

# Stop The City

Depending on what you compared it to, Stop the City was either a success or a failure. If compared to previous recent anti-war demonstrations in this country it was undoubtedly a success. The majority of the 2-3000 that turned up were not pacifists and were aggressive towards the cops. Whole area were blockaded and streets were taken over completely bringing the heart of the capitals financial area into diarray. Traffic flows were disrupted throughout the day, underground transport was sabotaged, causing delays for commuters. Other attempts at sabotage included the spiking of tyres, towing broken down vehicles and leaving them in the middle of the traffic, driving out the rich from posh restaurants by letting off stink bombs, exploding smoke bombs on tube lines leading into the city, etc. Many of these actions were done by small groups of inconspicuous individuals.

The blockading of the centre lasted from around 6am to 6pm. The inaugural ceremony of the new mayor of the City was totally disrupted by around 500 screaming protesters, some of whom managed to climb on to the roof of the Guildhall where the ceremony was taking place. The 500 then marched down towards the Stock Exchange where others were waiting. The police were unable to control the march and traffic was brought to a complete standstill. At the Stock Exchange the police blocked off part of the road with vehicles and horses. If the demonstration had been anywhere else the cops would have waded in and tried to beat the shit out of everyone. But the possibility of a riot taking place in the

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS



*Q: Which country is this? Poland? El Salvador? Turkey? Chile? Phillipines?  
A: It's Comiso, Sicily August 1983. This photograph is one of the few that survived as the police systematically smashed cameras & exposed film.*

where special emergency sessions had been arranged. The blockade lasted for about 2 hours until most of those arrested had been released on bail. It was an impressive act of solidarity: each time a defendant emerged from the court house there was loud cheering and whistling. An attempt was then

## SOUTH AFRICA

Four prisoners were murdered by guards in the Barberton maximum security prison after an outbreak of violence. Over the last 9 months a total of 11 prisoners have been killed in the prison. Currently 8 guards are on trial for the murder of three

shit out of everyone. BUT THE possibility of a riot taking place in the heart of the City was something the cops wanted to avoid at all costs. In the middle of all this several arrests were made; one person had an arm broken, another almost had his head yanked off by the force of 4 cops pulling him towards the police transit. However we later heard that an Inspector got a good kicking from two individuals who had witnessed what was going on. They then got chased by three cops and everyone else joined in by chasing the cops. The sight of about 1000 anarchists and punks tearing after some cops was quite a sight. The two who assaulted the inspector got away. From around 12am to 2pm the office workers came out to stare and then to mingle with everyone. For the police this presented an impossible situation as they couldn't control the movement of the demonstrators without much difficulty. Around 1pm there was a sudden movement by everyone and about 1500 people began to surge up Cheapside towards St. Pauls. Suddenly there was momentary panic from the cops as everyone began to run up the centre of the road. The cops gave chase while transits sped up parallel streets to cut everyone off. As quickly as it all started, the running stopped and everyone turned back towards the Bank. The cops didn't know what was happening and were totally confused. While all this was going on and during the rest of the day the cops were picking on individuals at random and taking them to the police station at Wood Street. Altogether about 200 arrests were made. It was not long though before a large number (around 500) decided to blockade the courts,

the court house there was loud cheering and whistling. An attempt was then made to blockade the main police station. But the police then used horses to disperse everyone. By this time the numbers involved in the blockade had shrunk to 200 and it was likely that any resistance would be nipped in the bud.

On the negative side there were no significant attempts to occupy offices, nor was there any major resistance to defend those being arrested. Very few had come prepared for any major trouble; in any case had anyone been armed for a riot the cops would have been able to make arrests before anything serious began. If a riot had taken place the cops would have found it difficult to control because throughout the day office workers and rich types were everywhere in large numbers getting in the way. The trouble is they would have been able to seal off all escape routes: many of the exists from the centre are narrow and there were plenty of cop reinforcements nearby to outflank if need be.

There were many lessons to be learned from the action. Meanwhile until the next Stop The City, sabotage is still an effective weapon to cause trouble for those who keep the capitalist machine well oiled.

N.B. Around 1am of the morning of the action, the St Ives squat in Roseberry Avenue was raided by 30 cops. Most were in full riot gear, the rest in plain clothes, and some were armed. Their "warrant" was to search for "subversive literature" and the name on it was someone they had charged with "illegal possession of a marker pen(?)", earlier.

the prison. Currently 8 guards are on trial for the murder of three other prisoners (alleged to have died of heat exhaustion) last December as well as assaults on 34 others. At the trial prisoners described horrific conditions where they are forced to undertake hard labour to exhaustion point. Threats have been made on the prisoners lives if any of them testify against the defendants (four of whom are white, the other four black).

During the last few weeks a number of schools have been set on fire by arsonists and one school was closed down after a walkout by pupils. In the north of the same area - the Ciskei - several thousand students boycotted classes in the university (Fort Hare) where arsonists had set fire to a staff lounge. In each case the boycotts were a gesture of solidarity in support of the arsonists' actions. Recently, in Johannesburg, the ANC claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on the Ciskei Consulate-General office in the Carlton Centre.

In the past ten years an incredible 8000 miners have been killed in mining accidents in South Africa. Over 98% of them were black. Recently 65 miners were killed in a blast at a coal mine in the Natal province. The newly formed NUM have demanded better safety conditions, but the bosses, although recognising the union (the first all black union to be so recognised in South Africa) earlier in the year, have refused to recognise its delegates claiming that the union is too young to be properly organised.