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# BLACK FLAG

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## WHY NOT RIOT



**HANDSWORTH POLICE WONDER:** *is 'community policing' off the road forever?*

The (perhaps not unjustified) Philistine sneer that trade union 'days of action' are in reality days of inaction could not be made in Handsworth last week.

Following trivial incidents of what some call insensitive policing and others more downright called harassment, the young Blacks exploded. Handsworth, Birmingham is one of the frustrated urban areas where everything is allowed to decay and once stuck there, one finds it difficult to get out. If in addition to this one is continually jeered at and humiliated because of racial origin, there comes a point where people can take no more.

The effort involved in the burnings, the smashings, the defiance of the might of the State, that took place in Birmingham — if added what happened in Brixton, Toxteth, Finsbury Park, Wolverhampton and similar spots in the past — was far greater than the energy expended in the storming of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. But capitalist authority isn't enshrined in the Indian corner shops they burned down, and the riots turned out to be populist rather than revolutionary.

The night of burnings ended with some Rastafarians offering to patrol 'their' streets for the police, which doesn't say much for the law and order image of the police nor the independent image of these particular Rastafarians.

The media are all putting the blame on 'criminal elements' and drug pushers in particular. There is an element of truth in this but the fact remains that if you criminalise your political opponents, as

Mrs Thatcher has been steadily doing, you also politicise the criminals, and bring a new dimension into play which your average policeman can't cope with.

The police could be brought in swiftly and in great numbers to attack miners. A massive confrontation was built up over the country, for after all the striking miners presented a major confrontation with the Government. No such swiftness and concentration happened at Handsworth. They let the place burn for a few hours, for they weren't going in to risk police lives for the sake of a few Asian shopkeepers. Had they been scab miners they would have had a value to the government.

There is nothing new in the riot situation even in the 'no go' area. There were deprived areas long before the sociologists, not so long ago in London there were parts no police dared enter, in all the areas of Victorian and Edwardian England there were districts of the 'submerged tenth' — once in, you were forgotten and could never get out. The 'lumpen proletariat' was the phrase given by German scholars (popularised by Marx) to workers who had no work let alone capital to render them a living and so had to turn to crime.

What has happened in today's England is that immigration has brought a large number of native born West Indians — generally expelled by their Victorian-style Christian parents — and slung them on the bottom heap. It is therefore possible to exploit the racial angle — and also make them more bitter and responsible to populist, rather than revolutionary, cheers that Babylon is being burned when it is not even being singed.

## UK JUNTA - Plans Exposed

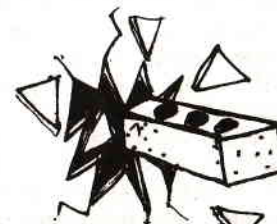
In the latest issue of the *New Statesman*, an exclusive expose on the secret, yet-to-be-ratified, measures to be enacted by the State in the event of a national emergency (eg. a major war, a protracted general strike, insurrection, etc.), confirms nearly all the assertions made in the article, *Preparing For Civil War (Black Flag Quarterly, Autumn 1984)*, concerning State civil/military contingency schemes. The assertion that under such circumstances the UK State would dispose with all forms of government and set up a civil-military junta, has also been confirmed by the *New Statesman* expose, which bases its findings on a leaked Whitehall document outlining the secret emergency plans.

One plan essential to the overall emergency strategy — already adopted makes use of *Ground Defence Areas*. The GDAs basically sketches a scenario by which each military commander in each military base around the country will enact total military control in the area of the base and complete power over all property and people within the base's 'jurisdiction'. Government has to date denied the existence of these new powers.

According to the *Emergency Powers (No.1) Bill* (unpublished), 'within GDAs everyone and everything is subject to military plans. . . Roadblocks and checkpoints can be set up under military control. Canals, seaways, roads and tracks

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## Stop South African Business Day



September 30

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