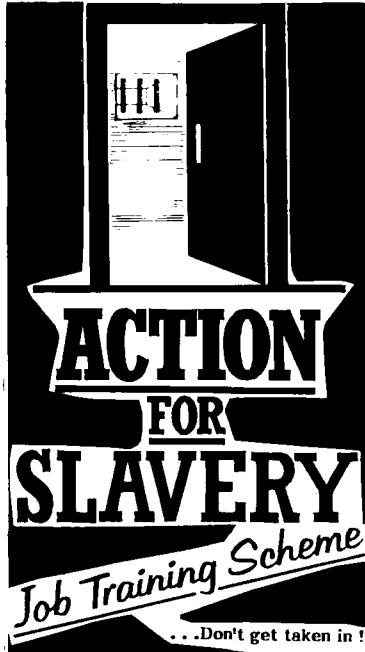


# COUNTER INFORMATION

APRIL / MAY 1987



A great new government scheme started on April 1st. It aims to cut the unemployment figures by 110,000 in 6 months.

**APRIL FOOL!** The new Job Training Scheme means claimants work for an employer - but still get the same money as when they were on the dole.

The new Job Training Scheme (JTS) recruits through Restart. From April everyone unemployed for 6 months or longer will have a Restart interview every 6 months.

Restart interviews could pressurise claimants, especially 18-25 year olds, to go on JTS. But, we urge claimants to stand up to any bullying. Remember the government claims that JTS is "entirely voluntary".

JTS placements last 6 months on average. Those on JTS are paid exactly the same amount as when they were unemployed plus travelling expenses.

The government Manpower Services Commission (MSC) pays Managing Agents to place JTS workers with employers. These employers will use JTS workers as cheap labour. In

the JTS pilot scheme in Dundee JTS workers replaced sacked workers at the Agripac factory. Even MSC officials say the training will be minimal.

In Dundee many who left JTS early had their benefit cut by 40%. Only by kicking up a fuss did they win back their full benefit. Everyone finishing JTS and then signing on will face the new Availability for Work Test.

#### WHY?

JTS is part of a wider government attack. The short-term aim is to fraudulently reduce the unemployment figures to help the Tories win the election.

There are also longer-term aims. The existence of masses of unemployed young people worries the ruling class. The mass riots of 1981 and 1985 show the possibilities. The government aim to use JTS and the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) to discipline potentially rebellious young people.

Equally important - the government boost employers' profits if they can force claimants into government schemes and other low-paid work. Employers gain free or cheap labour. And they gain more power to generally worsen wages and conditions. With JTS and YTS slave labour - why should employers pay much more to their other workers?

Increasingly, workers are being employed on a temporary, or even casual, basis. JTS and YTS are geared to this.

In March Employment Secretary Lord Young virtually stated that after the election 16 and 17 year olds who refuse YTS would have their benefit stopped. This move, and JTS itself, are steps towards 'Workfare'. The government have studied this scheme in the USA. It means claimants must work to receive their benefit.

#### NO SLAVERY

Activity is underway to oppose JTS. In Dundee threatened

strike action by shopworkers in USDAW stopped Wm. Lows using JTS workers. The JTS Managing Agency "Workstart" has been picketed.

Informal resistance by claimants has had an impact in the 9 pilot areas. Research by the MSC and the Unemployment Unit reveals a "cynical and suspicious" response by claimants to JTS, a low take-up and a high drop-out rate.

In Dundee, Edinburgh and Lothian, and Birmingham claimants and workers are uniting to oppose JTS - workers in the Department of Employment (CPSA) and in voluntary organisations (TGWU - ACTSS) are among those involved. Mass leafleting, flyposting and public meetings are taking place. In Birmingham lecturers in the Further Education union NATFE are boycotting JTS.

As for the 'alternative' bosses -

*"Our Union's sold us down the river. They shouldn't be in here at all. It's our struggle. It should be us that decides."*  
Caterpillar worker after Jimmy Airlie's visit 1.4.87.

## CATERPILLAR

#### THE SEEDS OF A DIFFERENT STRUGGLE

The leadership of the A.E.U. engineering union decided on 31st March to order workers occupying the Caterpillar factory at Uddington, near Glasgow, to surrender. Why? The occupation's illegal! Jimmy Airlie, veteran of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders Work In (another working class myth) delivered the message on April Fools Day.

Caterpillar announced on January 14th that production would end in May 1988 and work transferred to Belgium and France. 800 shopfloor workers and 400 staff would be made redundant. Simultaneously, the plant was being occupied.

#### NEW REALISM

After this encouraging start the workers followed the tactics of "New Realism" finding some dubious allies. These included the Communist Party, the Churches, Nationalists and wet Tories. The general attitude was summed up by a French C.G.T. delegate who promised support *"within the realities of the situation"*. Similarly, there were fruitless lobbies of Parliament (5th March) and the Scottish Labour Party Conference (March 14th).

Financial support has been good (£15,000 per week) from street collections and donations. Solidarity from Caterpillar plants in Leicester, Gosselies (Belgium), and Grenoble (France) has been largely token. In early March the Leicester plant refused to accept replacements for parts normally supplied from Uddington. This was overturned by A.E.U. officials.



CONTINUED BACK-PAGE

the TUC supports JTS, while Labour Party policy relies heavily on such government low-wage schemes.

The local government union NALGO advises its members to boycott JTS. But, as always, it will be direct action at the grass-roots that counts.

Claimants disrupting government offices, Department of Employment and MSC workers refusing to implement JTS, workers striking against attempts to bring JTS into their workplace, action to force Councils and other employers to boycott JTS - if really widespread, these are the kind of actions that could stop the new Job Training Scheme.

<b>CLAIMANTS</b>	<b>UNIONS:</b>
Lothian CU - 031 557 0718.	
Claimants Fightback, 448	
Stratford Rd., Birmingham 11.	
CU, Flat 1, 158 Hyde Park Rd.,	
Leeds 6., Tottenham CU c/o	
628 High Road, London N17.	

# abortion: No Demands !

The recent court case of an Oxford student who tried to stop his ex-girlfriend from going ahead with an abortion, highlights the reactionary propaganda against women taking control of our own fertility.

## TERRORISTS

In December last year the *Dublin Well Women Centre* had its Openline closed down in a high court action brought against them by SPUC (*Society for the protection of the unborn child*). Openline was found guilty of acting illegally in providing information about obtaining abortions in England.

Abortion Clinics all over the U.S.A. are being attacked and firebombed by religious zealots using terrorist tactics to enforce their fascistic aims. They tell us motherhood is the only option; to be 'chosen' again and again and again. We are never safe in their hands.

## CHURCH

We ask for nothing from the pious priests and clergy. Their alters stink with the bodies of women lying dead and bleeding from back-street botched abortions. The church's answer to unwanted pregnancies being coathangers! (The women they burned as witches during the middle ages were often healers and midwives giving reasonably safe herbal abortifacients as well as information on herbs for fertility and ease in childbirth).

## BUTCHERS

We will not plead with the (white) boys in their white coats for the necessary doctors signatures. The same boys who are frequently sterilising us if we're poor or black without our knowledge or consent, or offering abortion on the condition that we agree to be sterilised. We will not give these butchers power.

## NO DEMANDS

Groups of women throughout the world are getting together and learning collectively to perform simple, safe, and early abortions. (Send S.A.E. for an article and leaflet). We will not remain in awe of the so-called experts.

We make no demands on the state boys in power. No reforms will ever be enough. All women must have complete control over our bodies and our lives.

Let's develop tactics of resistance that cannot be controlled by the boys - that directly confronts and exposes them for what they are.

*Let's refuse to give them what they want - let's hit the boys where it hurts!*

## PUTTING ROSS IN THE SHADE!

IT HAS NOW been six months since 21 women from Ardbride Products in Ardrossan were given the sack by their slave driver Stuart Ross.

The women who made lamp-shades were looking for a wage increase and better conditions at the factory, as they have to work with machines with no safety guards, high rates of silica dust and solvent fumes.

The TGWU (big joke!) whom the workers wanted recognised in the factory, have given lukewarm support'. They won't even pay strike pay as they say the strikers are 6 weeks short with union payments, i.e. they had been in the union for 26 weeks and not 32 weeks!

Nonetheless solidarity from workers and others has been strong:

- Refuse collectors have stopped collecting Ross's rubbish.
- British Telecom engineers have refused to cross picket lines.
- Mail workers have refused to deliver company mail.
- Van drivers refuse to cross picket lines leaving Ross to deliver lamp-shades himself!

# Greece:

## "DACHAU" BURNS

P.A.S.O.K., the Greek socialist party promised if elected, to close the old, overcrowded prisons. They did nothing.

On Feb. 4th inmates of the medieval prison on Corfu, known as the "Greek Dachau", burned down the administration offices and prison church. The next day Anarchists in Athens demonstrated in solidarity with the prisoners.

In Salonika on Feb. 10th, supporters marched, shouting "Prisoners break down the prisons". An Anarchist radio station broadcasting anti-state, anti-prison propaganda was raided by the police. Nikos Hadjithoedouzou, aged 16, was arrested. Another comrade Dimitris Voglis is on the run.

In Athens, on Feb. 13th, demonstrators marched to the Min. of Justice demanding "the abolition of Hell". Their banners read "Desire for freedom is stronger than all cells" "Prisoners out, capitalists are the real criminals".

Outside, the police were taunted, "You protect the bosses, get rid of your helmets in order to think". "Honour to Christos Tsoutsouris [he shot the Prosecutor General, Theophanopoulos, 2 yrs. ago], every judge will have the same end".

## STRIKES

Greek workers have suffered a wage freeze since 1985. Simmering discontent and the imposition of V.A.T. on Jan. 1st produced widespread strikes. The T.U.C. [controlled by P.A.S.O.K.] announced two 24 hr. general strikes in one week in February to no effect. The T.U.C. then called off all strikes. This had Communist Party support. They want readmission to the T.U.C. and a say in government.

Source: "Domiki" Athens.  
Send S.A.E. for more info.

## RESPONSES TO ARTICLES

RECEIVED LETTER ABOUT PRISONS ARTICLE IN C.I.13, DESCRIBING IT AS SEXIST. SEND S.A.E. FOR COPY OF SUPPLEMENT.

## MORE LESSONS IN DEMOCRACY

Faced with a growing strike movement which led to occupations in March by oilworkers and seamen the Brazilian Government called in the military. Tanks and troops were used to regain refineries and ports, as the new 'democracy' resorted to the labour laws inherited by the previous dictatorship. Rather than return to low wages trying to cope with 233% inflation many seamen have called it 'quits'.

Earlier the paralysis of the rail system by angry workers in the independent unions, C.O.B. & C.U.T. in December was crushed by the deployment of troops and the arrest of scores of strike leaders who stand to receive 6 or 12 month sentences for 'illegal acts'. A forerunner of trouble to come was food rioting in Belem on the 11th March amid a mood of desperation.

## VENEZUELAN RIOTS

Troops were used against rioting youth following the shooting of a student in the town of Merida. Bands armed with rocks and clubs had attacked police and torched a military store and the local Party offices of the Government. Venezuela is normally seen as a relatively peaceful 'democratic' State.

## STRIKE WAVE THREATENS

A stringent incomes policy amounting to a freeze on wage rises not linked directly to productivity is being resisted in Yugoslavia. Dozens of "self-managed enterprises" in Serbia and Croatia have struck [March 17th] in protest and trade unions have been holding emergency factory meetings in a last-ditched effort by the State to defuse grievances arising from a 100% inflation rate

## OCCUPIED!

A local hospital in Manchester has been occupied since 1st March. Over 90 local people occupied the casualty dept. of Ancoats Hospital after it had been closed by the North Manchester Area Health Authority. There have been marches organised locally and strike action taken in other local hospitals who have had to deal with the overflow caused by the closure.

ARDBRIDE PRODUCTS LTD  
← POTTERY FACTORY ←  
SHOWROOM



# Spain

GRINDS TO A HALT

The EXAMPLE of the mass student protests has not been lost on many Spanish workers. Growing demonstrations and mass strikes have gained in intensity in March to the point at which the slick media messages of Felipe Gonzales' "Socialist" Government are no longer swallowed.

As with the student demonstrations which gained concessions in January, the Civil Guards are used to attack the protestors.

In the steel town of Reinosa in northern Spain they got a taste of their own medicine on March 12th when they were overpowered in fierce street fighting after the rubber bullets had run out. This had erupted after militant protests against job cuts led to the workers holding Company executives hostage, demanding guarantees that the 400 redundancies would not be implemented. The police had been marched out of town with hands above heads!

The widespread strikes in 40 cities signal growing resistance to job losses in a country of 22% unemployment. Such resistance is not easily channelled by Unions or Parties and the potential exists for more radical disruption unless the Government 'buys time' through selective concessions.



In the mines of Asturias in the North-West, 21,000 miners struck against redundancies. Elsewhere stoppages by health workers demanded changes in Government health policies, and students continued their campaign for easier entry to further education. The 5% wage freeze leading to pressures on the largest unions, the 'Communist' CCOO and 'Socialist' UGT to call a general strike instead of selective stoppages.

THE LATEST EPISODE in Italy's nuclear saga was the National Conference on Energy which took place from February 24th to 27th in Rome in an increasingly anti-nuclear climate. Meant to be the means of 'democratically' deciding which energy policy to follow, the whole conference was a farce. The government had already decided to continue their nuclear policy, and one of the 'experts' chosen by them even left the special commission, denouncing that the only reason for its existence was to manipulate figures to support the government's reasoning.

During the conference, there were several demonstrations and other forms of protest, including a students' march, a blockade at the nuclear plant at Montalto by the Greens (who did not participate in the 'conference farce', although invited), and 2 marches organised by Fascist youth organisations who, unfortunately, are visibly growing, taking advantage of popular subjects like nuclear power and the Americanisation of Italy.

The non-institutional Left covered Rome with posters and anti-nuclear graffiti, and on the 27th held another blockade at Montalto in which all work ceased for the day and there was none of the police violence that characterised their last one, with a demonstration in Rome following that afternoon.

During and after the conference the leftist parties began to push for a referendum on the nuclear question. Even the 'Communist' Party (PCI) are supporting this. This is the same PCI that signed the government's plan to continue with nuclear power. But upon seeing its youth and base organisations and the rest of the Left against nuclear power, decided no policy is worth losing votes. Such is expected of the PCI.

# Resistance Worldwide

## S.Africa

SHELL SHOCKED

THE Anti-Apartheid Movement began its latest campaign - against Shell - by releasing balloons over Britain's cities, covered with pious slogans and full of hot air. Fortunately more meaningful solidarity has been shown elsewhere.

**Ford U.K.:** Assembly lines at Dagenham were hit by a series of wildcat stoppages during 1986 when workers refused to handle parts made in S. Africa. In January 1987, a mass meeting decided to block supplies to the Ford export plant until trade with S. Africa was stopped.

In mid-February the company conceded. Workers threatened to spread the action if Ford supplied S. Africa from any other plant in Europe.

**Holland:** The Dutch firm SHV Holdings, decided to stop profiting from apartheid on 19th Jan. 1987. They are unable to obtain insurance cover after 4 arson attacks in 16 months on their 'Makri' stores, destroying property worth over £30M.

At 4 a.m. the same day, squatters occupied Shell offices in Nijmegen. Oil drums were placed on the roof to prevent helicopter attacks. It took police, with bulldozers, till 11 a.m. to break through a barricade of burning Shell office equipment. 12 occupiers were arrested.

At 1pm another burning barricade appeared in a main street. Mass shoplifting and 'sticker actions' occurred at V and D stores which sell S. African goods.

**Australia:** Dockers have imposed 24-hour bans on handling ships carrying cargo to or from S. Africa.

**London School of Economics:** Students occupied the administration block during the last week in February to protest against the school's investments in firms with S. African links.

### OPPOSITION STIRRING

Even the official Polish Union combine, OPZZ has been forced to declare opposition to price rises across-the-board such as 30% on public transport and 100% for postal charges. Underground resistance by Solidarnosc is also threatened.

In Rumania, cutbacks included 20% in domestic energy use and 30% in public buildings - this in the height of winter. Faced with increasing rationing, a 46 hour, 6 day working week, other workers may follow the past example of miners and refuse to take it any more.

### BRINGING THE STRUGGLE HOME!

In the occupied Gaza strip and West Bank, palestinians joined in protests with those in Israel proper against the Land Day, the 11th anniversary of March 1976 when 6 citizens of Galilee were killed by Zionist police while demonstrating against the expropriation of their land. A curfew was imposed in Nablus and defiant acts occurred in Gaza, Ramallah and other centres on March 30th.

### Nick Blockaded

There was an immediate response to the conviction and vicious sentences imposed on 3 men accused of killing PC Blakelock during the 1985 Broadwater Farm uprising.

On March 21st 100 people picketed and blockaded Tottenham police station. Chants denounced the racist police and courts. Speeches called for continuing resistance and preparation, "as it'll happen again."

There was NO forensic or photographic evidence and NO witnesses linking the 3 convicted with Blakelock's death. 3 other defendants were freed because their 'confessions' had been forced out of them by police brutality.

### OTHER NEWS

The PCI and government's campaign to discredit and discourage any dissent continues. The worst hit are, of course, the anti-nuclear, anti-militarists. Along with the 7 arrested Autonomists (all of whom have been released but are still facing charges), there were numerous searches and hassles of Rome's squatted social centres, searches of homes, confiscations of posters and other material, and searches of Carrara's printers where such posters and other Anarchist literature is printed. The 'Anti-Militarist Solidarity Fund' was confiscated, too. This served to spread information and, above all, to sustain the struggles of the comrades who refused military service, spending a year in jail. The authorities said the fund promoted and financed insubordination to the military, and thus the State.

We will not give in to these attacks - the fights against military, nuclear and state repression go on.

Rome Anarchists

# WAPPING COMES TO THE MIDLANDS

**THIS IS HOW** the latest fight with the print unions and bosses is being described by the printworkers themselves.

Print millionaire Lionel Pickering, who owns a dozen free newspapers such as the *Derby Trader*, *Nottingham Trader* and *Leicester Trader*, is trying to take the same path as Murdoch to even more profit and obedience from his workers.

In December, following 9 months of fruitless pay talks, he sacked 90 printworkers who were mostly NGA and SOGAT members. His hatred of organised workers is infamous, he reinforced this by hiring cheap, unorganised scab labour to replace the sacked workers.

The printing plant at Menor Gate in Derbyshire was occupied by the printworkers, but later a 24-hour picket was organised instead. This forced printing to be moved to the 'rival' press of the *Nottingham Evening Post*.

Picketing there stopped several known scabs getting in, but a car driven by a scabbing UDM

Positive developments have been the use of mass meetings to ratify the decisions of the occupation committee, and the setting up of a womens committee. The occupiers have also used the plant for music nights, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

Under pressure from Caterpillar and the Labour Party/Trade Union bosses, support for the occupation at mass meetings has been gradually falling. Many workers have voted with their feet. In mid-February the remaining white collar staff abandoned the occupation. On 23rd of March those remaining voted 418 to 352 to continue.

Caterpillar immediately announced that the factory would close on May 11th. 800 eviction orders were delivered to the factory gates. None were opened. The Company then sought an injunction.

## OLD ILLUSIONS

With faith in the law, the stewards met the company in court on March 25th. With 'much regret' the judge ordered the workers to end the occupation.

Another illusion dented, the workers refused to comply until it was put to a mass meeting on March 30th. Trade unionists were asked to show support by 'physical presence' at the meeting. The workers voted 269 to 263 to continue. The Trade Union leadership were horrified. After that, the knives were out.

To defy the bosses (union or otherwise) the struggle must change and spread. Tactics should be debated and decided upon by all supporters, family, friends, etc. of the occupation. This strengthened the Fisher-Bendix occupation (Merseyside, 1972). Production can be changed to satisfy social needs. The factory is then transformed into a community asset that workers will defend as their own. No longer a mere source of private profit. During the Plessey occupation at Bathgate in 1981 local residents defended the factory on several occasions.

## DIFFERENT STRUGGLE

Here lie the seeds of a different struggle. Not for a new boss or an old job. Breaking the chains of property laws, courts and sham democracy - for a new life based on social ownership and the fulfillment of human needs.

**At the Glasgow rally for Caterpillar** on 28th March, the platform pleaded with the crowd to give a "fair hearing" for Tory M.P. Alan Stewart. Then a Catholic priest lectured us for not recognising friends when we see them. Instead of a platform



mineworker taking in clerical staff almost killed one of the pickets, but fortunately she was thrown aside and escaped serious injury.

Support for the strike is growing at local level with pickets and some local people playing the major roles. 'Support' from the unions

amounted to a token strike van, some strike pay and the advice of the NGA rep that they may as well give up!

The national press, police and DHSS are doing all they can to make sure the strikers lose their fight. And following Wapping the worked have learned to trust

union bosses as little as other bosses.

For more information or donations contact: Trader Sacked Workers dispute c/o Stonehill Road, Derby.

## HERE WE GO!!

**From our Yorks correspondent:** North Yorkshire's miners are regularly on strike.

**British Coal [B.C.] attempts to curb the "Wildcat" have failed.** Now that miners realise that a day's lost production costs them a week's production bonus the one day stoppage has given way to the one week stoppage!

**Pits are popping out for a week all over:** SELBY [all the six pits in the development came out] and Kellingley [over bonus payments].

**Only 15 out of 125 pits owned by B.C. have avoided strike action since the 1984-85 strike.**

**Fed up of being ordered about and exploited? Sick of living in poverty while the profit system benefits a powerful few? Angry about men oppressing women? Disgusted at the many other injustices in today's society?**

**You're not alone. Lots of people round the globe are not only fed up, they're fighting back. In Counter Information we report this often-censored resistance, in the hope of encouraging more such activity.**

**We stress the importance of people directly controlling their struggles, outside the control of political parties, trade unions or any leaders. Replacing one set of rulers with another - as has happened in the 'Communist' Party - ruled regimes, and as left-wing parties and national liberation movements want - is no solution. We encourage today's resistance to aim for the complete overthrow of all relationships whereby some people oppress others. The world's resources should be owned and controlled by all, and used to satisfy human needs.**

**The Counter Information collective invites people to - send us articles and information - take bundles of the news-sheet to distribute - make a much needed donation towards our printing and postage costs - write for info on our Readers Meetings and the CI "Supplement" - contact us if they'd like to join the CI collective. We wish to co-operate with all who share our aims.**

**COUNTER INFORMATION, C/O 43 CANDLEMAKER ROW [PIGEONHOLE 81], EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND, U.K.**

**NOTE: The views expressed in reports from outside the collective are not necessarily totally shared by Counter Information.**

**bigwig meets tomatoes**

**London claimants report:**

On March 23rd an 'important' DHSS civil servant made a 'Top Secret' visit to the new Wood Green dole office.

So what was the momentous occasion? More pre-election give-aways from the EEC food mountains? Or maybe handing out medals to local claimants who've survived all the latest Government harrassment schemes (YTS, Restart, Availability forms, cuts, snoopers, race checks...)? No - it was to celebrate the opening of the 500th Dole Office in Britain!

8 of us confronted bigwig Mr Cooper - he was scared to come out. Big argument when he did - threw tomatoes at him. Spoiled his visit. Staff were really amused at the undignified dignitary!

On 13th March 20 of us occupied Tottenham DHSS, refusing to leave until our friend was paid. He was penniless after his giros had failed to arrive. In fact we decided to stay till ALL claimants got their money. At first, supervisors rushed down to close the reception, but when they saw we meant business (with leaflets, tape recorders, cameras...), they re-opened and EVERYONE got nearly all they'd asked for.

In Leeds claimants recently identified and photographed members of the visiting Regional Fraud Squad - and then followed them around, yelling "It's the Fraud Squad!"