

BEYOND 1984

The computer-readable plastic National Insurance cards lately introduced are not a new idea. A Home Office Committee on Data Protection, led by Sir Norman Lindrop in 1978, itself warned against them. Sir Norman thought that a Universal Personal Identity No., or U.P.I., whilst being simpler, efficient

cont.
page
2

FROM CRADLE



TO THE GRAVE

XVII CONGRESS INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION

Madrid
19, 20, 21 & 22
April 1984

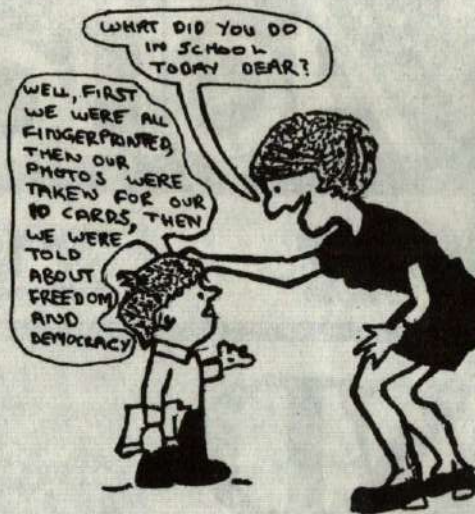
All those wishing to attend the congress or just have a cheap holiday in Madrid at Easter should contact the national secretary (DAM-IWA) as soon as possible and not later than March 1st. If enough people are interested then we may be able to organise a coach. DAM-IWA, c/o Raven Press, 8-10 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester 4. NB. Only those on the official DAM-IWA list will be admitted to the congress.

**I
N
S
I
D
E**

**NOW THE
NGA HAVE
LOST AT
WARRINGTON,
THE GOVERN-
MENT DECID-
ES TO BAN
UNIONS AT
GCHQ** What remains
is hope - Augustin
Souchy is dead etc

cont. from front page

and cheaper to administrate than dozens of identifiers, might be a threat to the privacy and freedom of the "private" citizen. He also realised that the likeliest and easiest way to introduce U.P.I. in Britain would be to use the National Insurance number (MI5 already do use it as their "identifier"). The Lindrop Committee especially warned of the "rise of drifting towards a U.P.I." and it called for an independent data protection authority. This government does seem to have taken heed of some of the findings of the Lindrop Committee. Unfortunately, it has acted along the lines the committee warned against. But, so typical of big sister, an attempt is being made to be seen to be doing exactly the opposite of what one is really up to. Thus, a Data Protection Bill is currently before Parliament and it does call for a Data Protection Authority. Not, however, exactly an independent body but surely all patriotic citizens can trust the Home Office to handle these delicate matters, and they do have such highly trained staff. I can hear the whole debate already! What have we to fear, after all? An innocuous plastic card, handier in one's pockets, and more modern-looking? Which makes it so much easier for people on the left to be blacked from becoming community workers, social workers, shop stewards, or any promotion/civil service jobs, for instance; or for anyone with a petty offence as an adolescent ever to get credit;



or those who've owed rent to the council (in the past) to be re-housed? The possibilities are endless, particularly for racism. It's noticeably being introduced for immigrants and school-leavers first (and sexism - let's not forget all the married women). I say "first" as no-one denies that their intention is for everyone to have one.

But I can give you some good news about these I.D. cards in thin disguise. The magnetic strip that information would be stored on can be "wiped" - by running a toy magnet over it. This was confirmed by the Department of Health, no less, who added "We cannot understand why anybody would want to do this".

To those who do understand, I strongly recommend mass action along these lines. The chances are that if enough school-leavers and immigrants and married women do "wipe" their cards even this government would realise their pet scheme has been foiled and drop it.

BIG BROTHER

The spirit of Orwell's 1984 is alive and well in today's Sweden. Professor Dennis Tollberg, who made a five year study of employment policies by the Swedish government, reveals that a computerised register of Swedes who might be a security risk results in at least 1,000 people being sacked each year.

The government is being taken to the European Court of

Justice over the case of Tors-ten Leander, a carpenter who was sacked from his job at a Maritime Museum (of all things) because the Swedish Secret Police reckoned he was a security risk. The 19,000 members of Sweden's large syndicalist union, the Sveriges Arbetare Centralorganisation (Swedish Workers' Central Organisation), would undoubtedly be classified as a security risk; beware - Big Brother is watching you!

IS WATCHING YOU

We hear a lot about Cable TV now, not because of its potential to serve local communities but because of the profits the capitalist media look forward to making from it. Well, they're not the only powers that are going to cash in on this latest scientific development. The authorities in East Berlin are also eager that the city goes cable. Why? In being next door to West Berlin it is easy to pick up West German television on an ordinary aerial (even if it is only to watch "Dallas"). By eliminating the need for an aerial any house which retains one after the cable has been installed is sure to be involved in such subversive behaviour.

RIOTS

"Social Turbulence" (or in plain English riots and strikes) is the prediction coming from the Taylor Nelson Monitor Company which specialises in social research. A survey revealed that the increase in class differences between affluent and unemployed has resulted in a wider acceptance of social disorder in the past 10 years. Widespread turbulence has not occurred recently due to personal fulfilment taking precedence over social progress the report said.

SUBSCRIBE

Subscription rate per 6 issues

U.K. & Ireland.....£2.00
OVERSEAS.....£2.50

I wish to subscribe to Direct Action.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

I enclose £ subscription and £ donation.

Cut out and send to Direct Action, Box DAM, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AW.

Cheques payable to Direct Action

ANARCHO—SYNDICALIST CO—OPS IN BARCELONA

Metalurgica de Baix Llobregat, an anarcho-syndicalist co-op with 204 members near Barcelona, has recently overcome marketing problems and now faces a relatively optimistic future.

The co-op began with the collapse of a firm named BRU in 1981. The workers, who are all members of the CNT-CCT, used their redundancy money and government support to buy up and modernise a factory in Sant Joan Despi, just south of Barcelona. They installed new machinery and began making precision metal parts for cars etc.

There were immediate problems though, as there are only a handful of factories in Spain doing this work and so the market was limited. They tried to switch to making electric games, even inventing one of their own, but the government's attempts to tightly control the development of this technology in Spain caused them too many problems.

In November however I was able to visit the factory and discovered they are now firmly established as a manufacturer of slaughter-house machinery and are in the process of making available further workshop space in their building.

The factory is run along anarcho-syndicalist lines, which in this case means that power rests in the hands of the workers' general assembly. These assemblies of all workers elect a "principle council"

from its members whose duties are the day to day organising of the factory and the employment of a director. S/he is an outsider with an understanding of the economics of capitalism within which the co-op must exist. The director and council are however subject to instant dismissal by the assembly and most council members do the job in their own time without extra pay. For each particular project the director draws up a work plan which is analysed by the council then submitted to an assembly which can alter or reject it.

The pay each month varies according to how well the firm is doing and there is a "nominal" wage differential of about 5%. Obviously this situation is not ideal and of itself would "only" create a sort of worker controlled capitalism where individual firms might still produce solely for profit rather than social need. This will hopefully be improved upon if the long term aim of a network of anarcho-syndicalist co-ops, who would relate to each other in a different way, is achieved, including eventually their own banks to supply finance.

Development towards this end is already underway with various smaller co-ops in areas such as teaching or car repairs in Barcelona and a glassware co-op in Mataro to the north which has been running along these lines since the 1920's despite Franco's government.

As one of those involved in this project told me "The economic side of all this is not the most important, it's a means, just a means, to change the way we relate and how we live our lives".

MICK LARKIN
READ "SINEWS": independent newsletter of the Spanish Information Network with news and views on anarcho-syndicalism in modern Spain.

Cheque or P.O. for 35p, payable SIN to: SPANISH INFORMATION NETWORK, c/o 5 HOLLIN HILL, BURNLEY, LANCs.

CNT—AIT

The CNT (Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo), the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist union confederation is intensifying its campaign for the return of the property it lost after the fascist victory in 1939 (Patrimonio Historico). "Solidaridad Obrera" (no.135) contains a detailed list of the CNT offices and centres that the francoists took over as spoils of war, and which should have been returned when the regime collapsed and Spain became a "democracy".

The "socialist" Gonzales Government, no less than its predecessors, has tried to put off and in every way delay the restitution... In the meantime comrades in Sabadell, Logrono, Igualada, Rubi, Villaverde Alto and Puerto Sagunto have decided to occupy.

HINDLES

HINDLES STRIKERS BENEFIT

A group of unemployed people in Bradford have taken over a council-owned building and are putting on a benefit gig featuring Crass and Chumbawumba for the strikers at Hindles Gears. Videos will be shown and food will be available. The unemployed of Bradford stress the their solidarity with the strikers at Hindles.

The gig will have anarcho-syndicalist input and will be at the end of February.

CHILE

"Chile: Ten Years After" This new, duplicated pamphlet published by Middlesbrough DAM is a short history of the '73 coup and analysis of the resurgent workers' movement in Chile today. 10p each, post free (except for single orders)
- from Box DAM, Red and Black Bookshop, 120 Victoria Rd., Middlesbrough.

**DIRECT
Action
movement**

PAMPHLETS FROM D.A.M.
DIRECT ACTION IN INDUSTRY. 50p
D.A.M. AND THE UNIONS. 25p
ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM. 30p

Reviews in next issue of D.A. Also due to lack of space a letter from John Cunningham, and our reply, will appear then. Pamphlets available from Publications Commission - D.A.M. 121 Railton Rd., London SE24

WATER WORKERS

A water worker looks back on last years strike:-

"It's a bloody good deal by any standards; we've won a tremendous victory".

That's how Ron Keating, assistant general secretary of NUPE described the water workers' settlement following their first ever national strike last year. So jubilant was Ron, that he offered to take striking water workers who had assembled outside the ACAS headquarters, for a pint at the Red Lion to celebrate their victory.

Far from feeling victorious, the immediate reaction of most water workers was one of great disappointment. The fact that the settlement had been a source of much embarrassment for the Thatcher Government was little consolation. There was never any doubt that the water workers would have had little difficulty in achieving a significantly improved offer, regardless of the 4% pay norm, due to the inherent bargaining power associated with the industry. Essentially, the strike was about comparability with the gas and electric: in the Electricity Supply Industry the lowest rate was £103 comp-

ared with the lowest rate in the Water Industry of £78. These were the issues that the dispute revolved around. The settlement itself did little to restore the relative position of water workers in relation to their counterparts in the gas and electric.

Why, despite solid support, were the officials unable to deliver the goods? The answer to this question undoubtedly lies in the fact that they never showed any commitment to winning the strike. Rather than escalate the strike, they did their level best to play it down. In February the Times, which had no reason to exaggerate the effect the strike was having, reported in its columns that the strike was beginning to bite seriously and that if the current peace bid failed a rapid decline in supplies would force shut-downs and lay-offs. Despite this, David Bassnett, general secretary of the GMBATU, was talking about pledging his personal honour and reputation on accepting the findings of a three man enquiry, which every water worker knew would give little worthwhile on the comparability

claim. The GMBATU also made it clear that they would not ballot their members on the offer before a return to work; the press and government were ominous by their silence, no talk of union members being denied basic democratic rights.

On September 30th, the National Water Council was abolished and the employers made it quite clear that they would not agree to a closed shop agreement for the Water Industry. The industry is seeing the gradual encroachment of civil engineering contractors in line with the Thatcher Government's policy of privatization and, although National bargaining is to continue on pay and terms and conditions of employment, the likelihood of a stoppage in defence of the closed shop agreement is not taken very seriously. It appears that the Government is prepared to accept National bargaining in return for the ending of the closed shop. No doubt this will be the precedent which will affect future bargaining arrangements throughout the public sector.

WATER WORKER

EMBRYONIC BRANCH

The recent heavy sentences handed down by Cardiff Crown Court represent the climax of a campaign of harassment and disruption by the South Wales Police of anti-government and anti-state activists throughout South Wales and the Rhondda Valley.

Welsh nationalist and anarchist groups experienced a succession of instances of nail and telephone interference. Much correspondence was either long delayed or failed to arrive at all; the papers "Black Flag" and "Direct Action" suffering the most, particularly from 1980 - 1982.

Although there was no evidence to link anarchists with the wave of bombings and second-home burnings this did not

prevent the police mounting armed raids on the homes of several D.A.M. members.

This concerted pressure fulfilled its purpose; the Welsh Republican Socialist Movement dissolved and the D.A.M. branch, previously one of the most active in the country, largely collapsed and is now inactive.

However all is not lost, it seems: on a recent visit to Cardiff central police station to report an assault an ex-D.A.M. member was led through to the C.I.D. section. On his way he passed a block of pigeonholes; to his surprise he noticed the most recent copies of "Direct Action". The national secretary is eagerly awaiting news and subscriptions from this embryonic branch.



"2 Direct Actions"

IWA

The Northern section of the International Workers Association held their annual conference in Elmshorn, North Germany in December. Delegates from the DAM-IWA, the FAU (Germany), NSF (Norway), ASF (Sweden) and the secretariat of the IWA in Madrid were present. The comrades reported on the progress and work of their respective organisations and how best they can work together in their common struggle against state repression and multi-national capitalism.

The conference heard a long and detailed report from the delegate of the secretariat upon its work and the new contacts it has made in the past year. They had received enquiries from Sweden, Japan, Australia and North America. The comrade secretary of the IWA, Angel Espinosa, visited Latin America earlier in the year where he was able to liaise with American anarcho-syndicalists. He was arrested both in Chile and Uruguay but none the less the visit was very fruitful and the secretariat will send more delegates to Latin America in the New Year.

Brazilian comrades have managed to give much needed assistance to their fellow Latin Americans even though it is no easy matter trying to organise anarcho-syndicalist groups in Brazil.

The situation in Uruguay is the blackest in South America, the present climate is rather like Nazi Germany, all basic freedoms have ceased to exist. Informers are everywhere, even in the family: children denounce their parents, brothers denounce their sisters. It is almost impossible to organise. Even the anti-government demonstrations take place only when the military say so. For the people of Uruguay 1984 arrived a long time ago.

The Mexican section of the IWA formed a union around the printing trade but the fear of anarcho-syndicalism is so great within the reformist unions (not only in Mexico) that the National Union Confederation set out to destroy the infant

union. Today its members are either unemployed or back in the reformist union, their hopes dashed for the time being.

Not all is bleak on the international front, the CNT in France have conducted a very successful strike in Bordeaux, after which 200 members of the reformist union the CGT-FO (Force Ouvriere) have now joined the CNT.

The delegates of the FAU informed the conference of their successful participation in discussions between members of the German anti-war movement (of which the FAU is an active partner) and workers from German armaments factories. Today the FAU has concluded that there is room within its organisation for both pacifists and direct actionists and are greatly heartened by their reception in the anti-war movement which is of course a major movement in Germany today. They have also involved themselves in a study of computerisation/automation and the effect it is having on the lives of workers.

The Norwegian organisation, the NSF are very much involved in the work of the Polish Solidarity campaign in that country (which is the largest solidarity group outside Poland itself). The publication of their new paper "Arbeiter Solidaritet" and the response it has received in the union movement have given them much hope for the future.

The comrades of the Northern IWA look forward to the struggles in 1984 and particularly to the general congress of the IWA which shall be held in Spain this Easter.

International Secretary.



Waste

Fighting Privatisation: The Struggle For Wandsworth published by the Institute For Workers Control and N.U.P.E.

This is sad reading, a catalogue of failures by the unions and the final defeat of the dustmen. It serves once again to highlight the failure and redundancy of the present union structure. It's amazing that faced with a group of Tory councillors allied with big business that so many thousands of workers end up losing.

From the start the unions stood by whilst a 1,000 jobs were lost through wastage. As the Tory council began a policy of privatisation the unions responded with futile 'days of action'. Contacts between different workers in different unions were through "official" channels only. The union bureaucrats put a brake on action, put their faith in the Labour Party and the local elections (which the Tories won), and when that failed were surprised that people lost faith. The result was abject defeat.

It's no surprise that the only real cases of direct action were unofficial and unmentioned in this book. The dustmen who wrecked the vehicles of private contractors, burned down the managing director's car and beat up blacklegs had the right idea. Their battle could have been won if all the different workers were united in one non-hierarchical organisation. They could have won if the white-collar workers sabotaged the paper work. If the contractors equipment was wrecked. If councillors had personal "visits" from groups of angry workers. So much could have been done, but wasn't thanks to the unions and the Labour Party hacks.

ANARCHIST STUDENTS ORGANISE:-

Any student interested in a National Anarchist Student Network or Organisation please contact Bradford Libertarian Group c/o Starry Plough Bookshop, 6 Edmund St., Bradford. West Yorkshire.

LESSONS OF WARRINGTON

As working class militants we welcome the fact that after such a long silence in industry one group of workers had at last been prepared to defend themselves. As always in times of economic crisis confidence amongst workers is low, and militancy is the victim.

For a brief moment, in the shape of the National Graphical Association - Stockport Messenger dispute and the mass pickets of Eddie Shah's non-union print works at Warrington in Cheshire, there was a spark of life and at least the possibility of a victory at long last to damn the tide of recent defeats for the working class.

The dispute had an importance far greater than might be apparent at first sight. It was not simply about the closed shop as the bourgeois press and the union hierarchy would have us believe. Neither were the new labour and anti-picketing laws the only things at stake. And of course all the trouble wasn't only over Shah's 6 sacked N.G.A. members.

MASS PICKET

The forces of "law and order" (or at least those who command them) fully realised what was at stake. That's why Home Secretary Leon Brittain said "picketing will be crushed". That's why in the early hours of Tuesday November 30th, the climax of the mass picket, thousands of po-

lice from all over the North West were being paid a fortune in overtime to make sure the picket was defeated.

There were 4-5,000 pickets on the night, but only perhaps half were prepared to physically confront the police. The pickets were drawn from two main sources - members of the print unions and the revolutionary left. At first the police had prevented coaches from approaching the industrial estate and many had to make their way there across the fields.

The "Battle of Warrington" was a night of scrums with the police, beatings, baton charges, stone throwing, makeshift barricades and snatch squads. The comrades who took part put up a stiff resistance to be sure. But the coppers were always going to win in the end. They were fully prepared and eager for a bit of "sport". Gradually, exhaustion and the police's superior violence defeated the pickets, over 100 of whom were arrested that night and were to spend the next 12 - 14 hours crammed up to 7 to a cell with other than caring attention from their captors.

THE ENEMY WITHIN

With the defeat of the mass picket in the early hours of that Tuesday the retreat set in. The paper tigers of the TUC hierarchy are never much

help at the best of times. In the present climate they are even less inclined to fight. Chairman Len Murray's idea of challenging anti-union and anti-working class laws is having cosy talks with the people who want to smash already weak working class organisation. The Labour Party is just as useless. These "official" representatives of the labour movement see their role after all as being to mediate between workers and their bosses rather than seeing a clash between two classes with no interests in common. Hence their appeals to stay within the law and their condemnation of "violence" on the picket line.

The leadership of the N.G.A. had in fact bent over backwards to reach an agreement with Shah; only the employer's refusal to meet them half way and the fines imposed by the courts for "illegal" picketing forced them to at least make some pretence of putting up a fight. But they were always searching for a way out. Finally Len Murray and the TUC's decision to give support on paper only provided the N.G.A. bureaucrats with a "sell-out" and the way out they had been desperately searching for.

OPPORTUNITIES MISSED

The defeat at Warrington was a defeat for the methods of reformist trade unionism.



At every turn the N.G.A. fought from a position of weakness rather than one of strength. The only time the N.G.A. looked dangerous was when it stopped production of the national newspapers on Fleet Street on the weekend of November 26/27th. The Fleet Street barons (who lie behind Shah and are watching his non-union, non-union rate operation very closely) were worried and divided as to what their response should be. Some wanted to go to the courts and lock out their printers, but the more intelligent realised they risked stirring up a hornet's nest.

But rather than pushing home the advantage in what was to be the only time the union side was on top, the N.G.A. bureaucracy called a return to work on the Monday, hoping they could now cobble together some compromise with Shah at the conciliation service ACAS. But Shah wasn't playing ball and so in order to be seen to be doing something they called the mass picketing at Warrington.

Now mass picketing is important, especially for isolated militants in work places and the unemployed who have no other way of showing solidarity, but on its own it isn't enough to win a dispute. The important ingredient is solidarity action by other workers where they have the most clout - in industry.

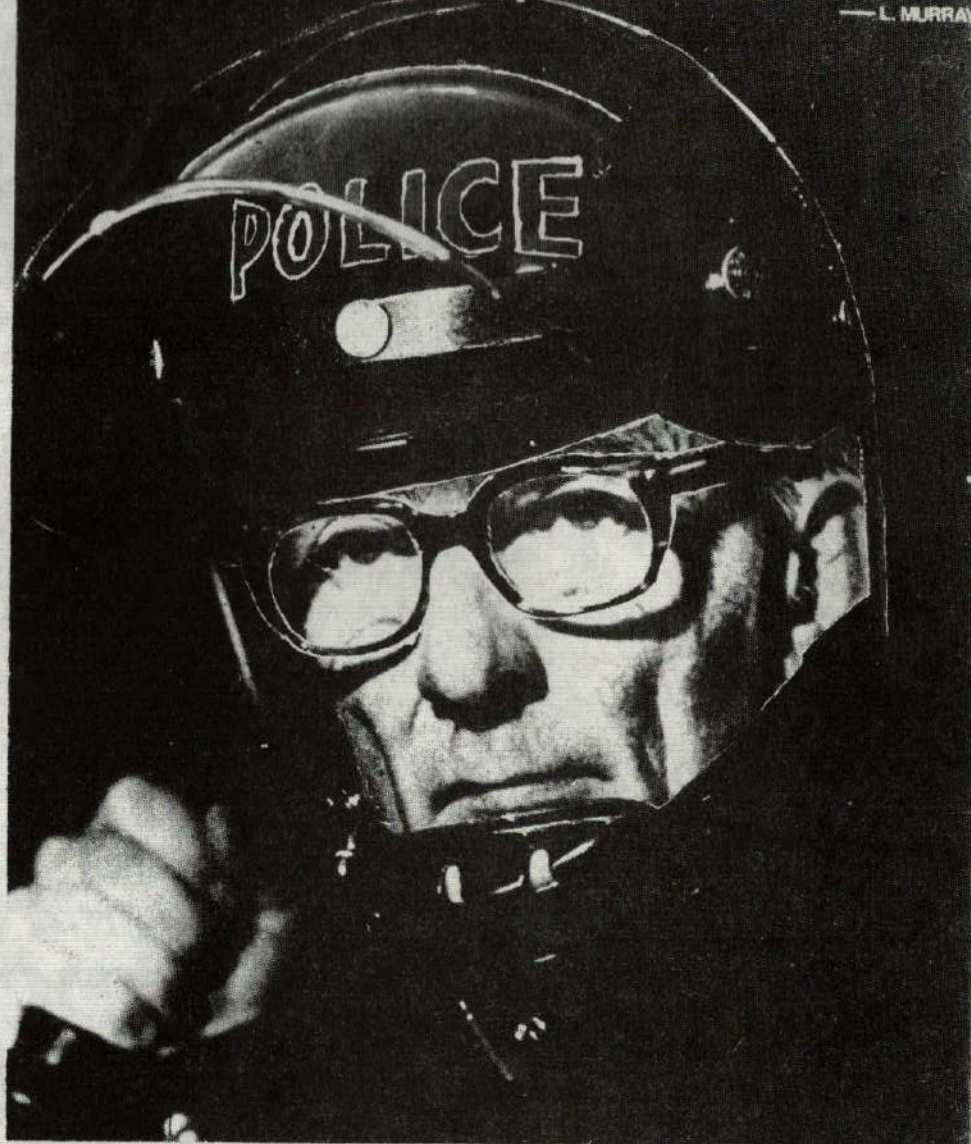
It was a sign of the weakness of the workers' movement in Britain today that no such solidarity was forthcoming from other groups of workers. For a start how come Shah's works is still getting electricity and mail, why weren't the phones disconnected, why doesn't Shah have any trouble getting materials to print or distributing his rag? Why wasn't the Stockport Messenger crippled in one fell swoop?

DEFEAT FOR REFORMIST UNIONISM

Part of the problem was of course the crisis in the working class itself, produced by the economic crisis - people are concerned enough about their own jobs and aren't as willing to fight. But the prob-

The first job the TUC has to do.
....is to protect itself.'

— L. MURRAY



lem is also one created by reformist unionism. The representatives of the latter (Murray, Wade, and also "left wingers" like Moss Evans) made no attempt to generalise the struggle. What in the circumstances of the unions in this country being revolutionary would have escalated to a general strike against the government and their laws was instead presented as simply being a dispute about a closed shop at one print works in Warrington.

As it was, only the revolutionary left correctly called for all out strike action in the print industry and solidarity action by other workers - a general strike in fact - as the only way to win.

The basis for the generalisation of the struggle was not there because of the prac-

tise of the reformist unions, or more particularly their bureaucracy. The generalisation could only have come about if there was a strong grass-roots movement for it. It is just this kind of movement which the bureaucracy always seeks to stifle, for fear that things get out of its control.

The N.G.A. is in fact a good example of what is wrong with the unions in Britain today. The sectionalism evident in all the unions is here writ large. The N.G.A.'s relations with other unions in the print industry such as S.O.G.A.T. are marred by rivalry and competition.

CLOSED SHOP

Because it is a craft union (rather than an industrial

Cont. p.8

union) the N.G.A. puts its faith in the closed shop to enable it to control its patch and increase its bargaining power. The closed shop so beloved of reformist unionism, while it may enable the union to obtain relatively high wages for a while (as in the print industry), also puts the bureaucrats in a very strong position. The closed shop is an agreement between the union and the boss to employ only card-carrying union members. This doesn't necessarily mean good unionists, just anyone who is prepared to carry a card (Shah was a member!). So the union bureaucrats can exclude not only company workers but also workers who are too militant for them. In many cases management welcome this arrangement because between them the union officials and management can have a work place all sown up and can lead a quiet life. In the Stockport Messenger case Shah only suddenly became concerned about "the right of my workers not to join a union" when he wanted to cut his wage-s bill. Previously he had operated a closed shop without any qualms.

The closed shop makes for two things - loyalty to the union and blind obedience to the officials. Thus when the union full-timers called for the walk-out on Fleet Street it was solid alright. But when



they called off the action the grass roots made no protest, even though there was apparently overwhelming support for the walk-out.

It is for this reason that anarchists oppose the closed shop as a means of effective working class organisation. Anarcho-syndicalism, that is revolutionary unionism, advocates instead the voluntary and conscious union of free workers who know how to act for themselves and don't need to wait till some over-paid official tells them what to do.

Right wingers tolerate or oppose the closed shop as it suits business, most left wing-ers and unionists support it out of a misplaced loyalty. Anarcho-syndicalists advocate a completely different, more effective form of union organization, because we believe only the initiative from below which was so lacking in the N.G.A. dispute, only the self-activity of the rank and file workers is up to the task before us.

DEFEAT FOR THE CLASS

Apart from the obvious effect it will have in the print industry, the defeat is serious for two reasons. Firstly, it will have dealt a blow to the already low level of confidence amongst workers. Secondly, it was a successful test for the Government's approach to industrial strife.

The N.G.A.'s assets were sequestered by the courts and the union was fined a total of £675,000 plus costs. In addition the newspapers stopped on November 26/27th are claiming £3,000,000 damages. The stage is now set for the courts to be used the minute any group of workers takes effective action. In their refusal to be pre-

pared to oppose the law the TUC has tacitly accepted the Government's new laws which seek to reduce the effectiveness of picketing and solidarity action. The tactics the police were allowed to use at Warrington show what is in store for any group of workers who are prepared to stand firm in 1984.

Bosses everywhere must have watched the defeat with pleasure. It'll increase their confidence for a renewed attack on wages and living conditions. For those reasons the N.G.A. dispute was important to every worker. The printers' fight was in the end everybody's fight. The fact that not many outside the N.G.A. felt that it was their fight shows what a low ebb the class struggle is at.

After Warrington, after the strike in shipbuilding that never was, revolutionaries must continue to draw the lessons of these defeats and seek to educate and strengthen the resolve of the few militants about at the moment. Only this will ensure that when things hot up again, as they inevitably will, the working class will be up to the challenge.

'Organised anarchy by pickets'

UNIONS BANNED

GCHQ - 25/1/84

At the time of going to press the Government have just announced they are banning all independent trade union membership at the Government spy centre GCHQ in Cheltenham. They are offering the workers a £1,000 pay-off if they agree to joining a scab staff association; presumably this is the only way they can effectively persuade them to join such an impotent bosses union.

This, despite the Government's assurances, is a precedent because it is being done under the Employment Pro-

tection Act of 1975 (introduced by Labour) which gives the Government the right to ban trade unions for "security" reasons "in the national interest". Obviously there are many other workers involved in work that is officially secret or could be construed as in the national interest;

There are many other examples where this excuse could be used to roll back the gains of our class, gradually chipping away until all workers employed by the State have their freedom to organise taken away from them. We must be vigilant and fight.

'WHAT REMAINS IS HOPE' AUGUSTIN SOUCHY IS DEAD

Aged 91 German veteran anarchist Augustin Souchy Bauer died January 1st, 1984 in Munich, FRG.

Since Augustin Souchy is not so well known in the English-speaking world (as he is in the Spanish hemisphere), a few words about this eye-witness of almost all the important revolutions in the 20th century should be mentioned.

Augustin Souchy was born August 28th, 1892 in Ratibor (Oberschlesien) which became part of Poland after World War 2. His father was a craftsman and a socialist. Around 1910 Augustin Souchy went to Berlin where he met the famous German anarchist philosopher, Gustav Landauer (who was later, in 1919, lynched by fascist paramilitaries as an active member of the Munich Soviet Republic). Together with Landauer and another prominent German anarchist, the poet Erich Muehsam (who was tortured to death in a Nazi concentration camp in 1934), he worked within the Sozialistischer Bund (Socialist Federation). As a convinced anti-militarist he had to escape to Sweden in 1915 to avoid the draft to World War 1. His participation in anti-war activities led to imprisonments and expulsions throughout the Scandinavian countries.

The German Revolution in 1918 brought him back to Germany and besides Rudolf Rocker he became one of the most efficient workers for the FAUD, the Freie Arbeiter-Union Deutschlands (Free Workers' Union of Germany), which was the main force of the anarcho-syndicalist movement in Germany at that time (the FAUD had about 100,000 members). From

1919 until 1933 he was a permanent activist and a journalist of the FAUD's organ Der Syndikalist (the Syndicalist).

In 1920 Augustin Souchy went to Russia as a delegate of the German anarcho-syndicalists with the First International Congress of Red Trade Unions. It was there he made one of his first contacts with Spanish comrades in meeting Angel Pestana, the delegate of Spain's anarcho-syndicalist mass movement CNT. Of course the anarchists there in Moscow (among them was also Emma Goldmann, the well known Russian born anarchist and activist of the USA's IWW - the "Wobblies" - , who became a friend of his until her death in 1936) rejected Lenin's attempt to subordinate the anarchist movement of the world to the discipline and policy of the Comintern.

After the conference he spent eight months in post-revolutionary Russia in order to find out more about those collectives, which had been initiated by the Russian workers and peasants during the revolution of 1917. Back in Germany he published a book on his experiences in Russia, which proves him as one of the first to warn of an authoritarian development under the more and more establishing dictatorship of the Bolsheviks. (1)

Augustin Souchy was also one of the founders of the AIT (International Workers' Association) and together with Rudolf Rocker and the Russian anarchist Alexander Shapiro he was elected co-secretary of this Anarchist International.

During the Twenties, while he was mainly living in Berlin,

he gave shelter to the popular Spanish-FAI militants Francisco Ascaso and Buenaventura Durruti. The two had been forced into exile after a successful attempt upon the life of the reactionary archbishop of Zaragoza in Aragon.

After 1931, when it became a Republic, Augustin Souchy went to Spain many times to make propaganda as a representative of the AIT. It was in the pre-revolutionary atmosphere of Spain where he deepened his contacts with the Spanish working class.

When the Nazis came to power in 1933 he managed to escape to France.

During one of his AIT travels to Spain he became an eye-witness to the outburst of the Spanish Revolution - the answer of the Spanish working class to the fascist coup d'etat which had begun in Morocco on July 17, 1936. Immediately he was chosen to be leader of press information for foreign countries of the CNT in Barcelona. From his small office in the former employer's place (at once overtaken by anarchist militants on July 19, 1936) he advised the CNT-policy on foreign relations and gave help to international revolutionaries who had come to Spain to support the working men and women in their fight for the social revolution. He was sent throughout Europe many times to gain much-needed military aid for the isolated Republic

cont. p.10

cont. from p.9

from the hesitating Western democracies.

Augustin Souchy is said to be the first writer who visited the revolutionary collectivizations, factories and land, which the Spanish proletariat had spontaneously brought under their control. The outcome of these observations is one of the best eye-witness accounts on the Spanish Social Revolution ever written. (2)

He worked and stayed in Spain until the very end of the Republic and narrowly escaped from the fascists across the Catalan border to France.

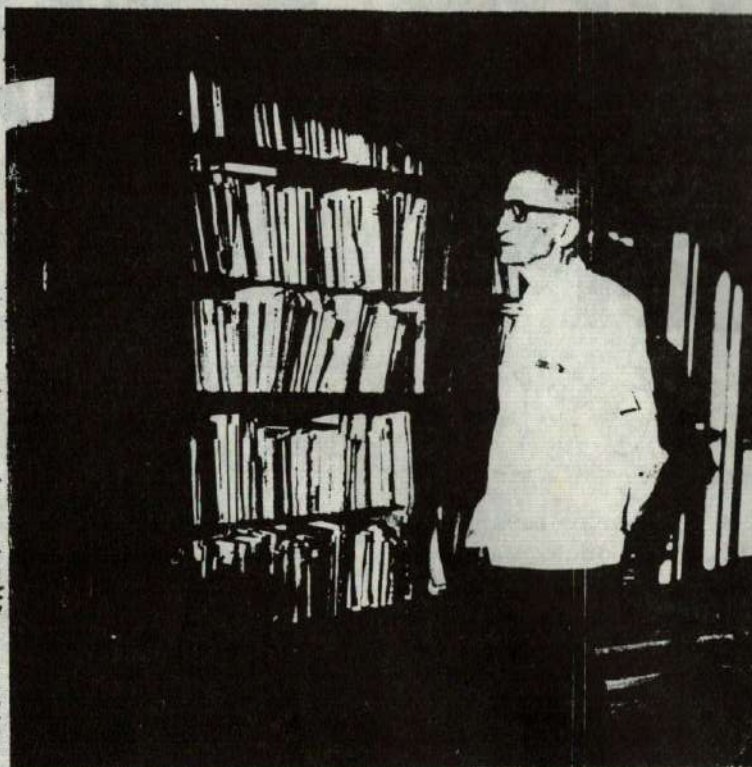
From France he went to Mexico where he worked for eight years with the syndicalist and anarchist movement. Among those he got to know and shared his exile with was the famous "Marxian" anarchist Victor Serge (supposedly the only prominent revolutionary who was able to survive the Stalinist show trials).

In 1950 Augustin Souchy returned to Europe and started to work as an expert for the Internationalen Bund Freier Gewerkschaften (International Federation of Free Trade Unions) in Geneva. As commissioner of this organization he made travels around the world; to almost all the countries of Latin America, USA, Israel, and even Africa, teaching trade union organization and self-management of the workers to the various populations. His favourite country however, which had become almost a second home to him, was Mexico, where he stayed for about twenty years.

Around the beginning of the Sixties he came back to the FRG and settled down in Munich. From then on he held lectures and wrote articles and books about his experiences and perspectives in Sweden, the FRG, the USA and in many other countries. His works have been published in German, Spanish, Yiddish, English, French, Danish and Swedish.

During the beginning and the middle of the Seventies, when the RAF (Red Army Fraction) became popular in the FRG, Augustin Souchy commented on the fighters of this urban

© Black Star Press ★ Duisburg/Köln, 6/83



guerilla organization as "wild children of the bourgeois" and according to the theory of the RAF he made clear that they were not anarchists, but elitist-dogmatic marxist-leninists.

Augustin Souchy stayed active until his death. His last works and hopes were more or less based on the worldwide anti-militarist movement, which he regarded - besides the international youth in general - as the main hope for the future.

Finally some personal notes. He invited me twice to visit him in his small flat in Munich (filled up to the top with books, pamphlets and documents - a treasure of rarities for every anarchist historian) last year. Meanwhile almost blind he gave me a hearty welcome although we had never seen each other before and we spent the whole afternoon and night discussing and talking about the history and future possibilities of anarchism.

I asked him once who or what it was that had impressed him most in his long life and he replied that it was the grand old anarchist, the Russian Peter Kropotkin, with whom he had spent one or two weeks in his wooden house in the countryside near Leningrad (or Petersburg as it was called at that time) in 1920.

Well, if someone would ask me the same question my answer would be: "Augustin Souchy, who shared his last spaghetti with me when we both felt hungry after a fascinating conversation."

Although the news of his sudden death (after an attack of physical weakness) makes me feel really sad, I am grateful to have met him at the same time - and I am sure his friends and comrades who had the luck to know him much better than I, feel the same way.

W.E. Belfast, 11.1.84

(1) As soon as possible a bibliography of Augustin Souchy's books will be published in one of the next issues. At the moment there seems to be only one book in English available: "With the Peasants of Aragon" (Cienfuegos Press) Sanday, Orkney 1982.

(2) Cf. A. Souchy: Nacht Über Spanien (Night above Spain) Together with P. Folgare, A. S. edited the only existing documentation on the social revolution: Colectivizaciones. La obra constructiva de la Revolución Española (Collectivizations. The constructive work of the Spanish Revolution.) In contrast to Vernon Richards or Camillo Berneri, for example, A.S. was

EXPERIMENT

BRITAIN'S MILITARY STRATEGY IN IRELAND: THE KITSON EXPERIMENT by Roger Faligot. Published by Zed Press/UK Brandon/Ireland 1983.

Whatever your views on the war in Ireland there can be no argument that, little by little, the lessons learnt by the forces of repression have been applied to the situation in Britain. Or as Tory M.P. Biggs Davison said in 1973:

"What happens in Londonderry is very relevant to what can happen in London, and if we lose in Belfast we may have to fight in Brixton or Birmingham. Just as Spain in the thirties was a rehearsal for a wider European conflict so perhaps what is happening in Northern Ireland is a rehearsal for Urban Guerrilla War more widely in Europe and particularly in Great Britain".

This book by a French investigative journalist covers the history and practise of the various forms of repression from the crude use of SAS assassins to the sophisticated use of "psyops", psychological warfare. He also looks at the similarities and differences between Kitson's strategy in other counter-insurgency operations like Kenya. What makes Ireland unique is the application of this strategy to a white, English speaking working class that is part of Europe. The lessons of experiences in this campaign are now being applied in other fringes of Europe such as the Basque country in Spain or the French

always a defender of the "official" collaborationist line of the CNT "leadership" during revolution and war. Although unwillingly, he also saw the anarchists forced to more or less accept restrictions for the Social Revolution in order to fight the fascists successfully.



island of Corsica in the Mediterranean; and, if there is any large scale industrial revolt in Britain, it is almost inevitable that they will be used here.

This could include selective assassinations by army sponsored death squads, full control of the Media, infiltration for intelligence gathering and provocative actions, and social control of workers by computerised information and modern methods of surveillance as well as the political use of laws. To some extent this is already coming about.

Of special interest in the book is a chapter on the women's "Peace" movement which shows how women can be used by the media and big business to uphold the status quo, as in the anti-Popular Unity saucepan demonstrations in Chile or the marches before the military coup in Brazil in 1964. Also the Murrays are mentioned as an example of the increasing repression in the South with their proposed executions at a time of increased collaboration between Dublin and London.

Altogether a vital book and one which should be read by all fighting for economic liberation in Britain.

TCB

SPAIN

"The Spanish Civil War" by David Mitchell, (Granada)

The book of the Channel 4 TV series is sadly disappointing. The TV programmes revolved around the eye-witnesses and old film footage, both of which can't adequately be transferred to print. Like the TV series the book works thematically rather than chronologically, where this worked well on the screen it lacks cohesion in the book. The most interesting chapter is the one on the Revolution rather than the war. Here the tensions between the communists and anarchists are sketched out, the differences between law and order PCE and the revolutionary CNT. The peasant collectives are scarcely described in detail and the collectivised industries in Barcelona only do a little better.

As an introduction to the Spanish Civil War it's adequate but as an introduction to the Spanish Revolution it's not. However it may serve to provoke deeper examination of the politics among non-politicised people, which can only be good.



Direct Action Movement

Aims and Principles of the Direct Action Movement

- (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 for independent organisation in the workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of, and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers organisations must be controlled by workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all delegates and representatives 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 the environment.

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.

PRINTED BY LEEDS ALTERNATIVE PRESS
PUBLISHED BY LEEDS DAM

The DAM (anarcho-syndicalist organisation) of the **INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION** (anarcho-syndicalist International)

I would like to know more about the DAM/IWA.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

.....

POSTCODE.....

OCCUPATION.....

TRADE UNION.....

Cut out and send to DAM/IWA:-

c/o The Autonomy Centre, Raven

Press, 8 - 10 Great Ancoats

Street, Manchester 4.

MANCHESTER DAM/IWA:

The former mailing address for

Manchester DAM at the Corn

Exchange has been discontinued.

The new address is now: the

Autonomy Centre c/o Raven

Press, 8 - 10 Great Ancoats St.

Manchester 4.

Press ££ Appeal



'DON'T FORGET
MUTUAL AID,
COMRADES!'

Thanx to the Comrades who sent in money to help us produce this copy of Direct Action, readers are asked to send donations in, no matter how small to;

Direct Action

Box DAM

59 Cookridge Street,

Leeds.

LS2 3AW.

Cheques and P.O.'s should be made out to Direct Action.

LOCAL CONTACTS

CLASS STRUGGLE

Various branches of the DAM (in Birmingham, Burnley, Hull and Middlesbrough) are now pro-

ducing their own broadsheets or papers (Class Struggle, The Agitator, Strike Back etc.). The Hull branch inform us that

copies of their paper, Class Struggle, are available from our national address. Send an SAE.