland. This week, 300 RUC with army backup swooped on 30 homes of UDR full and part-timers. Four of them appeared in court the next day, charged with having ammunition (other than the standard issue for personal protection) in suspicious circumstances. One claimed that the sixty rounds he had were for personal use! Make of that what you will.

Now, why the leaks, and why the swoops on the UDR? Some say that the information has come from loyalists trying to discredit the Anglo-Irish deal. But it has been common knowledge over here that loyalists in the UDR and RUC have had access to this sort of material, they use it every day of their working lives. Nor is it unknown for this information to

end up with loyalist paramilitaries, seeing as they share a considerable proportion of their membership with the UDR. So what had they to gain by passing on such information? On the other hand, there is considerable animosity between the various elements in the security forces and concern has been voiced about the decision to equip the UDR with plastic bullets 'to save lives in potential riot situations'... that's right, 'save lives'.

A report appeared in a Belfast newspaper stating that the information was deliberately leaked by sources within the RUC to discredit the UDR, to try and bring them in line before they have to impartially assist the RUC in riot control. There is speculation that some very influential Brits took the decision in order to show that the Dublin government that they are prepared to crack down on loyalist paramilitaries within the UDR and make the force more acceptable to nationalists. In fact, there are so many rumours and sub

plots you'd think Colin Wallace was back in his old job in the ministry of disinformation.

The DUP has launched a major poster campaign across the North called 'Hands Off The UDR'. They publicly slammed the RUC for having to use such force in arresting 30 UDR men. Meanwhile, in Castlewellingan, a predominantly nationalist village in Co Down, five police were stoned when a scuffle broke out between youths after a disco. The DUP press office in Belfast issued a brief statement to local press saying that to send only five 'officers to deal with such a potentially serious... blah blah... was deplorable'!

Organise, Ballymena



## TAKING A LEAK



# GUILDFORD FOUR

In Ireland the Haughey government have blessed themselves for their 'instrumental' part in obtaining the four's release. While this is in some part true, it is also a bit of an over simplification of the facts. The four were released by the British state in a deal with the Dublin government to cease the barrage over the UDR. Three Anglo-Irish meetings have been held in the past month with the UDR at the top of the agenda, Britain had to do something to pacify nationalist discontent within the colony. As Paul Hill said after his release: 'We were as much hostages as Terry Waite'. If not, more so.

Meanwhile, the state, while still claiming the North as part of its protectorate, continues to prevent 'Northern' Irish people from freely entering other parts of the 'United Kingdom' (sic). Those who do manage to cross the frontierless zone of Europe

find themselves open to the suspicion and racism of the British public, like the Irish building labourers held as 'suspects' in the Deal bombing. The whole Irish community in Britain is under 'suspicion' with the full force of the police and the prying of concerned 'neighbours' preventing their freedom of movement and association.

Twenty years is long enough and too long to continue. The British troops and the British state must set a deadline for withdrawal and the disarmament of the loyalist state. Only under these conditions can the people of the North and the people of Ireland as a whole get on with life, without the interference of the British state.

Organise, Ballymena



# INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

## THE SITUATION

The following report was originally presented to the 1989 Annual Conference of the Direct Action Movement by the Industrial Strategy Commission. This commission came into being after the conference the previous year decided that it was needed to draw together the different strands of thought & policies that the DAM had developed over the years. The general long term strategy of the DAM was to move away from being a political organisation and to take Anarcho-syndicalism into the workplace, to be politically organised but in the sphere of economics, the aim being an Anarcho-syndicalist Union. With this in mind the following report was drawn up after a years debate and investigation by the Industrial Strategy Commission.

It was decided after being accepted by the 1989 conference that the IS commission use it as a base for a pamphlet. However in the meantime it has been decided to reproduce the report in *Direct Action*. As the DAM, if it is to achieve it's aims, has to become more outward looking it was felt that we had a duty to the readers of *Direct Action* to inform and involve them in what has been taking place within the DAM, and to stimulate debate on the matters arising amongst a wider audience.

It has to be borne in mind that this report was originally an internal document and consequently makes many assumptions and appears as a result superficial. In some ways this is true. However since this report has held a day school on Industrial Organisation and the debate around this subject. Two points in particular, our relationship with the Social Democratic Unions & Industrial Networking were discussed in detail. A report of the day school will be published at a later date.

In this issue two parts of the Industrial Commission report have been included, the Situation and Principals of Anarcho-syndicalism. In coming issues we will also be printing the sections: The Community, Rank & Files and Industrial Networks, which made up the rest of the report, the latter being the backbone of the DAM's industrial strategy.

The proposal to build an anarcho-syndicalist union in Britain cannot be seen in isolation from the present economic-political-social situation existing in Britain and the world. For that reason we have attempted to outline a few points, however inadequately. That more work needs to be done in this area goes without saying.

The world is in turmoil as capitalism responds to the economic crisis it finds itself in. This has led to a global restructuring of productive (and non-productive) forces, involving mass layoffs, flexibilisation within companies (making workers work harder, ending restrictive practices etc.) and a general lowering of living standards for most of the working class, leading to greater and greater class differentials.

At the same time, the economic crisis has been the crisis of State Socialism, Welfarism, Labourism. Faced with the choice of defending the workers or defending the system (or 'the nation') the socialist and Communist Parties have inevitably chosen the latter, as have the Unions they control. That the Left Parties and the Unions had more and more become a part of the system that they were supposed, in their rhetoric, to oppose, was only given final confirmation in the last 20 years. (Consider Labour's 1969 'In Place of Strife', an attack on working-class wage militancy, and the 'Social Contract' between the last Labour Government and the TUC).

Socialist Parties like the French and Spanish that have easier been able to jettison their 'socialism' in favour of (Thatcherite) authoritarian neo-liberalism, have been able to govern in this situation. However, the contradictions have so

torn apart organisations closer (through the Unions) to the working class, like the Labour Party, that they have been obviously unable to govern, leaving that job to the new Tory breed of authoritarian neo-liberals. In this way, they retain some ability to criticise the 'excesses', as well as possibly being able to take over when the Tories push things just too far, returning to Labour's prewar role as a party of crisis.

The coming to power of the Thatcherites came after progressive failures of the Wilson, Heath and Callaghan Govern-

ments to make the working class pay via incomes policies and attempts to contain the 'British Disease', the unofficial strike. The Peter Wright revelations are a reminder that the British Ruling class was genuinely worried about the prospect of *nobody*

the benefit of capitalism.

The Thatcher Tory Party is an outspokenly Capitalist party (championing the market, attacking the welfare state as never before) and has genuinely carried out a political revolution, throwing the other parties into crisis, since Thatcher has drawn the dividing line quite clearly. Real opposition to Thatcher is thus opposition to Capitalism (hence the often-mentioned lack of opposition from the 'Opposition'), so that Thatcher has been able to taint anyone that disagrees with the party with subversion. Given worker's abdication of *self-government* it is not surprising that many choose to be ruled by people who are hard and give the strong impression of knowing what they are doing.

The gloves have been taken off, the ruling class are fighting with few holds barred. The time, then, has come for direct working-class action from our own perspective, as opposed to that of Capital's. This will not come from the Trade Unions (even if they make some sort of 'left turn'). The time is right to build an alternative unionism that takes as its starting point the defence of the interests of the working class as a whole (going beyond sectional concerns), which necessarily contains a critique of the whole capitalist system.

Given the increasing internationalisation of the world economy, and within that the move towards the Single European Market, the fates of the world's workers have become more intricately linked than ever. The need to build strong union sections of the IWA throughout the world is pressing.

being able to govern Britain, and with British Army activity closer to home than '69, it seems that some sort of military coup was being considered in some circles.

At the same time Thatcher was engineered into the Tory leadership and eventually to power with authoritarian populist politics and Thatcher's 1979 racist comments, her imperialism and jingoism as with the Falklands War, struck a chord with many British People) and liberal economics, determined to break the rules of post-war political consensus, all for

union, we propose the same libertarian forms of organisation.

*No separation of the economic and political:* Anarcho-syndicalism rejects all political parties and the conception of distinct political and economic organisations. It advocates working-class political autonomy and hence the creation of *workers'* organisations able to deal with *all* issues affecting our class.

*Internationalism:* The working class has no country, our interests are those of the workers of all nations, not the national bourgeoisie and their state. We believe in the building and strengthening of the International Workers Association, and of links between the world's workers outside of organisational frameworks. Anti-militarism is, thus, intrinsic to Anarcho-syndicalism.

These principles are both practised by the union and *advocated* to workers outside its structures. To the extent that Anarcho-syndicalist organisational principles are also how we envisage a free society being run, the Union is building the new world within the shell of the old and is a preparation for Libertarian Communism. However, we reject the conception of the Union as both the organisation of workers' struggle in capitalist

society and the administrative basis for the new society.

Present DAM policy, since 1988 conference, sees revolutionary society being run by *all* the working class through workers' and community councils, not all of whom will be in the Anarcho-syndicalist Union, even if it is predominant. The question is really very simple: we obviously believe that the



more workers there are committed to Anarcho-syndicalism prior to any revolutionary transformation of society the better. The success of the proletarian revolution depends entirely on the consciousness and experience of our class. However, we think it unlikely (to say the

## PRINCIPLES OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

**We believe the following are the basic principles of libertarian revolutionary unionism:**

*Class War:* The Union recognises that the interests of the working class are diametrically opposed to those of the ruling class (capitalists and bureaucrats). The Union seeks to defend the immediate and future needs of the working class, affiliated to the Union or not and rejects any collaboration between these classes.

*Revolutionary transformation:* Given the irreconcilability of class interests under capitalism (and the destruction that the rule of Capital is causing to the world), the only real solution for the working class is the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the creation of a classless and stateless society based upon self-management for human needs. Anarcho-syndicalism seeks the immediate improvement of the lives of working-class people, but realises that any reforms are only ever partial and temporary within class

society. Therefore the immediate struggle must be related to fight for a new world, also, in this way, avoiding a practically worthless abstract revolutionism.

*Anti-statism:* Anarcho-syndicalism opposes the existing State as an organ for the defence of class society. It is equally opposed to any idea of a 'workers state', a contradiction in terms put forward by a new ruling class: the Red Bureaucracy.

*Direct Action:* Anarcho-syndicalism believes that the class war has to be waged directly by the working class against their rulers, in all its political, economic and social aspects, rather than through intermediaries.

*Self-management and Anti-hierarchy:* The Anarcho-syndicalist Union will always be controlled by its members, without permanent or paid officials, and with recallability, specific mandates, rotation of duties, federalism and self-education. In struggles conducted outside the framework of the



**CONTINUED  
ON PAGE 6**

# FRUITLESS

Healds Juices, one of Britain's largest fruit juice producers, got a lot more than it bargained for when it attempted to wipe out increasingly strong union organisation. This was at its factory in Miles Platting, Manchester at the end of September. 63 workers with temporary contracts were 'laid off' or sacked with the intention of reminding us of the bosses' power (temporary contracts are used specifically to maximise bosses' power) and of not taking back union activists. Usual management efficiency was applied to their operation so the nature of the lay off as an attack on workers was fairly obvious. Little clues like one of the lower management lackeys bragging that a shop steward wouldn't be working for Healds again. Not to mention empty warehouses and full order books.

What they obviously expected was a quick clean cut victory to smash the union. What they reckoned without was the workers in the factory that make up that union. The day shift was laid off with 15 minutes notice and the night shift refused to go in. The following morning a yard meeting decided that we were all out until every notice was withdrawn.

For the first time in the factory, temporary and permanent workers were standing together to fight for each others' interests. Picket rotas were organised and we were firmly in control. The first threat to this control appeared in the form of a union big wig who wanted us all back

at work so that he could negotiate a nice sounding sell out. Not that us workers on strike were unaware of this but trying to keep this particular bastard under control meant we had no time to organise previously discussed delegations to the company's other interests; such as another fruit juice factory in Maidstone and a dairy in Manchester. So our own union, which was the GMB but could have been any, put the first break on the momentum we needed to win.

The second came as drivers for Marks and Spencer (the company's most important customer) started to cross our picket lines on the instructions

of their own union. But they had told us that they would stop crossing them if the strike was official. So thinking that we could bite hard enough to win if we were official we went back to work in order to conduct a legal ballot — our first tactical mistake. The ballot was for action (naturally) and the action we decided on was an overtime ban which was sustainable where as a strike wasn't and that it would hit the company harder in the long run (Healds is one of the smallest firms but has a 15% market share, so they totally depend on 24 hour production).

With the benefit of hindsight we would have realised that our strength lay in our solidarity and our willingness to act. Once back at work temporary workers who had previously been fully involved were out of the picture. And once an overtime ban was in progress permanent workers were taking a much more passive role, making it a matter of time before morale became too low to fight. As we go to press the overtime ban is still official but about to collapse. Again with the benefit of hindsight we would have been much better off staying out in the first place, unofficially or not. That was when our morale and momentum seemed unstoppable because we were all united. That was when we had the power to organise delegations, leafletting and even marches and rallies under our direct self-control and not that of the sell out unions. Looking back now, that was when we had the power to win.

M, Manchester

# OUT OF PRINT

Management at Jarrold's printworks in Norwich together with NGA bureaucrats have, to their mutual benefit, agreed plans for a single-union printroom.

The benefits for management are obvious. It seems that the motives of the NGA are also far from principled.

Among the workforce there has been considerable concern about the plans for de-manning shifts of twelve hours, and rigid holidays.

Of equal concern is the manner in which NGA National Officer Chris Harding (the bosses' lackey) has negotiated away the livelihoods of their workmates. The recent edition



of the NGA's mouthpiece *Printing World* really takes the biscuit, claiming that 'there were very few dissenters at a chapel meeting'.

NGA members' interests have far from been represented by their union's actions.

The management's proposals were never referred to the workforce either at the outset or during negotiations. SOGAT '82, with over 100 members at Jarrold's, throughout negotiations appears to have been kept entire-

ly in the dark, no doubt as the brunt of restructuring is to fall on them.

Sixty are to receive early retirement, and the fifty-seven remaining in the printroom are to be given NGA cards and are expected not only to cover the work tasks of those laid off, but to cover for those on holiday, etc.

Single union deals such as this are fast becoming the norm in printworks throughout Britain. The reason for the NGA being the management's collaborators lies with SOGAT 82 being marginally more prepared to defend workers' interests. Hence management's slamming them as unreasonable.

SOGAT's response to NGA/management collaboration has demonstrated an equal bankruptcy of any notion of principled solidarity, by offering their own single deal to management (rejected), and then to call an overtime ban. The result of the considerable opportunism from all quarters had by this time totally undermined their member's morale to the point of defeatism. SOGAT called off the overtime ban when this became apparent.

NGA principles are in reality those of gaining maximum membership and flow of money into funds, caring less for printers' interests, with union chapel meetings being relegated to less than a talking shop.

Short Fuse, Norwich anarcho-syndicalist paper

# TIME-LESS

British Aerospace sites at Chester and Preston and the Rolls Royce plant at Hillingdon started indefinite strikes at the end of October as the spearhead of the campaign for a shorter working week.

According to John Banham, Director General of the CBI, 'there is scant evidence that shopfloor workers really do want such a reduction in working hours'.

Absolutely John. That's why strikers have been joined by more than 7,000 others throughout the country. With the engineer's action spreading and management going on the offensive the last thing that is needed is Bill Jordan and Gavin Laird talking compromises. Local deals like the one struck at NEI Parsons where union leaders have negotiated up from a 35 hour to a 37 hour week and made concessions on changing workplace practices is a huge leap backwards.

A 35 hour week and no strings has to be the bottom line and not just for the engineers but for all workers in the industry. Over 60 years ago strike action by the engineering unions for a 35 hour week saw the tanks being brought into George Square, Glasgow. Workers today are still struggling for basic working conditions, pay, and even union recognition.

Support for a 35 hour week must grow in order to be successful.

RE

# NUJ-ED OUT

In early October 120 journalists were sacked by the management of Aberdeen Journals. In August they had been out on strike because of management attempts to drive the union (NUJ) out of their workplace. Bosses had pressurised most of the workforce into signing 'personal' contracts — these contracts basically mean that the employee has no right to collective bargaining or to strike. They then declared that they were no longer prepared to negotiate with the NUJ. The result of the strike ballot was that 120 workers walked out — including those that had already signed the 'personal' contracts. An agreement, in which the bosses climbed down and accepted collective bargaining, was reached after 19 days and the workers went back to work. Less than a month later, however, they were out again because the management had broken the agreement by victimising workers who had been on strike and trying to force two heads of department (who had also been on strike) to sign 'loyalty' contracts — you can guess who they were supposed to be loyal to! The management immediately sacked all the strikers.

The sacked journalists are now waging a consumer war against Aberdeen Journals — encouraging the public not to buy their papers and asking local authorities to stop publishing in them. However, while they waste their time with these tactics which failed so miserably at Wapping, the majority of the 78 editorial staff still working are also members of the NUJ. Solidarity action would be a much more effective way of winning these workers their jobs back.

KE



# HEARTLESS

Evidence from research in Sweden and the United States has uncovered a link between heart disease and workers with jobs that have a 'low decision latitude' — that is those who have little control over their work. Teams of scientists working at Columbia University, New York, and the National Institute for Psychological Factors in Stockholm have pin-pointed high risk jobs where machines dictate the pace, as on moving production lines and certain jobs that bring workers into contact with the general public, such as waiters.

The risk to health of these jobs

# INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

least!) that, given the weight of bourgeois ideology upon our class, that all workers will be in the Anarcho-syndicalist Union. If they are, all well and good!

There is also the question of how an Anarcho-Syndicalist Union *now* relates to other workers. Again, in line with 1988 Conference, we believe that the DAM now and any future Anarcho-syndicalist Union should give it's full support to independent workers' self-organisation, but that we must not fall into 'councilism', since we recognise that such an organisation is only ever temporary, relating to the specific needs of sections of the working class at a specific time. Workers who organise themselves in general assemblies and recallable strike committees are certainly waging the class war but it doesn't make them revolutionary. Without an anti-capitalist perspective any attempt to make such organisations permanent would tend to degenerate leading to bureaucratism and accommodation to capitalism.

This is why there is a need for a permanent workers' organisation committed to class war and libertarian communism, that can solidly resist the incorporation of workers' struggles into the system as well as internalising the lessons of periods of major struggle. An Anarcho-syndicalist Union is a voluntary association of working-class people, which helps to spread combativity, solidarity and revolutionary consciousness throughout the working class, through its own practice and its support for those other workers practicing it.

As far as the *tactics* of an Anarcho-syndicalist Union go, we will just say that they depend on anarcho-syndicalist principles and the details of the specific situation faced. We believe that the developing Industrial Networks will give us a clearer idea of any appropriate tactics for the Union than we could lay down here.

is roughly the same as heavy smoking or having a high level of cholesterol in the blood. The studies contradict the popular view that it is senior executives who have most coronaries due to stress. Too few decisions are far more dangerous it seems! The researchers suggest that work should be restructured so that workers have more control over what they do, so that they could be happier and healthier, but of course, that will not happen under capitalism.

Workers' control for less heart attacks.

JCB

# EURO-RACISM

Until comparatively recently Italy was noted as a country of emigrants, exporting its poor people to every corner of the world, not to mention from South to North within its own borders. But now that Italy has found its place in the central European sun (having recently overhauled Britain as an industrial power, for instance), she's now an importer of labour. This has been paralleled by the growth in racism in Italy along British and French lines, reflected in a number of racist attacks which have been widely publicised in the Italian media. Here we reprint an article from *Lotta di Classe*, paper of the Italian Syndicalist Union (USI).

One of the most strident contradictions of this 'Europe' which bosses and state bureaucracies are rushing to set up in 1992 is the increase of discrimination and abuses against immigrant workers and proletarians from third world countries.

In fact, while on the one hand the barriers to the free circulation of workers from EEC countries are coming down, on the other hand 'walls' (legislative, repressive, police and social) are being erected against immigrants from outside (Africans in particular, but Asians and South Americans also).

Italy intends to ally itself more and more with countries (Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, France and Germany) which have already mooted steps in this direction (for example the 'Schehgen Accord') to strictly limit the influx into Europe of non-EEC citizens.

So beside the explosion in our country of ever more violent and organised expressions of racism (from the assassination of the South African exile Jerry Essan Masslo to hundreds of other episodes of discrimination and intolerance which daily fill the headlines), we are also witnessing a conscious and precise policy of the government to

bring in new immigration controls which will in effect set up a 'quota' and allow only those with secure employment to enter Italy. The host of problems which derive from the phenomenon of immigration from poor to rich countries can in no way be resolved by recourse to these methods. In fact, such measures make the situation worse by favouring on the one hand clandestine immigration, and on the other hand the growth of 'mafias' (here and in the various Asian and African countries) which with the promise of a job will exploit workers forced to emigrate even more.

The history of emigration, in whichever continent it happened, is full of examples which confirm our view.

Quotas, in whatever form they are masked, will allow the capitalists to continue to take from the various countries concerned the amount of cheap labour indispensable for their profits (for example, in the agricultural sector), giving in return badly-paid, dangerous and casual employment. Thus the exploitation of third world countries continues and increases.

We revolutionary unionists of the USI belong to the International Workers Association (IWA) which unites workers and proletarians from every continent and of every race, raising the flag of internationalist solidarity and the destruction of all borders.

We have always been present in the past in the fight against racism, discrimination and all divisions, and today we are in the fore against any repressive immigration. No quotas and no limits... Europe, which has for centuries exploited and raped third world countries, must now prepare to receive the immigration of which colonial exploitation is one of the principal causes. But that's not enough. Concrete initiatives must be launched, with as their starting point, the fight for the right of residence for all immigrants (with jobs or without) already in our country and those who shall come.

they no longer wished to remain a part of the OVB under its present structure. They agreed that there would have to be major changes within the OVB before they would agree to rejoin. The BCS agreed at its congress to continue the existence of the BCS as an independent fighting union. Some comrades could not continue within the BCS because it now has no strike fund, and therefore reluctantly have either stayed within the OVB or joined reformist unions. The BCS understand their position, but were determined to press ahead with their plans for the creation of a true militant union. They plan to hold another congress hopefully before the end of the year.

CL



# OVB SPLIT

The Dutch syndicalist union, the OVB, has suffered a serious split within its ranks. The union which was founded in the early 1950s developed out of the old pre-war NSV (the former Dutch section of the IWA), has always kept its distance from the international syndicalist movement. This position adopted by the 'leadership' group has not always gone down well with the more militant members who rightly regard international solidarity as a key stone to the success of the war between labour and capital. In the late 1960's the 'leadership' moved over to a neo-marxist reformist position, killing off all hopes of uniting the Dutch syndicalist movement with the international movement. Regardless of the 'leadership' position, the comrades of the OVB have in the past shown great international solidarity during the Miners' Strike of 1984/85. One of the most active sections within the OVB during that period was the BCS, the section within the union reserved for all workers employed or unemployed who are not part of

the special trades sections ie., fishing, steel, docking, etc.

The 'leadership' within the OVB has tried to control the militancy of the BCS, and in certain cases comrades were expelled from the OVB. Earlier this year the dispute came to a head when several comrades were suspended from the union, this led to an eventual split. In October, the BCS held a congress in Amsterdam. The congress was called to discuss the future of the general workers section of the OVB and the majority of the BCS comrades present or sending messages to the congress agreed that

# NEGLECTED

The case of Beverley Lewis, the black blind-deaf woman who died in squalor at her home in Gloucester, cared for by a schizophrenic mother, exposed the government's so-called policy of community care for what it is — neglect.

The National Deaf-Blind and Rubella Association, have since taken an interest in the case and have posed some very pertinent questions.

Why was her mother left to cope with her single-handed? Why did Beverley not get any education at all after the age of ten years? Why was Beverley returned home after only one day in hospital where she'd gone for assessment at the age of 18?

called for the introduction of legislation to deal with cases like Beverley's. The legislation already exists! Under Sections 115 and 135 of the National Health Act 1983 it is possible to gain entry and remove someone who is being neglected. One finds it difficult to believe that the Social Services and health-workers were unaware of these powers.

The obstacles to the proper treatment and care of the disabled and handicapped are many, but it is not lack of legal powers on the part of social workers to intervene, but the government's reluctance to fund the necessary services for the care and treatment of the handicapped.



Some would argue that if Beverley had been younger, then the 1981 Education Act may have helped someone in her position with its provision for special education assessments, but this was only brought into effect in 1983. However, by this time Beverley was too old, and therefore beyond its scope.

In *The Guardian* (3/11/89), the coroner's summing up is reported 'in an ideal world it would be possible to remove Beverley... and care for her where she could have received additional nourishment'. Numerous newspaper articles outlined the horrible details, and

The government is relentlessly destroying the NHS, and has a programme of closing down wards and whole hospitals, while singing the praise of its policy of 'Community Care'. The Tories are only interested in Community Care because they think that it is a cheaper option which will save money. Community Care to the Tories means women and families coping with the intolerable with the absolute minimum of professional or financial support with which to do the task. It means private profit and public squalor.

JCB

# NUTTERS

You've seen all the uproar in the media recently about separate religious assemblies at schools for molsems, hindus, christians, etc., and pupils getting days off for ethnic religious holidays etc., but get a load of this.

In Barnet, North London, a group of Christian fanatics known as the Exclusive Brethren are refusing, with the full backing of the Barnet education authorities, to allow their children (some 119 in all) to use computers at school, despite the fact that computer lessons are compulsory under the new National Curriculum.

The reason for this is that the Brethren say that computers make people 'independent of God', that they 'fill them with sin', and that computers are, wait for it, 'energised by the full power of Satan'.

To think that this whole blasphemous state of affairs was caused by just one byte from an apple.

OK, so the Exclusive Brethren don't want their kids to use computers, but have they considered the latest product to hit the computer market? Yes, for only £295 you too can be the proud owner of the Franklin Electronic Bible, containing the whole of the Old Testament on one machine. And I always thought that computers were 'energised by the full power of Satan'. Shows how wrong you can be at times doesn't it?

# DAM

British Nuclear Fuel's Visitors Centre at Sellafield, Cumbria has been distributing a glossy leaflet around hotels and tourist information offices etc., which says what a great day you can have there! However, someone has been going round the tourist offices in the area overstepping the leaflets with an official-looking stamp. The message says 'Centre closed for decontamination until 1990'.

# SPOT

# LETTERS

Dear DA,

Greetings and thanks much for publishing the article on the Pittston Coal Strike here in the USA (DA 61).

I wish that we could report that this struggle is over. It is not. The fines continue to mount (and the total fines to date could wipe out the national debt and probably the debt of most developing countries) but working class solidarity has been strong. Workers from all over the US, and the world, continue to flock to the Virginia coal fields. We cannot impress on our comrades overseas that their material support is still needed. This will be a long fight and workers' families will still be financially pinched for a long time after this struggle ends. So dig deep comrades and help out.

Let me bounce back a moment on the matter of fines. If anyone ever thought that the courts are a friend of the people think again. Recently the judge handling the Pittston case gave full power of attorney to the Pittston Lawyers to collect the court fines levied against the miners!

Yet there are always the bright spots. A month or so ago, 99 miners physically took over a coal preparation plant for three days. This action, plus 2,000 supporters surrounding the plant, caught both the State Troopers and goons off guard. In fact, neither tried to intervene. Hopefully more of these types of actions will continue.

Despite all of the militant actions and real working class support it is a shame that the wildcat strikes of a few months ago were not allowed to continue. Many a miner has said that such a general strike in the unionised mines, coupled with a one day national general strike (which the bureaucrats are always afraid to call) would have resolved this and the long standing (eight months now) struggle of the pilots, airline attendants and machinists at Eastern Airlines. This may have been the real turning point of both strikes and the ability of the American class to kick off our version of Thatcherism. But history will be the ultimate judge.

Well, dear comrades, keep up your good coverage of workers'

struggles both in Britain and abroad. An we couldn't agree more with your closing comments in the Pittston article: 'Workers have no country, the class struggle is worldwide'.

Best wishes,

Mitchell Miller, WSA  
International Secretary.

Dear DA,

In reply to the Anarchist Communist Federation letter, I would first say read the original article in DA 60. You seem to have a great deal of difficulty grasping the fact that workers sabotage food products. I've worked in a number of food industries, ranging from restaurants to canning plants, and workers spitting in food is not an uncommon event. This form of sabotage is 'I hate my job' activity. It doesn't affect the boss in any way as it is not noticed in either quality control departments or by the consumer. It is done purely out of a feeling of being powerless and being pissed off.

The article stated that sabotage is a day-to-day reality in most workplaces. Most of it is small-scale, very similar to the theft from work that is carried out by the workforce. Only occasionally is an event noticed by the boss.. What also was argued in the article was that when sabotage is carried out it should be done with a class awareness, preferably involving the whole of the workforce for a specific demand. Maybe there are faults with some of the examples I gave but I would argue for sabotage at the point of production, not at the point of distribution which is what you seem to think. If a bottle of vanilla flavouring is added to a five ton vat of beans it will not have the slightest effect on the taste of the beans. If a couple of gallons of vanilla flavouring is added it will have the desired effect. This effect would be noticed by quality control and the whole batch would be withdrawn. For a couple of gallons of flavouring to get in the production line it would take solidarity and silence.

As for the issue that direct action makes working class

people feel powerless and brings down repression on those who are doing it. True, the railway strike did piss off a lot of working class people who couldn't get to work. Demonstrations block the streets when people want to go shopping

If there is mass dissent on the Poll Tax it will hurt nobody but the councils. What is it exactly that the Anarchist Communist Federation advocate apart from 'exposing the true nature of capitalism' Would you have been happy if I had advocated replacing the spaghetti hoops with an essay by Bakunin?

MP

Dear DA,

In reply to your article Puppet on a String in DA1 61. The article should have explained how and when Solidarnosc came about, and why it has become a part of the Polish state. Solidarnosc right from the beginning was and is a reformist union, aiming for changes 'within' the so-called 'state-socialist' system. It never intended to question the existence of the state, to abolish it and replace it with direct workers' and community control i.e., anarchy, or in other words, libertarian socialism. It was, and is, run by people who believe that they live under socialism that's gone a bit degenerate, and by Christians who, as you rightly say, want out and out capitalism. Because Solidarnosc wasn't right from the beginning an organisation set up and run on revolutionary aims and principles, a libertarian/revolutionary union, it has come from a militant union to a passive one, and ultimately, the government! Solidarnosc is finished, the working class in Poland will see this sooner or later, if they don't already, as they will be 'policed' by 'their' union. The Polish workers would be better to dump it and form a union controlled by the workers themselves fighting not just for improvements, but for social revolution, for workers' control.

For workers' solidarity,

G, Liverpool

## NO HIDING PLACE

On Saturday the 2nd December in response to the threat of the BNP organising a rally in Edinburgh to coincide with Hearts playing at home to Rangers, more than 700 people gathered at the foot of the Mound to hear a series of speakers condemn racist and fascist thugs.

A week earlier Glasgow had a well attended anti-fascist march and on Saturday they sent

were left to watch the station.

Before kick off four BNP supporters got off the train, saw the reception waiting for them up the stairs and hightailed it out of town. Police formed a barrier to prevent the BNP getting it. One woman was arrested but was later released without being charged. Further up the road teams of leafleters were asking fans to give Fascists a red card.



through two buses to join Edinburgh's. There was a fair amount of police and a couple of ambulances drivers had been out collecting on Princes St. but there wasn't any trouble at the rally unlike the last time where police confiscated the collection and threatened charging a couple of stewards.

As expected, the plan to march to Haymarket to leaflet fans coming for the game was not given the go ahead. Instead groups of more than ten were taken off along the pavement by a steward. The 200 or so heading for Haymarket clutching leaflets and walking quickly probably attracted as much attention as an 'official' march would have done. At Haymarket the police let about half through towards Tynecastle, the rest

A lot took leaflets, a few tore them up, a vocal minority came out with the shite that gives football a bad name.

The rally and the leafletting of the game were positive things to do but they don't attack the root of fascism. In a survey in Edinburgh 80% of black people said they experienced racial abuse and felt threatened on a daily basis.

Racist attitudes must be challenged all the time — outside and inside work. Racism is allowed to spread through fear and silence. To paraphrase Brecht's lines...

When we all stood up together  
Nobody came to get me.

RE

just a little bit more, what with waste paper like the Housing Bill and Community Charge Statutes, to name but two, cluttering up the place...



## WASTE PAPER

In mid-November it was quite interesting to see the House of Commons and the House of Lords decide that they too should do something to stop environmental waste by recycling all the waste paper produced at the two Houses. Apparently, according to Lord Trefgarne, the amount of waste paper accumulated each day is at least two tons, and on a busy day as much as four tons. Well, two tons is two tons, but if they were really conscientious they'd pep it up

### THE TRAGEDY OF SPAIN Rudolf Rocker

Published to commemorate the Spanish Revolution in 1936, this pamphlet deals with some of the hidden aspects of that heroic struggle. How despite the resistance by the independent labour movements, led by CNT-FAI, the revolution was eventually betrayed by the Stalinists. Driven by their desire for power they never ceased their attacks on the CNT-FAI and the POUM, who they saw as an obstruction to that power. In doing so they

totally disregarded the consequences these attacks might have on any successful resistance to the Fascists. First published in 1937 at the time of this struggle, it is written by Rudolf Rocker, a life long anarcho-syndicalist.

ASP £1.20

ASP  
BCM BOX 3714  
LONDON  
WC1N 3XX

ASP  
PO BOX 96  
DONCASTER  
DN40QU

ASP  
PO 61523  
2506 AM DEN HAAG  
THE NETHERLANDS

THE TRAGEDY  
OF SPAIN  
RUDOLF ROCKER



# DOWN IN THE SEWER

Want to be a rat-infested H<sub>2</sub>O, Pb, C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>6</sub>Cl<sub>6</sub>, CCl<sub>4</sub>, C<sub>2</sub>HCl<sub>3</sub>, Al, C<sub>8</sub>H<sub>14</sub>ClN<sub>5</sub>, PO<sub>4</sub>, C<sub>7</sub>H<sub>14</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S, C<sub>7</sub>H<sub>12</sub>ClN<sub>5</sub>, C<sub>7</sub>H<sub>5</sub>NBr<sub>2</sub> owner?

In 1989 the rat population has risen by 20% according to the Institute of Environment Health Officers. Rentokil put the figure at 50%.

Rats spread diseases, of which Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease is its most severe form) still kills one in 19 of its victims.

The number of people contracting rat-borne diseases rose from 21 in 1986 to 28 in 1988 and reached 20 by October of this year.

Water Authority funding has not increased to meet the problem of rat-infestation. One in three have reported a decrease in funding.

Whilst the advertising campaign to sell off water costs millions, the water authorities continue to put lives at risk, to make profitability greater.

Symptoms of Weil's Disease include fever, headaches, sickness, diarrhoea or constipation. In fact, the symptoms are similar to flu and are treated as such in many cases, thus correct diagnosis does not take place in some

cases until it is too late. Sometimes sufferers have swollen glands, stiff necks and muscle weakness. It can also cause liver, kidney or nervous system damage. It can be cleared within weeks if properly diagnosed and treated.

Leptospirosis and Weil's Disease are caused by contact with infected animals or infected animal urine. Up to 50% of wild rats are carriers of Weil's Disease.

Although the traditional risk areas are sewers, the disease may be contracted in any wet place with rat infestation. This includes inland lakes and waterways where sports and recreation can take place. For instance, in 1988 a man died from Weil's Disease which he contracted from windsurfing in a Warwickshire lake.

And the strange chemical formulae of the heading? Well, when water is eventually sold the buyers will not only be buying the water, but also all these strange chemicals which are pumped into the water supply.

Perhaps the tourist industry abroad should issue warnings to would-be visitors to these shores — 'Drink the water at your own risk'!

Recently it was decided to create an anarcho-syndicalist network of people working and studying in education in the North West of the country. This network is open to all those involved in the industry and its aim is the creation of an anarcho-syndicalist union. DAM Education Workers, c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2BU.

## MEDIAOCRE

Murdoch's News Corporation, a subsidiary of News International, has reached the other side of the Iron Curtain with an agreement to buy 50% of the shares of two Hungarian newspapers. *Reform*, a weekly with a circulation of 380,000 and *Mai-Nap*, a daily with a circulation of 80,000. The other 50% of shares will be held by Hungarian shareholders.

Under the heading of 'Civil Liberties', the TUC at Blackpool backed a call for a genuinely independent media free from government control. However, the media unions clashed with the TUC's General Purposes Committee when they were told that a leaflet, 'The Media We Need' couldn't be circulated to delegates because of its close relevance to motions on broadcasting and civil liberties'!

## NAZIS IN PORTUGAL

On the 27th October the PSR, the Portuguese section of the Fourth International, had a night of anti-militarist rock and a festival. Late that night some nazis, almost certainly linked to the National Action Movement (MAN), invaded the PSR HQ and knifed the leader of the Party, Jose Carvalho. Carvalho died instantly. The PSR stated that they would do everything in their power to punish the perpetrators of this 'political assassination'. The Portuguese state is trying to make the murder out as a typical Friday night brawl.

The MAN is known to have links in other countries, we must show no mercy to the nazis.

DAM Iberian and Latin American Commission.



# CONTACTS

### SOUTH EAST

Brixton DAM — c/o 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London, SE24 0LR.  
 Cambridge DAM — c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge.  
 DAM Civil Service Workers — c/o East London DAM.  
 Deptford DAM — PO Box 574, Deptford, London, SE4 1DL.  
 East London DAM — c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX.  
 Lambeth DAM — PO Box 761, Camberwell SDO, London, SE5 9JH.  
 North London DAM — c/o Box 30, 187 High Road, London, N22.  
 Norwich DAM - Box DAM, The Greenhouse, 48 Bethel Street, Norwich.  
 Oxford DAM — Box DAM, EOA Books, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford.  
 For contacts in Kent, Oxford, Plumstead, Reading and St. Albans, write to South East Region DAM Secretary, c/o Lambeth DAM.

### NORTH WEST

Bolton DAM — Box DAM, Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.  
 Burnley DAM — 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancashire.  
 Liverpool DAM — Box DAM, 82 Lark Lane, Aigburth, Liverpool 17.  
 Manchester DAM — Box DAM, Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.  
 Preston DAM — PO Box 172, Preston, Lancashire, PR1.  
 For contacts in Bury, Cumbria, Lancaster, Salford and Stockport, write to North West Region DAM Secretary, c/o Manchester DAM.

### NORTH EAST

Doncaster DAM — PO Box 122, Doncaster 4, South Yorkshire.  
 Leeds DAM — Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds, LS2.  
 Sheffield DAM — PO Box 106, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 1NW.  
 Teesside DAM — Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds, LS2.  
 For contacts in Bradford and Newcastle, write to North East Region DAM Secretary, c/o Nottingham DAM.

### SCOTLAND

Edinburgh DAM — PO Box 516, South West DO, Edinburgh 10.  
 Glasgow DAM — Box DAM, c/o Clydeside Press, 37 High Street, Glasgow.

### MIDLANDS

Nottingham DAM — Box 4, Hiziki, 15 Goosegate  
 For contacts in Corby, Leamington Spa, Leicester and Wolverhampton, write to DAM National Secretary.

### SOUTHWEST

Bristol DAM — BOX DAM, 37 Stokescroft, Bristol 2.  
 Plymouth DAM — PO Box 105, Plymouth, Devon.

### NATIONAL SECRETARIES

National Secretary — PO Box 106, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 1NW.  
 International Secretary — Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds, LS2.

### INDUSTRIAL

DAM Council Workers — c/o North London DAM and Doncaster DAM.  
 DAM Despatch Workers — c/o Deptford DAM.  
 DAM Education Workers — c/o Manchester DAM.  
 DAM Railworkers — c/o Manchester DAM.  
 Sheffield Independent Healthworkers — PO Box 446, Sheffield, S1 1NY.

### CONTACTS

Anti-Nuclear Network — Box 30, 187 High Road, London, N22.  
 ASP (anarchist publishing group) — BCM Box 3714, London, WC1N 3XX.  
 Black Flag (anarchist monthly) — BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX.  
 Despatch Industry Workers Union — PO Box 574, London, SE4 1DL.  
 Haringey Direct Action Group — Box 30, 187 High Road, London, N22.  
 Organise (anarcho-syndicalist group) — c/o 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1.

## 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 environment.
- 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.

Although *Direct Action* is the national paper of the Direct Action Movement, with most of its copy and financial contributions coming directly from DAM members, we would like to stress that *DA* is open to any readers who would like to contribute to it. Our aim is to produce an open, anarcho-syndicalist, working class paper. We will consider any articles or letters for publication (within reason — fascists, party hacks, etc., need not bother), although we will not publish contributions sent from an uncredited source. In other words, send us your name and address in case we need to get in contact with you. Pseudonyms or initials will be used instead when published. Signed articles do not necessarily reflect the views of either the *Direct Action* Editorial Collective or the Direct Action Movement as a whole, they are included to provoke discussion.

Producing a paper like *Direct Action* is not easy financially, at the moment we are struggling to pay

off our printing bills to Aldgate Press. We rely on a steady flow of donations to help us clear this and to set us up on a sound financial footing for the future. As a result of this we have set up a fighting fund with a target of £2,000. If you would like to make a donation to help us carry on send your money *Direct Action*, PO Box 761, Camberwell SDO, London, SE5 9JH.

If possible, all articles should be typed. If you are able to word process your articles, we can use them if you send them on 5 1/4 inch 360k IBM compatible diskettes. We can translate files from Wordstar, Multimate, Wordperfect, ASCII, Displaywrite, Word and DCA Formats. Please include an SAE if you want the diskette returned.

October, November and December's donations will appear in *DA* 63. The fighting fund still stands at £1,470.85.



● Tick where appropriate and send to *Direct Action*, PO Box 761, Camberwell SDO, London, SE5 9JH. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to *Direct Action* Movement. Enquiries for bulk orders are welcome.

★ I would like to find out more about the *Direct Action* Movement and the International Workers Association. Please send me information. Send to DAM National Secretary, PO Box 106, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 1NW.

The DAM was formed in 1979 from the SWF (Syndicalist Workers Federation) and other groups and individuals believing in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism. It is the British section of the International Workers Association (IWA), the anarcho-syndicalist international, which was formed in 1922 and has sections in France, Spain, Italy, West Germany, Norway, Denmark, USA, Japan, Australia, Brazil, Argentina and a provisional section in Finland.

Produced and published by the *Direct Action* Editorial Collective (London). Printed by Aldgate Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX. Send all donations, letters, orders, subscriptions, etc., to *Direct Action*, PO Box 761, Camberwell SDO, London, SE5 9JH.

	UK	Europe	N/S America	Rest of world	More information	Name	Address
6 issues	£3.50 ●	6 issues	£4.50 ●	6 issues	£7.00 ●	_____	_____
12 issues	£6.00 ●	12 issues	£8.00 ●	12 issues	£12.00 ●	_____	_____
6 issues	£4.50 ●	6 issues	£7.00 ●	6 issues	£8.00 ●	_____	_____
12 issues	£8.00 ●	12 issues	£12.00 ●	12 issues	£13.00 ●	_____	_____
6 issues	£7.00 ●	6 issues	£8.00 ●	6 issues	£13.00 ●	_____	_____
12 issues	£12.00 ●	12 issues	£13.00 ●	12 issues	_____	_____	_____
6 issues	£8.00 ●	6 issues	_____	6 issues	_____	_____	_____
12 issues	£13.00 ●	12 issues	_____	12 issues	_____	_____	_____
6 issues	£8.00 ●	6 issues	_____	6 issues	_____	_____	_____
12 issues	£13.00 ●	12 issues	_____	12 issues	_____	_____	_____

# DIRECT ACTION

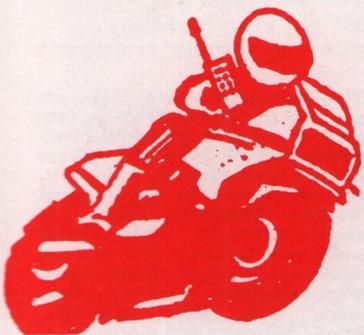
**Bloody Sunday**  
**Saturday 27th January**  
**Hyde Park, London, 12pm**

## ROAD TO REBELLION

Over the last 15-20 years the despatch industry has mushroomed in Britain and now employs 5-10,000 people. The reasons for the growth of this industry are many but include the decline of same day postal services, the growth of yuppy service industries such as advertising, the 'big bang', and the spreading out of offices away from city centres. There are now hundreds of despatch firms which have a fleet of motorcycles, pushbikes, vans or cars ready to deliver urgent documents and small parcels. Most firms are in London.

The despatch industry is a classic product of the Thatcher era. The firms are engaged in a cut-throat war to undercut each other, or to win clients by providing the 'most professional' service which is just so much bullshit. There are millions of pounds to be made for the bosses who are ruthless enough. But the days of the young entrepreneur setting up and 'making good' are numbered, as the big firms such as TNT and Federal Express buy out the small concerns. This process will probably accelerate after 1992. Incidentally, the bosses organisation, called the Despatch Association, is one of the main bodies pleading for the abolition of the Post Office monopoly.

From the workers point of view, the despatch industry is not all a bed of roses. If you liked cycling or motorcycling before, then the novelty will soon wear off. True, you can earn £3-400 per week. Some riders and drivers earn even more than that but those people are the voluntary slaves who work from early morning until eight at night, then collapse until the next day. More common are the school leavers who risk their lives every day racing around town on a moped for £100 per week.



The wages at first seem reasonable until you consider that you are 'self-employed' (read self-exploited) and have to pay out for your vehicle, your running expenses, your income tax, and put money aside for sickness, holidays, etc. So £400 per week is only really worth about half that.



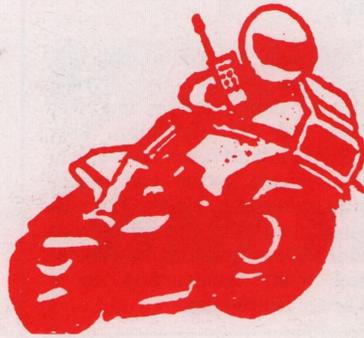
Even clearing £500 per week hardly compensates for the job. Despatch riders have to work in all weathers. Most work 9-10 hours each day without more than a few minutes break. The stress of riding or driving in heavy traffic is exhausting and dirty. There is no job security. And last, but not least, despatch riding is probably the most dangerous job in Britain in terms of fatalities and serious injuries.

In response to the low pay, in relation to the terrible conditions of work, there has been a significant amount of industrial militancy. Usually this has taken an individualistic form, i.e., the despatch rider/driver has a go at the boss and then jacks the job in straight away. But there has been organised militancy, in the form of strikes, at Capital Parcels, London and City Couriers, Greater London Cars, Southbank Couriers and First Courier. Of these, only the strike at Southbank was lost. The strikes are usually only for a few hours or even minutes. Undoubtedly there have been many, many more strikes that have not been reported.

The Transport and General Workers Union have tried at least twice to unionise the despatch industry but have failed miserably because almost nobody wants anything to do with a mob like them. Besides, it is acutely embarrassing trying to recruit people into a trade union which you know yourself to be a pile of shit. The TGWU was largely to blame for the scabbing drivers at Wapping and for the collapse of morale and resistance during this summer's dock strike.

But fortunately there is a light at the end of the (Rotherhithe) Tunnel. The Despatch Industry Workers Union was started in March 1989 by just four despatch riders (three DAM members) and has since had some steady success in recruiting people and defending members. The DAM members are now in a small minority.

Union meetings are the life and soul of the DIWU and the place where all the decisions are made. This might sound obvious, but if you have been a member of a traditional trade union you will know that all the major decisions are not made by the workers but by the higher-ups in the union. Therefore, the participatory democracy of the DIWU meetings gives us all a sense of responsibility, satisfaction and a belief in ourselves and what we can achieve.



The Constitution of the DIWU is, for want of a better word, anarcho-syndicalist. All workers in the industry are welcome to join, but no management. The DIWU aims to improve pay and conditions today, but also plan for a better society tomorrow. The Constitution has a healthy wariness of trade union bureaucracy and political parties, instead stating that collective direct action is the best way to achieve its ends. And significantly, point four of the Constitution states that 'Union members should never cross picket lines, unless the strikers consent'. This is the age-old basis of working class solidarity, and a point that has been forgotten by virtually all of the trade unions in Britain today.

The DIWU has attracted a lot of attention from the media which is a mixed blessing. There have been enquiries, articles or

interviews by LWT, Capital Radio, a video company, City Limits, Ride Magazine, Moving Target magazine, the in-house newspaper of the NUR, and a free-lance journalist. The DIWU now has a policy that any journalist who wants an interview must write their questions down, which will then be discussed, and a reply sent in writing. This seems to be the best way to avoid them twisting what you say.

The DIWU is a new union in the despatch industry, and hopefully it will grow and grow until all workers in the industry become active members. But there is more to it than that. The DIWU is the first attempt in Britain to start a union along anarcho-syndicalist lines. Admittedly the despatch industry is a marginal and expendable section of the British economy, but nevertheless the idea that anarcho-syndicalism can work in this day and age will hopefully spread to other industries by the DIWU's good example.

If you work in the despatch industry, or you know someone who does, put them in touch with the DIWU at PO Box 574, Brockley, London, SE4 1DL.

DAM Despatch Riders

## WHO'S BENEFIT?

August this year saw the start of a reorganisation of local social security offices which could eventually reduce one quarter of them to small branch offices with fifteen staff or less. The

public will only be able to visit the branch office where staff will have to try and deal with all public callers and make counter payments.

The unions are opposing the moves. The few staff in the branch office will not be able to cope with the workload. An obvious tactic to overload the system and cause maximum disruption, increased waiting time and extra work for less pay for the SS staff. Of course, this all could have nothing to do with a major change called 'benefit agencies' to be set-up by 1991 to introduce the benefit system with the market ethos.

Privatisation of everything in sight has become an obsession with the state. It will bring increased costs and greater profit to the few whilst the many suffer. The workers in the CPSA have started actions in London. Claimants should support their actions and help to resist 'benefit agencies'.

SM

