EMERGENCY
WHITES PROLONG THE AGONY

As we write, South Africa's apartheid government has declared an "official" State of Emergency — a vicious tightening of its repression of the rights of the non-white majority of the population.

To us outside the country, it means a blanket of secrecy over events there, making it impossible to be sure what is going on.

To South Africans, it means up to 6,000 people may be detained for up to 180 days and no information is given, even to their relatives. There is no way of knowing what has become of them.

It means thousands are being made homeless as bulldozers clear out "squatters" from townships in the Cape.

It means government-provoked fighting between "rival black factions" claims the lives of who knows how many innocent people — including children.

WHO FEARS SANCTIONS?

Meanwhile, Thatcher and Reagan, along with many other vested interests in the West, are solidly opposed to sanctions.

Their excuse is that it would lead to more violence and "the blacks don't want sanctions because it would put them out of work".

What lies. Recently we published a survey showing that most black South Africans wanted sanctions. And new evidence from Johannesburg shows that while sanctions would increase black unemployment by 1%, white unemployment would go up by 3%.

More to the point, sanctions would severely dent the profits bosses' profits both in South Africa and elsewhere.

It would also give the Soviet Union a significant advantage as the world's second-largest producer of gold.

That's the true reason for Thatcher and her friends objecting.

THE FUTURE

What are the prospects for the future? Is there any industrial organisation capable of bringing about real change for the better in South Africa?

Our correspondent in South Africa writes:

...I can tell you that COSATU is part and parcel of the ANC; it is the internal wing of the exiled South African Congress of Trade Unions. In short, COSATU is the ANC. In the post-apartheid society, the COSATU will be docile to the state, like the Russian trade unions after 1917. SAAWU belongs to the same camp. We will exchange tyranny for tyranny; the oppressed of today will be our oppressors tomorrow...

CONT'D

...
The accident at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in the Ukraine has awakened some discussion about nuclear power across the world. Russian media have been the most vocal in Europe against the building of new nuclear plants (70% in Holland; 75% in Italy; 97% in Germany).

As the radioactive fallout from Chernobyl drifted across Europe demonstrations took place in many cities, even some of the establishment are now expressing doubts about nuclear power.

Details of what happened are still not clear. Of course the Russian authorities didn't give much away — all governments are secretive when it comes to nuclear accidents, including our own jokers who removed Windscale from the map and renamed it Sellafield.

But perhaps the details are not so important as the event itself. The reactor blew up and released a huge cloud of radiation which covered a good part of Europe. Then the reactor came close to apocalypse as meltdown almost destroyed many people have been killed directly and many more will die slowly over the years from radiation poisoning. It is a singularly inappropriate time to ask, do we need nuclear power?

WE CAN'T AFFORD IT

The energy policy of recent British governments, and one of the reasons for the rundown of the coal industry, is to increase nuclear and renewable energy-generation. This is true of the UDM, which class millions of jobs. Britain is an island built on coal, with more coal reserves than the rest of Western Europe put together. Enough for 300 years at least in fact.

That coal should be used. Leaving aside questions of relative employment levels and environmental conservation, the fact is that nuclear power is no cheaper than coal power.

The nuclear lobby try to maintain that it is a lie. Most of the research for nuclear power is being done and funded by the coal industry. The spent fuel is a major problem, and the cost of disposing it is never acknowledged. The taxpayer subsidises nuclear power massively.

While the costs involved the government seems determined to continue with massive nuclear programmes.

DIRECT ACTION

The Editorial Collective wishes to apologise to all those subscribers and others who were disappointed by the failure of DIRECT ACTION to appear in June.

Unfortunately, the reason for this was financial.

In future the paper will appear regularly every month without fail. This is the last to be produced by Hull DAM, we will take this opportunity of expressing our thanks to all those who gave us financial, moral and practical support.

THANK YOU ALL.

WE DON'T NEED IT

Renewable resources might not be able to provide all our energy requirements in the foreseeable future, but they can certainly make a useful contribution. In Denmark for example a team built the biggest windmill in the world to date. They estimate that 1,100 smaller windmills on the Danish coast could provide the same amount of electricity as five nuclear power stations. These would cost £1 billion; the windmills only £40 million. It's not even as if energy needs were increasing; demand has remained steady for many years, and the growth which might have led to an oil-fired energy war has stopped with the onset of the oil crisis and their subsequent prosecution for the miners.

Hull DAM, we will take givens we financial, moral and practical thanks to all those who worked for the class based only...

5 GOOD ARGUMENTS AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER

The number of jobs in the nuclear industry is small. The proposed new reprocessing plant at Dounreay will cost £300 millions, but will only create 300 permanent jobs. The civil nuclear industry is small, and exposed to dangerous levels of radiation, tightly controlled under the present laws; they will find it very difficult to organise.

2. In fact there are serious implications for civil liberties generally. The nuclear industry is secretive and has its own armed police force — as former energy secretary Tom McCallan said: "We have never known such a well organised technical lobby as the nuclear power lobby." It has a life of its own.

3. Nuclear power cannot be separated from spending money. When Britain entered the nuclear industry, "civil" nuclear employees were regarded as a "spin-off" from the military nuclear programme. Today the plutonium from civil reactors is still used to make warheads.

4. The nuclear waste from reactors is dangerous for ages — a serious legacy for coming generations. The industry is over 50 years old, but already the experts are at a loss as to how to dispose of the waste products that has accumulated. Despite this, Britain is accepting nuclear waste from other countries without even hearings are held on their own territory — Britain is now considered a world leader in the nuclear dustbin of the world.

5. The nuclear industry likes to boast of its safety record. When the same thing happens elsewhere, the public is not so impressed. For example, the public of Belgium is becoming used to small nuclear accidents at Sellafield, the part of Sellafield at Harriabury in 1979 and the explosion at Chernobyl show how much their assurances are worth.

CHERNOBYL and after

The High Court has decreed that the Coal Board — or British Coal as we must now call it — must concede the right to a breakdown UDM in spite of a long running argument. The right only the NUM was the recognition of the coal mining workers union. "The union represents 20% of the workforce. You see, the UDM represents 20% of the workforce. You wonder why there are so many workers involved in the recognition dispute? Perhaps, too, they shouldn't apply to the High Court?" — or, is it simply tipping the scales?

We're sure that DC readers were delighted to see Ian McGregor receive his much-deserved knighthood.

Mr. McGregor is equally pleased to hear that he is cashing in on the miners' strikes — to the tune of £160,000. The price publishers have paid for his memoirs: "McGregor: The War of the Miners". Speaking of McGregor, he's been forced to the NUM to 1984, he is determined that he is "the villain of the piece"— the villain of the piece, according to McGregor, is the "scab" and the "anti-nuclear stance", and the "anti-coal lobby". He says he's going to write a book about the miners' strike, and then he's going to write another book about the miners' strike.

We will be reassured to learn that we won't mention it again.

MINT SAUCE and CASSEROLE

After Chernobyl, heavy rain means especially high radioactive fallout on hill farms in Wales and Cumbria. The effect of this on a million sheep here is now common knowledge. But contaminated lamb was on people's tables a month before ministers banned its sale and slaughter. They claim the radioactive casserole will "wear off" in about 3 weeks. Scientists say it has a half life of 30 years.
When Richard Dawkins wrote his book THE SELFISH GENIE he found that it attracted much attention from more than just the scientifically-minded public. Fighting politicians and economists to develop their idea that the selfishness of individuals, along with their pursuit of their own self-interest, is responsible for the election of the conservative governments in 1970. The word 'selfish' seems to be a very emotive one.

As Dawkins himself says, most of those who reacted so strongly to his book had "read it in a single sitting." The wing used the word 'selfish', building around it a set of misconceptions which they felt lent scientific credence to their own ideas, while Marxists condemned it as a comfort to the right.

But when they actually read the book, they would realize that the gene theory of selfishness states that evolutionarily successful behavior is based on the organism as that results in the greater percentage of the next generation inheriting the genes that behavior begets. Many might believe that this could involve an unselfish individual, who risked being brutally aggressive beings who brutally fight their way to the top as the expense of all around them. This is not necessarily so. In fact, the most successful form of behavior is not wasteful or cruel, but is, in fact, the best way of accumulating (but not necessarily passing on) "do unto others as you would be done by." The wing, with the addition of "if they did not, then it was not selfish," is the best way of ensuring that "do unto others as you would be done by."

Dawkins' main evidence to sustain this idea of co-operative success is the recent work of Robert Axelrod and Hamilton. Much of this is theoretical and based on computer simulations and models, and investigates animal co-operation. It begins by assuming that animals do cooperate with each other, and that this cooperation is a genetically programmed series of reactions. These can be used by different species to form some eighty possible forms. Some might simply take advantage of others' co-operative acts and not repay them, while others might offer helping to others without expecting help in return. But most would involve a combination of these two strategies. The most successful behavior pattern would be passed on to the next generation. It might include numbers and might well be the basic strategy for co-operative behavior in all animals, including ourselves.

So what is the most successful form of co-operative behavior? To find this out, Axelrod held two tournaments in which the computer programs play a series of "matches." The "Prisoner's Dilemma" is one such game that is thought by many to simulate situations which are a test for co-operative behavior.

In fact, the destruction of the environment is remote from normal workers' lives. Thousands of workers' lives are blighted by disease caused by work. Workers in textile mills, coal mines, and in work shops suffer lung disease, cancer, by bad working conditions. Thosands of workers die needlessly and horribly from accidents caused by fatalities poisonous water and chemicals. Children's brains are damaged by lead in drinking water for streets. Unhappily, we are being poisoned.

The excuse for all this is that the "system was planned to close down," jobs would not be lost. But the stupid answer to complaints about pollution is nonsense is this. If measures were taken to cut down running a dirty plate company, while reducing or eliminating its toxic wastes, jobs would close down. It could be done to have the work involved.

It's not jobs the socialist for pollution seems to want — it's profits (see which he poorly tests if one can validly call them profits). It's profit that demands noisy dangerous machines, that is left knobbed irrefutably on the fields, chemicals are untreated into rivers and up chimneys, lead in peatland, fluidded up and dumped in the profit, for more to be made.

This explains why the nuclear power plants are driven, that is into rivers and up chimneys, that is leaded in peatland, fluidded up and dumped in the profit, for more to be made.

There has always been a battle between those who argue human behaviour is instinctive and those who say it is conditioned by the environment. The right has always been led by the "instinctive" camp, because they wrongly felt that this justifies selfish, exploitative behaviour. As "natural, extending horizons", Marxists, however, have followed Marx, in the belief that all behaviour is determined by the economic environment alone.

ANARCHISM

Anarchism, with its firm foundation in a scientific understanding of the real world, rather than the abstract world of philosophy, has always steered a path between both extremes and accepted that human behaviour is moulded by both factors.

Although Dawkins starts from some natural, liberal ideas (eg that the state and police are"unnecessary"), he is forced to come to a very anarchistic conclusion. His ideas help put paid to the belief that anarchism is Utopian and would only work in a world full of saints. Anarchists have always maintained that freedom from the oppression of capitalism and the state is the only way to protect the ruling classes, people who could make a reasonable and co-operative world.

BOOKS:
Mutual Aid — A Factor of Evolution
by Peter Kropotkin
The Evolution of Co-operation
by Robert Axelrod
Basic Books, 113.50.

What Syndicalists Think About

The ENVIRONMENT
governments

There are those on the left who disagree with this view of governments. They would claim that certain types of government — Marxist "people's" or workers' states — would provide a far more co-operative environment than the capitalist or social democratic states. Some Marxists have always maintained that freedom from the oppression of capitalism and the state is the only way to protect the ruling classes, people who could make a reasonable and co-operative world.

common sense

For common sense is the basis of the Syndicalist argument. Let me make a real concern about the environment a common sense example. The idea that people have the right to live in a world free of pollution is something that individual solutions only work if at all, for the individual. These are problems facing all of us, and only by organizing together can we hope to overcome them. If we are to make the individual a subordinate to the community, we need to re-consider the whole concept of "common sense."
fish be better value?Perhaps —only 5WATER. THIS IS NOT THE TOTAL WATER CONTENT FOUND IN ALL FOODSTUFFS—IT IS THE WATER CONTENT FOR PROFIT. Food is doctored by the addition of hydrogenated fats (marked on the label) which can lead to obesity, heart disease and other problems. Use unsprayed, potted and tinned "wild" fruit,big, bad animal fats like beef, pigs, pineapples, etc ——be careful. What about foods we deliberately choose because they're supposed to be better for us? DO YOU KNOW that some breads (not labelled wholesome) is hydrogenated to get big crumbs? DO YOU KNOW that the fish in white "high" breads often comes from objects that are dangerous to health,are eaten, or even our bones? They've got some hidden fat that can cause cancer or upset your stomach. WHO ARE WE Dying FOR?

In the Caribbean, malnutrition is common, and much food has to be imported. Thousands of people starve to death. Three million people are at risk of dying in the next few years, and the government doesn't do anything about it. For the few lucky people who can afford to buy small quantities of food, it's pitiful. We're all trying to eat healthy, but what's in our food? Isolated and unknown by most people, much of the food industry is doctored to fit their own needs. Some suggest that food is doctored to fit the needs of the food industry. Some argue that the Government is critical of these interference. "Naughty But Nice" (unlike DDT, dimethoate, aldrin and others) is very). A thousand catchy names are used to make the food look even more appealing. Yet British people eat an average of 100lbs of sugar, which is dangerous to health. It's cheap, so it's used to make food look better. WHO ARE WE Dying FOR?

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BOSSES ON THE ROCKS

The fairy tales of my youth have come alive! Who'd have thought I'd see the bosses locked out and a strike-in-strike on the British colony of Gibraltar?

Even the genie of the General Strike was almost out of the bottle in Gibraltar in May this year. Only the last minute offer of the Gibraltar Government, which aimed at the full demands of the Gibralter dockyard strikers, put the stopper back before the Rock labourforce got out of control.

General Strike Threat

So two weeks into the strike other sections of the TUC (Gibraltar's main union) voted to come out on a one-day General Strike on May 15th. On past performance, because of the geographic isolation of the Rock, General Strikes lead to total paralysis of everyday life. In the 1972 General Strike, a union official told me, both water and electricity had been cut off, leaving only essential services supplied.

One union leader said this: 'It was like an erg.'

This point was not lost on the Gibraltar Government, the owners of the yard, which is leased to Gibrepair.

After a couple of weeks, union leaders took over and promised management and workers an offer which met the demands in full.

By agreeing to pay the difference between the union demands and the company offer, the General Strike was removed. As a result of this, the union voted to return to work.

The fairy tales of my youth have come alive! Who'd have thought I'd see the bosses locked out and a strike-in-strike on the British colony of Gibraltar?

Three months after the end of the strike, the company have yet to pay back the money they were owed. The police and Gibrepair have yet to be charged for the violence and the death threats.

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THE BACKGROUND

The chief feature of labour disputes in the early 1960s was that they were mostly unofficial. More than half the strikes were not officially backed by the unions involved. These unofficial strikes would usually start on the shopfloor when the workers concerned would walk out, often supported by their shop stewards. They were often local, short-lived and successful. Most disputes had the backing of the workers concerned. They were often small, reflecting the scale of the workplaces available to workers in dispute.

Disputes in the early 1960s would usually start on the shopfloor. They were often small, reflecting the scale of the workplaces available to workers in dispute. The unions mostly employed elaborate procedures, so by the time they had completed the paperwork that made the strike official, the dispute had usually died down. The unions rarely used their official machinery to settle disputes. Many union leaders could pose as being "socially responsible" and so collect their bonuses, while at the same time pulling strings off the unofficial strikers for their own political purposes.

Against this background, during September 1960 the director of the British Railways suggested that a meeting be held to set up an Industrial Co-ordinating Committee, with a view to bringing trade union militants together in a spirit of industrial unity. Several organisations supported this move, including the Independent Labour Party, the Syndicalist Workers' Federation, the London American Group (the Workers' Party), which merged with SWP/Socialist Advance League (London), and the Socialism Reaffirmed group.

In January 1961 an Industrial Co-ordinating Committee was set up and the National Rank & File Movement was launched. Its aim was to bring shop stewards and militants together in action through which they might discuss common problems and find solutions to them. This movement was started by the rank and file because they wanted to play an active role, and not sit back and let the union bosses, the TUC officials and the state decide for them.

RANK & FILE 60s STYLE

The Rank & File Movement was launched in the summer of 1961. It was a direct action movement to fight against the state and the bosses for renewal must be at a local level. The Movement was launched. The idea was to give shop stewards and militants an organisation through which they might discuss common problems and find solutions to them. This movement was started by the rank and file because they wanted to play an active role, and not sit back and let the union bosses, the TUC officials and the state decide for them.

THE MOVEMENT'S AIMS

1. To promote financial help to striking members.
2. To link up militants in different industries.
3. To make printing facilities available to workers in dispute.
4. To collate lists of addresses and organise transport in all the main areas, so that when disputes occur there is always back-up support.
5. To work for international support of stoppages.
6. To broadcast to other workers the demands of the strikers.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The National Rank & File Movement had members in engineering, the docks, printing, carpentry, the electrical trades, building, teaching and the professions.

They tried to build a new basis by bringing together the leaders of the unofficial strikes. They wanted to spread support for stoppages. And it was with the assistance of these leaders that they were able to press the strike pay issue. They were involved in the building of the TUC's strike pay fund.

In January 1961 an Industrial Co-ordinating Committee was set up and the National Rank & File Movement was launched. Its aim was to bring shop stewards and militants together in action through which they might discuss common problems and find solutions to them. This movement was started by the rank and file because they wanted to play an active role, and not sit back and let the union bosses, the TUC officials and the state decide for them.

Finally, the Rank & File Movement was in the right place at the right time. The Movement's success has been due to the fact that it was a movement of masses, not of ideology, and that it was a movement of industrial action. The Movement's success has been due to the fact that it was a movement of masses, not of ideology, and that it was a movement of industrial action.

DO IT YOURSELF

It is as if the British working class, shaped by the land by the enclosures, left their jobless, village-based nineteenth century, only to form sectional villages within the factories. It is as if the British working class, shaped by the land by the enclosures, left their jobless, village-based nineteenth century, only to form sectional villages within the factories.

Let me say this: In 1961, when I was an apprentice in the industry, I didn't know much about the Rank & File Movement. I knew nothing about it. I was looking into the electricians' shop window. I saw there were deep tribal divisions between electricians in the industry. The electricians were divided between the various branches of the trade union. They were divided between the various branches of the trade union. They were divided between the various branches of the trade union. They were divided between the various branches of the trade union. They were divided between the various branches of the trade union.
LAST ISSUE'S ARTICLES ON EDUCATION BROUGHT IN A GREAT MANY LETTERS IN RESPONSE: WE CAN PRINT ONLY A SELECTION, TOGETHER WITH A BRIEF REPLY.

Dear Comrades,

I enjoyed the article "Education: The Liberal Lie" in DA 31.

My own experience of school was not a happy one and although I have no children of my own, talking to my 8 year old and some of my school friends on the subject it seems that the situation has not improved much, if at all.

School, like all other institutions, is against tolerance, individuality, which is seen as a threat to its own authority. So children find their sense of worth and uniqueness repressed cruelly.

I follow up to the article, readers may be interested to know that any organization which exists to advise parents/guardians on how to go about withdrawing children from school and educating them themselves.

The address is: Action Otherwise, 25 Common Lane, Hemingford, Abbots, Cambridge CB 18 9 AR

Yours in solidarity,
Steve Tuner
Edinburgh DAM.

Dear Comrades,

I don't think we can get anywhere by simply deriding teachers and saying that they are all "soft cops". Some teachers do work with children without reinforcing social control, I know a teacher who teaches remedial children in a second class. She doesn't do this because she cares; she never wants to get promotion and it does not want it. The children she works with are those who through the system has little or no resources and are concentrationed - usually mothers, battle alone, and are only seen for an hour and are only given to the other kids joining in sabotage. Rather than the solidarity of all the teachers and saying they are revolutionaries. The teachers at home are a way out for a sector of minority, but due to the way society is run, it cannot be the majority of the working class. Rather than teaching children to read is more difficult than teaching them to speak, to read, to write and patience that many parents have not got.

Yours in hopes and solidarity,

Steve Tuner
Manchester.

Dear Comrades,

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Questioning children in school is not half what damaging as leaving them to absorb the diseases and insecurities and lies of, at most, two people passing on their lies and insecurities and lies of, at most, two people passing on their lies, knowledge and practice. And that the hierarchy of children obey their masters who obey their masters who obey their masters, and who is a wage slave. At last, a dozen teachers have given me a few insights and a few are only seen for an hour or two weeks and there is always the solidarity of all the other kids joining in sabotage of their authority.

Anyone who has dealings with children knows this.

I am a Vegan
London SW 20.

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ANNOUNCING...

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"But organisation is the key. Together we can demand on end to the destruction of the human habitat. We can pressure the bosses to work safer, cleaner, more socially, industrially and penetrate their growth, the by the intelligent organisation of their economic strength."

The end of evolution would syndicalists like to see for the society of the future? Certainly not the grim, rigid, obedient, militaristic world of our capitalist present. All such movements must be controlled and work to the advantage of all, and we must ensure that this is achieved. The working class has no country. It is the working class itself which is the only class to achieve this. We are opposed to all States and State institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and recognises no national boundaries. If the working class does not exist, it cannot exist as the working class, anywhere in the world.

The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the value of anarchy and syndicalism and that the working class has no country. The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the value of anarchy and syndicalism and that the working class has no country. The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the value of anarchy and syndicalism and that the working class has no country.

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Our thanks are due to the following for donations:

DM(Middlesbrough); RM (Rotherham); DAM (Darlington); DAM (Middlesbrough); DAM (Darlington); DAM (Newcastle); DAM (Manchester); DAM (Hull); DAM (Wolverhampton).

Please make your cheque payable to DAM (UK & Ireland) and send it to PO Box 102, Hull HU1 1EL or to your nearest local group. Thank you.
Donaldson's Filters

Twelve members of the TGWU have been sacked by their firm, Donaldson Filter Components, after striking to defend two colleagues who had been victimised ten days before.

Donaldson is a multinational, based in the UK. One of its French plants tried to unionise the company, closed it down and moved to England where it hoped to find a more pliant workforce.

At the Hull plant, most of the workforce had held fixed-term temporary contracts. The company offered the workers a few weeks to THREE YEARS. They have been told to down tools just before a public holiday, so that the company can save on holiday pay. When asked why the company suggested a new shift rule for the football team—but were mean enough to demand that it should be paid for out of the annual pay.

When workers began to get fed up with this treatment, and poor standards of safety in the factory, the firm’s response was to set up a works consultative committee only to close it down when it demanded real action on the workers’ grievances.

The action of the full-time workers took the lead in trying to organise the workforce in the UK. At the first signs of success, the company sacked all the “ring leaders”. At the beginning of May (the rest of the full-time workers struck in support).

The firm is using all kinds of scare tactics to try to beat back the workers, including flying in two scabs from SOUTH AFRICA. They have sent a booklet, the ugliest of its kind, and formed vigilante squads to police the strikers around in an “antique road show” style.

The action of the Silentnight strikers in London is appreciated. The Donaldson workers (see separate articles in this issue) are also appreciated. In contrast to the attitude of the TGWU, which has been pathetic, Donaldson’s workers tell 34:00: “This strike won’t be won through the rubbish, by dragging its heels. They are frightened of write. They haven’t even stopped our jobs being advertised in the job centre.” Another striker told how the TGW Full-time Barry May is pushing for a payout of 13000 for the TGWU workers, and a no-hope appeal to an industrial tribunal.

But what most articles missed was that what the trade unions were doing was little more than following the guidelines for success laid down by Britain’s premier, Margaret Thatcher. Although at times the festival people sign on the dole, as is their right, during other parts of the year, many of them are self-employed traders and craftsmen without the prospect of state assistance.

Like Thatcher’s ideal small business men, they are driven by profit and effort, and will reform the institutions that are not so bad because they can do it. So the difference is a drastic reduction in the rights of all bosses. A revolutionary left must explicitly denounce such old-fashioned, conventional notions of solidarity: send donations to: Donaldsons’ Strikers, 385, Cowcaddens, Glasgow have extended their action to kicklines. Solidarity has been extended to the Hull traders, who are blacking Donaldson’s Filters (see separate article in this issue).

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The Spanish workers laid down their work tools and took up weapons to fight Franco's fascist uprising. Anarchist syndicalists have sometimes been criticized as being backward, living in the glorious past of the Spanish Revolution. It is unhealthy to dwell on past successes and failures but it is vital to study working-class struggles of the past so we may learn not to make the same mistakes twice. D.A. celebrates Spain 1936 and proclaims it the Greatest Revolution because it was the only Revolution to successfully all but briefly supplant the state with the workers' own organizations—the unions.

**The Spanish Labour Movement**

The CNT (National Confederation of Labour) was perhaps the most combative union ever formed. It was not merely defensive, unlike the unions in Britain today, but offensive, aimed at nothing less than the destruction of the state by way of a successful general strike.

**The CNT—the Early Years**

From its first congress in 1913, the CNT remained underground until 1914. In 1916 together with the UGT (the reformist socialist union) it called for a General Strike against shortages of food. In 1918 it began re-organising itself in industry-wide unions i.e. a single union for each industry (One Union). By 1919 the CNT could claim 700,000 members and extended its influence in areas such as Galicia, where previously it had been very weak and far less numerous than its socialist rivals the UGT. In Catalonia, Aragon, and other centres of industry in the north of Spain strike followed strike. The most important of these was that directed against the Canadian Company. This Canadian Company was building a large dam which would have made possible the building of a big electricity generating station. The Canadian Company dismissed a number of workers and fellow workers came out in solidarity. The CNT-Spain's libertarian workers' movement fought to the death. Spain was the greatest Revolution because it was fought for not by a tiny party elite but with the blood and sweat of 2 million men and women represented by the CNT—a revolutionary union fighting for anarchism.

**The Spanish Revolution 1936**

It is 50 years since the Spanish workers laid down their work tools and took up what weapons they could beg or steal to fight Franco's fascist uprising. Anarcho-syndicalists have sometimes been criticized as being backward, living in the glorious past of the Spanish Revolution. It is unhealthy to dwell on past successes and failures but it is vital to study working-class struggles of the past so we may learn not to make the same mistakes twice. D.A. celebrates Spain 1936 and proclaims it the Greatest Revolution because it was the only Revolution to successfully all but briefly supplant the state with the workers' own organizations—the unions. whilst the Marxist labour movements of Europe in the 1930s lay down and surrendered without a shot to fascism, the CNT—Spain's libertarian workers' movement fought to the death. Spain was the greatest Revolution because it was fought for not by a tiny party elite but with the blood and sweat of 2 million men and women represented by the CNT—a revolutionary union fighting for anarchism.
of the capital and shot down to the ground. When Franco came to power in 1923 the CNT were suppressed. Anarchists periodically rose up in revolt, and factories were closed, and 200 lead- ers of the movement were arrested. Despite yet another attack by the army the union movement survived members paid their dues and met in fields. The period 1923-36 was one of rapid expansion for the CNT becoming a major force in the Spanish working-class. By 1936 the union had about 2 million members.

One of the most important developments in the CNT was the founding of the FAI (Iberian Anarchist Federation). It was formed to counter straddles of thinking in the CNT which favoured slowly building up the union's strength. The FAI was strong enough to begin the revolution. The FAI, which in the words of Alexander Schapiro, was dedicated to evolve away from 19th century anarchism, believed in immedi ate revolution. In 1931 a Republic was declared. Many workers had high hopes that it could introduce significant reform, it could not.

During the 1930s the FAI had been capturing prominent, position workers in the CNT. They embarked on a policy of overthrowing the Spanish state. But the CNT had not been ready. In 1931 and twice in 1933 the FAI ordered the unions to organize the streets. The result was a fast from the leader Casas Viejas in Andalucia whostarved to death. Efforts to smash captured anarch-syndicalist sympathies. Three FAI officials, disguised as workers, were executed for that very reason. The CNT was more radical in Madrid than in Barcelona. Anarchists led the October 1934 general strike which took place the day after workers in Madri'd. The defeat of the national-ists and within 33 hours the government was not in command of it. The defeat of the nationalists in Madrid and Barcelona was a social revolution.

On July 19th 1936 the Spanish military staged a coup in the capital and shot down planes. Fighting took place and on July 21st all the CNT union's strength till it was closed, and 200 leaders of the movement were arrested. The FAI, which in the words of Alexander Schapiro, was dedicated to evolution away from 19th century anarchism, believed in immediate revolution. When the military coup took place the Republic government brought in a red army. The FAI, which in the words of Alexander Schapiro, was dedicated to evolution away from 19th century anarchism, believed in immediate revolution. When the military coup took place the Republican government brought in a red army. The FAI, which in the words of Alexander Schapiro, was dedicated to evolution away from 19th century anarchism, believed in immediate revolution. When the military coup took place the Republican government brought in a red army. The FAI, which in the words of Alexander Schapiro, was dedicated to evolution away from 19th century anarchism, believed in immediate revolution. When the military coup took place the Republican government brought in a red army.
WHY THE REVOLUTION FAILED

Why did the revolution fail?

With 2 million members how did the CNT end up backing peddling on the revolution till the Communists controlled the Republic?

SPAIN’S ISOLATION

Syndicalists believe that for a revolution to succeed it must spread beyond national boundaries. This could not happen in 1936. In contrast to the unions, there was no longer revolutionary but conservative in the Communist party. Throughout Europe the strong syndicalist movements of the 1920s had gone down fighting to fascism in Germany, Italy, and Portugal. The Spanish workers were isolated surrounded by a labour movement either dragged by the Nazis or smashed by the Fascists. Any future revolution depends on co-ordinated international action.

FRANCO’S FRIENDS

In contrast Franco received massive military aid from Hitler and Mussolini. In contrast the whole German airforce corps and tens of thousands of tank troops. The Republic received ancient Russian equipment in the shape of small arms. The treaty signed with France, though groups of military advisers whose main interest is the suppression led to the Syndicalist forces in Spain.

THE COMMUNISTS

The Communists Party in Republican Spain and Catalonia became a Dutchman for the Spanish middle-classes. It swelled to 60,000 members in 1936-policemen, shopkeepers, undergraduate. They came to control the trade unions in the Republican zone and by 1937 started attacking collectives in industry and agriculture. In May 1937 the CNT rank-and-file rose against the Communists only to be ordered in the name of a false unity to go back to work by Falicar Garcia Oliver and Federica Montseny. From this we learn that come a revolution the Marxists left must be ruthlessly crushed if the revolution is to survive.

INTERNATIONAL BRIGADES

Not just the romantic crusaders against fascism as commonly thought by Stalinists but a well-armed body like the weapon-starved CNT militarized by force. A great effect by the Communists to attack the agrarian collectives.

WOMEN IN THE REVOLUTION

Gains were also made by women. In relation to their role during the Civil War observers have pointed out that they played a full part in the anti-fascist resistance. They were present everywhere – on committees, in the militia, in the front line. In the early battles of the war women fought alongside men as a matter of course. It was not merely a case of women filling in for men who were away at the front. (Which is usually the case.) Garcia Oliver portrays but a well-armed (unlike the weapon-starved CNT militarized by force) army. When the war is over and women are no longer needed in the labour force, they are pushed back into the home.

They were in the militias and fought alongside the men as equals. They were organizing the collectives and taking up the fight against the sexist attitudes of the past which have no place in any real revolution.

The Anarchist women’s organisations, Mujeres Libres (Free Women), had 30,000 members. It had been active before the Civil War organising women workers and distributing information on contraception. During the war abortion was legalised in the “republican zone”. Centres were opened for women, including unmarried mothers and prostitutes.

From all accounts there were truly changes in attitudes towards women. One woman participant in the Civil War has said “it was like being brothers and sisters. It had always annoyed me that men in this country didn’t consider women as beings with full human rights. But now there was this big change. I believe it arose spontaneously out of the revolutionary movement...”

“Margorita Balaguer quoted in “Blood of Spain”

50 YEARS ON

The victory of Franco brought a brutal and bloody wave of repression of the Spanish working class. Franco had more people killed after the Civil War than had died during it. One in ten workers in each factory were taken out and shot while thousands ended up in concentration camps and prisons.

Veterans of the Civil War and members of the CNT waged a guerrilla war against the fascist regime from 1945 onwards. The CNT existed as an organisation in exile in France, though groups of anarchists-syndicalists continued to work underground.

Franco died in 1975 after 36 years of rule. The CNT reappeared and organised a wave of strikes and demonstrations during 1978-79 voicing the grievances of the last thirty years.

Since then the CNT has split-a tragedy for the anarchist-syndicalist movement. The CNT-U favours a more experimental approach while the CNT-AIT is more dogmatic.

Workers in arms in Spain, 1936. Fighting to replace capitalist exploitation with workers management of the economy, not to defend the pro-capitalist Republican government.
More than 20 years separated our first visit to Spain in 1963. At that time we were working with the Justas Liberativas (FL), photographing the shrines and shanty towns of Barcelona; filing reports for Revolutionary Labour Action; Direct Action (SNE), penetration in the Valencia trade union, in Alicante; and re-establishing FL contact with libertarian militants in Andalucia. It was a time when the shantytown stood on the banks of the river at Málaga when encampments built like bocas to control the favelas of Montjuic (not far from Barcelona’s fancy La Rambla) housed whole families in the building trade couldn’t pay its day wages and always ‘manana’; and when the police could never break the law and beg on the sly.

### Fascism/Socialism

From Fascism of the sixties to Socialism of the seventies, the begging beggars freely; the shantytown survived; the 3m to 4m jobless in Spain were a benefit to the whole community. Some of the shantytown dwellers, who used to beg as a weekend retreat while studying in Madrid, told us that those presents were hostile to them. The problem was not the inward looking attitude of the people of Spain, the people of Spain didn’t dislike the shabby sight of those half-baked, youngish, Valley kids, all laughing at the Mecanicos up the road for being old-fashioned. Basically, all the people who don’t work or contribute to the community, like students, and the odd wheeler and dealer businessmen you get in these parts.

### Spanish Arsehole

Angel, La Linea alongside Gibraltar is the arsehole of Spain. It has always been well qualified in this respect, but now the only place really built is San Roque which has given it its title. It is a shabby encampment–an unplanned, unimaginative cluster of buildings—whose very existence was called into question by the CNT.

**Peasants and Outsiders**

‘Ladron’ (chief) of the Customs House at La Linea. Flora passed, I speculated wryly that English anarchists might well dub that dolce office Peñas and garage owners.

We skirted Sablalona, where they used to tell us the Civil War had corrupted the building trade for the construction of an Arabian hospital, but this seemed more of a pipit on a coast polluted by developments over the last 25 years.

Next Moril, with its industry, was momified in posters proclaiming the 75th anniversary of the CNT. From here the bus turned inland, passing fig plantations and eucalyptus towards the Sierra Nevada and cowboys clothed in dirty white. Yegen, in Las Alpujarras, is a shabby gas station on the rocky mountain chain between the desert of Almeria, and the lush province of Malaga in the west. A wealth of olives is measured by the five bars it has in such a village, as much by its ample crops of almonds, grapes, pomegranates, and oaks. The key to the wealth lies in the wine which flows from a fountain in the village square.

The village of Yegen, was home to Don Geraldo—Gerald Brennan, the writer who was so well respected by the anarchists for his work on the CNT and libertarian movements, who, for a time made his home in Yegen. An old woman we met, who claims to be the daughter of one of Don Geraldo’s house keepers, was not so much interested in his academic accomplishments as that he was an old rich man in the family. When we said goodbye, she pointed ahead and said: ‘That’s our stable near the bridge.’ Worse still, in her view, he married her into money and moved the child to England where he would refuse to break the law and beg on the sly.

### CNT Anorexia

Here we were told by militants who had recently left the Madrid CNT that the CNT-Anarchist relationship with both CNT factions. This was a way of making the whole political profile of the CNT-AIT, they fell into the hands of the CNT-AIT itself first met in 1979 at the Madrid Congress. The CNT-Anarchist movement seem to be the same thing as the CNT, and have been given by some others. They were to prove that the CNT-AIT was an attempt to see all relevance to the political situation Spain. Though they admitted it may still no force of the people. Their explanation for the CNT-Anarchists local branches, based on the lack of appetite for the CNT-Anarchist social constituency in Spanish society.

1. The refusal of the CNT-AIT to negotiate with the CNT, thereby present any industrial program to the workers in the factory.
2. Their failure to fight cases of industrial injuries and use solicitors to protect workers.
3. Their refusal to take on the CNT-Anarchists and the CNT-Anarchists.
4. Because the CNT-Anarchists are known to work against the current rather than entering the industrial struggle.

What amazed these Anarchists in that our industrial policies in the CNT, would meet their objections. In terms of the practical application of these policies in the CNT.

### AIID THE CNT!

HULL SYNDICALISTS have set up an appeal for money for the CNT. Unlike the Socialist and Communist unions with their state handouts, the CNT functions on a shoestring. All money will be used to aid CNT prisoners’ families and to help the CNT. 

Send cash, or cheques made out to S. SAMUEL, to HULL SYNDICALISTS c/o PO BOX 102, HULL