



DIRECT ACTION

Paper of the Direct Action Movement - International Workers Association



Issue number 75 Price 40p

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SO MUCH TO



LENIN'S COMMUNIST PARTY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- The destruction of the real Russian Revolution.
 - A fake ideology instead of workers revolution
 - Military Dictatorship of the working class
 - Disaster in China
 - The betrayal of the Spanish Revolution
 - Alliance with Nazi Germany
 - War with Nazi Germany in which Russian people were sacrificed for Stalin's mistakes
 - The suppression of revolutionary socialist throughout the world
 - Massive Enviromental destruction
 - Post-war catastrophe in which the people starved while astronauts conquered space
 - THEY
- Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Bukharin, Brezhnev, Gorbachov
TURNED A DREAM INTO A NIGHTMARE !
Not to be continued ...

Direct Action is the newspaper of the Direct Action Movement, British Section of the International Workers Association, which has sections in France, Spain, Italy, Norway, Germany, Japan, Australia, Argentina, Brazil, U.S.A. and Finland.

ANSWER FOR

EDITORIAL COMMENT

WE TOLD YOU SO!

Everyone is celebrating the death of communism in the Soviet Union. Even our very own Leninist parties are euphoric over the toppling of Lenin's statues. Will they still be wearing their t-shirts and badges of Lenin, we wonder?

We have always criticised the Soviet Union, even when it was unpopular to do so. The Soviet Union did not go wrong. It was wrong from the start. Authoritarianism and exploitation are at the heart of bolshevism. Bolshevism is not and cannot be communism as we understand it. As anarcho-syndicalists we are fighting for communism and freedom. We look forward to a libertarian communism not the state-led perversion of the eastern block. We also look forward to the freedom of self-management, the freedom to be and to do as we choose rather than the capitalist "freedom" to live in poverty.

Of course there is much to celebrate. The regimes have been toppled. But at the same time the task before us is still large. Throughout Eastern Europe, big money is moving in. The new regimes are seeking "technical" assistance (in exploitation?) from western capitalists. The "new" state and fac-

tory bosses are often exactly the same communist party bureaucrats who were in charge before. Communism is dead - Long live Yeltsin*??

Recent events have demonstrated the power of our class. To re-assert control, the new regimes are stirring up old nationalisms turning worker against worker. We hope that working class organisations like the SMOT (the inter-professional free trade union), the KAS (the Confederation of Anarcho-syndicalists) and others can counter this offensive and build a truly working class movement. Currently the International Workers Association is working with the SMOT to distribute their english language bulletin. We are confident that this exchange of ideas and solidarity will continue to develop.

The ruling class is worried and rightly so. Their hold on power is tenuous. They do not know who to support - Gorbachev, Yeltsin or some other figure. They do not want to see the break-up of the Soviet Union, because this might signal their loss of control over the working class. To paraphrase the words of the First International: There is a spectre haunting Europe - the spectre of the working class.

* Boris Yeltsin was until recently communist party boss in Moscow and waited until earlier this year to resign from the party.

DIRECT ACTION

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*For a revolutionary Anarchist
(Non-governmental) society through
Syndicalism (the struggle for workers
control) to free communism
(common ownership and no state).*

LETTERS

Dear DA

On Saturday 10th August the Irish Freedom Movement held its annual march in North London protesting against the British occupation of Northern Ireland. For the uninitiated the Irish Freedom Movement is a front for a small Marxist-Leninist group called the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) whose purpose in organising the march is to recruit people to their party. Do they in fact have any real interest in what goes on in Northern Ireland? It seems difficult to square the supposed internationalism of Marxism with chants supporting reactionary nationalist organisations like the IRA.

I was one of three members of Hackney Solidarity Group at the march and recognised maybe a couple of dozen other anarcho-s. Presumably there were more that I didn't know. It's a pity we didn't march together and so show our presence.

The RCP stewarding was the same as before. They practise a strict sexual division of labour with men as heavies walking alongside the march and women with megaphones running up and down bellowing the officially approved slogans at the marchers. This meant we know exactly what to think and couldn't chant anything not sanctioned by the RCP.

RCPers were making the usual nuisance of themselves trying to sell their monthly magazine *Obsolete Bolshevism*; silly me, it's called *Living Marxism*, isn't it. Obviously their persistence, in the face of indifference and refusal, is on party orders. Why do they do this? Do they enjoy getting up people's noses?

The flute band were good fun, though.
Mo



Dear DA

A quick response to Albert's letter in the last issue (74) about squaddies and anti-militarism...

Why is it 'raising a bogey' to talk about Ireland? The Army's propaganda talks in terms of "learn a trade", "see the world", etc. Surely anti-militarists should be shouting it out that a part of the world prospective recruits stand a good chance of visiting is Northern Ireland. And all they'll learn there is how to walk backwards down the Falls Road, rifle in hand.

Of course many squaddies volunteer under the pressure of unemployment and ignorance. Our message should be: "Keep signing on (and organise) - Don't sign your life away".

I dare say that even a more or less professional army will mutiny in a revolutionary situation. But what about in the here and now? When even someone like Conservative MP Michael Fallon is making representations to the authorities about brutality inside the Army, anarcho-syndicalists should have more to say



about barracks life than nebulous talk of "soldiers councils". Catterick Garrison is not Kronstadt, unfortunately, Albert.

Dino, Middlesbrough

Dear DA,

The summer's here (well nearly gone) and the riots are back. It will be interesting to see what is made of them. How if indeed were they different from the politically influenced poll tax riots or the riots of the 1980s which had their base in the terrific rise in unemployment which hit young people particularly hard.

Discontent, hopelessness, poverty are all to blame. The riots make me sad because I don't like to see cities and people burn and be injured, cities and their populations, such as Elswick in Newcastle which have suffered enough in the past. I do not like to see fire engines and their staff attacked and injured and people disconnected with riots lose their homes, and be scared shitless with what's going on around them.



When the fighting starts it should be for a purpose, towards some goal, to a point. We should beware of injuring ourselves, our communities and our anger should hurt those who create the poverty and hopelessness that exists in Elswick. I'm not sure that that is what happened this time around.

S

Dear DA,

About the Venezuela article in DA 73. It would be nice to know what the "elements within the analysis" are with which you disagree. It's a bit irritating for the uninitiated to play find and seek, especially when you're a bit of a slow thickie like me and it just leaves you feeling twice as thick and inadequate. Hats off for the new style paper, though!

In solidarity, Chris, Sheffield.

Sorry! We just felt that by pointing to a rising crime rate and to the poor performance of industry, the Venezuelan crisis was presented in reformist terms. Glad you like the paper anyway.

**It's
CRAP!
LIVING MARXISM**

THE BIGGERTORY VOTE - THE COVERT SEQUESTRATION OF THE BIGOTORY VOTE;

Nick Toczek, £2.95

TERRORIZING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD; Noam Chomsky, £3.95

LEONARD'S SHORTER CATECHISM; Tom Leonard, £1.95

Published by AK Press

Don't let the awful cover of *The Bigger Tory Vote* put you off. This pamphlet is for all people who have been desperately missing the incredibly long Black Flag articles with lots of initials like WACL, BNP and MI5. There's even a bit of dirt on Mary Whitehouse! For those not acquainted with this sort of investigative journalism, you'll come to realise that Roy Castle's trumpet playing wasn't the dodgiest thing about 'Record Breakers'.

Was it a coincidence that Nicolas Ridley granted the National Front their limited company status after having lived at the same block of flats as wanted Italian terrorists and several very active members of the NF? Why did the Home Secretary not deport one of the Italian terrorists? Was it because he had been passing on information to a former second-in-command at MI6 and head of an extreme right-wing Tory pressure group?

It is a pity that this book, excellent elsewhere, repeats the myth that "the holding of extreme and/or unpopular views" should be seen as "general outsiderism". It is particularly surprising that this comes after such a cohesive demonstration of the links between fascist leaders and the ruling class.

The author goes on to argue: "Outsiders, though they'd be reluctant to admit it, often have more in common with their extremist opponents than they do with the moderate of apolitical mass. They not only share commitment to a struggle and a sense of alienation but have means and method in common, even though their aims may be diametrically opposite. Thus a terrorist, for example, is perceived as simply that by non-terrorist. Whether the terrorist's politics are left-wing, right-wing, anarchist, nationalist, or whatever, is usually of little interest to the broad public...but of great interest to anyone else involved in terrorism."

This is exactly what the ruling class want us to think. Working class people have for too long been presented as 'apolitical'. 'Anarchists' have for too long been presented as synonymous with 'terrorists'. Yet at the same time the mass killing by the allies in the gulf are regarded somewhat differently. The other two books reviewed take up these issues.

Ruling class control and manipulation of 'public opinion' is a recurring theme throughout Noam Chomsky's political writing. "Politics and ideology are largely bounded by the consensus of the business community. *Terrorising the Neighbourhood*, dealing mainly with Central America acts as a less expensive introduction to Chomsky's work than *The Chomsky Reader* or his latest £20 plus hardback on post-Cold War American foreign policy, *Detering Democracy*. Chomsky exposes the myth of the ruling elite's support for free market capitalism. In the US the sectors of the economy that remain competitive internationally are those that feed from the public trough: high tech industry, capital intensive agriculture, pharmaceuticals and others.

Through state-led terrorism in Central America, as in the Gulf, the US is fighting on behalf of large US based multi-nationals. The struggle is not for freedom but for the control of production and of the working class.

The difference between Central America and the Gulf is that the Gulf conflict was fought publicly and in the full glare of the media. However, as Tom Leonard demonstrates, the media presented a far from neutral picture. The subtitle of *Leonard's Shorter Catechism*, 'On the mass bombing of Iraq and Kuwait, more commonly known as "The Gulf War"', speaks for itself. Leonard, a well-known Glasgow poet, delves into the use of language and the role of the media in presenting and omitting information. Kuwait was 'liberated' by its destruction. American foreign policy in the post-Cold War period, as Leonard and Chomsky demonstrate, is simply the same old story. They have just got better at presenting it.

These three books are good in detailing the crimes of the ruling class, but the trouble with 'conspiracy theories' is not that they are wrong, but more that they say very little about working class resistance. We need more books that explore how to change things, rather than merely stating the problem.

All the above titles are available from:

AK Press
3 Balmoral Place
STIRLING
FK8 2RD

(cheques/postal orders payable to R Kanaan)



ANTI-RACIST
'UNITY CARNIVAL'

On Sunday 8th September the biggest anti-racist carnival in Britain for ten years took place on Hackney Downs, in London. 10,000 people came along to the 'Unity Carnival Against Racist Attacks', organised by Anti-Fascist Action and Cable Street Beat. Music was provided by Gary Crail & the On-U Sound System, African Head Charge, 5.30, Soho, and a particularly brilliant band called 25/5 (that's '25th May'). There were also craft and food stalls and a kids' play area.

The whole day was a tremendous success, and made a welcome change for activists and supporters alike. The council even commended the organisers, and the Red Cross said it was the best run event they'd seen in years, as not one person was hurt. So, looks like the Unity Carnival is to become an annual event if there's enough money to cover costs for this year and next. Please feel free to send donations to cover costs to:

Anti-Fascist Action
BM 1734
London WC1N 3XX

WOMEN'S PICKET
19TH OCTOBER

11.30 - 12.30 HOLLOWAY PRISON
JOIN MAIN MARCH AT CALEDONIAN PARK 1.00

We are calling a women's picket at Holloway Prison in connection with the anti-Poll Tax demo to be held on 19th October. We will be picketing in solidarity with all women who have been imprisoned for non-payment and for confronting the police at anti-Poll Tax demos and actions. We want to draw attention to the fact that many women have been imprisoned for 'crimes' related to poverty and debt — the Poll Tax being the latest attack.

We also want to express solidarity with all women imprisoned for fighting back against domestic violence. We see similarities in the struggles of women who defend themselves against domestic violence and women who defend themselves against police violence — *in the home and on the streets, self-defense is no offense!*

If you're particularly interested in the women's picket and would like to get involved, contact Rozanne or Debbie via the Prisoners' Support

Group, TSDC, c/o Brixton Law Centre, 506 Brixton Road, London SW9. If you're a woman ex-prisoner, we would like you to speak at the picket — so get in touch with us ASAP if willing.

FAST FORWARD
for FREEDOM

a day conference
on education

at Vaughan College
St Nicholas Circle,
Leicester

on Saturday 2nd November
from 10 - 6 plus
evening entertainment

for full information
send an s&e to:

Lib ED, The Cottage
The Green
Leire
Leicester LE17 5HL

NATIONAL
DEMONSTRATION
FOR A
POLL TAX AMNESTY

Saturday
19th October 1991, 1 pm

from: Caledonian Park, Market Road
Islington, London N7
(Caledonian Road tube)

to: Trafalgar Square,
via Pentonville Prison

For all poll tax debts to be
written off, for an amnesty
for jailed non-payers and
those jailed for the Trafalgar
Square Demo 1990.

Called by Prisoners Support
Group, Trafalgar Square
Defendants Campaign
and local anti-poll tax groups.

TSDC, c/o Brixton Law Centre,
506 Brixton Road
London SW9
Tel: 071-738-7586

INTRODUCTION

- We present here two articles on the environment.
- The first article exposes the fraudulent claims by car manufacturers for green and environmentally friendly cars. The second article describes how one group of workers demonstrated how their industry could be altered to produce socially useful products.
- We hope that these articles stimulate debate. Let us know what you think about cars, pollution and workers' control. We would like to hear about workers' struggles over environmental and health and safety issues, particularly those that present scientific issues in simple and understandable ways.



WORKERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Car manufacturers appear to have changed their tune. Gone is the competition over speed and high performance and in is the greenhouse effect and green politics. They've now all got green consultants.

We're told that, fitted with catalytic converters and running on lead-free petrol or even water and made from recyclable components, cars will shortly be "pollution-free". Can it be? Can capitalists have solved the environmental crisis?

No! Manufacturers' claims of "green" and environmentally-friendly cars are nothing less than outright lies and deceptions. True, lead-free petrol reduces the amount of lead in exhaust fumes. Lead certainly is a dangerous pollutant. Also true, catalytic converters reduce the emission of another pollutant, nitrous oxide. But, both of these "green" measures produce greater emissions of carbon dioxide. And, it's carbon dioxide, not CFCs and nitrous oxide, that makes the greatest contribution to the greenhouse effect.

Fuel cells are being hyped as creating the "car that runs on water". Not so, the real fuel is not water. Fuel Cells are charged by electricity. Electricity is produced at the power station. So, carbon dioxide isn't emitted by the car, it's produced at the power station. Unless, of course, it's a "clean" and "safe" nuclear power station! A case of out of sight, out of mind?

Yet another con is BMW's claim that their cars are 80% recyclable. In truth the rate is nearer to 75% and this has been standard for all cars since the 60s. Anyway, it's a bit of a myth that recycling is green. Recycling just reduces the need for some raw materials, but it still uses lots of energy. It might be an idea to produce things that last longer. Of course, there would be less profit in this.

Car manufacturers have jumped on the green band wagon certain in their belief that their claims will not be questioned. A good look at the facts

behind these claims that the petrol engine as it now stands continues to be a serious danger to our present and future.

In addition to road deaths and injuries - 5025 people died on the roads in Britain in 1988 alone - there are the so-called "secondary" deaths related to pollution from cars. One report estimates that 30,000 deaths every year in the United States are directly related to car pollution. There's also the devastation caused by road building and the mining of raw materials.

Don't get this wrong - cars in themselves aren't wrong. Working class people should have access to good safe transport suited to their individual needs. In a free society this would involve individual means of transport - cars, bicycles - as well as more collective ones - buses, trains etc. But we'd have developed cars that didn't poison us and we'd have buses and trains that worked for us rather than for employers and supermarkets. In today's society we just don't have that choice. Everything is built around cars. "Public transport" is poor and if you've got a disability you might as well forget it.

For many years numerous designs have existed for alternative ecologically sound forms of both power generation and transport systems. Many are relatively inexpensive. Of course, it would cost time, effort and money to develop them. Development has been consistently blocked by governments and industries. They've even bought up patents and sat on them! Why? Well, there's certainly less room for profit in socially useful production. And capitalists are blinded to the environmental costs by greed and self-interest. Even now, as their own experts point to environmental disaster, all they can offer is whitewash and cosmetic tinkering.

Change quite obviously will not come from above. Workers are best placed to identify the dangers to our environment. We are also the first to witness the immediate effects. We are also best placed to provide the solution.



SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES

SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES: A workers alternative shows how the economy could be organised.

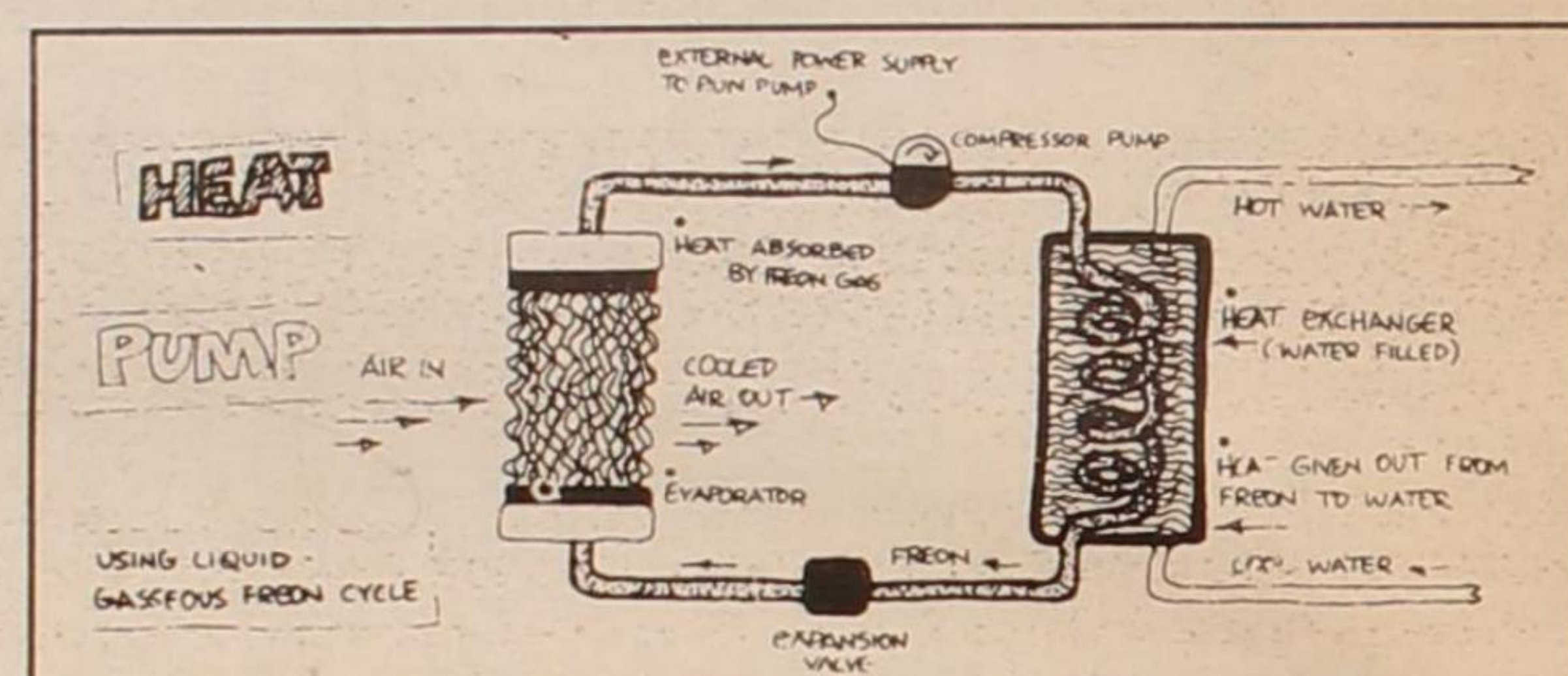
In the mid-70s, workers at Lucas formulated an alternative development plan for their industry. They demonstrated that workers can come to grips with science and technology. Their experience proves an insight into both the possibilities and obstacles to workers control.

Lucas Aerospace, now part of British Aerospace, produced predominantly for military uses. Between 1970 and 1975, five thousand jobs out of total of 18,000 had been axed by Lucas. Faced with further cuts in military spending, workers produced a development plan for their industry. They used their own knowledge of their factories and their capabilities. They researched areas of potential need amongst their communities and amongst a wide variety of health and social pressure groups. Through this process, they came up with a wealth of alternative socially useful goods.

In contrast to many so-called workers' plans, the Lucas Plan was produced not by full-time union officials nor by academics. Workers were based at thirteen different sites, so the production of the plan was co-ordinated by a delegate shop stewards' combine. Workers were involved through their delegates and a regular combine bulletin. These structures proved successful. Moreover, the workers themselves demonstrated their creativity. They came up with more than 150 times ideas for new products. In comparison, out of the eighty academics consulted, only three responded with specific proposals.

From these ideas a set of concrete and achievable proposals were developed. Divided into broad areas like medical equipment, alternative energy sources and transport, they included improved kidney machines, an ambulance life support system, energy-saving heat pumps, wind generators, airships and a high energy efficient and low pollutant motor engines.

One apprentice designed the Hobcart, a vehicle giving mobility to children with spina bifida. He described seeing one child's pleasure using the Hobcart as one of the most enriching experiences of his life. This



An example of a workers design for a heat pump

direct link between designer and user gives a glimpse of what production could be like in a free society. Despite the prototype's success, Lucas management refused to develop it because it was incompatible with their product range.

Another memorable proposal was for the development of a road-rail vehicle. This lightweight vehicle could run on railway track and on roads. The cost of building railways would be greatly reduced because there's no need for tunnels if your train can drive up a hill, and so providing transport services to remote areas could be cheaper. This vehicle makes so much sense that the fact it has not been developed almost defies belief. It's versatile, it's cheap and it reduces pollution.

All these ideas used existing factories and much of the existing technology. All were in areas where workers had skills and expertise. Being produced by workers, the plan aimed to challenge existing working practices replacing these with ways of working that extended workers' skills and creativity. They envisaged linking the "experience and commonsense of shopfloor workers" to the "scientific knowledge of the technical staff".

The plan was far from perfect. It was not a revolutionary document. For one thing, it envisaged workings alongside management gradually introducing new products. But despite this, it does demonstrate that workers without recognised technical skills can produce much better technical ideas than industrial bosses.

Of course, management rejected the plan. They said the proposals did not fit in with the company's capabilities and reputation. They meant the ideas were not profitable. Most of all, the bosses wanted to control and subdue workers. Accepting the plan, produced after

all without the involvement of management and on workers' own terms, would have meant giving in to workers. The Labour government of the day and the trade unions were just as unenthusiastic. Jeff Rooker, a Labour MP and hardly a radical one, wrote:

"The workers at Lucas Aerospace actually saw their aspirations trampled under the feet of many full-time officials who used inadequate, out of date, trade union structures to fight their own members. Management loved it".

The trade union bureaucrats always regarded the shop stewards combine as unofficial. It was organised along industrial lines rather than craft lines cutting across traditional trade union boundaries. Independent thinking is a challenge to these bureaucrats' very lifeblood - negotiation and status quo. For this they require a passive workforce and the control of, not by, workers.

The Lucas workers' initiative was attempted within the framework of social democracy. It appealed for support from politicians and bureaucrats, whose interests lie firmly in the maintenance of capitalism. It was, therefore, bound to fall on deaf ears. Capitalists are not interested in how socially useful their products are as the very existence of a company like Lucas Workforce demonstrates. The bosses are only interested in profit.

The Lucas Plan demonstrates that we can take control of science and technology. We have ideas and solutions. We can solve the environmental crisis. But we can only do this without management, politicians and trade union bureaucrats. By rejecting them, we can reclaim what is ours: the wealth we create, our labour, our communities, our environment and our future.

Solidarity Network

**Solidarity with
those in struggle!**

COMPANY INFORMATION SERVICE

The Solidarity Network is now able to offer company information searches. They can provide you details on profits, shareholders dividends, directors salaries and more. The service is free to Solidarity Network affiliates. To others the cost is £1 for information on a Public Limited Company (PLC) or £3 for a limited company.

AMBULANCE WORKERS SACKED

Two Bridgewater ambulance workers have been sacked for allegedly refusing an emergency call. The call was only upgraded to an emergency when the two requested a short break. Bridgewater Trades Union Council have set up a support group to help their defence. Solidarity contacts: Mike Wallburton 0278 459112 or Dave Chappel 0278 450562.

Source: Solidarity Network Bulletin.

Why not get your union to affiliate to the Solidarity Network? It's only £10. They produce a monthly bulletin containing information about working class struggles here and internationally. For more information contact the Solidarity Network at 74 Kingsland Road, Plaistow, London E13 9PA.

INDUSTRIAL DISEASE AT HOME

A Charlton woman died because she inhaled asbestos dust from her husband's overalls, an inquest heard.

Mrs Irene Keen's husband had worked as a fire engine builder, and had frequently come home with dusty overalls. Breathing in the dust as she washed them had given her a malignant tumour in her lung, which developed into broncho-pneumonia.

The inquest returned a verdict of death by industrial disease.

PERGAMON PRESS

Strikers in the long-running Pergamon Press dispute have outlasted Robert Maxwell. He's sold the company. Whilst Maxwell's departure is to be welcomed, it hardly represents the great victory being claimed by NUJ officials. After 2 years in dispute the strikers' demands for reinstatement and union recognition have yet to be met. However, the strikers do feel that outright victory is much closer than ever. As always donations are welcomed. Contact the strikers' office on 0865 60762.

Causes for such high rates of illness are varied and numerous. One factor is exposure to carbon monoxide, noise and lead, each of which are known to cause disease. The fact that our work is made up of rigid times schedules, long hours and shifts with little control over our work environment affects our health in different ways - disrupted lives, poor diet and sleeping habits, for example, can lead to fatigue and poor nutrition, increasing our risk to illness. Also high level of job responsibility may directly add to greater health risks.

So the question we must ask ourselves is what are we to make of these findings and what can be done? This is beyond the areas covered by health and safety laws and without doubt beyond the will of government departments and politicians to tackle. These problems are deeply rooted within the very nature of our work and the economic system that relegates us to the level of wage slaves. Reducing the health risks we face demands a public transport system run by ourselves, addressing the madness of today's roads and the real needs of our communities.

In the meantime, there being little will to challenge the chaos of public transport, we need to look at areas of possible improvement and take direct action for our own health and safety, just as workers had to decades ago when faced with deaths and injury at work every day. Direct control of our work is a must, for longer lives if nothing else!

Source - Excess Risk of Sickness and Disease in Bus Drivers: A Review and Synthesis of Epidemiological Studies; from 'International Journal of Epidemiology'.

periods of sitting. In another study of 41 occupational groups, bus and taxi drivers show the highest rates of death from coronary heart disease, partly caused by a higher occurrence of hyper-tension, physical inactivity, smoking and cholesterol in the blood.

Cardiovascular Disease Morbidity (Illness) - bus drivers are found to be twice as likely to suffer chest pain. Serious coronary heart disease occurs three times more frequently in drivers than amongst conductors. Again stress from the job and long periods of sitting were thought to be responsible. It must also be remembered that inner city drivers suffer greater stress than suburban or rural drivers.

Gastro-intestinal and Musculo-skeletal Morbidity - when 800 German bus drivers were compared to administrative workers of the same age and sex, the drivers showed higher rates of digestive disorders, nervous problems and back pain. Similarly English, Finnish and French studies came up with the same results. A study of 12 general disease categories amongst transport labourers, office workers, drivers and conductors showed the latter two groups having greater digestive problems - 4.6 times above average.

Absence from work due to illness is more frequent and for longer periods than workers in other jobs - two to three times higher.

ARE YOU SICK OF YOUR JOB?

'TRANSPORT WORKER'

Transport Worker is a new quarterly paper written by transport workers for transport workers. It's full of news and analysis on a whole range of issues affecting transport workers. We re-print below an article on the occupational hazards of being a bus driver.

Transport Worker can be contacted c/o PO Box 574, London, SE4 1DL.

If you are interested in receiving *Transport Worker* regularly, send them your name and address along with £1.50 p+p for a year (4 issues). If you would like to help distribute *Transport Worker*, please contact them.

As with all these things *Transport Worker* is run on a shoestring, so donations are always welcome.

Studies into higher than normal rates of absenteeism, illness and death amongst bus drivers reveal greater health risks in our work than in many other jobs. Three main risks have been pin-pointed:

Cardiovascular Disease Mortality - in a study of 31,000 London bus drivers and conductors, death from coronary heart disease was twice as high amongst drivers than conductors. Reasons being greater mental strain in drivers' work and long

INDUSTRIAL

RSWs' REGRADING CLAIM

The Residential Social Workers' Regrading Claim reached its anti-climax, remarkable even by NALGO's standards. As previously reported, NALGO had shown lukewarm support to the RSWs' claim and only really took it up in the wake of the 'Pin Down' scandal. After first recommending that local claims should be submitted and after local action was taken NALGO then switched, and 18 months later said the national claim should take priority.

To this end a 'National Delegate Advisory Meeting' was held on 25th July to decide future action. About 100 'delegates' (more correctly 'representatives') attended. NALGO told the RSWs that they should wait until the results of the enquiry into Pin Down are known in November. Their line was that if RSWs go for industrial action now the employers would not be happy and would refuse to talk!

Action on local claims would only be supported as long as it did not impinge on the national claim. In places like Manchester, where the local claim mirrors the national one, the two days of action already taken have been for nothing, and if any more action is taken then not only the employers but NALGO itself will be in opposition.

The employers are talking of asking for an extra £50 million from central government for improvements in RSWs' conditions. This includes

salaries, material conditions in establishments and training. The government has already indicated that it intends to increase the budget for training by £5 million next year. This has to be seen against the scale of the cuts being imposed on social services all over the country that amount to over £11 million in Manchester alone.

Pinning hopes on the enquiry could prove fatal. There is no certainty that the report will recommend the regrading that RSWs want. The last RSWs' dispute in the mid '80s was called off pending an enquiry and ended up in no gains being made at all. NALGO is talking of industrial action if the result of the enquiry is not satisfactory, but this raises questions about who has to be satisfied - the RSWs or NALGO? Also, by November the impetus that could have been built up may well be gone forever.

It is notoriously difficult for RSWs to organise themselves even on a local level, and the attitude and actions of NALGO, both nationally and locally hinder the situation. RSWs need to break away from their traditional insular outlook and begin to organise independently against the employers and their own union.

Contact - Council Workers Network
c/o Manchester & North
London DAM

See 'CONTACTS' for addresses.

TRANSPORT WORKER

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No 1 Summer 1991
P.O. Box 761, Camberwell SDO, London, SE5 9JH

FREE

PRIVATISATION THE THREAT TO TRANSPORT WORKERS

The threat of privatisation now looms over both the railways and London buses. This will be the end of a programme of privatisation which began with the selling off of hotels owned by British Rail, followed by British Rail Engineering (BRE) and continuing with the deregulation of buses outside London 8 years ago.

In every case this has meant quick profits for the Tories' friends in the City and a worsening of pay and conditions for the workers involved. It is little wonder, then, that the Tories have left British Rail and London buses until last because they are both politically sensitive and, in the case of BR, have the most difficult to privatise.

The unions have done little or nothing so far to fight privatisation and the resultant butchering of workers' pay and conditions, but have often seemed more interested in squabbling among themselves to maintain membership in the newly privatised companies.

On the railways the re-organisation to prepare the network for privatisation is well advanced. At the moment management are engaged on a programme of restructuring most grades from P-way to drivers which, if they are allowed to get away with it, will end up in a backdoor method of introducing individual contracts with performance-related pay. Faced with this massive attack on our conditions the RMT and ASLEF, instead of starting a campaign to resist restructuring have sat down with management in an attempt to squeeze a few extra concessions. In the case of the S&T they stood by and allowed management to isolate individuals, forcing them to sign new contracts.

On the London buses the privatisation pro-

cess has already begun with that tried and trusted tactic of not taking on workers wholesale, but picking us off group by group. When management at London Buses Forest District won a tender they immediately turned round and imposed a 20% pay cut. Fortunately, the workforce resisted these moves and came out on strike after an overwhelming majority voted for action.

But this is only the start of the campaign. On the railways pressure must be put on the unions to resist the restructuring and to start a campaign against privatisation. On the London buses resistance to deregulation must be escalated and links should be built amongst rank and file busworkers across London. We cannot afford to be deterred by threats of illegality by whinging union officials only concerned for their cushy jobs far removed from the reality of our lives.

In the long term, a network has to be built amongst all transport workers, whether that be buses or railways, private or state-owned, so that action can be organised which would paralyse transport networks and so begin to redress the disgusting pay and conditions transport workers have had to endure for far too long.

By Transport Workers - For Transport Workers

ANC V THE WORKING CLASS

'The union or the Party?' has occupied much time among socialists throughout history. Marx and Bakunin differed over whether the First International should be a workers organisation or a political party. The debate continues today, among socialists of different persuasions throughout the world. It is probably at its most intense in South Africa, where it is further complicated by the existence of a number of trade union federations, and several political parties, all of which lay claim to the working class.

There are two main union federations in South Africa, plus a number of smaller federations, as well as a large number of unaffiliated unions. The two main union centres are the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU). The smaller union centres tend to be politically linked, such as the right-wing scab union, United Workers Union of South Africa, which is linked to Inkatha and has had secret funding from the apartheid government. There is a third significant union, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), although it has no strength on the ground and is in the process of merging with COSATU. SACTU has been operating in exile for so many years that its structures within South Africa had all but collapsed. SACTU has very strong links with the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP).

One of the reasons COSATU and SACTU are merging is because COSATU has entered into an official alliance with the two political parties. How has this come about, and why is the SACP growing when Communist Parties all over the rest of the world are on their last legs?

During the mid to late eighties, the situation in South Africa changed dramatically. The focus of the liberation movement and its worldwide Stalinist apologists, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, had been on the armed struggle coupled with economic and political isolation of South Africa. This tactic had failed. What shifted the position of the National Party and the government was the revolt which began in the townships, and involved workers, organising and taking political strike action. In some townships, the communities used boycotts as well as driving out the police and other forces which co-operated with the apartheid regime. This was action which involved the working class as a whole, and it was determined by the working class. It would be true to say the ANC were taken by surprise.

COSATU was formed in the early eighties, drawing upon three tendencies within the labour movement. These were the Federation of South

African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and a number of unions close to its position, the pro-ANC unions, principally the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) and the Motor Assemblers and Components Workers (MACWUSA), and the unions which were to become NACTU.

Of these, FOSATU was syndicalist in outlook and its leaders advocated independent working class politics, which included some looking ultimately to the formation of a new political party. The NACTU unions dropped out of the negotiations, and FOSATU, whose base was in the factories, were swamped by ANC bureaucrats with years of experience of manipulation. For a while this led COSATU to refuse to share platforms with organisations not aligned to the ANC.

Throughout this time a debate raged within the organised working class about the Freedom Charter and the Workers Charter. The Freedom Charter is an ANC document, drawn up by them with a lot of input from the SACP, which commits them to running a mixed economy South Africa, with some nationalisation. This makes it a lot easier for the black middle class, as represented in many areas by the ANC, to exploit the black working class. The Workers Charter was a socialist document drawn up by trade unionists. Although flawed, it addressed how industry could be controlled by workers directly.

COSATU had adopted a resolution of political independence at its founding congress, but the ANC Freedom Charter was foisted on affiliates and ultimately the Congress itself, with little consultation with the membership.

Since then the ANC have drawn on the immense prestige they have as one of the oldest liberation movements in existence, and the prestige of prominent individuals like Mandela, to increase their stranglehold on COSATU. Even now, more than a year after his release, there is virtually no criticism of Mandela. When grievances about the ANC are aired, it is always assumed that Mandela knows nothing about it, and that if he did, he would do something.

Gradually the ANC and SACP regained the territory they had lost within the working class. The debate is now characterised as being about "two hats", and the limits on individuals holding prominent positions in both the unions and the ANC/SACP.

Now that an ANC government in the near future is on the cards, unionists are having to re-assess the role they should play in relation to the government. FAWU's Transvaal regional secretary has said "I am not too optimistic that the ANC will protect the interests of workers and that it will be in favour of socialism when it is the government." Trade unionists have further complaints. Lack of consultation with COSATU, lack of consultation and democracy within the ANC, no programme of action and organi-

sation, secretive negotiations, poor strategy, an over-willingness to compromise on major issues, and the leadership is dominated by exiles with no experience of mass organisation.

Moses Mayekiso, General Secretary of NUMSA (Metal workers union), has said that the unions need a "strong ANC, an ANC biased towards the poor and the working class." He sees no contradiction in holding government and being a union leader. Presumably if the ANC nationalises metallurgical factories, he could be negotiating with himself! Others see problems in the alliance, such as Chris Dlamini, who has said that if the ANC rejects or dishonours the aspirations of the working class there will be no need for an alliance with it.

It suits some union leaders to build their political careers in political parties which can become the government. But that's no good for their members. Workers' interests are fundamentally different from those of politicians, and both centre on control. Socialism cannot come about until workers themselves control the economy. If that happens, politicians are redundant.

Lenin and Bolshevism has been toppled in Russia, but their pupils in South Africa are waiting to repeat his seizure of power. Whether they will is dependent chiefly on how well the ruling National Party (NP) maintains its power. The NP has opened itself up to blacks, and may well attract significant sections of the black middle class away from the ANC. This would seriously undermine the ANC's credibility with international capitalism. It would be especially ironic at present, given that Inkatha is in trouble after its links with the government and the South African Defence Force were exposed. For the ANC to succeed as a government in a capitalist non-apartheid South Africa it needs to deliver what the capitalists want - control of the black working class.

See 'Anarcho-Syndicalism for Beginners - An Anarchist Approach to National Liberation' (Page 11).

SOUTH A

Apartheid is apparently crumbling. But a capitalist South Africa will conditions that the black working class live in will continue to exist institutionalised racism, but wherever black and immigrant workers menial jobs, they are also effectively excluded from decent housing, schools these exist. A fighting and revolutionary working class organisation i

WORKERS & TENANTS IN YOUR FACTORIES & TOWNSHIPS
UNITE TO DEFEND YOUR LIVING STANDARDS



GLOSSARY

We know that initials, abbreviations and unfamiliar names can be confusing, so here's what they all mean:

AAM	Anti-Apartheid Movement
ANC	African National Congress
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
FANU	Food Allied Workers Union
FOSATU	Federation of South African Trade Unions
Inkatha	Pro-capitalist movement led by Chief Buthelezi
MACWUSA	Motor Assemblers & Components Workers Union of S Africa

MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC
NACTU	National Council of Trade Unions
NEC	National Executive Committee of the ANC
NUMSA	National Union of Metalworkers of S Africa
SAAWU	S African Allied Workers Union
SACP	S African Communist Party
SACTU	S African Congress of Trade Unions
SWAPO	South West African People's Organisation, currently in government in Angola.
UNITA	Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (National Union for the total Independence of Angola), Pro-capitalist and was supported by the S African government.

AFRICA

ill mean that the economic exploitation and bad t. Apartheid is one particularly horrible form of rs are forced into sweat shops, do the low paid schools and hospitals, and from those areas where n is what is needed...



"MUTINY IN THE ANC, 1984. AS TOLD BY FIVE OF THE MUTINEERS"

Price £1.50. Available c/o Bill McElroy, Secretary, Solidarity with Ex-SWAPO Detainees, 17 Tudor House, Tudor Grove, London E9 7QS.

This 27 page pamphlet tells of a widespread rebellion in the training camps of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC (African National Congress) inside Angola and Tanzania in 1984. It was written by five of the 'mutineers' involved in the rebellion and also details conditions inside some of the ANC's detention camps, in particular the notorious 'Quatro' camp, known as the 'Buchenwald' of the ANC/SACP (South African Communist Party).

Reports of injustice and dissatisfaction in the rank and file of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) stretch back 20 years. As a precursor to the 1984 'mutiny' the first large rebellion took place in 1979 at Fazenda camp in Northern Angola. Trainees at Fazenda were supposed to spend three months in the camp before returning to fight alongside their sisters and brothers in the Townships of South Africa against the South African security forces. It soon became apparent

and a second course was introduced, that they were being fooled, to keep them busy.

Complaints from the rank and file of the camps, many of whom were eager to return to struggle in South Africa, were further fuelled by widespread dissatisfaction at the lack of democracy and the suppression of criticism. Inequalities in the living standards of the ANC/SACP officials and the majority of guerrillas went hand in hand with the authoritarian internal functioning of the camps. "ANC administrative bodies ruled over its elected bodies, the security department ruled over the administrative organs, and the KGB trained officials - no doubt members of the SACP - ruled over the security apparatus."

The strength of the ANC in Angola was underscored by its support from Cuba and the Soviet Union, and the authors write that MK was really an extension of the KGB in Africa, with its role in Angola being fixed by Soviet foreign policy interests.

The spirit of resistance and criticism in Fazenda was not to be tolerated though; ANC general meetings, which had been platforms for discussion were terminated, Fazenda was closed and its occupants were distributed among other camps. The majority

of the MK forces were taken to Zimbabwe to fight against Smith's Rhodesian Regime while three of the most vocal at Fazenda became the first inmates of the newly built prison camp, Quatro.

After fighting in Zimbabwe many of the MK forces refused to return to Angola, wanting to go to S Africa, and there were calls in June 1980 for a conference of the whole ANC membership where this issue and other dissatisfactions could be settled democratically. This call was rejected by the ANC leadership and during this period a 'spy-network' was 'discovered', becoming a pretext for rounding up anyone who wanted to "overthrow the leadership of Tambo" by calling for such a conference. Detainees in the prison camps received beatings, torture and punishment under the guise of 're-education' and 're-habilitation'.

But the demands for democracy though, as the months went by did not go away and in 1983, to diffuse further calls for a conference the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC were forced to announce various changes in the organisation that were, however, merely cosmetic. This simply confirmed feelings in the grass roots of the organisation that the leadership had nothing but contempt for their demands and ideas and the discontent spread further throughout the camps.

In January 1984 rebellious forces at Kangandala on the Malanje front presented a package of demands to MK second in command, Chris Hani, and on hearing of this the NEC ordered all the forces from Malanje to come to Luanda to meet the ANC leadership and resolve the crisis. At the transit camp, 'Viana', near Luanda, the guerrillas were ordered to surrender their weapons to the security forces, but fearing reprisals from the guards they disarmed them instead. Crews of guerrillas were sent out to ANC establishments to explain their case and hear the positions of others, and despite ambushes of delegations by ANC security personnel, people from all the establishments came streaming to Viana to join and support the mutineers that same day.

Mass meetings at Viana put forward several demands: an immediate suspension of the security department with an investigation into Quatro; a fully representative democratic conference with new elections; an end to the role of MK forces against UNITA in Angola and a review of armed struggle and its lack of progress in South Africa.

At the same time rebellions broke out at Caculama and Pango camps, all in all representing a 90% majority among the whole of the trained forces of MK in Angola (at the time the only country where the ANC had guerrilla camps). Despite the scale of the 1984 Mutiny the different rebellions were suppressed with a mixture of treacherous deals, broken promises and military force, with the Angolan army coming to the aid of the ANC Security and their remaining

'loyal' forces. Executions, torture and imprisonment followed.

In 1985 a national conference was held at Kabwe, with the ANC leadership being quick to claim that it had nothing to do with the demands of the mutineers, but rather with the political situation in S Africa. Delegates were rigorously vetted by the ANC leadership and the few protesting voices that were allowed in order to give an appearance of democracy were easily silenced on the pretext that they would jeopardise 'unity' and divide the ANC.

This, however, was still not the last of the mutineers. In 1988,

This tragic history shows us the familiar workings of authoritarian politics in action. Calls for democracy and accountability were labelled counter-revolutionary and a danger to 'unity' by political leaders. In fact, in the ANC there was a "myth of tried and tested leadership" and the election of people to leadership positions was seen as "unworkable" and "unrealistic". The repressions employed by the ANC show all the hallmarks of Stalinism and the authors of the pamphlet remark on how the Anti-Apartheid movement with its open and covert collusion and censorship represents "the most successful popular front lobby for Stalinism anywhere in the world".

MUTINY IN THE ANC

with the Cuban withdrawal from Angola, the mutineers, after nearly five years detention without trial, were moved to Tanzania and the ANC Development Centre at Dakwa. Much to the disappointment of the security officers the mutineers received an unbelievably warm welcome from the community there, as the gulf between the mood of the rank and file and the leadership of the ANC had continued to widen since 1984. Members of the 'Committee of Ten', influential in the 1984 Mutiny, were soon acting as representatives in their local organisations - the Zonal Youth Committees - bringing up the same issues and demands that had already cost them years in detention. When two ex-mutineers were elected to the Regional Political Committee of all ANC centres in Tanzania in 1989 things had gone far enough; the body was dissolved by the ANC leadership to be replaced by an appointed 'Interim RPC'.

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Faced with more reprisals and a refusal of protection from the UN in Tanzania, some of the ex-detainees escaped to Kenya. Others made it to S Africa where, following detention, a group of them held a press conference in Johannesburg on 16th May, giving an account of the Mutiny and repressions within the ANC, to the disbelief of Anti-Apartheid journalists. The ANC dismissed the revelations as the work of enemy agents, and shortly afterwards Sipho Phungulwa, one of the group and a long standing and respected activist, was murdered. The rest of the group remained in exile along with an estimated 40,000 others.

Within the ANC long held illusions about the leadership being unaware of the repressions and the subsequent calls for enquiries and investigations and demands for the removal of key personnel, show that many retained a hope that the ANC could be reformed. As Anarcho-sychicalists we completely reject the idea of political parties; however, the insistence on independence, accountability and democracy coming consistently from the rank and file gives voice to aspirations we can recognise.

The ANC are currently seeking the integration of certain members of MK into the S African army and police. Among them are MK commander, Joe Modise and second in command, Chris Hani, two of the most notorious for their role in the running of Quatro camp and the repressions within the organisation (this parallels SWAPO's recent decision in Namibia to appoint S African security police to head its secret organs of coercion). And with the ANC preparing to take over the reigns of capitalism in S Africa, what the authors of the pamphlet termed their own "cruel journey of consciousness" to question the goings in in the organisation, must surely take them further to look at the deeper logic of its structures and methods as a political party.

The tragic events described in the pamphlet may seem all too familiar to anarchists, but for the rank and file of yet another struggle the lessons have had to be learned the hard way. This is not to say that the ANC represents the total struggle in S Africa. It has long been of relatively little relevance within the Townships, though its new bargaining position of government in waiting has meant the extension of its politics, including those of the 'necklace' over recent years.

This pamphlet is valuable, though, for providing a detailed look at the goings on in a current liberation struggle and provided some scarce inside information about the South African situation.

While visiting our IWA sister organisation in Norway (NSF), DAM members attended a conference organised in opposition to the policies and structure of the national trade union federation (LO). Unions in Northern Europe have in common with unions in Britain high union density, a strong commitment to welfarism and strong links with social democratic parties.

Norwegian unions had accepted many aspects of 'New Realism' before World War 2, like limits on secondary action and picketing. After the war, like many 'liberated' countries, Norway adopted a constitution influenced by the Allies, which was designed to provide a stable background where western capitalism could flourish. This led to a highly centralised union movement working closely with the state to limit militancy.

This is still the case, with the LO negotiating pay and conditions directly with employers' federations. Pay agreements last for two years, and where agreement cannot be reached there are long mediation procedures to go through. Before a strike can be called the parties must submit to mediation, the result of which must be voted on by the membership. Should the proposals not be accepted either party may request that the dispute be settled by voluntary arbitration. But the government has the power to use compulsory arbitration with legally binding results.

Faced with restrictions on the right to strike and a union committed to co-operation with the state and bosses, it appears that opportunity for militant action is more limited in comparison with Britain.

Norwegian workers do have some advantages however. Unlike the British TUC, LO negotiates for all workers in the organisation. Workers identify more with an organisation that has power to determine wages and conditions and where they see themselves as part of a class wide organisation. What worker in Britain sees themselves as belonging to the TUC?

In the LO workers still belong to national unions and federations. There are big advantages in the way the individual unions organise – all workers in one workplace in the same union; so they do not suffer from separate unions negotiating with the same employer or unions competing against each other for members on the shopfloor.

In Britain the first layer of the union operates outside the workplace – the branch. In Norway it is a workplace organisation known as 'The Club'. In smaller workplaces LO members are in one Club, decisions are taken at mass meetings held whenever possible during worktime. In larger workplaces, mass meetings elect delegates to a factory wide club meeting. These clubs have limited negotiation rights to make improvements on local pay and conditions.

The recession and restructuring of capitalism in the '70's and '80's affected Norway like other western countries, wages and conditions

worsened. It was the workplace clubs to which Norwegian workers increasingly turned, with the more militant clubs able to win illegal pay increases disguised as allowances and expenses. This led to conflict with the LO leaders and the state. Clubs taking what we term unofficial action is illegal under Norwegian law, with those involved liable to fines. In some cases workers found ways around this. In one famous case one of the best organised groups, the lift engineers, incurred fines for striking, but on returning to work they went on an go-slow, thereby forcing employers to pay the fines. Financial victimisation and the unsupportive stance of the LO convinced workers of the need for financial independence. This resulted in clubs having their own funds, raised through regular collections.

they had with the earlier syndicalist-inspired labour movement which was involved in everything from providing eating houses for the poor, to resisting rent rises.

The militancy and influence of the factory clubs and local federations has upset national LO leaders. LO's whole rationale is social democratic, and about compromising with the state. This has led them to sabotage actively the efforts of workers. They have organised an LO national conference in 1993 to review the whole structure. The proposals they have so far put forward is that LO goes the whole way and becomes "one big union"; in a cynical move to undermine the growing power of the rank and file of the new union, the local federations are to be disbanded.

lined the positive role of the early syndicalists and contrasted them with the negative role played by the communists.

A wide-ranging discussion on the need to build democratic unions independent of the state and the Labour Party, and calling for the Labour Party to stop interfering in the union youth movement took place. 'Free And Independent Trade Unions' became a buzzword. But as the conference progressed splits occurred over how these unions were to be built – inside or outside of the LO? This battle rages in many sectors of their trade union movement.

Workers in the offshore oil industry had organised an independent union outside of the LO, a move seen as

involved in a strike that the state made illegal and it went all out to break the union. The dispute became increasingly bitter with workers occupying the rigs and ended with the sacking of 20 workers. But the union survived.

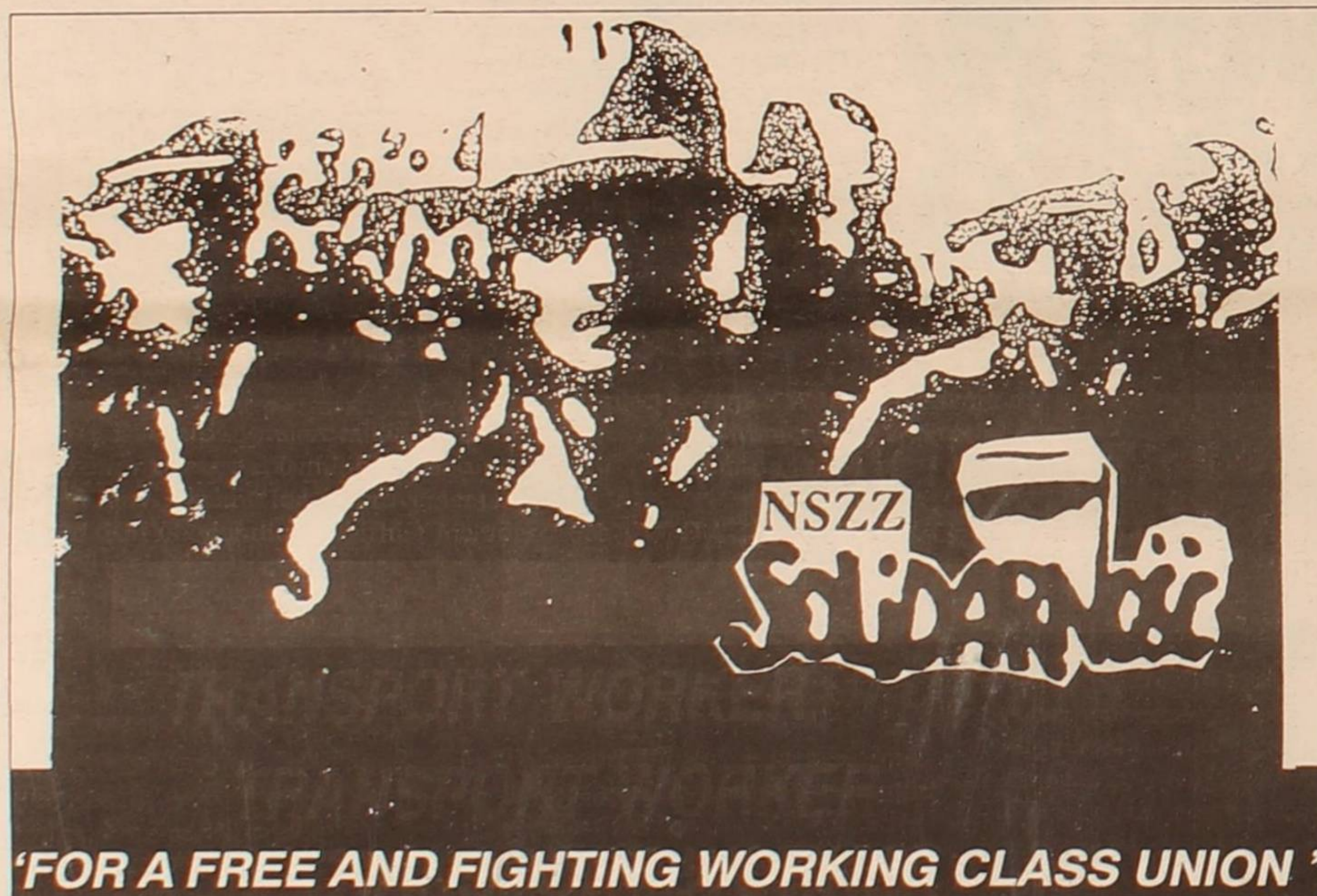
This experience inhibited moves to leave the LO: but a ballot was still held over whether to leave the LO amongst construction workers. A narrow majority forstayed with 51% for, and 49% against. Disenchantment spread to the shipbuilding industry (now mainly involved in building oil rigs) with calls coming from many areas to leave the LO. It became widely recognised that the influence of Maoist shop stewards arguing to stay in the LO was disuading workers from leaving.

Delegates from places like Odda and the oilfields made it clear that their priority lay in building an effective trade union movement, if that meant being expelled "then so be it". But in many areas workers were committed to the LO. Where previous debate had not been held they were far more reluctant to be involved in actions that might result in expulsions. The debate was good-humoured and free of the sectarian point scoring which dominates the British scene. A national network is being set up with the local federation from Odda being the co-ordinating body. The aim is to exchange information and co-ordinate national support for strikes; to organise opposition to attacks by the LO on local organisation, and to prepare the ground for the next opposition conference in 1993, with concentration focused on preventing the local federations being disbanded.

Norwegian workers have not only maintained workplace organisations but have expanded them. There has been discussion on the role of the reformist union federation, the LO. Links between unions and the Labour party were analysed critically, a rarity in Britain. The special magazine, produced by the NSF for the conference, outlining the opposition in 1911 and the setting up of the NSF anarcho-syndicalist union in 1916, was well received. The Norwegian labour movement is using classic anarcho-syndicalist tactics and the events in Eastern Europe has also led them to give serious attention to anarcho-syndicalism.

In Britain we have faced a decade of a Tory government trying to destroy the union movement. We still have a large union membership and a high number of shop stewards. But we have a more centralised trade union movement which sees its role as providing financial services and looks towards the European social charter and the election of a Labour government to provide a legal framework through which to enter into a social partnership with the state to run capitalism. The question must be asked therefore, "Where is our opposition movement?"

UNION REVOLT IN NORWAY



Clubs send delegates to a local union organisation equivalent to our local branches. For example, workers in an engineering works send a delegate to a town or city-wide engineering branch. These branches then affiliate with branches from other industries in the same town to form a local LO federation, each with its own building, 'The People's House'. These structures date back to the turn of the century when LO was influenced by syndicalists. In more recent times they were not utilised fully. During the recession they again proved useful to workers when they were faced with closures and job losses. In many places the local LO federations provided the framework for whole communities to fight back, with People's Houses providing a focal point for the struggle.

While we were in Norway one such struggle was taking place in the town of Odda which had been the scene of a fight against local job losses and a struggle to prevent the closure of a hospital. The local federation was at the centre of organising support in workplaces throughout the town and the locality. Shop stewards involved were saying how much in common

Activists proposed an opposition conference. Links had already been built between activists in a national campaign for Polish and Latin American workers in which clubs had been at the forefront. The first conference, in 1989, proved little more than a rally dominated by political groupings. The following year in Oslo, it was sabotaged by manoeuvres of the LO. Calls came again for a conference in 1991 with ten union branches to help organise it. The conference was moved to Trondheim, far to the north of Oslo, and details widely circulated. 300 people attended, 40% of them women, with the majority as mandated delegates. Norway has a small population so the delegates attending represented up to 10% of the union organised workforce.

The largest left wing group in Norway are Maoists, but under proportional representation they concentrate on parliamentary and local council politics rather than the industrial scene and were not present in any strength. The conference began with a talk from a labour historian outlining the history of the Norwegian Labour movement. She out-

an initiative other workers would follow. But the new union was involved in a strike that the state made illegal and it went all out to break the union. The dispute became increasingly bitter with workers occupying the rigs and ended with the sacking of 20 workers. But the union survived.

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INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY NETWORK - NEW YORK

On 3rd June 1991, the homeless community in the Lower East Side of New York was attacked by the police and their home, Tompkins Square Park, was demolished. Since that day, an occupying force of police have been guarding the area against the homeless and squatting community.

The strategy of 'yuppie-fication' goes back to the early seventies when resistance to the State was increasing in many urban working class areas. The political solution was to destroy radical areas by moving the poor out into isolated suburbs.

Tompkins Square Park has been a focus for resistance to this social engineering for many years. On

6th August 1988, after a peaceful community festival, the police rioted, causing serious injury to dozens of residents. A London solidarity demonstration was held outside the London offices of the New York State Department of Commerce on 14th August to protest at the continuing police occupation.

After a two hour picket we moved off to the offices of Cable News Network. After entering en masse and blocking the door, we were able to talk about why we were holding the solidarity action to the CNN European correspondent, who 'phoned the CNN newsdesk in New York to pass on the solidarity message.

In Berlin, in Barcelona, in Rio de Janeiro, Bristol, Southampton, London, Liverpool, working class areas are facing the same State strategy. The strongest resistance in Britain to the Poll Tax and to the bailiffs is in working class areas.

SOLIDARITY IS STRENGTH

For more information on yuppie-fication or resistance to it...

**International Solidarity Network,
56 Crampton Street
London SE17**

The American ISN address is:
PO Box 24114
New York
NY 10009, USA

SOUTH AFRICA -
STRIKERS' SOLIDARITY APPEAL

800 workers in Zamedelia, South Africa are requesting support. Back in 1987, the workers were sacked by their employer, Sasol, following industrial action. The dispute has been waged through the South African Industrial Courts, which - Surprise! Surprise! - has upheld the company's position. The workers now face eviction from their Sasol-owned homes.

Strikers are requesting letters of protest to: **The Manager, Sasol Ltd, 23 Baker Street, Rosebank 2196, South Africa.**

Messages of solidarity to: **Mr J L Kekane, PO Box 2661, Vereeniging 1930, South Africa.**

Donations c/o **Leicester Trades Council, 138**

Source: Solidarity Network Bulletin.

USA

WAR RESISTERS

Away from the glare of publicity, the US government is court martialing gulf war resisters. So far, a total of 21 soldiers in the US and Germany have been given prison sentences of between 8 and 18 months. Several more still await trial. Eric Larsen and Kevin Sparrock, who both played an active part in the German anti-war movement, have been singled out for particularly heavy treatment. The prosecutor is asking for the death penalty.

Messages of solidarity etc to:
**DFG-VK, Vogelsbergstr. 17, D-6000,
Frankfurt 1, Germany**

ANTI-FASCIST ACTION

Contact AFA, BM 1734, London WC1N 3XX, for more details ..

Saturday 12th October
"The Lessons of Cable Street"
2pm Davenant Centre
179 Whitechapel Rd
London
Nearest tube ...Aldgate East

Sunday 20th October
"Reclaim the Lane"
Oppose fascist paper sales.
Assemble 11am sharp!
Corner of brick Lane and
Bethnal Green Rd

Sunday 10th November
*"National Demonstration
Against Racist Attacks"*

SPANISH WORKING CLASS HISTORY IN PARIS

The Spanish CNT in France was once a great movement, the survivors of the fascist Holocaust who kept together almost an extended family. Scattered over France in poverty, and at first resented by many as intruders, they were forced into internment and then slave labour camps during the war. Some of the men were able to escape by joining the Foreign Legion (and later by entering the Free French or British forces), which is how they got their families out of misery.

During the German Occupation, the French Resistance consisted of Spanish Anarchists and French Communists. It was the latter who took orders from the Allies but the former who achieved the spectacular results, but for which they were totally unrewarded.

After the war, the Spanish CNT as a workers' organisation out-

stripped many leftist parties. Its structure, however, remained ossified as it was at the end of the Spanish war so that a bureaucracy centred in Toulouse, consisting of people who came to prominence in the civil war, took control, and the movement tended to become apathetic, looking for a revival in Spain. From its ranks, however, came the Resistance fighters such as Sabater, who renewed the struggle against Franco.

We visited the remnant of the Spanish CNT in France last month. Its membership is down to a few hundreds, as many veterans die off or have returned to Spain (on a British or French old age pension one can live well in Spain, especially if one had a house or flat to sell). Though family tradition is strong in Spanish anarcho-syndicalism, activist daughters and sons have either entered the French movement or returned to Spain.

The Spanish CNT retains many halls and centres. The complex in Paris, at 33 rue des Vignoles, consists of a hall and several offices (it had a library, but the collection has been sent to Spain). The French CNT has its offices there and makes use of the hall.

Apart from huge collections for Spanish prisoners over the years, the CNT-in-France collects for the parent organisation, and publishes 'Centi' monthly. It is a significant historical landmark in working class history that has been ignored. Almost every one of its ageing members would have a story to tell of past struggles: they have fought fascism and capitalism, aided the resistance against Hitler and Franco; rebuilt the organisation in Spain and contributed to the building of the French organisation.

FUND APPEAL FROM THE
'INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S
MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA' (June
1991)

Seventy years of authoritarian socialism and attempts at achieving equality in a largely patriarchal and peasant-based country has not brought Soviet women control over their own lives...

Olga Lipovskaya, her partner Natalya Filippova and sister Tatyana are to starting an independent women's publishing house in the USSR. The founders are launching an appeal to individuals and organisations. Due to the extraordinarily high cost of obtaining paper in the USSR, they plan to establish their own printing workshop and connections.

Help the nascent independent women's movement by sending a donation to the 'FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA', Account No 7039670 at LLOYD'S BANK, 51 Highgate High Street, London N65 LA, Code 301400.

A first Independent Women's Forum was held from 29th-31st March 1991 in Dubna, a town just north-west of Moscow. It is considered to have been a success. For more information on this or on the publishing house in formation, you can write to Olga - USSR, 191104 St Petersburg, Liteiny per 51-19, Olga Lipovskaya.



USSR

The hottest news from the Soviet Union is the split at the last conference of the Marxist Workers Party between the Bolsheviks (majority) and the Mensheviks (minority).

The 'Party of Workers for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat' statutes say "we gather workers who have the highest level of class consciousness". Their organisational structure is based, of course, on the principles of democratic centralism, "elected decision making bodies... party members follow strict disciplinary rules...majority submits to minority", etc.

Unfortunately within this particular split, the Party of Workers for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat are the Mensheviks! Never mind, better luck next time.

PARAGUAY

Good news from Paraguay! Workers have established an independent and revolutionary union movement. The new federation, the **Coordinadora de Organizaciones Sindicales Independientes (COSI)**, was established in February 1989 following organised opposition to the state-controlled Paraguayan Workers' Confederation. It now includes more than 70 unions. COSI see themselves as signifying the resurgence of revolutionary anarcho-syndicalism in Paraguay. We hope to carry more information in future issues.

Contact: **Coordinadora de Organizaciones Sindicales Independientes, Brasil y Mcal Estigarribia, 1er Piso, Asuncion, Paraguay.**

Source: Umanita Nova

Dear Readers, Subscribers, Distributors, Bookshops.

Welcome to this issue of **DIRECT ACTION**.

We have recently changed the way in which DA is produced and this has taken us some time to organise. Apologies therefore for any delay in receiving this issue, which we hope you will enjoy.

Distribution note: there have also been changes to the distribution of DA. This shouldn't have affected many people, but if it did please let us know.

ODDS & SODS

Anarcho-syndicalism is above all internationalist. As we struggle here against capitalism and the state, we directly support whenever possible the working class in other countries against their bosses and their state. In this we are unique; all the left at times abandon a class position for 'tactical reasons' and support a sometime oppressor - a Saddam Hussein or an ANC committed to becoming part of the capitalist South Africa, which will continue to ensure the exploitation of the black working class. This is an extract from 'An Anarchist Approach to National Liberation' (circa 1978) by Martin Spence.

For many socialists, 'national liberation' struggles represent the revolutionary tendency in the world. To criticise them is to take an 'objectively counter-revolutionary stance'. But these struggles aim to establish 'independent states' and therefore new class societies.

IMPERIALISM involves a relationship between two societies whereby one dominates the other. Imperialism does not require the existence of formally dependent 'colonies'. A metropolitan society dominates a peripheral society, economically and often politically and culturally. Imperialism is not "the highest stage of capitalism", as Lenin argued, but a precondition of capitalism, which retains its importance throughout capitalism's various developmental stages. The industrial revolution in England and elsewhere was fuelled by the capital extracted from other societies by the European countries from their colonies or dependents.

'Underdevelopment' is the historical consequence of exploitation. Underdevelopment is the condition of dependency in peripheral areas, whose economies are so structured as to be incapable of autonomous movement, able to develop only insofar as metropolitan

more ahistorical prelude to development; the underdeveloped economies are not 'lagging behind' the industrial economies. They are crippled as a result of systematic exploitation.

These imperialist relationships of power and dependency are not confined to national boundaries. Within the metropolitan British economy, core areas have exercised a crippling control over peripheral areas (Ireland, the Scottish Highlands) in a classically imperialist fashion.

The dominant element is not the metropolitan society as a whole, but the ruling class within it. The class broadly controls the development of both metropolitan and peripheral economies. The mass of people at the metropolis are, of course, excluded from effective power, but can be encouraged to share in a sense of national superiority. Meanwhile, at one periphery, a local ruling class profits from the exploitation of the local population and resources, and can perhaps share in the lifestyle and values of the metropolitan ruling class which it aspires to emulate.

NATIONAL LIBERATION

The local ruling class at the periphery acts as an entrepreneur between local resources and metropolitan profits. A section of this class may become aware of this role, and the resentment or guilt arising from this may be expressed in nationalist or socialist terms, setting a goal of 'national liberation', using grand rhetoric, setting 'the people' free, liberating 'the nation'. The rhetoric is impressive, and many socialists justify their support for national liberation.

All over the world, socialist and leftist rhetoric is used to justify the emergence of new ruling classes.

The goal of national liberation has been set by those sections of the peripheral ruling class with sustained contact with Western society. National liberation represents a new and subtle stage of imperialism at which the metropolitan

Of course, conflicts do occur. National liberation movements do clash with entrenched local rulers, or with entrenched metropolitan interests.

These conflicts cannot be ignored - they cause untold suffering and death. Wars between rival despots have always caused suffering and death; that is no reason for us to 'support' one despot against the other.

NATIONAL LIBERATION v THE PEOPLE

The transformation of colonial territories into 'independent' states does not represent a blow against imperialism, but an adjustment within it. The subordination of peripheral areas and populations to dominant metropolitan interests is not questioned. National Liberation movements construct their programmes and activities around concepts borrowed from the imperialists, and make typically imperialist assumptions that there must be a political centre, political leadership and ultimately, a state.

National liberation is diametrically opposed to a class perspective of liberation, whereby oppressed masses achieve their own freedom in their own way. An effective and consistent anti-imperialist strategy must insist on the primacy of class conflict at all times. Once we abandon that position and start talking in terms of 'national self-determination' we are talking about solutions within the framework of imperialism. Is it our task, as revolutionaries, to do that?

National liberation is not synonymous with anti-imperialist struggle - it is a particular demand, and is supported by certain interests and imposed upon the generalised anti-imperialist struggle. This generalised resistance is going on all the time, all over the world, and it is the basis on which a true anti-imperialism is built. The generalised resistance starts from everyday realities of the oppressed.

The authoritarian approach insists upon imposing national unity; the libertarian approach is to build upon the common class experiences and the common ethnic experiences which exist. By insisting upon a class dimension to anti-imperialist struggle, we are merely pointing out that an oppressive system can only be opposed by the autonomous actions of the oppressed. By insisting upon an ethnic dimension, we are pointing out that these same people can only start to build a free society on the basis of their own particular, concrete, everyday experiences; the common experience of oppression, and of the struggle against it, provides the embryonic form of a new social order. An emergent ethnic unity replaces imposed political unity.

"We therefore have territorial limits which would not necessarily coincide with the political confines of the preceding state dissolved by the revolution. In this case the ethnic division takes the place of the de-forming political division."

Alfredo M Bonnano, 'Anarchism and the National Liberation Struggle'

Our task is not to 'support' national liberation, critically or otherwise, but to participate in anti-imperialist activities in the metropolis. Imperialism is sustained both at the periphery and at the metropolis by denying the conflict of class interests by building up feelings of nationalism and identification with the state. Our priority must be to reveal the clash of class interests at all times; to show that the British state is in no sense 'our' state, but is imposed upon us; and show how the 'national interest' is only in the interest of the ruling class.

A militant struggle within the British imperialist metropolis, which weakens dominant interests here, can only be of help to people struggling for their freedom elsewhere. In the final analysis, imperialist institutions crippled at home would be unable to maintain their stranglehold at the periphery.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

You can help us improve DA by taking out a 'Supporter's Sub'. We don't have any rich backers, and are entirely dependant on sales and donations. If you like what we're saying, even if you don't agree with all of it, we welcome your support.

For your Supporter's Sub you will receive:

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'ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM '92' NATIONAL DAY SCHOOL - LIVERPOOL

at YMCA, Mount Pleasant (near Lime Street Station)
on Saturday 2nd November, 10 am - 6 pm

10 - 1, workshops on Anarcho-Syndicalism;
1 - 6, Industrial Strategy;
Social in evening

Further information from any local DAM group.

The LONDON GREENPEACE FAYRE '91

Saturday 2nd November, 11 am to 9 pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1
(Holburn Tube)

For the fourth great year London Greenpeace present a day for a world without industrial exploitation or pollution, without money, borders, governments or armies. Without oppression of people or animals, without the destruction of nature. For freedom and sharing.

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DISCUSSIONS

Free admission (but donations welcome, and needed!)

The DA group wish to thank the following for donations to Direct Action:

Ray Emery (Somerset Norton) - £14

Tony Crowther (Manchester) - £5

CONTRIBUTORS

Thanks to everyone, from those within and outside the Direct Action Movement, for their help and contributions to this issue, without which it would not have appeared! Special thanks to the production group and to Albert for technical assistance and loads of patience.

PUBLICATIONS AND SALES

OUT OF THE GHETTO

OUT OF THE GHETTO is an unfinished autobiography (1913-1939) of Joe Jacobs, a Jewish working class militant from the East End of London. His vivid and personal book is history, biography and politics all in one. The heart of OUT OF THE GHETTO is the decade of the 1930s and the struggles against fascism. Joe was an active member of the Communist Party throughout the '30's, but was expelled in 1938 for taking too hard an anti-fascist line. So his view of events in the East End, especially the battle of Cable Street in 1936, differs from the orthodox CP version. The book was published in 1978 but has been out of print. You can help Phoenix Press raise the £4,000 needed.

Firstly, you can lend money in multiples of £40. For each £40 you will receive a copy of the book and the offer of your money back when enough copies have been sold (this is likely to take several years!) If you can't afford £40 but still want to help, then you can buy advance copies at the reduced price of £6. We hope to have the book published in autumn 1991, in time for the Anarchist Book Fair. Phoenix has already published six books through this subscription system.

OPEN EYE

C/o Bookmarks, 265 Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park London N4 2DE.

— A NEW magazine challenging media censorship —

Falklands War Plot.

The dramatic untold story of war preplanning and the secret battle to save Thatcher from exposure for deceiving Parliament.

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20 Third World democracies overthrown; the inside story. A review of top-ranking ex-CIA agent John Stockwell's new book.

'Gladio' and N.A.T.O.'s Terrorist Network.

Allegations of NATO involvement in pan-European terrorist groups. Repression as the key to social control.

FBI: Political Police.

The F.B.I.'s ruthless 'COINTELPRO' campaign against 'Black Panthers', native Americans and MOVE.

Gulf War Launches 'New World Order'.

Ex-CIA agent Phillip Agee's comprehensive analysis of American military operations.

The Greens in Conflict.

Splits in Die Grunen, Earth First!... and the British Green Party?

The Cancer Business.

The scandal of suppressed cures.

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Issue One out NOW!

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Also: War & the Media/Spectacle, "Operation Censored", Permaculture, CIA & the drugs trade, Palestinian poems, Nicaragua, 'underground' magazines...

SCANNER APPEAL

THE PRODUCTION OF DA IS NOW ALMOST COMPLETELY COMPUTERISED. HOWEVER WE DESPERATELY NEED A SCANNER TO COMPLETE THIS TASK.

THE SCANNER WILL ALLOW US TO INPUT AND MANIPULATE PHOTOGRAPHS AND GRAPHICS WITHIN THE COMPUTER, AND BEST OF ALL SCAN ANY TYPED TEXT SENT TO US AND RECOGNISE IT AS TYPED, SAVING US LOADS OF TIME AND HASSLE, ALLOWING US TO DO A BETTER PAPER.

TOTAL NEEDED APPROXIMATELY £750

CONTACTS

THIS IS THE DAM

be controlled by the workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all delegates of such workers' organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.

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

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

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

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

5. We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is by independent organisation in the work place and the community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers' organisations must

6. We are opposed to all states and state institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is world wide and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all states do not exist to protect the workers of those states, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.

7. We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and environment.

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

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

CONTACTS - UPDATE

NATIONAL OFFICERS

NATIONAL SECRETARY, Manchester DAM-IWA, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY, Edinburgh DAM-IWA, PO Box 516, SW DO, Edinburgh EH10 5JH

EASTERN REGION

NORWICH DAM-IWA, PO Box 73, Norwich NR1 2EB

MIDLANDS

LEICESTER DAM-IWA, c/o 70 High St, Leicester
For contacts in Leamington, Nottingham, Northants and Worcester, write to National Secretary

NORTH EAST

LEEDS DAM-IWA C/o Box DAM, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS2
MIDDLESBROUGH DAM-IWA, C/o Leeds DAM
SOUTH YORKSHIRE DAM-IWA, PO Box 122, Doncaster, S Yorkshire
For contacts in Doncaster, Scunthorpe, Sheffield and York, write to North East Regional Secretary, C/o Leeds DAM

NORTH WEST

BURNLEY DAM-IWA, 12 Kingsland Grove, Burnley, Lancs BB11 3PY
LIVERPOOL DAM-IWA, PO Box 110, Liverpool, L69 8DP
MANCHESTER DAM-IWA, PO Box 29 SW PDO, Manchester M15
PRESTON DAM-IWA, PO Box 172, Preston, Lancs PR1
For contacts in Cumbria, Lancaster, Salford and Stockport, write to North West Regional Secretary, C/o Burnley DAM

SCOTLAND

EDINBURGH DAM-IWA, PO Box 73, Norwich NR1 2EB
GLASGOW DAM-IWA, PO Box 239, Glasgow G3 6RA

SOUTH WEST

BRISTOL DAM-IWA, C/o National Secretary
For contacts in Avon, Devon and Plymouth, write to National Secretary

SOUTH EAST

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE DAM-IWA, PO Box 245 St Albans, Herts
DEPTFORD DAM-IWA, PO Box 574, Brockley, London SE4 1DL
EAST LONDON DAM-IWA, C/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
NORTH LONDON DAM-IWA, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE
SOUTH LONDON DAM-IWA, PO Box 761, Camberwell SDO, London SE5
For contacts in Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire, write to South East Regional Secretary, C/o North London DAM

IRELAND

There is no section of the International Workers' Association in Ireland, but we maintain links with:
ORGANISE! (Anarcho-Syndicalist group based in the Six Counties),
C/o 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1, Ireland

All other international contacts should be sought via the International Secretary.

NETWORK FORUM

Donations or Standing Order payments in support in Industrial Networks should be made to:
NETWORK SOLIDARITY FUND,
Acc No 12282083, Sort Code 16-16-25,
Royal Bank of Scotland, Manchester Chorlton-cum-Hardy Branch,
44 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 1AR

Send any donations, or notify of any Standing Orders, to Network Forum, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW

INDUSTRIAL

Council Workers Network, C/o Manchester DAM and North London DAM
Transport Workers Bulletin, C/o Deptford DAM, PO Box 574, London SE4 1DL
Despatch Industry Workers Union, C/o 489 Kingsland Road, London E8 4AU
Independent Education Network, PO Box 29 SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW
Health Workers Federation, C/o PO Box 761, Camberwell, London SE5

OTHER

IDEAS & ACTION (US Anarcho-Syndicalist paper), PO Box 40400, San Francisco, CA 94140, USA
REBEL WORKER (Australian Anarcho-Syndicalist paper), PO Box 92, Broadway, NSW 2007, Australia
ANTI-FASCIST ACTION (North/South/East/South-East London Branches), BM 1734, London WC1N 3XX

DIRECT ACTION

MUNICIPAL MAFIA

MURKY WATERS TENDERING FOR LEISURE CONTRACTS

Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) in local government has been the spearhead of the growth of a business culture in what should be public services. Typified by superficial jargon - 'customer care', etc - this has had the effect of bringing the management of private and public sectors closer together, and facilitating greater mobility between the two. The initial benefit for public sector managers has been the growth of 'recruitment and retention' packages for 'essential staff', ie, performance-related pay schemes, company cars, cash bonuses, etc, for senior management. The attitude of the employers to the rest of us, we who merely provide public services, is very different. Unemployment has been cited in pay negotiations as having the 'beneficial' effect of there being no shortage of candidates for low-paid frontline jobs.

These measures are the icing on the cake for the most greedy. Tendering and close links between local government Chief Officers and private contractors have provided even greater opportunities for enrichment. The details of the case outlined below are taken mostly from Scottish newspapers, notably the Glasgow Herald, and from the personal knowledge of the author. Remember these names....

The story came out in May. It was alleged that the Deputy Director of Recreation of Glasgow District Council was the major shareholder in Contemporary Leisure, a Leicester-based firm seeking to bid for the leisure management contract due to go out to tender on 1st January 1992. The Fraud Squad had been called in to investigate Robert Hulbert's links with the company. Council manual workers were refusing to negotiate with either Hulbert or the director, Bernard 'Ben' Connolly. They were concerned that terms would be leaked to the private sector. Connolly was quoted as a referee by Contemporary when they expressed an interest in tendering for the leisure contract in neighbouring Strathkelvin district.

The Fraud Squad investigation centred on the contracts awarded to Whitewater Leisure, a Yorkshire based firm, to install 'flumes' (fancy water chutes) at Glasgow's Castlemilk swimming pool, and the Royal Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh. The investigation was hampered because a number of files had gone

missing in Edinburgh, where Connolly and Hulbert had worked in Recreation as director and assistant director (baths) respectively, with one Douglas Stewart, assistant director (parks), now a director of Contemporary Leisure. The Edinburgh contract turned out to be a disaster for the Council, but lucrative for Whitewater. Costs were underestimated and income overestimated, leaving the Council to pick up the bill, but Whitewater with guaranteed income as the pool's licensed operator. A similar thing happened in the London Borough of Hackney, at the time when Douglas Stewart was director of Leisure Services (leisure and recreation are interchangeable labels in local government). Their £100,000 worth of 'consultancy fees' were 'overlooked', of which more later. An additional twist is that Whitewater has subcontracted work to both Contemporary Leisure, and another company run by the same people, Open Space Management (East Midlands). You scratch my back...

Journalists had more luck digging up hard evidence. The Evening Times discovered documents proving that Hulbert, Stewart, Thomas Kiernan and David Bryant were the shareholders and directors of both Contemporary and Open Space, the last had been registered in May 1990. The company's lawyer is David Williams. Kiernan initially admitted that Hulbert was the major shareholder in Contemporary, but subsequently denied it, claiming the latter had initially agreed to become a director, but later changed his mind, and that shares had been allocated to him 'inadvertently', then transferred to Williams.

The claims made by Contemporary as credentials for their tenders were ripped apart. It claims "project development responsibility for a wide range of projects, ranging from £250,000 to £30m". The alleged £30m contract is for the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham, where the principal contractor for the £52m job was Laing Midlands, and a Birmingham City Council spokesperson described Contemporary's claim to a £30m share as "inconceivable". It claims big contracts in Edinburgh and Glasgow, which are non-existent, and interestingly £54,000 worth of work for Whitewater Leisure. Hulbert is the Edinburgh/Glasgow connection, but when Stewart left Edinburgh in April 1988 he moved to Birmingham, before going on to end his local government career in Hackney. What is actually being

referred to is involvement claimed their role as local government officers, some of which, like Stewart's claim to have been responsible for Edinburgh's 'record breaking' Gold of the Pharaohs Exhibition, is patently false.

The Fraud Squad is investigating Hulbert in Edinburgh and Glasgow, they are not investigating Stewart in Hackney. Stewart only left Hackney's employment in September 1990, after he had founded Open Space Management with the rest of the Contemporary gang in May of that year. Since Contemporary has very close links with Whitewater Leisure, whose controversial contract to install 'flumes' as part of the refurbishment of Clapton pool was won on Stewart's recommendation. This merits close investigation. Stewart and Hulbert were both involved in the similarly controversial flumes contract won by Whitewater in Edinburgh. Fortunately for the people of Hackney, Stewart left the Borough in a certain amount of haste shortly after a grievance taken out by the Directorate Finance Officer when an assault with racial overtones was found against him.

Stewart fostered an image of dynamism, and was unusually young for a director. He was very good at integrating himself with some of the left, even approaching NALGO to join, claiming to have won disputes as a Chief Officers' rep. (Yes, NALGO does look after bosses' interests, in spite of its 250,000 low paid members in local government.) The steward who signed him up, incidentally, was later approached to discuss her 'career development' privately, which she declined on principle. 'Coincidentally', she was seconded to the unit preparing for CCT in Leisure at the time. Office staff claim that Stewart, who took increasing amounts of time off 'working from home' on 'family leave' or 'sick' in the last few months of his employment, photocopied and removed files on all aspects of the Directorate's work. Since he maintained his house in Marker Harborough, arranging his timetable to work a four day week, it suggests that he was doing a lot of work for the companies of which he was already a director in nearby Leicester, while in Hackney's employment. Companies acknowledged by its managing director, John Greetham, to have done work for Whitewater Leisure.

It is suspected that Stewart's appointment as director in Hackney may have been influenced by fraudulent

POLL TAX PRISONERS NATIONAL SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE

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FOR DETAILS AND REGISTRATION PLEASE CONTACT:
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20 CORNER HOUSE, WELLINGTON STREET, SMETHWICK

APPEAL TO ALL ANTI-FASCISTS!

On Thursday 18th July 1991 - 3 Anti fascists were fined £250 each plus court costs amounting to about £500 each.

They were arrested while protesting against the National Front who were holding an election meeting in Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

We Hope you can show your solidarity with these 3, by donating any money towards their fines.

Please make all cheques etc payable to Acc, No. 38097621, Sort code 60-10-17 and return to Debbie, 61 Goldings House, Hatfield, Herts



claims about his achievements earlier in his career, backed up by references from Bernard Connolly, who has provided 'personal references' for Stewart, Kiernan and Bryant, according to Kiernan. But Stewart's fraud with Whitewater was so transparent that it was exposed at the first serious scrutiny. How did he get away with it? Why isn't he being prosecuted for fraud by Hackney Council?

Further questions are raised by a couple of interesting rumours. The first appeared in the local anarchist newsheet, Hackney Heckler, claiming that the brother-in-law of Council Leader John McCafferty had been bundled off to Scotland to head off a corruption scandal. The second, from an unconnected source, is that Stewart is a relative of fellow Scot McCafferty. Evidence, please!

More damningly, the Chair of the Council's Community Services Committee which covers both the Leisure Services Directorate and grants to the voluntary sector, Hajra Khote, wrote a letter to all her fellow Labour councillors in February when decisions were due to be made on what got cut. She urged support for a proposal to put Leisure Management out to tender six months early, using pseudo-leftist rhetoric about the need to avoid cuts in services by doing this. Now, since neither the Council's 'Direct Service Organisation' (the contract side), nor the majority of interested private contractors which was prepared for this and had inside information (provided by Stewart?) would be in a

position to fulfill the contract. Khote's (unsuccessful) advocacy of such a course is highly suspicious, especially in the light of her very close working relationship with Stewart.

The fraudulent activities of the Whitewater/Contemporary/Open Space Management network cover the whole of England and Scotland, and are made possible by the government's legislation on Compulsory Competitive Tendering, which it is proposing to extend as part of the 'Citizens' Charter'. The risks are taken by the taxpayer. The profits are reaped by the cowboys. The Guinness Affair was not an isolated scandal. The only crime was getting caught, for which wrists were duly slapped.

John Greetham, the biggest fish in this network is an arch Thatcherite and a prominent figure in Yorkshire, where he is chairman of the NHS Trust at St James Hospital in Leeds, one of Europe's biggest teaching hospitals. Health Secretary William Waldegrave appointed him chairman of the NHS Trust Federation, which covers all opted-out health services. He has identified local government tendering 'a big business' and wants 'a small percentage of that'. 'Competition', fraud and industrial espionage are one and the same thing to our rulers. Local government bureaucrats (represented by the Labour Party) and private contractors (represented by the Tories) have discovered their common class interests and have bought their next politicians.