

4 July 2002

There is only one word to describe what happened last night in Cyprus: insurrection.

But let's take the facts from the beginning. Last Sunday the Green Party made a call for a road block at the English base of Akrotiri from where Britain carries out much of its slaughter, as the latter were due to start work to erect yet another giant radio listening antenna to add to the already existing ones which cover a large area. These antenna don't only create an environmental hazard, they give rise to health problems to the people who live nearby and beyond.

The Greens set up camp at the entrance to the base, but the only people who accepted their call were some anarchists of the Cyprus group. A few of us had spoken base the to some of the villagers that afternoon, they said they had decided to come to the base next day at dawn in order to attack the convoy. The anarchists spent the night outside the base preparing to attack along with the villagers when they arrived. During the night the area was surrounded by cops. In the morning the villagers failed to turn up. Perhaps the threats and bribes from the English masters had been successful in keeping them away. (The base covers a large area which has destroyed the land, and has become the main source of income for many local people.) The demonstrators (anarchists and ecologists) had nothing left to do but block the entrance to the bulldozers etc that were arriving to start the work.

When clashes began a few hours later the road was closed completely. Following a final ultimatum from the English army, special forces cops (SBA) arrived on the scene and violently attacked the demonstrators, pushing them down an embankment and immobilising them in order to open up the road again and let the bulldozers into the base. They arrested one comrade who was released later in the day after being charged. Meanwhile construction of the antenna had begun.

In the afternoon of the following day, Monday, there was a demonstration of discontented from the communist party of Cyprus AKEL at the scene of the construction. The AKEL's intentions were obvious: on the one hand the party is trying to keep a 'revolutionary' profile because of the approaching elections and on the other hand they want to gain leadership of the whole struggle, keeping it within the lines of political 'legality', i.e. symbolic passivity.

But it seems that others had a different opinion! The main demo stopped 100 yards from the base, but the anarchists (carrying a banner 'Death to the Base of Death', and giving out leaflets in Greek and English), ecologists, young local guys on motorbikes, etc, went right up to the entrance of the base, now guarded by SBA riot police and English soldiers in full riot gear. Some members of the communist party who wanted to keep going like the others didn't do so because their party didn't give them permission! Slogans were shouted and there were some skirmishes with the cops. It was soon realised that we wouldn't be able to stand up to them because we were outnumbered. After a brief evaluation of the situation along with the others present (the ecologists desisted) everyone decided to leave. The English dominators and their henchmen thought that the night was over. But they got it wrong.

Anarchists and young rebels very quickly gave themselves an appointment for a couple of hours later, and in the meantime went to look for reinforcements to swell the

# AKROTIRI

number. They met as arranged, and after a brief organisational discussion, returned to the base. The night was a celebration. There was a battle with the cops who received a storm of stones, molotovs and pieces of wood. In the face of the continuous attack from the cops, furious demonstrators began burning the place all around in order to hold them back. Each one was very well self-organised, especially during the retreat which took place in convoy, driving around the base in dozens of open trucks spilling over with young people, as well as in cars and on motorbikes, all under the spotlight of the wide beams of the military helicopters hovering above. The rebels attacked. Part of the police station was burned, factory buildings, a car and a lookout post near the base were also torched. Such moments are indescribable. At one point the whole convoy drove to the nearest petrol station and filled up crates of empty beer bottles in order to return and continue the attack against the base. Some were thinking of the many planes that have taken off from this place, and how many bodies of humiliated people had been dismembered: that was enough for us to want to burn it all!

Here it should be said that there were none of the patriotic flags so visible in the riot the previous year following the arrest of a right wing deputy who had been protesting against the erection of a similar antenna. This time it was a question of people rebelling for themselves. Needless to say, the press reported this present attack as an act of 'hooligans'.

Finally three arrests were made. Two young guys and another comrade were arrested from the base area by the Cypriot cops, because they declared they hadn't stop at a check point. Later all the accused were released.

Comrades, something very strong has begun here, and whoever says that insurrections are not happening, just needs to look at what happened last night on this island, where apathy and indifference are widespread.

DEATH TO THE BASE OF DEATH. DEATH TO THE BASE OF THE  
DOMINATORS.