

COUNTER INFORMATION

No. 10 MAY/JUNE 1986 FREE

NEWS INTERNATIONAL STRIKE

STOPPING WAPPING

WAPPING was a more or less forgotten area of London until Murdoch moved in with his scabs. His fortress stands in the former London dockland, which is now being developed into private and luxurious flats in old warehouses and a tourist complex for the rich at the nearby St Katherine's dock.

These are the words of a resident of Wapping. Picketing has been going on for months, and support from miners and other groups throughout the country has been increasing.

There have been many demos including some organised by local residents who have been angered at the way TNT (Murdoch's distribution company) lorries have been allowed to use Wapping's narrow streets, which has resulted in the injury of children.

Resistance has been kept up and the plant at Wapping is virtually under constant picketing - although generally Murdoch's paper (Sun, Times, Sunday Times, News of the World) are getting out on time. On some nights the papers are held up for hours. The following is only things which we have heard about and no doubt there are countless numbers which go unreported.

Feb 11th - TNT set up an incident room to report attacks, and intimidation of their scabs.

13th Two TNT lorries' windscreen's smashed - police bricked and papers held up for two hours.

15th - 5,000 pickets. 58 arrests after police charge crowd with horses. Riot cops with snatch squads meet resistance in the form of "public control barriers" and hand to hand fighting. A lorry ambushed in Fulham and windscreen smashed. Scab driver escapes with minor injuries.

16th - Arsonists against Murdoch burn a shops quota

of News International Sunday papers.

19th - Scab vans smashed, police buses ambushed and scaffolding used to block a road.

March 8th - Thousands of women march on International Women's Day. 5 lorries have windcreens smashed, also police bus with scabs and Murdoch's Mercedes.

12th - Two pickets injured by scab vans at Wapping.

15th - Picket of 6,000 at Wapping. Pickets rock the iron fence until it collapses, but crowds pushed back by police supported by riot cops and horse pigs. After the demo a 'roving picket' was formed and held the papers up for 5 hours.

Earlier in the day 30 residents of Wapping march to Murdoch's plant chanting "lorries out of Wapping".

16th - Two scab vans in Brentwood, Essex had flammable liquid poured over them and set alight. Both vans were destroyed.

21st - 400 residents of Wapping march to Murdoch's plant and hand in a petition.

Two coachloads of pickets arrive in Cardiff to picket the local TNT depot, joined by miners and numbers increase to 300.

22nd - Three lorries have their windcreens smashed. Murdoch's 'white vans' had been ambushed and papers were seen scattered over the road.

April 6th - Police come under attack with bottles and stones and returned with riot gear and horse pigs. 15-20,000 take part in demo at Wapping. A fence was pulled down but police arrive on scene to save Murdoch's plant. At night police get even with snatch squads and injure a small girl who was on the picket.

8th - Dozen of 'white vans' kept in all night at Brookbank Park by pickets harrasing scabs and police.

9th - A march of 1500 arrive at Wapping. Police try to arrest pickets but are met with resistance.



STATES SPONSOR TERRORISM

OVERSHADOWING all other events, the US bombing of Libyan cities has brought home to millions of workers worldwide the everpresent threat of WAR.

The protests throughout Europe, and even in a few US cities such as Boston have symbolised that a large minority are prepared to voice their concern in opposition to US military might.

There is a widespread perception that US military intervention has been revived and that the attempts to wipe out Gadaffi and destabilise the Islamic regime are a scenario for what is to follow. The acclaim within the US for the invasion of Grenada has been restated to further pressurise Nicaragua. Elsewhere the CIA has been flexing its muscles in the change of regimes in Haiti and the Philippines.

In the Middle East the root cause for the escalating mayhem is the Israeli State. 5 million Palestinians have been uprooted from their country of origin or subjugated in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. 'State Sponsored Terrorism' knows no equal in Israel, as the aftermath of the invasion of Lebanon so vividly shows. US policy is now openly working in tandem with Zionist expansionist aims, and no longer pays attention to the misery of the Palestinian refugee camps or the internecine multiple conflicts in Lebanon.

Armed Palestinian groups saw in

airline hijacks a 'necessary evil', the means to capture media coverage in an age when the spectacular takes precedence over mass involvement. As its most vocal supporter, Libya has been singled out as the 'bad guy' which 'Uncle Sam' can put right with the aid of a few bombs and shellings. Terroristic acts should be abandoned in favour of mass civil disobedience in the occupied areas and shift attention to the inevitable brutal response which the Zionist State would administer. Opposition to militarism by Israelis opposed to Zionism will be strengthened by uniting with Palestinian mass resistance.

The bombings also occur at a time when the economic power of the Oil Producing States have been diminished with revenues slashed to one fifth of 1981 levels and the US superpower was assured that Arab outcry would remain precisely that: rhetoric! But would subsequent strikes at Libya, or say Lebanon meet with the same response in the Arab and Soviet blocs?

Hence the alarm at the British Government's active conivance at the growing threat of World War III. The bases of the superpowers must be challenged through sustained opposition that goes beyond symbolic gestures of peace to mobilise a working class response to militarism, and in this way the fate of Europe and revolution are interlinked!

RESCUE

12th - Two lorries have windcreens smashed. Horse pigs trap pickets (men, women and children) against railings at Wapping, screaming abuse. Pickets were harassed and stretched and scabs had to run a gauntlet to arrive at work.

14th - 300/400 people picket the old 'Times' building in Grays Inn Road, where scabs still operate. Police were harassed and stretched and scabs had to run a gauntlet to arrive at work.

16th - 1,500 picket Wapping after a march and rally. Resistance to police snatch squads is increasing as police try to arrest pickets.

17th - Picket of Luton TNT disrupted and no papers left the plant all night. Police tried to push back picket line, but it held. TNT drivers talked of having a day of action!

18th - Transport and General Workers Union stewards hostile to 60 pickets who try and make contact with drivers at Convoys Wharf, Deptford. Some delay to papers. At Wapping, a resident had the windows of his car smashed by the police, who then dragged him out of his car and beat him up, until pickets intervened. Picket of 150 stayed all night supported by unemployed.

19th - Saturday night again. 3,000 pickets supported by Lesbian and Gay Printers. Two

lorries bricked, scab car ambushed. Police try snatch squad tactics again but are met with resistance. Sat. night picketing still suffering since TUC day of (in)Action!

25th - At 9 am 500/600 pickets from the Cleaners chapel, surged through police barriers and take control of the main gate at Wapping for 30 mins. A mixture of police reinforcements and a SOGAT official who was worried about the women's safety (!) ended this most significant piece of direct action yet.

May Day - 2,000 take part in the most effective midweek Wapping picket so far. Fierce clashes with the police.

May 3rd - The biggest yet

cont. page 2, col. 1



MURDOCH'S sacking of 6,000 News International printworkers has an importance far beyond Wapping. If he's successful many other employers could follow his lead. The state realise the high stakes - the might of the legal system and the police are being thrown against the strikers.

Victory for the printers would be a victory for all working class people - and a big step towards such a victory would be other workers striking in unison with the N.I. strikers. The N.I. strikers themselves need to directly approach workers who might take such action.

For example the other national newspaper printworkers have good reason to join an all-out strike. They too are under attack.

The *Telegraph* management want a legally binding no-strike deal, the right to temporarily lay off employees, the right to control the supply of labour and to transfer staff. And they want to cut the London production staff by nearly a half.

Meanwhile, at the *Guardian* management also want a legally binding agreement, which would outlaw industrial action before the end of an elaborate procedure. Plus a pay rise of only 3½%, and job cuts through non-replacement

Printers and journalists at the *Express* and *Daily Mirror* have already had job losses and worse conditions

STOPPING WAPPING

cont. from front page

Saturday marches converge on Wapping. Picket reports "For 3 hours there was constant violence as riot squads, horses and ordinary cops charged the pickets again and again... Pickets counter-charged using bricks, scaffolding and anything to hand. Wives of printworkers were again in the thick of the action".

Most of this info comes from 'Picket' c/o 628 Tottenham High Road, N17, London. It is compiled by actual pickets and contributions/solidarity are welcomed.

NO POLICE

MINERS AT Bettws Colliery took strike action on 16th April in protest at a proposed police visit to the pit.

The manager had invited the newly appointed Chief Constable of the Dyfed and Powys police to see round the South Wales colliery. But after their bitter experiences at the hands of the police during the miners strike this was deeply resented - and all those working at the time walked out. (Info: Direct Action)

United strike action across Fleet Street could stop the workers getting picked off one by one. But the SOGAT and NGA trade union leaders are willing to accept virtually anything, as long as the print unions still have some kind of recognition. The union bosses' main concern is to maintain their own important position and keep those union dues

At News International the union leaders have been conducting secret negotiations with Murdoch. They've put forward proposals for a virtual no-strike deal, whereby either the unions or the employer could call for binding arbitration. The union proposals also give management the right to control staffing levels.

500 striking N.I. clerical workers denounced these union proposals at a meeting in late April - but to really stop the union leaders' sabotage the strikers will have to take the struggle *totally* into their own hands.

Further skulduggery - as we write the union leaders are seriously considering Murdoch's latest offer. This involves the unions having his old Gray's Inn Road plant and £15 million compensation - in return for completely calling off the struggle at Wapping. To accept it would be a real mistake.

Any new paper started by the unions would still face all the pressures of the profit economy. The pro-establishment *Economist* estimates that the new paper could only 'efficiently' employ around 1,000 printworkers. The rest would be on the dole. Those working would have to exploit themselves in order to stay in work. The enemy is not only the individual exploiter like Murdoch, but the whole exploiting system whereby production is for profit, not human need.

NICKED

Union sabotage also operates on the picket line itself - originally

refusing to call any kind of mass picket, this was left to individual print chapels, telling miners they are not welcome on pickets. Brenda Dean blaming "outside agitators" (yawn!) for the violence and on other occasions attempting to lead people away from the picket lines to listen to boring speeches. Top stewards collaborating with the police, grassing people up and getting them nicked

Also noteworthy is the seemingly divisive way the unions have organised the pickets and marches at Wapping, most being called and organised on different

MONKTONHALL

CONFLICT CONTINUES at Monkton-hall Colliery near Edinburgh.

In early April management threatened to sack 50 miners for alleged poor productivity - but then backed down. The men concerned have been involved for some time in a dispute caused by the management withdrawing accepted 'wet conditions' practices.

Later in the month NACODS men went on strike. This was to oppose the downgrading of 2 NACODS members because production targets for the day hadn't been met.

IT COULD NEVER HAPPEN!

THE DISASTER at the Nuclear Plant at Chernobyl has drawn into question the cataclysmic effects of 'accidents' from any Nuclear Plant.

The radiation cloud has passed over the Baltic States, most of Eastern Europe and Britain, and widespread anxiety persists over skin cancer risks decades from now. The Soviet State has demonstrated its secretive nature and its inherent tendency to suppress news and distort events. This time, unlike the Urals Nuclear Plant in 1958, it was impossible to conceal the extent of the danger.

Despite the exploitation of the disaster by the Western media to bolster the facade of 'democracy', examples here

demonstrate otherwise. A similar policy of disinformation was issued in Britain in 1957 after the 'accident' at Windscale.

Up to now, opposition to nuclear power has been marginalised throughout Europe. In Britain there was direct action against the siting of Torness 7 years ago, but opposition to Sizewell has been contained by the anti-nuclear lobby. In Europe opposition is usually much more militant, such as at Wackersdorf in Bavaria in recent months. But workers organisations have not foresaken narrow self-interest such as construction work and so on. The consequences are an increasingly centralised and militarised State determined to conceal and distort its operations.

Europe wide, perhaps the only positive legacy of Chernobyl will be to stimulate consciousness of the dangers among the working class who in turn will meet the opposition of Nuclear States united in defence of THEIR POWER.

CONTRACTS LTD (FRENCH CONNECTION) STRIKERS SOLD OUT BY UNION

The strike at Contracts Ltd., South Shields which began in September 1985 over trade union recognition, has been sold out by the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers.

On February 28th the union suggested that there should be a return to work, without any recognition of elected shop stewards and no improvement in pay or conditions. This was overwhelmingly rejected in a secret ballot. The union then set out to sabotage the strike. It was declared unofficial and the last batch of strike pay was to be paid on March 7th. On Saturday March 1st a union official bragged to a local paper 'The Journal' that the strike would crumble. Two days later the union attempted to have the strike centre phone disconnected.

At this point support for the strike was still growing. On March 6th South Shields T.U.C. unanimously passed a

motion in support of the strikers and condemning the union. At the same time 4 shipyards in Sunderland pledged their support and arranged collections. Reports were coming in of pickets at French Connection shops in Edinburgh, Leeds, Manchester, London, Paris and Ivry-sur-Seine.

DIRTY TRICKS

Despite this, the union's dirty tricks continued. On 7th March a full time official attempted to bribe strikers into accepting the deal rejected on Feb. 28th and informed 'The Journal' that he had done so. The last batch of strike pay (£17) did not arrive. The N.U.T.G.W. official, Ron Bales, said it would be paid after they returned to work. To further weaken the strike the union began returning donations made to them, saying the strike was over. This meant that the hardship fund became completely drained.

days by only one section of the union.

Nevertheless, encouragingly many pickets are taking direct action that goes far beyond the limits set by the union bosses. As *Picket* write:

"This newsheet is for the ordinary worker. Trod on, stamped on, left in the breach to print lies. Once awakened through picketing there is no greater power. For there is welled up a loathing and contempt for the bosses and their hirelings and helpers that knows no bounds. Here there is the power to overthrow the bosses."

INJUSTICE

Following the uprising of Oct. 6th at Broadwater Farm, 13 people have now been committed for trial at the Old Bailey charged with riotous assembly and/or affray. 6 are also charged with the murder of PC Blakelock. This is despite the fact that virtually the only 'evidence' is forced confessions made in police custody. Contact: Broadwater Farm Defence Committee, 12-16 Tangmere Willan Road, LONDON N17. Tel: 01 808 1667.

MORRIS' DISPUTE

Striking workers and apprentices at Morris' Furniture Factory in Cowcaddens, Glasgow have been in dispute to gain a 39 hour week for a year. At Easter, the Strike Committee extended their action to lobbying working class people using a number of stores selling Morris' products, including Goldbergs. Active support has come from a number of Support Committees in associated firms such as Blindcraft and further afield from John Brown Shipbuilders, to the printworkers

FINLAND

In Finland more than 245,000 workers began an indefinite strike on the 13th of March this year. The demands are for a cut in the working week from 40 to 35 hours by 1990.

Also in Finland 15,000 state workers started an indefinite strike over pay on the 2nd of April. They are looking for a wage rise of up to 20%. Air flights to Europe have been cut by half and train and postal services disrupted.

STOP PRESS: A further 10,000 electricians have joined the strike.

SWITZERLAND

ON MARCH 29TH at the 8th International Lesbian Conference in Geneva over 300 lesbians held a demonstration. Their banners included 'US dykes against Reagan terrorism' and 'Lesbians against Racism, Fascism and Sexism'. A scuffle began when a policeman tried to seize a banner. Several women chased him away and when he returned with reinforcements counter-attacked, shrieking, whistling and pushing. The police were forced to make a speedy retreat!

OUR HEALTH UNDER ATTACK

The Government continues to wage war on our Health Service. In Glasgow there is an estimated shortage of 2,147 nurses. At Gartnavel Royal Hospital the staffing level is so low it contravenes the 1984 Mental Health Act and the situation at other hospitals is much the same. Still in Glasgow, NUPE believe the Health Board plan to close down the Royal Samaritan Hospital for women and that a private buyer is interested in taking it over.

In Edinburgh the Health Board plan to close down Bruntsfield Hospital for women at the weekends. And now we hear that there are plans to reduce subsidised accommodation for nurses with the result that nurses will be evicted and have to move into expensive, private accommodation which they can ill afford on their meagre wages.

What can be done in the face of this and other similar attacks taking place all over the country? The following is an extract from Newham Hospital Worker:

DIRECT ACTION

The battle against privatisation is just around the corner. Unless we fight there will be wage cuts, job losses and worse conditions. The bosses always take advantage of hospital workers because if we go on strike the patients usually suffer. In the long run it is not striking hospital workers who harm the patients but inadequate resources, appalling conditions, and underpaid and demoralised workers.

Going on strike is the most

straight-forward way of putting pressure onto the management. Although strikes are rarely won if we all go home and watch the telly. There has to be picketing, picketing and more picketing. One-day strikes are totally useless because the bosses just laugh and save some wages.

Many hospital workers, i.e. learner nurses, are unable to go on strike because it means the sack instantly. Many other hospital workers cannot go on strike because it will really harm the patients. That is fair enough. But if you cannot go on strike you can still participate in other forms of industrial action. There is more than one way to skin a cat. Below are a few ideas which are alternatives to striking, or which could be used to make a strike more effective.

1) Occupations or sit-ins of key administration offices. It is not illegal to occupy part of a building and lock the doors, providing no damage is done.

2) Mass sick-ins. Certain departments or the whole hospital can phone in sick on certain days, and nobody loses any pay!

3) Pickets or demonstrations outside managers, administrators and private contractors homes. Let them suffer for a change.

4) Boycotts. Domestics can refuse to clean management offices. Canteen staff can be 'too busy' to serve managers. Other hospital workers can send managers to Coventry.

5) Go slow or work-to-rule. This drives the bosses to despair because only a quarter of the work gets done and we get full wages.

6) The list is endless. It is up to you to think of other forms of industrial action.

pounds worth of damage was caused by an arson attack on the World Video Library in Morley, Leeds. In a statement issued after this attack 'Angry Women' said "This arson attack is on a video shop which sells pornographic videos and videos showing horrific violence against women. These images feed men's minds that violence, murder and rape against girls and women is OK...Angry Women are fighting back".

ABOUT TURN!

PROTESTANT and Roman Catholic women joined forces at the beginning of April to prevent a walk through their village in commemoration of the Apprentice Boys of Derry.

The Kingdom of Fife No Surrender Club intended to 'break new ground' by starting their parade from the village of Cowie in Stirlingshire.

Protestant and Catholic women squatted on the road to stop the march going on. The whole community were united in the view that the parade should not take place. Needless to say, the bands and the marchers left!

SOCIAL INSECURITY

Making the poor poorer and the rich richer - once more the government is cutting welfare benefits. This summer they plan to abolish many single payments for the unemployed.

At present Parliament is passing the Fowler Social Security bill, due to be implemented in April 1988. Cuts include - less benefit for all unemployed under 25, £24 instead of £30 - all claimants paying at least 20% of their rates - lower future pensions - benefit cuts for students.

To have any impact, opposition to these cuts must cause real disruption and escape the control of the usual bureaucrats - see the account of the anti-Fowler demo below. And equally important is the everyday resistance whereby claimants claim everything possible, get more benefit through 'fiddles', shoplift etc. Sharing information, backing each other up at DHSS interviews, going in groups to the offices all makes this more effective.

A correspondent writes:

I went to the demo against the Fowler Social Security cuts on 20th Feb in London. 30,000 students - it's a shame it wasn't more broad-based, but then they want to play one group off against the other of course.

Polis planned route up back streets to some silly park - Kennington. Fortunately people got pissed off quickly and the National Union of Students

Get the Monkeys off our backs!

SEVERAL UNEMPLOYED men are in a... including running the... of the 'Poverty Industry'... This multi-million pound industry, with an estimated salary of £1,200 a week, and 'jobs for the boys' galore, is the one bone in the meat of Scotland. It is supposed to help the unemployed, but the real purpose is one of CONTROL. Just like the Community Workers who effectively sabotage real action and any meaningful local action, these 'professionals' manipulate by means of specialist knowledge, or Urban Aid seminars, their will to be 'socialist' - but they start by defending their positions... and by defending their positions. They are all part of what Thatcher would call her 'BETTER BETT'. Even some unemployed claimant members have been captured, with the bait of a fat salary as a Government Lackey. These who try to 'save' the State only end up by being used by it. UNEMPLOYED will only come when the unemployed are independent without any 'professionals' middle-men, and fight to stay totally independent, both politically and financially. THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE SUPPRESSED!

Practical Anarchy

47-51 St. George Street, Glasgow G1 1LJ. 041 222 2222.

wallys got left stood crying for their organised demonstration.

3 spontaneous marches headed off in different directions. One got to the other side of the river, apparently there were thousands on it. Our lot - about 150 - got as far as Westminster Bridge - trying to get to the City en masse. Inevitably the polis were waiting with transits, horses, gorillas and bikes and had blockaded the

bridge, which remained so for about 20-30 minutes.

It was difficult to know what to do in the circumstances as nothing had been pre-organised and we were totally enveloped by the boys in blue. Slight problem! The spirit was good...perhaps next time. I thought at least it was better than the usual marches and a lot of people who would never have thought of initiating their own marches were beginning to like the idea, though it was a great laff.

THE UNWAGED AND THE TRADITIONAL LABOUR MOVEMENT

The traditional Labour/Trade Union or Leftist movements either ignore those who do not work (not just UB40 holders) or, claiming to act on their behalf, seek to organise them behind their campaigns. They get very annoyed when the unwaged organise themselves. The experience of two particular unwaged groups illustrate this.

In Islington, N. London, the Unwaged Centre was run by a users group, Islington Action Group of the Unwaged (IAGOU). There were no paid workers. At first they got a bit of money from Islington Council and the GLC. The centre was experimental. Interests varied from struggles against super-snoopers, racism at the dole, YTS, benefit cuts etc. to simply having a social cuppa. However, users were united in a desire to keep the centre open and out of the hands of the authorities, political parties or other manipulators.

The Union and Labour party bureaucrats paid lip-service to the idea of the unwaged running their own affairs. They tried to use funding as a lever to turn the centre into a sophisticated soup kitchen, run by paid welfare workers. They didn't advertise the centre or defend it against attacks in the local press. The Council spent large

amounts of money running their own 'Welfare Campaigns' without consulting the unwaged. IAGOU members were then accused of being apathetic, for not supporting the left-posturing council.

Islington Council evicted the centre from its premises in February '86. There is talk of opening another one, but the Council refuse to have a majority of the unwaged on the management committee. IAGOU still meet weekly to plan actions for themselves as unwaged people.

"IAGOU proved consistently adamant in their view that the centre should be run and controlled by the unemployed. Unfortunately this is not a position that the TUC or regional TUC is prepared to accept". South East Region TUC.

TYNESIDE

The Tyneside Unemployed Workers Movement (TUWM) was set up in 1983 as an organisation independent from the Trades Council or any other outside group. They supported many other industrial disputes, campaigned against the snooper squads and collected £17,000 for the miners. Then the local Communist Party tried to get control of the Unemployed Centre Management Commit-

tee and dictate how things should be done. When rank and file delegates complained, they were summoned to a Newcastle Trades Council Executive meeting, "to discuss internal problems of the TUWM". These only existed for the would-be manipulators.

As the situation deteriorated, some members of the TUWM left and with others formed the Gateshead Unemployed Action Group (GUAG). A grass roots, unemployed-controlled organisation, their aim is, "To organise together with employed workers to fight back against attacks". They have been active on picket lines and collected £2,000 for the Contracts Ltd. strikers. When the DHSS snoopers were last in Gateshead, they occupied their offices and photographed them. GUAG is self-funded by street collections and donations.

The unemployed should refuse to be used as electoral/campaign fodder or to be patronised and organised by those above. New forms of struggle must be developed to combat our oppressors, which would seem to include the traditional labour movement.

Thanks to IAGOU and 'The Syndicalist'. GUAG, c/o Gateshead Law Centre, 13 Walker Terrace, Gateshead.

PORN IN FLAMES!

ANGRY women carried out two attacks during March. On International Women's Day (March 8th) an attempt was made to destroy a pornographic 'sculpture' - The Chair by Allen Jones at the Tate Gallery in London.

Paint stripper was poured over The Chair (valued at £50,000) which consists of the figure of a woman in high-heeled leather boots lying on her back with her legs strapped to her chest to form the back of the chair. The leather seat, strapped to her thighs, adds to the sado-masochistic image of a woman in bondage.

In a statement after the attack, Angry Women said "Women are angry at our constant humiliation and degradation, at the violence done to us for men's pleasure and power. We will no longer tolerate or allow the acceptability and glorification conferred on our oppression by the display of pornographic 'art'".

A few days later, on 14th March, several thousands of

Resistance Worldwide

SOUTH AFRICA RESISTANCE GROWS

SPANISH DOCKERS ON STRIKE

All Spanish ports were hit by one-off strikes during March and April as dockers protested against the (Socialist) Government's plan to privatise the docks. If this plan takes effect it will result in the dissolution of the OTP (the dockers' union), a drastic loss of jobs, the abolition of the present system of contracting labour and growing rivalry between the ports at Spanish and European level as each port tries to compete for international maritime trade. Dockers are united against this and in February an assembly met to draw up a general strike programme.

On April 16 a meeting between the government, dockers and companies involved came to no agreement and at that stage it seemed likely that a general strike in all ports would be called from May 12. However, on 25 April the emphasis changed slightly and according to newspaper reports the dockers agreed to create a national commission to co-ordinate protest actions outside port areas, to go on strike after May 17 with one day's warning, not to take holidays this year and to ask for the age of retirement to be extended.

The situation is still uncertain and Spanish dockers are continuing to fight the government's proposals. In La Estiba, the dockers' magazine, they say 'This struggle must be carried through by defending our unity at national level but, overall, by close international relations which would be the basis for a whole solidarity for all European dockers in the defense of their interests'.

ACTIONS WORLDWIDE VS. U.S. BOMBING

IN AMERICA itself protests against the US bombing of Libya were small. However, demonstrations took place in Minneapolis, Boston, New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Massachusetts and Philadelphia. In Berkeley, California an American flag and an effigy of Uncle Sam were burnt at a demo.

The same day, Tuesday 15th, in London 2,000 people staged a sit-down protest in Downing Street and Whitehall. 160 were arrested.

On Wednesday the 16th 10,000 Sudanese took to the streets shouting anti-American slogans. Similar demonstrations took place in Jordan, Lebanon, Madrid, Rome and Berlin. At Menwith Hill spy base, N. Yorkshire, 6 people broke in, hung up banners, and daubed slogans, before escaping undetected.

Things began to hot up on Thursday 17th. In Nicaragua,

NO RETURN TO NORMALITY!

School unrest continues. That is the clear message from reports within South Africa.

'The Weekly Mail', a liberal paper published in Johannesburg, reports (11/4/86) that "there is no serious teaching going on", in Soweto, for example. Similarly, in other parts of Transvaal and the provinces of Natal, and the Eastern and Western Cape, everything is far from 'normal'.

In Soweto, students have demanded 'Pass One, Pass ALL', to allow no selection of those who can progress on to

the next grade.

The continuing disturbances and resistance in the townships is also responsible for walk-outs and other acts of solidarity such as in Voslooro on the East Rand and Ratanda, Heidelberg in Transvaal.

Elsewhere, popular demands have been made to continue 'People's Education' or to rename schools after those killed by the authorities. In North Transvaal, for example, Hwiti High School has been renamed Mafokoane in commemoration of the first student victim of the Bantustan police.

The severity of the repression in the so-called

APARTHEID FOOD - ROTTEN TO THE CORE

IN JANUARY health service stores workers and catering staff in the Portsmouth area refused to handle South African goods. They were supported by some drivers and health staff.

The Area Health Authority threatened them with wage cuts, lock outs and the use of scab contractors. On 11th March the A.H.A. announced that only emergency cases would be admitted to Portsmouth hospitals. The A.H.A. is prepared to put the sick at risk over just 13 products from a total number of 6,000. In the

Homelands has been termed 'Operation Extermination' in an area north of Pretoria, the capital of the Apartheid Regime.

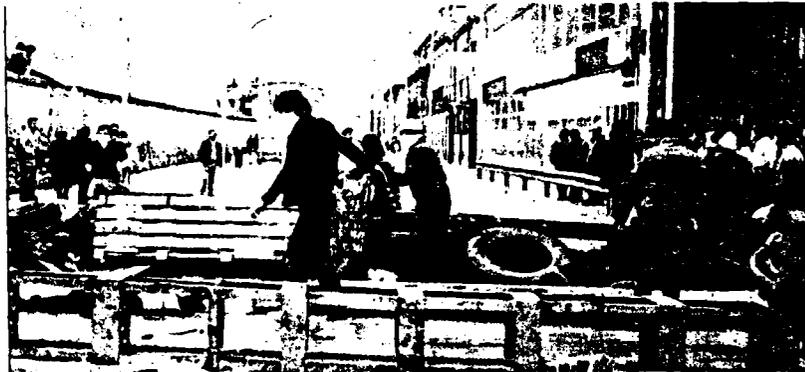
Other protests have included the burning of exercise books throughout Cape Province to draw attention to the inferior quality of educational expenditure outside White schools.

The National Education Crisis Committee may have called for the boycott to be lifted, but the attitude of the students themselves will not allow schooling an appearance of normal operation while the war of liberation remains unwon.

face of this moral blackmail the boycott has been scaled down.

Solidarity action has been taken by 14 workers at Leicester hospitals supply depot. Local NUPE members voted almost unanimously to support the boycott. One worker (a local Labour councillor) abstained.

Contact: Jane Bruton, 56 St Stephens Rd., Leicester.



SPAIN 'Os Cangaceiros' record militant opposition by shipyard workers against redundancies in 1984/5. Amongst the most significant resistance was a college burned down in Oviedo, Asturias; the burning down of the control tower of a steel conveyor belt at the Ensidenas steel mill; the occupation of TV and radio stations; the destruction of pro-government UGT offices in Vigo, Galicia Province; the systematic destruction of buses until arrested strikers were released on demand, and the use of home-made weapons like bazookas. For a copy of a longer article send a SAE.

UNITE & OCCUPY!

Workers in metal factories and other industries where workers are affiliated to COSATU, the independent Union Federation, have started occupying plants where disputes break out.

In Heggrie Rand, the 2,000 workers occupied the plant for 4 weeks and won a victory. In other plants, workers have decided to stay in to thwart the bosses' plans to bus in scabs, as happened for example in the prolonged BTR/Dunlop strike in Howick, Natal where the whole workforce was dismissed.

Divide and Rule remains the aim of companies, multinational or otherwise. In the mines, employers group workteams according to tribal lines to make contact more difficult in the NUM, while in areas like Kwazulu in Northern Natal, COSATU have been holding factory meetings to counter the Inkatha attacks.

Calls by left groups for a vanguard Workers Party to be formed are failing to attract support, the activists instead being concerned to "channel our needs through the programme. The programme has got to be open, so we can put forward ideas, then we will see where we can go from here" (Moses Mayekiso, Transvaal Secretary of the Metal Workers Union in 'Socialist Worker').

In areas such as Alexandria in Johannesburg, a dual power situation exists which the State has tried to repress. Reports (21/4/86) of police raids on the Alexandria Action Committee and damage to the building in which they met, led to a mass assembly the following day and more clashes with the police whose policy is: if handpicked stooges can't rule then we won't allow the community to do so as an act of resistance.

RESIST NUCLEAR DEATH

Mass direct action is being used to resist the building of the first West German nuclear reprocessing plant (WAA) in Wackersdorf, Bavaria.

The WAA processing plant is a project for war. The plutonium will be used for atomic weapons.

On 3/4 May 10,000 people attended a festival at Wackersdorf. In the wake of the nuclear disaster in the Soviet Union participants demanded the closure of all nuclear plants. Clashes developed, demonstrators hurling missiles as the police

defended the nuclear site with water cannon laced with chemical gas.

80,000 people took part in huge demonstration at Wackersdorf on 31st March. During violent attacks a demonstrator died following an asthma attack probably caused by the police CS gas.

In December demonstrators had occupied the nuclear site and built a village there with over 70 houses. On 18th December 5,000 police brutally 'cleared' the village and arrested 1,000 people!

tens of thousands marched through Managua. In Greece there was a one hour strike. Attacks on British and American diplomatic buildings took place in Warsaw, Tunis, Costa Rica and Beirut. Rush hour traffic was stopped for nearly an hour in Nottingham as 30 women blocked the road. 23 were arrested.

After a break-in at RAF Welford, Berkshire on Friday, 5 women were arrested. They were charged with criminal damage and the theft of documents.

LOTTA BOTTLE

In Britain events reached a peak on Saturday 19th. Demonstrations several thousands strong, occurred in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bristol and Manchester. A mass protest in Grosvenor Sq., London, outside the American Embassy attracted 10,000

people. Later 2,000 people blocked Oxford St. When police moved in to clear the road demonstrators were punched and kicked. The cops commandeered buses and drove them through the crowd. One had its windscreen smashed and a policeman was hit on the head with a bottle. There were 67 arrests.

Fence-cutting, break-ins and arrests took place at military installations all over Britain.

Faslane submarine base, on the Clyde (11 arrests); RAF St Mawgan, Cornwall (58 arrests); US army base at Burtonwood, near Warrington (21 arrests); Lakenheath F1 11 base (6 arrests); Menwith Hill (31 arrests); Fylingdales early warning station, N. Yorkshire (4 arrests).

Late on Monday night (21st) 5 women from Greenham Common broke into Upper Heyford airforce base, Oxfordshire, and daubed paint on an F1 11. They were arrested as they sat on the cockpit of the plane while the engine was running.

Counter information is put together from news, information and personal accounts of resistance to this rotten system. At present it is put together by people in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Grangemouth. We would like to encourage the widest possible distribution and participation in the project, and regular communication between people with a revolutionary desire to get rid of all that impoverishes our daily lives. The more material we receive, the more able we will be to produce the broadsheet regularly and ensure its distribution as widely as possible. Donations towards costs are much needed and very welcome. We encourage all those who want information and/or bundles of the broadsheet to distribute to contact us.

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