

COUNTER INFORMATION

No. 11 Aug/Sept 1986 FREE

UNDER SIEGE!

The pressure for change in South Africa intensifies despite the fierce repression unleashed by the State. The imposition of emergency regulations in June led to thousands of detentions designed to neutralise resistance in the workplaces, schools and townships.

Coupled with this is a policy of arming and encouraging the activities of vigilante groups given a free hand to terrorise dissident centres and assassinate activists.

In the news blackout and 'black against black' disinformation barrage, it has been difficult to obtain precise indications resistance. The restart of the school term has seen the introduction of massive absenteeism and measures for all pupils to carry identity tags and have discipline rigorously imposed.

COSATU, the union federation, organised a withdrawal of labour on the 14th July which received support despite Employer, State and UWUSA (Zulu union) intimidation.

■ Meanwhile polarisation within the white community increases with the neo-nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement planning to train white youths from 11 upwards set against those largely English speaking whites who are active in the U.D.F. and non-racial organisations.

■ Mamelodi is a township north of the State Capital, Pretoria. Before the 'State of Emergency', control of the township was effectively in the hands of the people. They had established a network of street committees, organised from the street level upwards to block and section committees and a civic association.

The creation of genuine community democracy arose out of the successful struggle to wrest control from the security forces and discredit the Government back town councils in 1985. One of the prime movers was the Mamelodi Youth Organisation (MAYO) which assisted the measures instigated to root out crime against their

fellow township dwellers through 'peoples courts' which usually decided on community service in all but extreme cases such as rape.

"They must gain confidence in what we are doing, so that they can break away totally from government structures. The government must become irrelevant to their lives".

Whole committees cannot be detained and intimidated in the long term and the achievement of the Black opposition is moving to exercise dual power and create its own democracy will be vital as a springboard for a future when the security forces can be more effectively combatted.

"But the time will come when the balance of power is on our side, and then the people will say 'enough is enough'." (Source: Weekly Mail)

THE LIBERATION OF LEARNING

At the heart of the resistance to the State has been the mass action and radicalisation of the school students. Despite the widespread detention of youth as young as 11 schools continue to be closed: in Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State; in Seshago in North Transvaal after Police and Army raids to intimidate those engaged in a consumer boycott; in 'homelands' such as Lebowa after students demanded an end to irrelevant and biased subjects, and in numerous other townships such as Witbank coinciding with trials such as 11 workers accused of terrorism.

Well publicised student protests in Universities such as Witwatersrand were continually attacked over 3 successive days of violence in early June.

HELP SHELL TO HELL

The Anglo-Dutch oil company Shell continues to supply the South African regime with oil.

S. Africa has no oil supplies of its own. Thousands of police vehicles, aeroplanes, tanks and watercannon are 100% reliant on imported oil. Oil is also necessary to produce the tear gas, nerve gas and napalm used on S. African workers.

The President of Royal Dutch Shell Group, Mr. Lo Van Wackem, in a newspaper interview (Oct. 1985) stated: "We are not planning to voluntarily abandon our subsidiary in S. Africa. We have a company there which is already for some 70 years a loyal member of the Shell Group. Recent events in Holland may persuade him to change his mind.

On the night of May 11 - 12 1986, 4 day before their annual shareholders' meeting, Shell filling stations across Holland were attacked. Two groups, 'Nightshade' and 'Ever More Nightshade' were involved (in Dutch the word for shade also means damage).

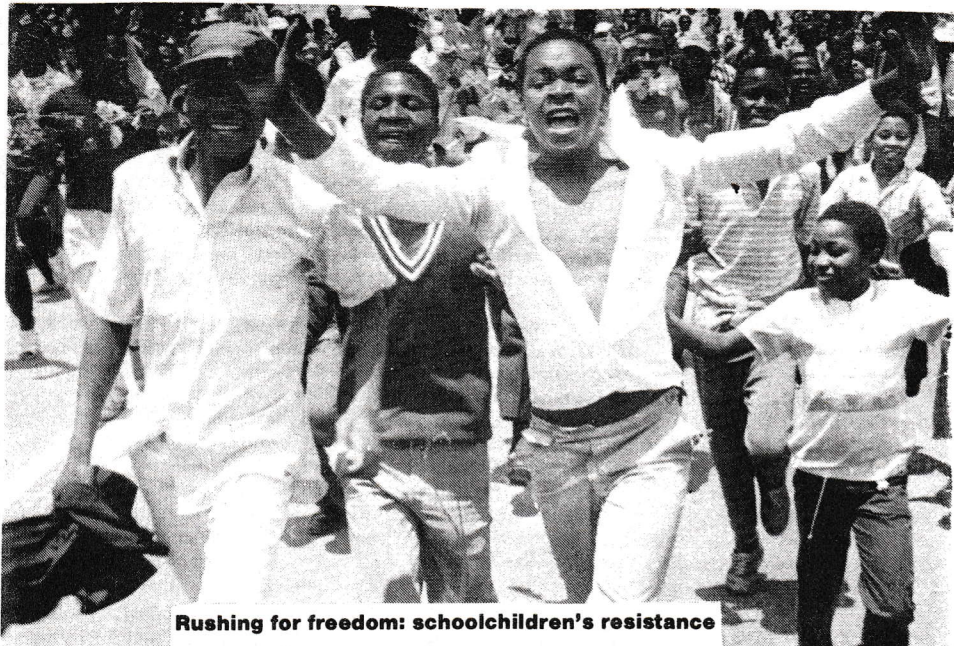
Ever More Nightshade burnt down a Shell filling station on the A28 near Wezep to take "some of the power back which companies like Shell keep for themselves in order to oppress us the population" and "showed Shell a fraction of the violence with which they daily confront the population of South Africa".

Nightshade cut through petrol hoses, destroyed pumps, glued up automatic pay machines, put sand and sugar in petrol reservoirs and painted anti-apartheid slogans. These actions took place in Zoetermeer (3 stations), Somersen, Breukelen, De Bilt, Deil, Nieuwegein, Jutphaas, Kesteren and Amstelveen (2 stations).

Nightshade left a warning: "If these action achieve nothing we will not hesitate to take more, further-reaching steps against Shell...Help Shell to Hell".

On June 15th 200 people attacked the S. African Embassy in the Hague. Fences were pulled down, paint bombs and bricks were thrown. Police interference as effectively resisted until mosty people had gone home. Then 9 people were arrested at random.

The following day, the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising, there were more attacks on Shell filling stations in Emmen, Marssum and Eindhoven. In Amsterdam one station was completely burned down and another had its shop cremated. Nobody was arrested.



Rushing for freedom: schoolchildren's resistance

■ In towns surrounding Durban, vigilante attacks on youths involved in school protests had led to 20 deaths by the end of May. The so-called 'A Team' recruited directly from especially released criminals and a few black teachers has embarked on a strategy of intimidating potential resistance by extremely brutal killings: "his body was gashed with panga. His eyes and genitals were removed...", another's skull "was opened and his brain matter taken out".

Women now stand guard over their children and the community of Chesterville is in a state of siege. The white anti-apartheid organisation, Black Sash has helped with women brought into give moral support and provisions. This is Natal Province today!

■ A 'stayaway' by workers in Kwandebele accompanied running battles with the Vigilantes (Imbokhto) and youths mobilised at funerals and in a march on the 'Parliament' of the area.

The civil war in the homeland escalated on 30th July with the killing of Home Affairs Minister, Ntuli, the chief advocate of independence within the apartheid system by insurgents fighting the combined force of vigilantes and South African army who have used helicopter gunships to disperse and intimidate mass protests.

■ Western computer companies have been making a 'killing' out of sales to the South African State. I.B.M. supplied the computer software for 'The Book of Life', which classifies the population of racial grounds and consequent resident and employment patterns. I.C.L. computers are utilised to track the movements of the 25 million black population, each of whom is fingerprinted at the age of 16, with 20 million prints in current storage. Other companies such as the Control Date Corporation have provided systems used in the current repression whereby townships can be simulated in great detail to assist the security forces in their policy of brutal detention and harassment. Another company, Ontel, a U.S. electronics company set up the surveillance network on workers' productivity (rate of exploitation). Such business links boost the ability of apartheid to survive and our solidarity can be demonstrated by bringing such facts to the attention of I.B.M. and I.C.L. workers and their bosses.

■ The British owned company, G.E.C., was faced with a determined response in early June from workers in Germiston and other towns south of Johannesburg. Strikes at 3 plants involving 1,300 workers had led to the

victimisation and sacking of 49 machine operators and in turn this provoked a sit-in at the plush headquarters in nearby Parktown, which led the company to concede demands for negotiation involving all 3 plants, rather than playing one against the other, the policy of companies extracting super-profits in South Africa.

WOMEN STRIKE OVER RAPE CASE

An all woman-stayaway was launched in Port Alfred in the Eastern Cape this week after police released a man accused of raping an elderly township woman.

Kolekha Nkwinti, representative of the Port Alfred Women's Organisation, said 98 per cent failed to turn up for work.

NO FESTIVAL!

The Police operation against the Stonehenge convoy followed on from the freedom of movement being denied to striking miners in the 1984/5 dispute.

For a full report, write to the Pleasure Tendency, PO Box 109, Leeds, LS5 3AA.

CHIP ON THE SHOULDER

Although resistance to the dictates of 'new technology' work in California is rarely expressed in terms of the underground independent organisation of 5 years ago, alienation and work pressures continually threaten disruption.

Work conditions and modern methods of supervision leads to on-the-job 'disorganising': absenteeism, disinformation and sabotage. An extreme pointer to the office of tomorrow is that of Pacific S.W. Airline where workers have constant use of Visual Display Terminals (VDTs). The VDTs track every micro-second of their workdays. A red light flashes if the worker is 'slacking'. Apart from minimum length breaks, only 12 minutes out of every 7½ hours work off the phone and so-called 'Quality Assurance' supervisors police performance strictly. Understandably this leads to high job stress and job turnover, but it can also lead to a wide range of computer-induced incapacity: hemorrhaged retinas, irregular menstruations, nervous breakdowns, and back trouble.

The work environment may be sanitised but the job stress is intensive! We would be interested in reports of 'Silicon' industries in central Scotland and elsewhere.

Processed World, 1986

RADIATION RESISTANCE

IN THE WEEKS and months after the Chernobyl nuclear farce, feelings have been running high throughout Europe against Nuclear power.

Nowhere has it been more concentrated and militant than in Germany. In the following article it has to be remembered that a lot of the participants were local people supplying stones or coke cans filled with sand for themselves and other militants. It also must be remembered that all those people working together were fed up with government lies over radiation levels and decided to show their anger in a constructive way, by direct action against an industry that will, eventually, destroy and poison us all. The destruction of this industry can only do us good.

WACKERSDORF

Saturday 17 May: 2-3,000 local people gather at Wackersdorf. The 'Invincible' fence is attacked and one electricity pylon pulled down.

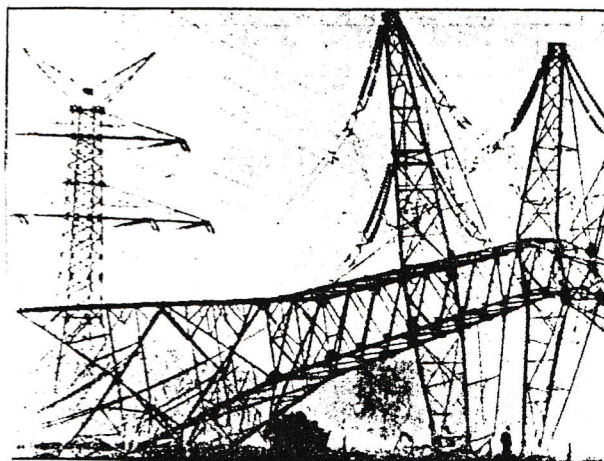
Sunday 18 May: protestors swelled to 10,000 with 1,000 masked militants. A 'walk' starts at 1 pm and meets 50 or so police outside the fence. Police retreated inside after being pelted with stones.

Work started on trying to get through the fence. The Demo is met with water cannons and thousands of police. The water cannons come under fire from stones (supplied by locals), paint, wood, catapulted ball bearings and petrol bombs.

Work to make the fence 'waterproof' (eg shelter the fence cutters from water cannons paid off as holes and gaps begin to appear after 3 hours. (The fence is made of ½ inch steel rods criss-crossed with steel bars like railway lines!!) On seeing this, 200 police run out and try to intervene but they are met by a hail of stones and have to retreat carrying their wounded behind them.

After 7 hours of all-out attack and constant gas warfare, fighting subsides, with most participants exhausted although 3-400 masked reinforcements kept up the stone throwing till 3 in the morning - as police tried hurriedly to weld up the fence!

Significant actions are taking place almost every week at Wackersdorf. Gorleben, Biblis, Hamm and Brokdorf nuclear sites have also seen big actions, while rioting broke out in Hamburg on June 7th, 8th and 14th.



CLAMP DOWN IN ITALY

"What's at stake is the guarantee to be able to continue to struggle, to organise, to discuss, to spread information, for all who want to do so outside of the established institutions and the rules imposed by the political parties." So wrote the journal *AUTONOMIA* about the situation today in north east Italy.

In March 1985 the police in Trieste shot dead Pietro Greco, an activist in the Workers' Autonomy movement. Since then the autonomists and other concerned people have organised a 'Counter Inquest into the murder of Pietro Greco'. The fact of the deliberate murder of the unarmed Pietro have been publicised. In March '85 and '86 significant demonstrations marched through Padova, breaking a long-standing ban on autonomist-linked demos.

The State has clamped down on this dissent. Following 20 arrests last year for 'subversive association', on 15th April the police arrested many activists involved in the Counter Inquest. The accusations were so absurd however that on 3rd May these most recent charges were dropped.

On 25th May autonomists demonstrated in Padova to oppose all the 'conspiracy' laws, to support the continuation of the Counter Inquest into Pietro's murder, and for the dropping of all the outstanding charges.

STOP THE FRAME-UP

Following are extracts from a leaflet distributed by the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign on 20th July at a demonstration in solidarity with all those arrested following the uprising of October 6th.

THE EVIDENCE AGAINST ALL DEFENDANTS IS STATEMENTS EXTRACTED UNDER THE TERROR OF INTERROGATION IN A POLICE STATION.

Defendants were:

- Totally isolated from solicitor, family and friends; alone, cold, often without shoes, jacket, or no clothes at all.
- Tired and confused and hungry; suffering frequent and lengthy interrogation some lasting up to 14 hours at a time day and night;
- Threatened with a murder charge, long prison sentences, injury and attack, threats of arrest and prison for their family;
- Offered inducements that if they admitted throwing a stone they would be able to go home and would only get a fine;
- Made to endure constant questioning by a Mr Nice and Mr Nasty and Mr Nice, lasting up to 7 days.

Some defendants were beaten up on the way to the station and during interrogation. Among defendants were children.

In these conditions the police manufactured their evidence.

On July 8th between 6 - 8 pm Tottenham High Rd. police

LAND AND LIBERTY

IN ANDALUCIA, Southern Spain, about 600 agricultural day workers have been taken to court for actions taken in their struggle for land reform. These actions range from demonstrations, blockading roads and hunger strikes to occupations of large estates (usually badly under-used and often abandoned).

station, near the farm, was completely blockaded by over 200 demonstrators. Speakers with megaphones kept up a continuous chant of anti-police, anti-racist, anti-South Africa slogans. Pigs were visible in the street and in the upper floors of surrounding buildings but they didn't risk trying to stop the demo.

Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign, c/o No. 12-16, Tangmere, BWF Estate, London N17. Tel: 01-808 1667.

HOMES NOT JAILS

Over a hundred and fifty unemployed protestors and a contingent of anti-militarists from all over Europe (taking action at the Faslane Nuclear Submarine Base) greeted the Queen in Glasgow on July 29th.

The Royal scrounger was present to open the giant Sheriff Court complex which has the capability of holding up to 2,000 people in the event of riot or civil disorder.

Andalucia has the richest arable land in Spain but 60% of it belongs to only 2% of the population. Life for the land workers has historically been extremely harsh - abject poverty, illiteracy and hunger. Even now some 500,000 landless workers try to survive by selling their labour to large estates.

MASS EMIGRATION

Between 1960-73 the mechanisation of agriculture resulted in 2.5 million Andalucians being forced to emigrate. In the 70's profitgrabbing landowners replaced traditional, labour-intensive crops (olives, beet) with sunflowers and cereal which need little cultivation by hand. So now 200,000 seasonal workers are condemned to a life of permanent nomadism in their search for work. Spain's entry into the EEC will probably accelerate the mechanisation of agriculture and worsen the situation.

RESISTANCE

S.O.C. (the landworkers Union) was established in 1977. There are no officials in the Union, all decisions are taken by assemblies of workers and all delegates are subject to immediate recall. Their demand is for basic human rights, land for those who work the land, a better standard of living and education. In 1978 they organised the first in a series of land occupations to try and achieve their aims. The initial

hope that the Socialist government would listen to their demands was of course dashed and the repression continued. The measures taken to repress S.O.C.'s campaigns are very severe, whenever occupations take place the Guardia Civil is sent in. In 1984 in El Coronil, 200 people occupied land for 11 days, the police intervened by blowing up the door of a building 8 men were occupying peacefully - despite the fact that one of the doors was open. The men were charged with breach of the peace and sentenced from 6 months to 2 years in prison. Land workers who protest by chaining themselves to trees are charged with coercion! The struggle gained momentum in 1985 when workers from 10 villages simultaneously occupied land.

THE SITUATION NOW

The 600 workers recently sentenced have been given sentences ranging from heavy fines to prison sentences of 6-30 months. S.O.C. explain the severe sentencing by pointing out that many judges are landowners or related to landowners so that little justice can be expected. They are appealing against these sentences to prevent their members going to prison. At the time of writing the results of the appeals are not known.

Information from C.E.D.R.I., B.P. 42, 04300 Forcalquier, France and S.O.C. c/o Santas Patronas, 24, 2, 41 01, Sevilla, Espana.

NATIVE AMERICAN RESISTANCE

SINCE THE DAYS when the first Europeans stepped upon the land now known as America, the Native People have resisted domination, robbery and massive genocide.

The fight goes on today in places like the Black Hills where members of the Oglala Lakota have reclaimed some of the stolen land.

In Montana, the Northern Cheyenne are struggling for survival of their homelands against multi-national corporations.

The Innu Indians from Canada are in the middle of a battle to prevent NATO from using their homeland as a base for large-scale warfare training.

BIG MOUNTAIN

The US Government intends to 'relocate' i.e. forcibly remove, 14,000 Navajo and Hopi people from their homeland in Northeastern Arizona.

The land round Big Mountain which includes Hopi and Navajo

reservations has become known as the Joint Use Area. It is this land which is to be sold to large-scale ranching, coal strip mining and uranium mining interests. In order to achieve this the government invented a dispute between the Hopi and Navajo. In fact they have lived in harmony with each other for over 4 centuries. The people of both tribes say there has never been and is not now any land dispute.

Since 1962 the government has been using this 'dispute' to justify an economic boycott of the area, causing tremendous hardship to those living there by freezing construction, repairs and improvements to homes, school, roads and health facilities. In addition, they have imposed a 90% reduction in livestock - the only way many in

the area earn their living. When these measures didn't have the desired effect - forcing everyone off the land; a Relocation Commission was set up to facilitate their removal.

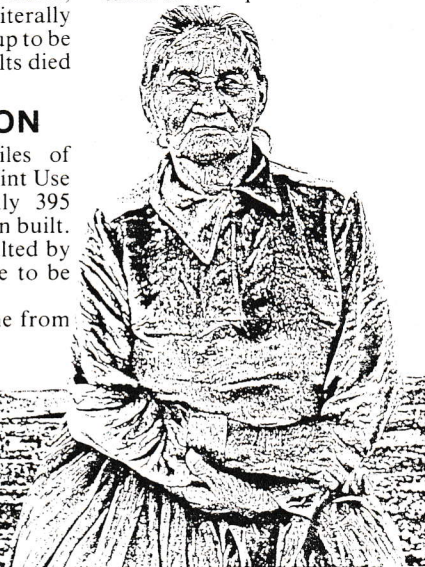
Relocation means being forced into racist and hostile towns surrounding the reservations; or onto wasteland, reduced to poverty and literally left to die. Of the first group to be relocated 25% of the adults died within the first 6 years.

DIRECT ACTION

In 1976, the 400 miles of fencing to separate the Joint Use Area began. So far only 395 miles of the fence has been built. The last 5 miles being halted by the direct action of those to be removed.

It began when someone from

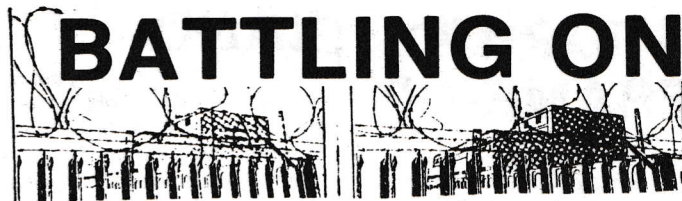
Big Mountain fired her gun at the fencing crew - they left! When they returned later she was joined by other Big Mountain women, who have successfully halted the fencing by pulling up fence posts, throwing stones, taking keys from trucks - doing whatever it takes to disrupt the work!



Info. Native American News. For more information: Big Mountain Support Group, 1412 Cypress Street, Berkeley, California 94703.



Shipyard workers fire grenade launcher at police in job cut protests in May in Gijon, Spain. (Send SAE for more info).



The 5,000 sacked News International printworkers fight on. Their aim is full reinstatement and entry into Murdoch's new Wapping plant with the same rights as before the mass sackings.

The Sun, Times, Sunday Times and News of the World are still being printed and distributed. But on a mid-July visit to the picket line we found the pickets to be in good heart. New tactics dreamt up and applied by the pickets themselves, and going beyond the usual ineffective trade unionism, were causing disruption to the bosses.

Flying pickets are attacking distribution depots, after causing considerable damage. Day time road blockades in the Wapping area are causing huge traffic jams, sometimes stretching into the City.

A major problem the printworkers face is isolation. Murdoch is receiving solidarity from his class. The police, the law and the courts are all being used against the strikers. Don't wait for the TUC or the trade union leaders to do anything, the printworkers need solidarity from other working class people now.

How can the strikers take the struggle forward? The news sheet *PICKET*, produced by some Wapping pickets, writes in its 18th July issue:

If there is any leadership in this strike it is certainly from the pickets, all others have shown

themselves unwilling or unable to force the strike ahead. Not only is it necessary to force the flying pickets ahead but also the campaign to black all of Murdoch's scabby products and those who work for him. The organisation of these activities has fallen to groups of people without leaders or constitutions and if these are strengthened then the strike is in so much more of a position to resist the next sell out. If the pickets do what they think is right then this dispute can be won but if the leaders are listened to it is clear what will happen.

RESTART? NO START!

The 'Restart' scheme is the government's latest attack on the unemployed. Between July 1986 and March 1987 everybody who has been unemployed for more than a year will be called in for an interview.

The government claim 'Restart' is to help unemployed people. But the early evidence is that it means increased harassment of the unemployed by the State.

Those interviewed are quizzed about their efforts to find work. Often they are pressurised to go on a low paid Community Programme scheme, a 'Restart' course, or a 'Jobclub' against their will.

But claimants are fighting back. *Claimants Action Group Edinburgh* urge people to attend the interviews with a friend and not to be bullied. They suggest claimants quote the statement by Ian Lang M.P., Under Secretary for State for Employment: "Restart does not force people to accept jobs or any of the 8 opportunities on offer" (Guardian 4.7.86).

As the Action Group say "If you're angry about what they're doing to us all, why not do something to stop them?"

For a copy of their leaflet, contact C.A.G.E., c/o U.W.C., 12a Picardy Place, Edinburgh.

GETTING OUR OWN BACK

Unemployed people in 2 mining areas have found a way of getting a little bit of their own back from British Coal.

In Seaham Co. Durham, after dark residents of Malvern Crescent have started raiding coal trains. Wagons coming from Seaham Colliery bound for power stations are stopped at level crossings by home-made barriers, hauled onto the track.

Where possible the coal is released from the wagons and up to hundred people carry it away in whatever containers they can lay their hands on. It has been estimated, by a local councillor, that up to 500 tons have been liberated in some weeks.

British Coal have hired private security guards with dogs to stop this repossession by the working class. This has been totally ineffective due to the large number of possible attack points and active resistance by the people.

A similar tactic is being used in the Rhondda and Ryhmney valleys to keep the home fires burning. At Porth in the Rhondda masked raiders reclaimed 10 tons of coal one night last winter. In Ryhmney valley transport police started running decoy trains up from Cardiff. This was sussed out and a decoy detective bricked.

FITZWILLIAM, YORKS

Kinsley Drift mine seems set to close, but miners at nearby South Kirkby battle on. All 3 shifts struck on 16th July. This was to oppose management's dictatorial policy of shifting people from one job to another without consultation. By this tactic the bosses presumably mean to disorientate the workforce and stop militancy developing. The local NUM branch secretary was noted urging miners to scab.

Loads of people from the local mining community have wanted to join the printers at Wapping. And indeed both organised bus-loads and individuals have done so. However NUM leaders have obstructed this solidarity, stating that printers' leaders such as Dean don't want miners there, and threatening to refuse NUM legal representation to anyone arrested. Another striking example of the need for grass-roots cross-industry contact to by-pass the bureaucrats.

To finish on a positive note - some policemen received a good thumping recently when they tried to defend a scab in the Kinsley club. Angry locals pursuing a self-confessed strike breaker reacted to the police intervention by attacking the scabs in uniform. At least 2 policemen hit the deck. The police had to retreat unceremoniously with the scab. No arrests.

BLACK RAVEN
BOOKS

62 47 4 2

Eastleigh, 5th July. Arrived at the TNT depot. As one man set about quickly and methodically, windscreen after windscreen, side windows, lights, depot windows, brake pipes. Not one vehicle is spared. Plenty blocking the entrance and the view of the police. Scab drivers sat in a little darkened corner as private cars and vans are done, not daring to show their faces. *PICKET*

Newfolk, July 1st. More than 200 people damaged vehicles and aimed flares at offices at the TNT depot at Thetford. A dozen cars and 15 vans used to deliver News International papers were damaged in the night attack.

The Scotsman

Contact *PICKET*, c/o Housmans Books, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX.

Counter Information wants to spread knowledge of resistance to oppression in all aspects of life. We encourage this resistance to aim for the complete overthrow of all relations of domination and submission, including the class system, the oppression of women and the many other existing aspects of oppression and exploitation. The world's resources should be controlled by all its people and used to satisfy human needs.

We encourage correspondents to send us reports. Sometimes these articles may not be in complete harmony with our revolutionary ideas. For example, we stress the importance of people directly controlling their struggles. Thus in workplace struggles we emphasise how Trade Unions prevent this grass-roots control and how they inhibit the development of generalised class struggle against all forms of exploitation. We would also stress the importance of not merely replacing one set of rulers by another, as has happened in the 'Communist' Party-ruled regimes, and as national liberation movements aim for.

At present Counter Information is produced by people in Central Scotland. We would like to encourage the widest possible participation in the project, and we wish to co-operate with all who share our aims.

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.

COUNTER INFORMATION, BOX 81, c/o 43 CANDLEMAKER ROW, EDINBURGH.

This issue published 2nd August 1986.