

FREEDOM CONTACT PAGE

PHONE 01-247 9249

Freedom Press
IN ANGEL ALLEY
84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH ST.
LONDON E1

GROUPS

ABERDEEN libertarian group. Contact c/o 163 King St. Aberdeen
ABERYSTWYTH. David Fletcher, 59 Cambrian Street, Aberystwyth (operative from October 1979)
BELFAST Anarchist Collective c/o Just Books, 7 Winetavern St. Belfast 1.
BIRMINGHAM meet Sundays 8.30 pm at the Fox & Grapes, Freeman St. or ring Joanna 440 5132 (also Anarcha Feminist Group)
BRISTOL CITY. 4 British Road, Bristol BS3 3BW
BRISTOL Students: Libertarian Society, Students Union, Queen's Road, Bristol 8
CAMBRIDGE - new contact awaited
CANTERBURY Alternative Research Group. Contact Wally Barnes, Eliot College, University of Kent Canterbury.
CARDIFF. Write c/o 108 Bookshop, 108 Salisbury Road, Cardiff
CHELTHAM Anarchists see street sellers, 11.00-1.30 Saturday mornings, Boots Corner, High St.
COVENTRY. John England, Students Union, Univ. of Warwick, Coventry
DERBY: Collaborators welcome. Contact Andrew Huckerby, 49 West-leigh Ave., Derby DE3 3BY. tel. 368678. No connection with some of the graffiti appearing in the city centre!
EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians. Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.
EDINBURGH Anarchists meet 8 p.m. on Monday at First of May Bookshop, 45 Niddrie Street
EXETER Anarchist Society, Univ of Exeter, Devonshire House, Stocker Road, Exeter.
GLASGOW Anarchist Group. Initially, weekly meetings. For further information contact John Cooper, 34 Raithburn Avenue, Castlemilk, Glasgow G45.
GREENWICH & BEXLEY. Any trade unionists interested in forming a syndicalist group please contact John Ryan, 47 Binsey Walk, SE2 9TU
HASTINGS Anarchist Group. Solstice, 127 Bohemia Rd., St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex. Tel. 0424 429537
HIGH BENTHAM. Ask at the Dragonfly on Saturdays.
HUDDERSFIELD. Meetings every two weeks. For details phone 0484-38156 (Polytechnic Students Union)
HULL Libertarian Collective. Pete Jordan, 70 Perth St. Hull, E.Yorks
LEAMINGTON & WARWICK. c/o 42 Bath St., Leamington Spa.
LEEDS. 29 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds 2
LEICESTER. Anarchist group, Lyn Hurst, 41 Briarfield Drive, Leicester. Tel 0533-21250 (days) 0533-414060 (nights). Bookshop, Blackthorn, 76 Highcross St. Leicester, tel. 0533-21896. Libertarian Education, 6 Beaconsfield Rd. Leicester. Tel. 0533-552085

LONDON:
Anarchy Collective, 37a Grosvenor Ave, N.5. Tel. 359-4794 before 7 p.m.
Freedom Collective, 84B White-chapel High Street, E.1. Tel. 247-9249
Hackney Anarchists, Dave, 249-7042
Kingston Anarchists, 13 Denmark Rd. Kingston-upon-Thames Tel. 549-2564
London Workers' Group, Box W, 182 Upper St., N.1. Tel. 249-7042
Love V. Power, Box 779, Peace News (London office: 5 Caledonian Rd). West London Anarchists, 7 Pennard Rd, W12.

MALVERN & WORCESTER area. Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storridge, Malvern, Worcs.
MANCHESTER. c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M1.
MID-SUSSEX Anarchists. Contact Resources Centre, North Road, Brighton
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE. Black Jake, c/o 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle NE1 4AG.

NOTTINGHAM. c/o Mushroom, 10 Heathcote St (Tel: 582506) or 15 Scotch-olme Av, Hyson Green (Tel: 708302).
OLDHAM. Anyone interested in forming anarchist group in Oldham area, contact Nigel Broadbent, 31 Cooke St, Fails-worth, Manchester. (Activities to be decided on formation).
OXFORD. Danny Simpson, Room 1, Turl Street, Oxford
PORTSMOUTH. Caroline Cahm, 25 Albany Road, Southsea, Hants.
READING University anarchists c/o Students Union, Univ. of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, Berks.
SALFORD: Movement for Anarchy Experimental Group 2. Contact SNOWY at 22 George Henry St., Salford 5.
SHEFFIELD Anarchists c/o 4 Have-lock Square, Sheffield S10 2FQ
SHEFFIELD Libertarian Society, PO Box 168, Sheffield S11 8SE. Group: Sheffield Autonomous Anarchists, Black Cross Group, IWW, Syndicate of Initiative, John Creaghe Memorial Society
SWANSEA. Don Williams, 24 Derlwyn. *unvant, Swansea
WINDON area. Contact Mike, Groundswell Farm, Upper Stratton, Swindon, Wilts.
WESTON-SUPER-MARE. Martyn Redman, Flat 5, 23 Milton Road, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

FEDERATIONS

KENT
Ramsgate: Peter Ford, 22 Royal Rd. Sevenoaks: Jim Endesby, 70 Brad-bourn Road
NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester, M1 7DU
Groups are:
Burnley Anarchist Group, 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancs.
Lancaster Anarchist Group, 41 Main Road, Galgate, Lancaster.
Manchester Anarchist Group, c/o Grass Roots
Manchester Syndicalist Workers' Federation, c/o Grass Roots (Newsletter & quarterly meetings. Contacts in other areas.)
MIDLANDS FEDERATION: Groups in the Fed. include Birmingham, Corby, Coventry, Derby, Leamington/Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham, Sheffield.

NORTH EASTERN ANARCHIST FEDERATION. Secretariat: c/o Black Jake, 115 Westgate Rd., Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4AG

SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION Contact Nina Woodcock, 74 Arklay St. (Top R), Dundee. Tel. Dundee 814541

'SOLIDARITY': a libertarian communist organisation which publishes the journal SOLIDARITY for Social Revolution. Local contacts
Aberdeen c/o 167 King St.
Dundee c/o Mina Woodcock, 74 Arklay St. Dundee. **Manchester** c/o 109 Oxford Rd. Manchester M1.
Oxford c/o 34 Cowley Road. **London** c/o 123 Lathom Rd. London E6 and members in many other towns.

ANARCHIST COMMUNIST ASSOCIATION (Organisation of class struggle anarchists who produce their own paper 'Bread and Roses'. Local contacts: **London:** Danny Jakob, 88 Speedwell House, Cornet St. Deptford, SE8. **Birmingham:** Bob Prew, 13 Trinity Ct., Trinity Rd. Aston, B'ham. **Burnley:** Jim Petty, 5 Hollin Hill. **Glasgow:** Dave Car-ruthers, 53 Ormonde Ave G4.

MEETINGS

EDINBURGH. Sat. 15 Sept. SCRAM (Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace). Rally, starting with a march 11 am from Waverley Bridge along Princes Street to the rally on the Meadows. Speeches (Robin Cook MP, Mick McGahey, a representative from Danish anti-nuclear movement, a church member, a medical speaker on radiation hazards), Exhibition on energy conservation, etc., and afternoon ceilidh. SCRAM, 2 Ainslie Place, Edinburgh. Tel. 031-225 7752.
LONDON
Thurs. 4 Oct. at 8.15 pm. 'Animal Liberation (as opposed to conservation)', with Ronnie Lee of ALF
Thurs. 25 Oct at 8 pm 'The Struggle of American Indians against Uranium Mining' with Winona La Duke (chairperson of Women of All Red Nations).
Both meetings at Dick Sheppard House, 6 Endsleigh St., London WC1
Organised by GREENPEACE LONDON (tel. 91-387 5370)
Sun. 7 October is the 100th anniversary of the birth of JOE HILL. Celebrations being organised by London Workers Group and Surrey & Middlesex Syndicalists. For details of plans or to offer participation contact London Workers' Group, Box 2, 182 Upper St. London N1 (tel. 01-249-7042)
CENTRAL LONDON WEA Classes Autumn programme 'Human Rights in Contemporary Society'; 'Heritage in Buildings'; 'Socialism and Feminism in Britain'; 'Psychology and Sociology'. Details from S. Billson 33 Compton Road, London N1.
NOTTINGHAM. 4 October. 'The Right to not Work', speaker Ross Bradshaw. In the International Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. Organised by 'Mutual Aid' 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham.

Would any anarchists in North London who would like to form a group contact Allan via FREEDOM

Published by Freedom Press, London E1
Printed by Magic Ink, Margate, Kent.

anarchist fortnightly Freedom

8 September / 79

Vol 40 No 16

20p

Conspiracy to Rig

Things have moved on quite a bit in the Persons Unknown case. (see Review Section). Best bit of news is that at the pretrial review on August 16th. Ronan was finally given bail. He's fine, though a bit drawn and thin.

The clumsy frame-up continues on its unsavoury way. As is now widely known the police have obtained permission to 'vet' the potential jurors. (see review for details). Not content with the weight of the bias in their favour, the prosecution are impeding the defence still further. Apparently, with only the resources of the Special Branch, The Criminal Records Office and the CID, coupled with unlimited right of challenge, they still feel a little insecure. After all the defence will have the aid of a private detective and no less than three challenges. Still, it must help to have a two week lead, before the defence get the jury list.

Rigging of juries is too much for liberal opinion, which had managed not to notice the case so far. Newspaper reports have appeared, disapproving letters have

been printed in the Guardian, the NCCL has spoken up and Questions Have Been Asked In The House.

Additional complications have arisen because the Legal Aid authorities are balking at paying for the detective, so there have had to be further court hearings. The judge in question has been concerned about the way things said in "private" hearings seems to get about outside. However, he has now been convinced that "in chambers" is not the same as "in camera" (really). So our intention to reprint a few fatuous remarks no longer carries the risk of prosecution for contempt. However, we would like to reassure them all that our contempt is in no way diminished.

Were you aware that most of the adult male population of London has criminal associates? This is why this jury must be vetted. (we are not sure why the simpler approach of having a female jury was not adopted)

Anyway, with one thing and another, the court recognised today (11th) that the defence might be having a few problems, and as we said above, the Legal Aid people are a bit worried about those detective bills. Accordingly, the police are to share their information. They have graciously agreed to provide "relevant" information. And to give the defence a fair chance (after all, this is Britain) the trial has been put back again. It is now three days later, on Sept. 20

BLOOD AT THE CONWAY

Conway Hall was splashed with blood on Saturday night as members of the British Movement tried to break up the Persons Unknown Benefit. About thirty of them gathered in the balcony, determined to stop "Crass" the anarchist band from playing. From early in the evening it was obvious that there would be nastiness. Tension built steadily. Eventually somebody realised that it was foolish to be selling bottles of beer over the bar. There were a number of skirmishes, then the real trouble broke out at about 10.30. In a series of scuffles several people were hurt, some needing to go to hospital for stitches. Scalp wounds bled nastily. From the look of the floor, someone had bled to death.

A group of British Movement members have been specialising in this kind of thing. Their most famous exploit has been the destroying of the "Sham 69" concert at the Rainbow. Of course, this more glamorous activity has not caused them to neglect their steady work of harassing blacks, gays etc. The British Movement has been gaining strength lately, at the expense of the National Front, which has flirted with respectability. They have, if anything, even less political ideas. At this benefit, they could have done more damage as a bloc. However, they got involved in fights in threes and fours. All bad enough, but they were contained to some extent. Later, the police arrived and turned everybody out.

The poor liberal Guardian reporter who happened to be there was horrified

and wrote a totally muddled piece on it. Ironic that this appeared just next to an analysis of right wing terrorists which said that 'the attitude of the anti-terrorist squad is that it is a "detective machine, not a preventive machine"'. What was all that talk last June about anarchist conspiracies being "nipped in the blood"? Still the Guardian piece had a nice photo of what appeared to be a procession of police with Union Jacks, captioned, "The right on the march"

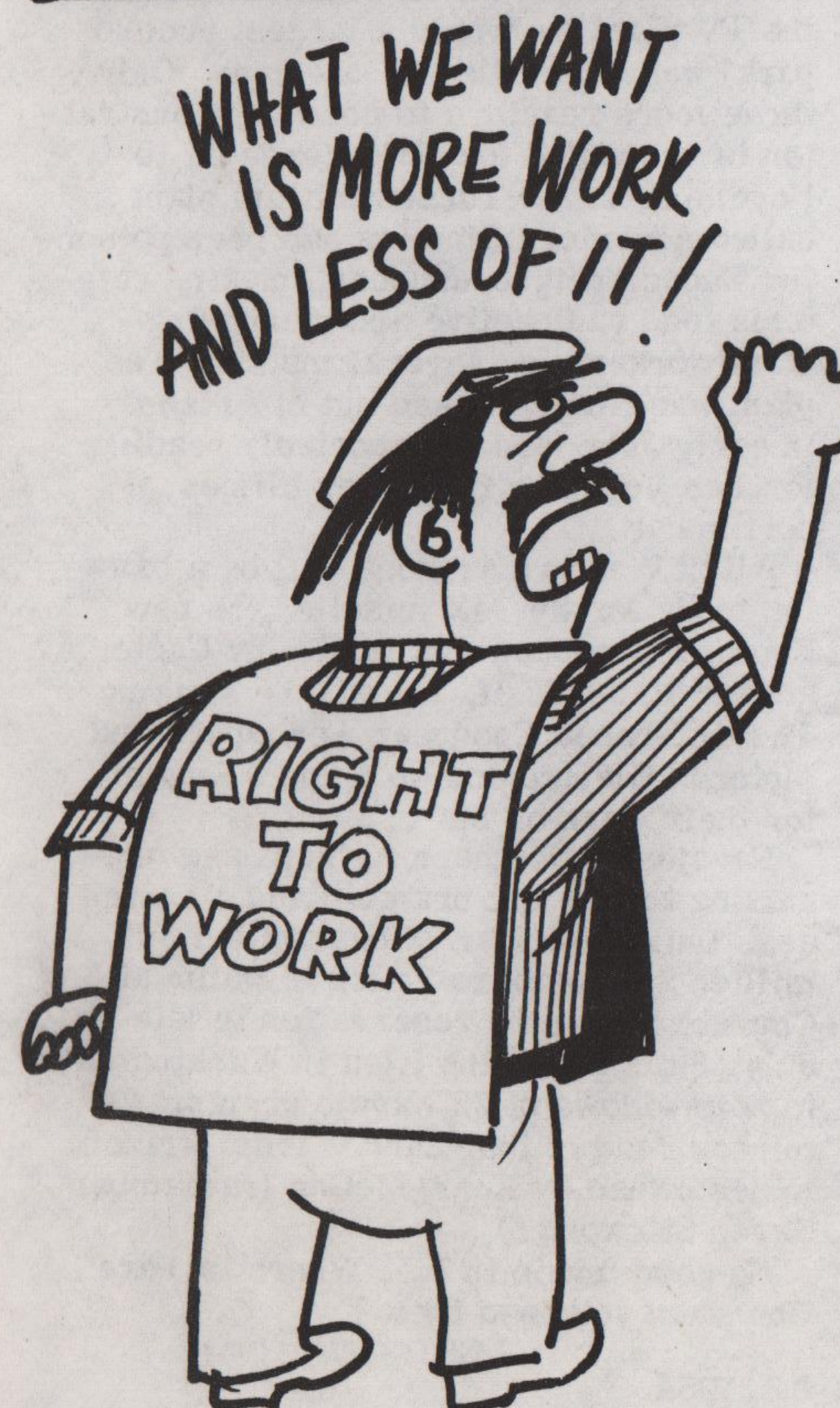
The lesson of Saturday's incident is obvious. If you are holding a public event then you have to prepared for trouble. On the bad side, these people succeeded in disrupting the Benefit (Crass didn't get to play). On the good side, a lot of money was raised.

It is also worth noting that the management of Conway Hall continues to insist on "free speech". They recently hired the Hall to the National Front, for a "Rock Against Commies" event.

PRE-TRIAL EVENTS

Please note new times.
Saturday Sept. 15 3.00pm. Public Meeting at Conway Hall, Following at 7.00 a Social at the Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road.

Thursday Sept. 20 Picket for first day of trial. Old Bailey



NCASBR FIGHTS THE SCROUNGER MYTH!

This article is from the National Campaign against the Supplementary Benefit Review. The campaign is broad based and obviously, given the nature of its field, reformist. However, as you can see from this, it is clear sighted. A number of anarchists are working with the campaign. They have a good series of leaflets on different aspects of supplementary benefits, each slanted to a particular group of victims such as widows, pensioners, young people. For these pamphlets and newsletters, contact Jason Copeland, Flat C, 20 Colville Square, London W11.

NCASBR is now eight months old, and in its short life can claim to have been influential in getting a lot of individuals and groups to register their disapproval of the Review's terms of reference as well as of its proposals. We have had the ear of the last government; after initial alarm and a letter from Stan Orme to the MPs on the Parliamentary social security group asking them not to attend our December conference; Orme met us in March and heard our objections.

Since then a new minority government, elected by less than a quarter of the British population, has taken office on promises of tax cuts, public spending cuts, and is scrounging the stale old mythology about scroungers we have heard so often before.

So what should we be doing now? Firstly, the Review itself is by no means dead. Although we now have it on good authority that the overwhelming majority of the 1100 representations that the Department of Health and Social Security received after the publication of the Review were highly critical if not downright rejectionist, it still exists as a Pandora's box of evils for any government to dip into and produce a punitive act, or even several acts, each looking innocuous by itself, but adding up to a large-scale erosion of welfare rights. So we have to keep fighting the ideas within the Review, and keep going with the work of thrashing out what we want to see in place of the current mess. We may have to campaign for a royal commission to investigate income maintenance as a whole, in order to shelve any immediate ideas the government might have for implementing Review proposals. We will also have to be alert to the necessity to campaign against any tendency to erode the real value of benefits by inadequate uprating, or even by not uprating at all.

But it is clear that we must now take the argument further. We must fight the scrounger myth. Wandsworth Rights Umbrella Group have just published a pamphlet called "Would the real scroungers stand up" and a leaflet entitled

GROUP REPORTS

"Social Security: Fact and Fiction", which gives the following government figures: in fiscal year 1975/76, fraud amounted to about 5p in every £100 paid out, but for every £100 collected in fiscal year 1977/78 in tax, a further £3.60 was dodged. These are the facts we must unveil.

We must also start attacking the work ethic head on. With the increasing evidence of serious damage done to the planet by chemical pollution, and the appalling dangers of nuclear power, it is high time that people stopped worshipping the great god WORK and screaming for any job at any cost, and started looking at what the effects of the work done are. There is nothing sacred about work. If it is good work and beneficial to the population as a whole, then let it be done. If it is damaging, then it must be stopped. The damage being done to the only planet we have makes it clear that humans must now, and urgently, start taking responsibility for their actions. This means that generally we have to start talking sanity in all quarters.

The debate is clearly about what kind of society people want. A sane, sensible, humane one that provides a decent living for those who through no fault of their own cannot work, or a vicious, punitive one that piles up trouble for itself and spreads suffering. We must tackle all the issues. That may mean calling ourselves by a name which reflects a wider approach than the present one does.

JASON COPELAND
(Secretary, NCASBR)

BOYCOTT OLYMPICS!

IN RESPONSE to an appeal from Plyushch, Grigorenko, and other exiled Soviet socialists and human rights campaigners for the boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, some members of the Solidarity Group and the Anarchist Communist Association have decided to launch a campaign of Direct Action around this issue. We wish to make it clear that the solidarity we are demonstrating is solidarity with the Soviet working class and the organisations such as the Klebanov group, the Leningrad Left Opposition and the Ukrainian Workers' and Peasants' Union. We therefore disassociate ourselves from those on the right, such as the NAFF, who seek to recuperate the struggles of dissidents in the east for their own ends. We also disassociate

ourselves from those on the left who regard the Eastern European countries as in some way socialist. This attitude we feel can only serve to mystify and demoralise the working class and make ineffective a genuine campaign of solidarity with Soviet workers.

In fighting against the Bureaucracy for such basic freedoms as freedom of organisation, freedom of speech, freedom of movement and the right of ethnic minorities to self-determination the Soviet working class is waging the same struggle that the Western working class wages against its own exploiters and oppressors. If the outcome of this struggle is to be successful, socialists in the west are duty-bound to give what support they can to their comrades in the east. An integral part of this support is the campaign we are now waging. This campaign is not confined to the British Isles but is part of an ongoing international campaign being undertaken by comrades in Europe, North America, Australia, etc.

We call on all bona fide socialists, libertarians and anarchists in this country to affiliate to the campaign and to play an active part in ensuring its success.

Further information can be obtained from T. Liddle, 83, Gregory Street, Eltham, LONDON SE.9.

Donations payable to T. Liddle.

CLEANING UP THE DESERT

YOUR paper is amazing and pretty inspiring here in the desert. News from Cowboy Kountry - two of the five planned nuclear reactors for the Palo Verde site west of Phoenix (which would have made the PV plant the world's largest nuclear park) were cancelled in late June! Only three more reactors to go! A demonstration is scheduled for Palo Verde on 10 November... A Tucson tritium plant called American Atomics has been poisoning Tucson neighbourhoods, making cafeteria food radioactive and sterilising plant workers for several months. The plant was finally kicked out of Arizona in early July, and is reportedly heading for Las Vegas or friendlier climes northward...

All of Western Arizona will be a basing mode for the MX missile, the new Doomsday weapon that is Jimmy Carter's answer to SALT II. We will be striking Phoenix-based Goodyear Aerospace and Motorola Electronics on 6 and 9 August for their work on MX...

Navajos in Northern Arizona are organising to kick out uranium and oil miners. United Nuclear Mines spilled 300 million gallons of radioactive water at Churchrock on the reservation in late July. Suits are being filed in Washington to help widows of 25 Navajo uranium miners dead of lung cancer from Arizona mines owned by Kerr-McGee (remember Karen Silkwood?)...

No good music in AZ. Where is Pere Ubu when you need them?

LORING WIRBEL
AZ, USA

AMERICA

READERS following events at Walla Walla, where our comrade Carl Harp and fellow members of the Anarchist Black Dragon collective have been in battle with the prison, will be interested to learn more details about conditions there. Free Socialist of San Francisco, in its summer edition, has an article from the S.F. Chronicle of July 25 in which the chaplain at Walla Walla tells of systematic cruelty to prisoners. There was a similar report in The Guardian which bears reprinting. The original source is UPI, Washington:

"The chaplain at the Washington State Gaol has released affidavits from prisoners describing brutality by guards. The affidavits tell of beatings, milk served with urine and inmates being forced to sit for days unprotected in the sun until their eyes are swollen shut.

"Father Robert Beh said it was only recently that he realised brutality existed at the prison in Walla Walla, even though he has been chaplain for three years.

"In May, three inmates took hostages (Carl Harp, Robert Green and Robert Washburn - eds.) and demanded to speak to reporters about conditions inside the high concrete walls. During the aftermath, Father Beh watched as three or four armed guards bullied naked inmates around 'slamming them into the wall, jabbing them with their sticks, and pulling up on their handcuffs'.

"He said: 'That's when I knew there was some foundation in it'. Now he brings handwritten affidavits out of the prison by hiding them in his mass kit, to try to convince others on the outside. 'Brutality is just the outward physical part of it. There's something other than that that is harder to heal', Father Beh said.

"Inside the prison there are 230 prisoners living in the 'big yard' under the watchful eye of State troopers. They are the inmates of no. 8 wing - among the

most troublesome prisoners, and many are doing life. They have been in the big yard since July 7 when they rioted.

"Another 1200 prisoners remain locked in their small cells with temperatures reaching 120 degrees. Occasionally they are brought out in small groups for showers and a few minutes of exercise.

"The prison has been clamped tight under deadlock since a guard was stabbed to death last month. Relations between guards and prisoners have deteriorated since a new, tough-minded warden, determined to restore 'security' to the prison after years of liberal reforms, was appointed.

"The prisoners have claimed that a group of 15 guards repeatedly attacked six inmates in the segregation unit with nightsticks and lead-lined gloves. They said one of the prisoners is now in hospital after having a nightstick forced up his rectum.

"Twelve guards, including the president of the Guards Union, have been suspended pending investigation.

"A former guard, aged 22, said he quit because he thought something was going to 'come down'. He said: 'Tension was too high and I could see another Attica revolt'.

Carl Harp, who has two life sentences, became an anarchist in gaol and began to spread his libertarian ideas to fellow inmates. He became a 'jail-house lawyer', taking up cases for other prisoners. In Walla Walla he helped form the Anarchist Black Dragon Collective and is also a member of the 'Men Against Sexism' group which established 'safe cells' for new young male prisoners against intimidation and rape by guards and other prisoners. (His conviction is connected with an alleged rape of two women).

A leaflet on Carl Harp, giving more details about his life and terrible ordeal is available from Freedom Bookshop.

PRISON NOTES

GREECE

THROUGH his father, Theodore Tsouvalakis managed to get out a letter to us while in Piraeus transit police station on the eve of an appeal hearing against the prosecutor's refusal to allow two defence witnesses to be called to his trial. Theodore has been sentenced to 7 years' and his brother Nick to 21 years' imprisonment on an armed robbery charge.

The authorities have been continually transferring the brothers from one prison to another, and they have been separated. On 19 March Theodore was in Aigina and on 17 April in Halcida, where he was able to see his brother. Then, on 3 May, Nick was sent to Heracleion, Crete, and on 2 June Theodore was taken back to Aigina.

Theodore writes, 'I can say truly that in Greek prison we are hungry, and we don't have money to buy fruit etc, as the fascist prisoners do'. They are being kept in isolation too. All comrades who can are asked to write both to Theodore and to Nick and help send them news of one another. Money too, of course, is needed. The address of Nick's and Theodore's mother (for correspondence, money, papers etc) is: Maragaki 16, 102 P. Drapetsiba, Piraeus, Greece.

Nick's present prison address is: Alicarnassos Prison, Heracleion, Crete. And it might be worth trying to write to him direct.

We have also heard from Philip Cristis who, with Theodore, is in Aigina prison and who is also in need of letters and cards from comrades.

SPAIN

IN a series of raids at the beginning of August, reminiscent of the Franco era, police arrested several libertarians, claiming that they were members of an armed cell responsible for a number of attacks and robberies in Catalunya, Barcelona. Police also claim to have seized arms and explosives in the raids, but have released little information about the arrests.

THE SCALA AFFAIR

ON 15 JANUARY 1978, the Scala nightclub in Barcelona was gutted following a firebomb attack, resulting in the deaths of four workers - two from the UGT and two from the CNT. Immediately, with the connivance of the police, the press (including the Stalinist press) mounted a campaign blaming the attack on the CNT, saying that a commando made up of CNT members in the FAI and JJLL was responsible. The FAI was even described as 'the armed wing of the CNT...'

As a result of this six CNT members were arrested, despite the fact that two of the victims were CNT members - as are 75 per cent of the Scala workers. The six comrades have still yet to be tried,

despite having spent 18 months in prison. In fact, the Spanish Supreme Court, for reasons best known to itself, is unable to decide under which court's jurisdiction the case falls until September and refuses to return the six to a Barcelona prison or to grant bail. The six need economic solidarity urgently for their defence fund. Contributions can either be sent direct to account number 1-52885 - 01/6 in the Banco de Europa, Calle Rossellon 214, Barcelona, Spain, or via Direct Action Movement (Manchester group), c/o 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M1 7DU, who will pass anything received to the defence committee.

DAVE THOMSON
(SWF/ATT)

Subscribe!
PLEASE NOTE
RATES

One year	£ 6.00 (\$12.00)
Six months	£ 3.00 (\$6.00)
Five issues	£ 1.25 (\$2.50)

WHY NOT?

EVEN FURTHER TOWARDS A READERS' MEETING! ON **Freedom**

AS PROMISED in the last issue, the following article will reveal the arcane secrets of our paper production, previously known only to an elite few! It is hoped that this will serve two purposes:-

a) illustrate some of our practical problems and elicit offers of help, suggestions etc (money)

b) share our experience with anybody who might want to enter the exciting, stimulating world of the mass media...

At present FREEDOM is fortnightly. It dropped from weekly a few years ago, for economic reasons, mainly cost of postage. It would cost the same to produce twice as many 8-page issues, but most of our circulation is by subscription or by bundles sent to sellers. It is apparent that if we despatched weekly, costs would become unacceptable. However, one section of the paper is still produced weekly, the Review and 'news' section alternating.

Production is on a Monday night. The finished artwork goes down to Ian the Printer and the final product comes back on the Thursday. It is then folded and collated. On alternate weeks it is also despatched: which brings us back to the next Review. This means that there are three main tasks: editorial, production and despatch.

Sources Material may come from outside, from within the collective, or from a hybrid source, eg. a specific item directly solicited from outside by the collective.

In general the Review presents less problems. Its nature means that more forward planning is possible, and the articles are generally longer. Pieces that are not used immediately can be held over without losing their value, and so on. This discussion therefore deals more particularly with the news section, which contains more and shorter articles which date quickly. In other words, we begin each Review with a headstart, whereas each news section rises out of a primeval void. At best we settle down with an in-tray of articles, letters, press releases and the like and decide which shall go in. We also consider which 'issues of the day' need coverage and arrange that the resulting blend is then moulded into the FREEDOM which, along with its Review, hits the stands later that week. (Full editorial meetings rarely take place more than once a month; otherwise editorial decisions are taken as we go along). At worst, members of the collective write by the column inch, in the middle of the typing and the paste up.

Whatever situation dominates varies from week to week. We think things have improved greatly, but there is still a definite wave pattern. It seems that surges of literary inspiration sweep through the anarchist movement only to die down a few months later. Obviously this is, to some extent, a product of how much activity is occurring. The editorial collective contains people who are competent writers. But obviously we produce better work when we have time, and according to our particular interests. We are sometimes told that if a certain group of people was 'given' the paper they could produce an issue that would stun the world. We believe them. We could do it ourselves. But not every fortnight!

TIME AND PLACE

The Reader's Meeting will be held at:-
THE ROEBUCK,
TOTTENHAM COURT RD, LONDON W 1
on FRIDAY SEPT. 21st. at 7.00pm

Production Nowadays producing a magazine is easy, given certain resources. You don't need to be in possession of esoteric trade secrets on 'justification' or whatever. The invention that makes all this possible is the photolitho process. Basically, instead of setting columns of metal type, which is a skilled and time-consuming (and therefore expensive) process, you produce your copy on paper. It is then photographed and a metal plate is produced for the printing machine to work from. The printer does all this part. So any group or individual can produce something. (If they can pay the printer).

So what happens The material is typed up on galleys - that is paper with the right width for the columns marked on it. These are then cut up and pasted onto a larger page, marked accordingly. Simple black and white illustrations can be pasted in directly; glossy photos need 'screening' (again, the printer does this, at more cost). The most crippling part is the typing. It is best done on a reasonable electric machine, which has a bolder face and gives a more even appearance. (Check a few back issues of 'small magazines'; you'll be able to pick out what has been done on a manual). Our problems

with typing have already been documented in the continuing saga of the Typewriter Fund. (To give an idea, a machine packed in again last week. The 'e' wasn't printing and had to be overhauled. Cost £28).

The layout and paste up is less wearing. The most time consuming parts are the headings and the proof reading for mixtures. If things are pushed the headings become rushed and the proof reading gets rather slack.

Production of an 8-page section requires about six hours' typing, which is too much to expect from one person in one evening, on top of a full time job. The bottleneck here is the most common reason for a late appearance of the paper. The layout takes rather less time, but is obviously tied to the production of typed galleys.

How you can help If you can type, and if you can, get in to Angel Alley on a Monday evening. Your Order of Bakunin Star will be reserved immediately. For the less fortunate, well we presume that you can write. You can write about your activities, your ideas, your anything. Why not just let us know that you exist, and comment on the paper? As with so many things, people tend only to let us know when they disagree with something. That's OK, though a bit of praise does wonders for morale. But whichever it is, WRITE IT. We need feedback. In the past pressure of work has meant that our response to mail has been patchy. This has now been taken in hand, and one of the collective is making efforts in this direction. But, please, have some understanding. We are under pressure. And, after all, we are talking about answering letters, not just sending out acknowledgement slips.

You could help in distribution. Again, if you can get down here (on Thursday evening this time) you could help fold and despatch. If not, you could take a bundle, sale or return. Sell to your friends, neighbours, in the street, factory, office, pub. Small newsagents will often take the paper (at a discount of a third). Try yours; we would post you a bundle, you would drop it in and collect unsold copies and money.

ERRATUM - OR CRAWLING APOLOGY

Our apologies to Colin Mackay, for inadvertently re-naming him Chris in Letters, last issue

THOUGHTS ON **Freedom**

I don't know what the circulation of FREEDOM is at the moment, but I'm sure most readers would like it to be larger. General issues concerning the purpose of the paper will doubtless come up at the meeting* and I don't want to go into these much here but instead make a few points about its style and content.

I prefer the style of FREEDOM to that of most radical papers - there's less tub-thumping and sloganising. Nevertheless, some improvements could be made. It comes over as quite a cynical paper and I find guiltily that I often fall into this style myself (eg. 'Anti-Nazi Farce'). Genuine satire is fine, but a paper made up entirely of put-downs and bitchery (sic) would indeed be depressing. I suppose it's up to individuals to write some sunny articles! A more important point is language: the best polemic in the world is useless if no-one can understand it. Articles in FREEDOM are usually quite readable (certainly when compared with the 'alternative' jargon of Peace News or the Marxist jargon of, say, Spartacist Britain) but articles which need the use of a dictionary should be avoided. Use of Latinised words, jargon or sentences which look as though they've been tied in knots just mean that the writer is being lazy - it's much easier to write an article in simple language than it is to read one in obscure language.

Content. Here is a break-down of subject matter in recent issues of FREE-

	Summer 78 %	Summer 79 %
Industry/Class	16	10.2
British State & Police	12.3	9.1
Foreign States & Police	14.4	8.1
Feminism/Sexpol	1	2.5
Racism/NF	3.6	3.2
Prisons	1.5	4.4
Ecology	13.8	13.1
Children/Education	0	0.7
History	10.6	11.8
Anarchist Theory & Organisation	10.9	19
Other	16.8	18.5

FOXING THE ENEMY!

SORRY; On the front of the Review Section the names of Taff and Ronan are transposed. The Special Branch must be getting quite confused by now. A while ago a Dutch paper carried a picture of a member of 'Freedom' collective chatting to Iris, and labelled 'Ronan Bennett'.

DOM. I admit the classification into subjects is a bit rough and ready but it was the only method I could think of.

The main point that should be borne in mind if we are going to decide on some general priorities for subjects is how relevant they are to most people's lives. Other points are important to the anarchist movement and relation to anarchist beliefs. Without trying to dictate an editorial policy, here are the conclusions I got by applying these principles to various subjects.

Industry, the class struggle and work in general should make up a substantial part of the paper, since the great majority of people do work of some sort or other (even if it's not the magic 'productive work' that Paul Buckland thinks we should be doing). I would like to see more down-to-earth articles on struggle in the workplace, workers' cooperatives, industrial safety, houseworkers, service industries and lots more. I think we could learn a lot from Solidarity here.

The number of articles in the rather broad categories of British State & Police and Foreign States & Police seems to be going down, and I'm glad. Particular cases of State repression do need to be reported (especially when it's anarchists who are being repressed), parliamentary democracy does need to be criticised, but there is a lot of irrelevant and repetitive stuff that could go. Far too much is written about the activities and fates of terrorist and urban guerrilla groups who have no connections with anarchism, such as the Red Brigades, the RAF and the Irish National Liberation Army. This not only wastes space but would give an uninformed reader the impression that we are all in the same boat. The only time armed groups deserve a mention is either as part of a general article on the politics of a particular country (e.g. Gaia's article on repression in Italy) or if they are anarchists, in which case it is of importance to the movement as a whole. FREEDOM seems compelled to report political violence for its own sake - this is pointless, since the deaths of Schleyer, the RAF, Aldo Moro or Airey Neave are no more important than the deaths of other people.

The number of articles on feminism and sexual politics in general is rising but still pathetically small. Consider: more than half the population is female and suffers for it, yet FREEDOM hardly raises an eyebrow. Nothing on economic inequality, nothing on rape, precious little on marriage and not much on anything else either. No wonder so many women feel alienated from the anarchist movement. To quote one frustrated anarchist-feminist: 'I used to go to anarchist meetings but all they ever talked about was what they were going to do at the next general election'.

As regards sexuality, which practically all of us have in some form or other, it

looks as though FREEDOM discovered the subject on March 24th and had exhausted it by April 7th! Class warriors may ask what this has got to do with an 'alienated worker' on a production line, but first they should ask themselves what that 'alienated worker' is likely to be thinking about!

How much space is given to racism, ecology, prisons and education is mainly a matter of personal preference. For instance, I like the large amount of coverage given to the anti-nuclear movement because I'm part of it, and I don't normally notice the scarcity of articles on childhood and education because I read Lib Ed (which is probably the reason for this scarcity in the first place).

The amount of history in the paper is ridiculously large. The articles are mainly self-indulgent pieces about the writer's favourite anarchist or revolution, preferences which may well not be shared by most readers. I would enjoy writing about Emma Goldman or Russian populism but I haven't done so because there are more pressing subjects and if people want to read about anarchist history there are plenty of good books on a wide range of subjects. If people read a newspaper they will want the news of today, not fifty or a hundred years ago.

Theory and organisational material are obviously necessary to any movement and I think the present amount is about right. As for 'other' there's not a lot to be said - it includes some very good articles that didn't fall into other categories, 'fun' pieces and odds and sods.

To finish, I'd like to tell you about a friend of mine. She's almost the perfect potential anarchist. She resents being at the bottom of the social heap, she resents being tied to the home, she resents being married and she resents not having a decent education. She stopped supporting the Labour Party when she realised that 'it hasn't got much to do with socialism', she joined the SWP but left because she was fed up with just waiting for 'the revolution' and now she's disillusioned with politics in general. At this point our hero should step in and hand her FREEDOM, the paper crammed with direct action, workers' power, sexual freedom, personal liberation and much more! But he didn't because it isn't.

WINSTON SMITH
Shrewbury, Shropshire

SUGGESTION!

Dear Freedom Collective

I have been reading your paper for over a year now and must say that I think it's excellent. I read regularly about your financial problems and hope that these don't get so serious that you have to stop publishing.

Black Flag you may know have done their best to persuade readers to take out a standing order and I think this would be a good idea from your point of view.

Yours fraternally
N. BIRRELL
Hull, W. Humberside

Dotty Escapades?

Dear comrades

I have been a continuous subscriber to FREEDOM since the days of War Commentary, and have seen its pages giving hospitality to some pretty weird movements occasionally. Your most recent issue must surely take the prize for wasting labour, paper and ink on idiots who go around Woolworths breaking hundreds of fishing floats believing that they are thereby striking a blow for freedom!

I am well aware that there is a valid case for the vegan philosophy in relation to certain religious orientations to life, and vegan influences in some cultures should be respected. But the dotty escapades of the ALF Hit List seem unrelated to any coherent philosophy. What the hell do these nuts think happens to the local ecology when they release a batch of 1500 silver foxes into the countryside? Presumably when they 'rescued' a population of mice from March Evans Ltd. the local cats had jamboree of gluttony and cruel sport.

If these people like to make fools of themselves we can only wonder at the strange quirks our society produces. But it has got nothing to do with anarchism. We should not be afraid of the traditional association of anarchism and crankiness - it will always be with us. But if FREEDOM as a journal wishes to cut its own throat by taking off into cloud cuckoo land, alas, dear comrades, all I can do is weep at your funeral.

TONY GIBSON

Cambridge

Dear FREEDOM people

The review on animal liberation may bring some of the numerous animal lovers into the anarchist movement. But I doubt very much if these people and the present animal liberators really know how much slavery, killing, torture, humiliation, exploitation is still going on among our own species, the human race. And if the animal liberators believe that animal liberation should have priority over human liberation, then they can have my deepest sympathy but not much of my support. Reading the review one cannot help thinking that if you substitute animals, laboratories, factory farms, with human beings, hospitals, prisons or schools, you have the problem of human liberation. And replace monkeys, mice, rabbits with prisoners, mental patients, schoolkids... To see tortured prisoners, beaten-up children and women is at least as horrifying as seeing pictures of animals on which pain has been inflicted for the sake of the human race. If that treatment of animals were not, at least to some extent necessary, the people who inflict the pain should be treated. Being an anarchist who prefers non-violent methods to treat, to educate people, I would not consider revenge or retaliation of any kind. Additionally it can be said that if comparable

action were carried out against prisons, mental hospitals, schools, most if not all of them would serve long prison sentences. It becomes somewhat fashionable to be picked up by law and order and to be fined or imprisoned. Do we really need 'heros' to further anarchy? Finally I would make a point in relation to their (ALF) so-called hit list. Surely the affected people will think about it and sooner rather than later tighten up security, first privately and then with the state, armed police, army... which will in turn further hamper our attempts to liberate our fellow human beings. More child beatings and child abuse, more women and wife beatings, more intolerance to and from other human beings. Do the animal liberators just want that?

With my best anarchist-human wishes

MICHAEL HABERNOLL

London SW10

Dear editors

On behalf of my collective I must indicate deep concern over the ALF acting in an ecologically stupid manner. These bloody fools don't seem to realise that dumping 1500 predators on the local wildlife will cause suffering and perhaps extinction to both existing predators and prey. Either the foxes will die or they will compete with local predators. The odds are on the foxes surviving and breeding, depriving red foxes, stoats, weasels, etc of food. The burden on rodents which supply the food will be unbearable. Thus the foxes will spread out causing uncalculable damage and SUFFERING. This sort of thing has all but destroyed the British polecat. A further instance is the effect of the introduction of the black-necked swan to New Zealand. (Two in the Bush by G. Durrell is worth reading). Releasing large quantities of any animal to the wild, especially when that animal is new to that habitat, will result in suffering and perhaps the extinction of a species. By all means ship the foxes to an area where foxes are rare but could blend into the habitat with a minimum of effect. In nature any change can cause a balance to tip and once started the balance goes disturbing other balances till the system lies in ruins.

Cruelty to a few individuals is nothing to what the release of say mink has done to the animals that have to suffer the tyranny of the new invaders. Our dumping of our convicts in Australia has now resulted in the persecution of the abo tribes.

We remain opposed to any action which could harm the environment, whatever the motives. It is a pity animals lack the good intentions of their rescuers. Don't just think of the creatures you release, think of the poor sods that they might harm.

mks for the fearnhill collective

DEFLECTING ENERGIES

Dear Editors

I would like to add a supplement to your* and Ian the Printer's criticisms of violent radicalism published in issues 13 (14 July) and 15 (11 August) of FREEDOM respectively.

I believe that one of the deficiencies of this type of politics is that, when its exponents find themselves having to defend themselves against legal charges regarding their 'crimes', it engenders emotion which is so strong as to delude people to a) think that support activities constitute the highest form of political expression, and b) forget that such activities are purely defensive!

However, I believe that a more important criticism is the fact that it deflects human energies and resources away from positive work such as improving communication networks and publicity, establishing sound financial bases for expensive or long-term programmes, etc.

Finally, although I am loathe to doubt the sincerity of radicals who engage in violence, I equally find it difficult to forget the adage 'violence begets violence'. Therefore I, too, wonder about how their hoped for society would operate and whether it would necessarily be fairer than the one under which we presently live.

In support

JOHN DESMOND

187 Southgate Rd
London N1 3LE

*This is, perhaps, a reference to our leading article 'Murder and the State'. We would not, however, regard this as in any sense a criticism of violent acts by radicals in general. It is, rather, a criticism of the acts and aims of certain radicals. (Eds)

CANINE LIBERATION FRONT!

Sunnyvale, USA - Two pit bulldogs who "just don't like uniforms" chased a policeman into his patrol car, then stalled the vehicle by chewing through all four tires. "They were real friendly - they just don't like uniforms", said Santa Clara County Animal Control officer Bill Manley. (From Free Socialist, San Francisco)

NICOLAS WALTER UNDER FIRE

LETTERS

NICOLAS Walter's reaction to our anthology, Reinventing Anarchy, was certainly bizarre. His displays of national chauvinism and of sexism are unpardonable. His arrogance and uncomradely comments are regrettable. His few lines of substantial commentary are almost all factually incorrect.

On national chauvinism. Walter's anger seems directed most forcefully at the absence of British contributors. We find such ethnocentrism strange for an anarchist writer.

We spent almost two years searching for reprints and new contributions throughout the English-speaking world. We sent notices for posting publication to libertarian bookstores and periodicals, including FREEDOM and Freedom Press Bookshop. Mr Walter, among others, was asked for his suggestions. His only suggestions were that we include Albert Meltzer and Colin Ward (both of whom we had already invited). Meltzer declined to have anything of his reprinted in our anthology, dismissing us - in his correspondence - along with Kropotkin, Read, Woodcock and Joffree Stewart as having the incorrect political line. We did send two inquiries to Mr Ward which were not answered. (We have no idea whether he ever received them).

If Walter perceives substantive differences in theory or practice between British and American anarchists. It would certainly have been instructive for him to comment upon them. That would have been a constructive, if not comradely, form of criticism.

On sexism. The second target of Walter's bile seems to be our concern with sexism in language. He appears more concerned about preserving traditional language forms than he is about their social significance. He concludes by writing "I might feel different if I were a woman". To be sure. But shouldn't he also feel different as an anarchist who claims to be committed to overcoming inequalities in all aspects of life? We think so.

On other uncomradeliness. Nicolas Walter ends by implying that the anthol-

ogy is for our personal profit and by criticising our copyright notice.

As he knows from our correspondence, all money goes directly to Research Group One and the Great Atlantic Radio Conspiracy, two anti-profit work collectives staffed by unpaid volunteers.

The copyright notice was asked for by the publishers. We complied because we thought it was harmless. (We ourselves do not copyright our audiotapes or pamphlets). Walter did not understand the copyright procedure. The notice merely protects the publisher against anyone reproducing the entire anthology. It does not place any restrictions on anyone's contribution or any restrictions on reproducing any part of the book.

A final note is in order: Nicolas Walter's petulant scorekeeping (four bad articles in this section, three in that) hardly constitutes serious intellectual discussion. And his opening disclaimer that his isn't an impartial review is grossly inadequate: it is not a review at all.

Sincerely

HOWARD J EHRlich CAROL EHRlich
GLEND MORRIS Baltimore, USA

Dear FREEDOM

I hope I might be allowed to correct a slight misunderstanding in Nicolas Walter's comments ('Signs of the Times', FREEDOM, 14 July) on The Alternative Bookshop.

I did not say that I saw 'anarchism as part of the spectrum of free-market libertarianism which the bookshop is intended to serve'. Obviously, although I and the bookshop's supporters have our own particular preferences, we intend the bookshop to serve the whole spectrum of basically libertarian thought - it is this spectrum that we see as running from collectivist anarchism, through individualist anarchism and anarcho-capitalism to classical liberalism, free market economics, human rights theory, 'liberal' conservatism, libertarian-humanistic psychology, non-Marxist feminism, etc.

Yours for liberty

CHRIS R. TAME (Manager)

The Alternative Bookshop
40 Floral Street, London WC2

DON'T BE SILENT!

Dear FREEDOS

I would like to draw anarchists' attention to a concluding paragraph in Fifth Estate vol. 14 no. 3 of June 19, article 'Junior Cops and Anti-Nukers': Boycott or Participate?

"A boycott of the large actions will be in order if the anti-nuke politicians refuse to renounce their policy of cooperation with the police which places the entire gathering in jeopardy. Their pacifism and concern for 'peaceful' demonstrations is used to mask their reliance on the major force of organised violence in society - the police. It may be argued that to leave the field completely clear of criticism of these wretched reformists would be just what they prefer, but it would be equally foolish not to begin activity that we ourselves define".

These sentiments could read from an article in Britain after Torness or in Australia almost anywhere. If anarchists want to participate in libertarian struggles (anti-nuclear, anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-rent/homelessness, anti-militarist, anti-imperialist—the Troops Out of N. Ireland demo was made bearable by the grouping of some comrades who sang, played music and carried on regardless, but it was a bad terrain surrounded by marshalls, police and megaphones), then why can we not prepare our own strategy and tactics as with the May Day picnic? The Persons Unknown trial of our comrades will bring out our defensive organisation all over the country and overseas. Are we to return to the swamp-land of leftism again where the abyss's of slime abound? We need not be a silent minority!

PETER YERIL

Herne Hill, S.E.24

P.S. Have you actually (I mean really!) tried offering FREEDOM, the London Weekly, Black Flag, Bread and Roses etc to your local newsagent or bookstore? First time is a bit painful but second, third, you can even get stuck into their preconceptions about anarchists: it's now or never.

ACA-CONFUSED OR JUST PLAIN DISHONEST?

SOME manifestations of the anarchist movement seem more suited to Wonderland than the real world. A recent example is the Anarchist Communist Association, whose organ, Bread and Roses, in its last issue carried a gratuitous attack on FREEDOM as "some people calling themselves 'anarchist' (not members of the ACA)"... Is this perhaps what basically worries them? The (at least ostensible) reason for this attack was a leading article on China and birth control in FREEDOM of 24 March. To anyone who had actually read the article it was quite obvious that the purpose was to show how successive Chinese regimes

have seen birth control as a question merely of cannon fodder and power politics, something to be turned off and on according to the dictates of war or the computer age. Anarchists, on the other hand, including the FREEDOM group, have viewed it as a question of the freedom of women to control their own fertility. (More recent ecological questions deserve an article on their own, but the freedom of women to decide remains absolutely central).

We leave aside the fact that FREEDOM has willingly published several letters which are thinly disguised plugs for the ACA. It's one thing, however, to be att-

acked for what you say; it's quite another to be attacked for what you don't. The 'Odds and Sods' part of Bread and Roses carries dishonesty to the point of making it look as if it's quoting from the article by putting a phrase in inverted commas which is entirely contradictory to it. This in itself is sad enough, not only for us but as it reflects upon the fundamental lack of integrity of supposed comrades. It becomes downright suspect - or simply confused - to combine such an attack with a new ACA recruiting pamphlet which uses several illustrations from FREEDOM without acknowledging their origin. EDS

JIM'S BOOKSHOP NOTES

All the titles mentioned in this column are available from Freedom Bookshop at the prices - plus postage - mentioned. Items marked * are published in the U.S.

TO KICK OFF this week, a few recent anarchist(ic) journals. Authority - that merry scourge of the libertarian left - has managed a second issue and seem to have turned their barbed wit onto the "heavy left"; to my mind an easier target than the anarchists, but then I'm prejudiced! Still, if you enjoyed the first issue as much as I did you'll enjoy No.2 as well. (25p, plus 8p postage).

A re-issue of the Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review No.4 is now available at £3.50 (60p post). Its large format 184pp. make it excellent value, with features on Santiago Carillo, Camillo Berneri, Flavio Costantini, Gregory Maximoff, Minimal Statism, Anarchism in Mexico and much else.

Hasslé Free have at last managed to 'get it together' regarding distribution, so

FUNDS

FREEDOM DEFICIT FUND

Contributions Received
19 July - 1 August

LEIGHTON BUZZARD: D.G. £1.54;
GLASGOW: D.C. £1; WORTHING:
R.P.C. £2; LEEDS: S.J.P. 30p;
LONDON WC2: L.S. £1.50; MAN-
CHESTER: R.B. £3; WOLVERHAMPTON:
J.L. £3; J.K.W. £1;
SUTHERLAND: J.A.J. 60p;
YELLOWKNIFE, Canada: D.B.
£2.15; STROMNESS: J.L.B. £1;
GLASGOW: S.M. £1; GLASGOW:
A.J. 30p; CLITHEROE: P.G.
£2.50; WHITEHAVEN: H.W.L.C.
50p; In Shop: Anons £3.58;
ST. CLOUD: Minn.: M.G.A.
£26.80; LONDON SE10: L.J.M.
£2; FYLDE: J.G. 45p.

TOTAL: £54.22
Previously ackn'lgd: £898.06

TOTAL TO DATE: £952.28

PREMISES/OVERHEADS FUND

Contributions to 1 August

LONDON WC2: L.S. £10.00
Previously ackn'ldgd £100.00

TOTAL TO DATE £110.00

Anarchy Comic No. 1* is now available from us. No. 1 includes work by Cliff Harper, Jay Kenney and many more. The price is 65p (post 11p). Also, Cliff Harper's own really excellent fable of the contradictions of the commune, Class War Comix* has been reprinted. Not only a book of superb illustrations, but making a political point which is far from simplistic (65p, post 11p).

Last in this section on journals - Interrogations No. 17/18. A double issue - now only in Italian, alas, (£1.60 post 29p) which is a special on 'Workers' Control' with articles by Murray Bookchin, Nico Berti, among others. It also contains a nine page summary of the articles, in English.

*

This week's Book Bargain is: Emmanuel Frynta: HASEK: The Creator of Schweik - large format, 148pp, cloth, £0.60 + post 76p. It is profusely illustrated and although it comes from Czechoslovakia and is therefore likely to be a little slanted, underplaying Hasek's commitment to anarchism, for instance, at this price and bearing in mind the dearth of material on Hasek it's worth buying - worth it for the illustrations alone!

*

While we're on Hasek and Svejk, Cecil Parrott's excellent unabridged translation of The Good Soldier Svejk is still available, with the original illustrations of Josef Lada (paper, £2.25, post 60p). Also available is Cecil Parrott's own fine biography of Hasek published last year: The Bad Bohemian: A Life of Jaroslav Hasek (296pp., cloth, £10 + 60p post). Expensive, but a fascinating and well-researched story, finely and sympathetically told.

April Carter's new book Authority and Democracy at £4.95 (29p post) is expensive - although in cloth, it is only 93 pages long! It is a critique of power and a clarification of the concept of authority from the standpoint of a libertarian political theorist; extending the ground covered in her earlier book, Direct Action and Liberal De-

mocracy (£1.25, post 29p), being a definition and a defence of direct action even (especially?) within the framework of a liberal democracy.

Gustav Landauer and his writings are, at last, achieving the kind of attention they merit, although again the price of books makes one shudder. Firstly, though, a work of his own, For Socialism* (£1.75, post 25p), a fascinating outline of Landauer's own attitude to libertarian socialism and - as far as I can trace - the only work by Landauer currently available.

Secondly, Eugene Lunn's scholarly and sympathetic study Prophet of Community: The Romantic Socialism of Gustav Landauer* £15.00 + post, cloth, 434pp. Again, as far as I can trace, this is the only work on Landauer currently available. It gives full measure of importance to Landauer the anarchist as well as Landauer the mystic and socialist; it's only a pity it's so expensive.

Next, a couple of items from the I.W.W. in Australia, firstly a pack of well-produced stickers - 100 assorted for £1.50 (+ 11p post); secondly, Ian Turner's Sydney's Burning - no, not the immolation of the editor of that fine individualist anarchist journal 'Minus One' but a history of the Wobblies down under at the time of the First World War (£1.50 + 29p post).

J.H.

Footnote: Opening hours.

For some time past we have had difficulty in keeping the bookshop open at the times previously listed for Thursday to Saturday. The position is:

Monday CLOSED (as ever - except for Freedom Editorial meeting in the evening).
Tuesday 2 - 6 pm) as
Wednesday 2 - 6 pm) previ-
Thursday 2 - 8 pm) ously
Friday)
Saturday) we are trying to maintain a rota system for Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; but it is always advisable to ring us (01-247-9249) to check whether we are open before calling, to avoid the possibility of a wasted journey.

Anarchist Review

Freedom

SUPPLEMENT
8 September / 79
Vol 40 No 16

VINCE STEVENSON

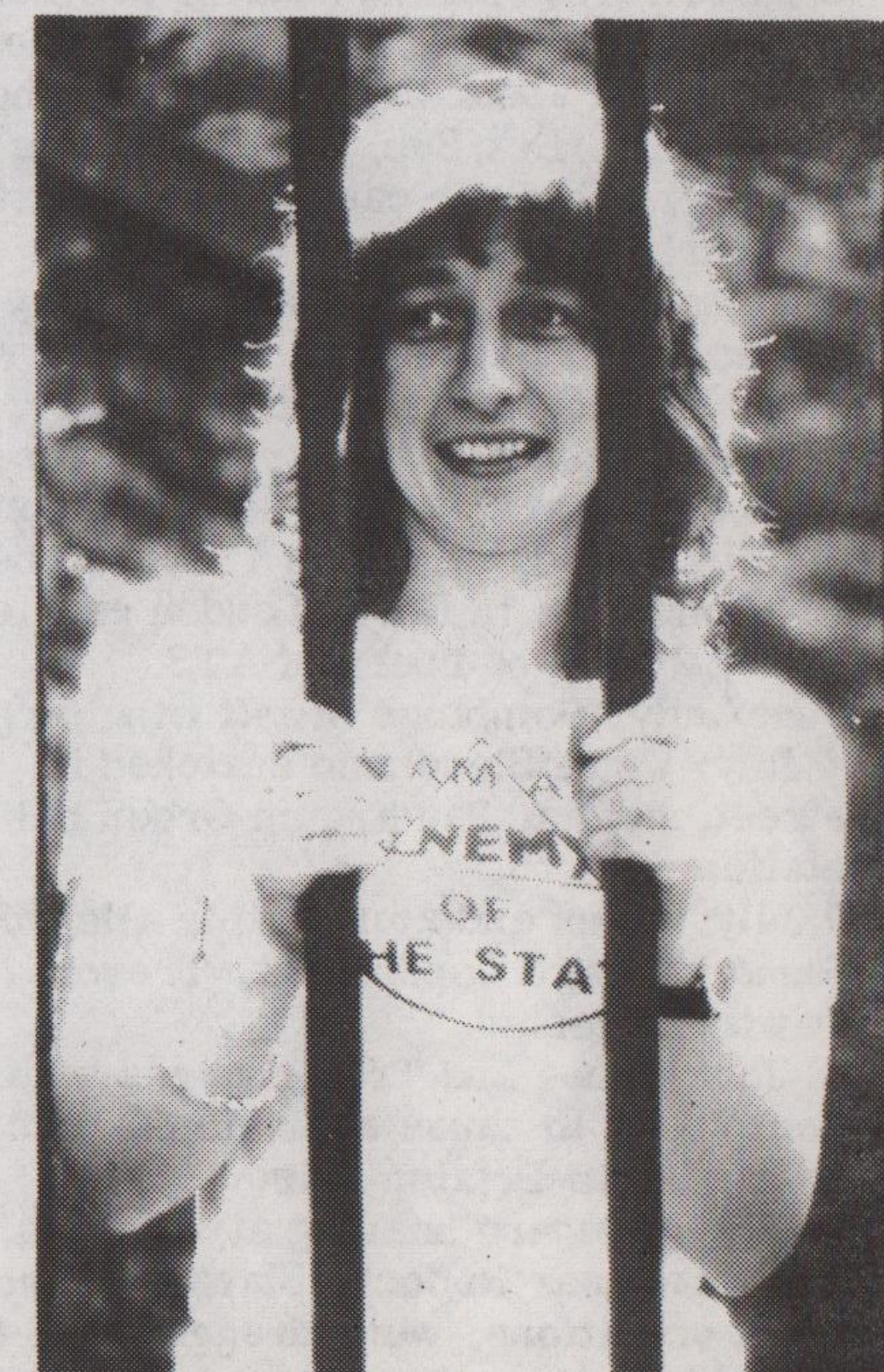


TAFF LADD



CONSPIRACY TO DISSSENT

IRIS MILLS



RONAN BENNETT



TREVOR DAWTON



FREEDOM PRESS 84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET
in Angel Alley LONDON E1 7QX Phone 01-247 9249

This Supplement is based on the case which has become known as "Persons Unknown". (perhaps somewhat inaccurately, in fact that is the name of the Support Group). The trial is finally due to begin on September 17th, fifteen and a half months after the first arrests. Whatever the outcome of the trial, these people will have spent many months in prison, under maximum security conditions. I had intended to sit down and write a deep analysis of the case, to act as introduction, then I thought, hell, it speaks for itself.

There's just a couple of points I'd like to emphasise. The case takes place against a background of increasing tension in this country, indeed in the world as a whole. There is widespread discontent, the economic situation continues to deteriorate and no-one really expects it to ever get better. This cynicism is matched by an equally deep mistrust of conventional politic answers. The Established powers are jittery, this discontent can no longer be bought off with material wealth, its just not there to be had and the worlds resources are shrinking. Added to this people in the Third World are demanding something a bit more like their fair share.

The "progressive" answer to this discontent is to absorb it in a bureaucracy, to turn the country into a vast Social Services Dept., a nationalised soup kitchen. However there is a more primitive response. Clamp down. Over the past few years the forces for doing this have steadily become more blatant. This trend has been documented in FREEDOM and elsewhere. We have seen the police turn into vultures cruising the streets in metal boxes, linked by radio to computer banks. We have seen them develop a

"Paramilitary Third Force", whilst all the time insisting that such a thing would be inappropriate in Britain. We have heard them demanding greatly increased powers. All this while they openly admit that they habitually break the regulations that are supposed to control them. And while the Metropolitan CID has lost over a third of its officers in five years, for corruption.

While the police presence intensifies (with useful lessons to be learned from Northern Ireland, of course), the more subtle side of the judiciary has also been at work. British law has always amazed the world in its vagueness. The British people fondly believe that this represents a good natured willingness to muddle along. In fact, of course, it means that there is always a law to fit. The last couple of years has seen the development of a number of particularly useful catch-all pieces of legislation. The Conspiracy Laws have been around for a while (see FREEDOM vol 39 no. 14 for a fuller treatment). So have the Official Secrets Acts (see coverage of the ABC case). All this has now been joined by the Criminal Tresspass Law and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. From this case it looks as if there is to be an unholy alliance between parts of these to produce a useful charge of 'terrorist conspiracy' or some such.

Well, they were particularly clumsy in the ABC case, and they failed. They have been particularly clumsy here. The Grand Anarchist Idealist Terrorist Bombplot To Overthrow Society has collapsed to 'conspiracy to rob' and 'dishonestly handling' airguns. But remember, that 'conspiracy' could still carry fifteen year sentences. D.P.

CHRONOLOGY 1978

24 May: Iris Mills and Ronan Bennett picked up in a raid on a flat in London
25 May: Press reports range from 'actress in bomb bedsit shock' to 'couple held in anti-terror raid'.
27 May: Police hunt for a car 'full of bombs', supposedly 'boobytrapped'. Iris and Ronan appear at Marylebone magistrates court, charged with conspiring with others to cause explosions in the UK.
2 June: Raid on a house in North London. Dafydd Ladd arrested.
3 June: 'Wanted' car found dumped over a Welsh cliff. No further mention of this by police
5 June: Dafydd Ladd appears at Marylebone along with Iris and Ronan. All three refused bail and remanded in custody.
8 June: First remand hearing at Lambeth magistrates court. Complaints made by the defence about the handcuffs on the defendants. Det. Sup. Bradbury says they were there in case of armed attack on court.
16 June: Raids in Swansea, Highbury, Hornsey and Hackney.
21 June: First news of Stewart Carr, also charged with conspiring to cause explosions, arrested in Gillingham and held in custody since the Thursday before. Raid on house in North London carried out by 20-25 members of ATS.
June/July: Bombings of left wing targets
4 July: Vince Stevenson snatched in street, held at Paddington Green police station.
7 July: Arms and ammunition allegedly found in North London flat. Trevor Dawton arrested.
10 July: Vince and Trev charged with conspiracy to cause explosions, both remanded to Brixton prison.
13 July: Remand hearing at Lambeth. All six appear in dock. Started to protest about conditions, were dragged out, then brought back one by one.
15 July: Demonstration outside Paddington Green police station, home of ATS.

20 July: Remand hearing at Lambeth. More charges brought in relation to several armed robberies and theft of arms.
26 July: Raid in Brixton. Police burst in wearing flak jackets and with drawn guns.
27 July: Remand hearing at Lambeth.
Armed traffic police in evidence in and around the court.
3 August: Remand hearing at Lambeth, alongside hearing of two Arab nationals accused of conspiring to murder the former Iraqi ambassador.
4 August: Jeremy Thorpe appears in court at Minehead charged with conspiring to murder Norman Scott. Awarded bail.
24 August: Even stricter security conditions at Lambeth. Two members of support group arrested (one mistaken for other) and threatened under PTA for what turned out to be small unpaid fine.
7 September: A German comrade is stopped, searched, questioned and photographed on his way back to Germany after visiting one of the defendants in Brixton.
14 September: Confidential defence papers read by police during search of lawyer. The magistrate whitewashed this unprecedented breach of privilege.
15 September: Astrid Proll arrested.
19 September: ID parades begin at Paddington Green. None of the charges substantiated.
29 September: Trevor Dawton given bail.
26 September: Iris Mills given bail. Original 'bomb-making' materials identified: 2 tins of weedkiller, 2 bags of flour and 1½ bags of flour.
16 November: Announcement that the Attorney General had refused consent to proceed with 'conspiracy to cause explosions' charge on Iris, Ronan, Taff and Stew. Those on Vince and Trev had not even been submitted. Replacement charges of 'conspiracy to rob' brought.
11 December: Vincent Stevenson given bail.
21 December: After several postponements committal proceedings begin. Taff Ladd given bail, but not released due to police objections to his sureties.

1979

January: Remaining prisoners 'decategorised'.
1 March: Taff released.
23 March: In again refusing bail for Ronan, magistrate makes clear that this is due to his being Irish.
May: Indictments served. Some charges re-worded. New charge of 'conspiracy to defraud'. (A legal precedent). Two new names added to conspiracy. Stew's specific robbery charges (the only ones against any of the six) dropped.
Trial set for September.
10 August: At pre-trial review 'conspiracy to defraud' charges dropped.
Prosecution granted permission to present jury.
16 August: Ronan Bennett given bail.
17 September: Current date for start of trial.

THESE are the bare bones of the case. It broke on May 24th of last year, splashed in the London evening papers. The next day the nationals took it up, with sensationalised stories but few facts. No names were released but we quickly learned that the two who had been arrested were Iris Mills and Ronan Bennett. They were known, they had been held almost exactly a year before in Huddersfield under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (FREEDOM vol. 38 no. 10). They were released with no charges being made, Ronan's deportation to Northern Ireland (he is Irish) had only been prevented through the intervention of the then Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees, after a successful publicity campaign.

On May 27th they appeared at Marylebone Magistrates Court and were formally charged with 'conspiracy to cause explosions'. No evidence was produced, but Det. Supt. Peter Bradbury of the Anti-Terrorist Squad opposed bail, with vague allegations. This pattern was to continue. That night there was a dramatic television news flash. A car had been booby-trapped with bombs and the public was warned to keep away. Over the next few

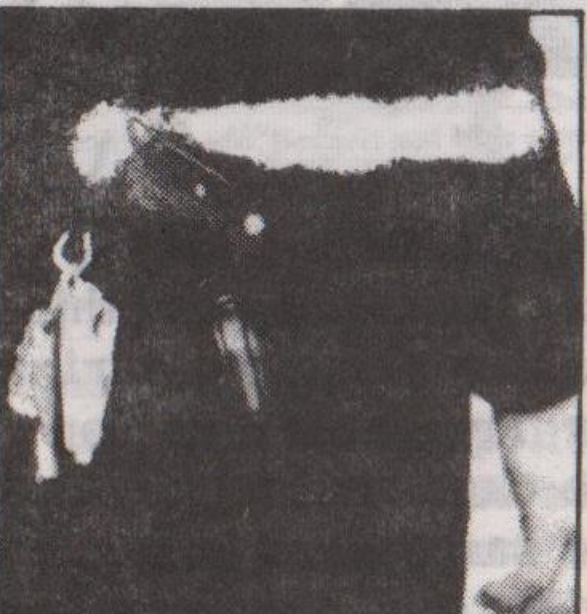
days the press continued with talk of a 'major anarchist organisation' and 'police hunt more bombers'. A small throw-away paragraph in the *Guardian* (3/6) announced 'Wanted Car Found Dumped'. No more was heard of the bombs.

After a few days, amid mounting police raids and media hysteria, people began to recover from their shock and to organise more extensive support. (A solicitor had already been engaged). The shock was understandable; after all this 'major anarchist organisation' had completely escaped our notice and there hadn't been any explosions. In a raid on June 2nd Dafydd (Taff) Ladd was picked up and in court on the 5th the police began their now infamous statements. The three were said to be part of a London-based group of 'idealistic persons who believe that they should take positive steps to overthrow society'. Later this conspiracy was to widen to take in the whole country; international links were to be suggested. The fragile 'society' which was in imminent danger of overthrow was to become 'authority'. But this remained the basic accusation. Details were scarce; it was said that 'chemicals and wiring' had been discovered in Iris' and Ronan's flat. Taff's fingerprints were allegedly found there. The lack of actual explosions was no problem; the conspiracy had been 'nipped in the bud'. (Later a police spokesperson was to describe this shortage as 'unfortunate'). On the basis of these dark hints bail was again refused. The court was assured that evidence did exist. 'There is evidence of association. There is some documentary evidence. I would prefer not to disclose it at this stage'. There was talk of a statement by Taff. This statement was to disappear without trace. Press reports of the hearing were dramatic, with talk of a 'bomb plot' and 'anarchist plot'. In the *Daily Telegraph* headline (5/6) the police raiders were described as 'Terror Squad'. This was prophetic.

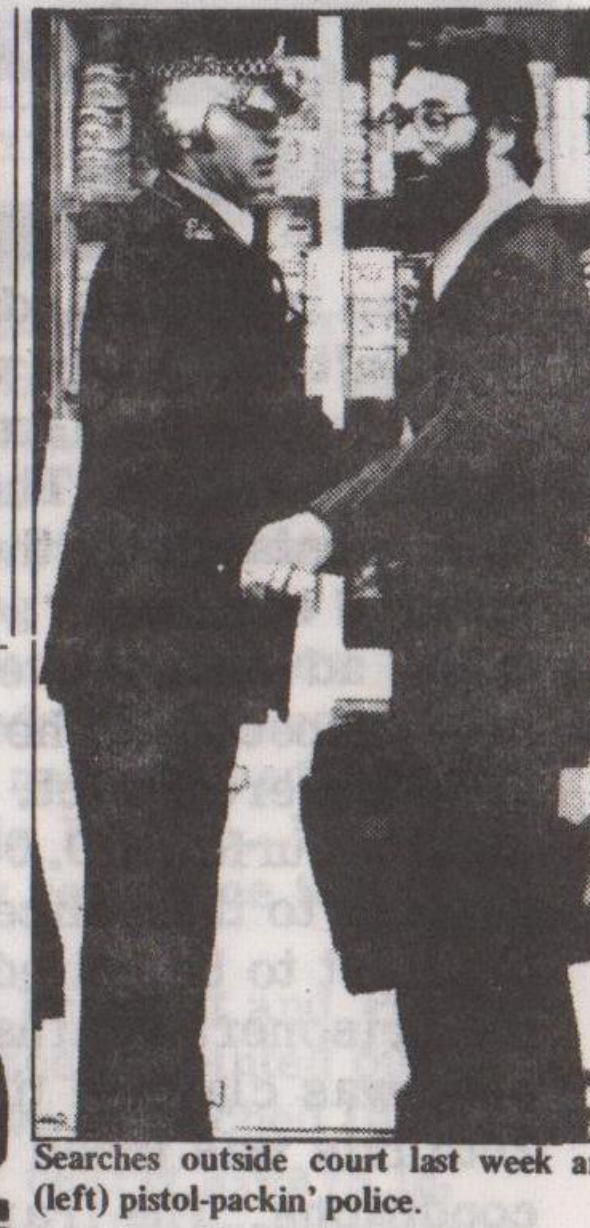
The police now began to theatricalise events even more. It was apparent that their charges were rather thin, so the highly charged atmosphere had to be maintained. Raids continued throughout the country. The tone of these was steadily intensified. Doors were broken down first thing in the morning by up to 30 police with dogs and people were interrogated about their politics. Some were taken to police stations and held for several hours. Literature, photographs, personal mail and address books were seized. Anything that was interpreted as less than total acquiescence was met with threats of the PTA. There were constant attempts to find an international connection; for example German-speaking police were included on raids. Wild statements were made. At one time an imaginative chart was produced, supposedly encapsulating all the links in the British anarchist movement. Later, the raids escalated into military operations with policemen wearing flak jackets and waving drawn guns. In the middle of all this they managed their moments of farce. One raid was on a building in North London. When they burst in the police got into a punch-up with the bouncers of the gaming

club which was based there and who thought they were being attacked by criminals. In fact, the police thought they were raiding Centro Iberico (the libertarian centre) which had moved out two years before.

Melodrama also steadily built up around the remand hearings. On June these were moved to Lambeth Magistrates Court on security grounds. This is the nearest court to Brixton prison. It is a small building down a side road, opposite a house used as police accommodation. It has been used as a special high security court in the past. Its position makes it easy to saturate the area with police. This was done zealously. By June, every Thursday morning, this quiet street was flooded with gun-wielding police. Roadblocks were set up and pedestrians harassed. They even put spotters with binoculars on the surrounding roofs - presumably, as someone remarked at the time, to foil an air attack. The armoured van with the defendants handcuffed inside was rushed in at high speed, causing fears of severe injury in the event of an accident. (Similar fears were expressed by the former RAF member, Astrid Proll, when her turn came to be rushed to remand hearings from Brixton). There was a series of more or less minor collisions, culminating in the demolition of a police motor bike.



Searches outside court last week and (left) pistol-packing police.



from "Time Out" (an 'honourable exception')

But this is getting a bit ahead of ourselves. In the meantime the support group, called Persons Unknown after the charges, was properly underway. Other groups were set up around the country. As well as direct support, visits, letters and meals for the prisoners (though this took some time to be allowed and met with a lot of harassment. Basically, if you put your name down as a possible visitor, you got an early morning visit), work was done to publicise the case. Apart from a belated acknowledgement of the groups' existence in the *Guardian* (28th June, with the somewhat clumsy headline, 'Alleged Terrorists Get Support') a blanket now fell. Gone the intense interest of the early days. With a few honourable exceptions the left press was no better. Here were a number of people

being held in Category A (maximum security) for openly political reasons - one of them, due to her sex, in virtual solitary confinement, week after week, with bail being refused solely on the basis of flimsy allegations by the police who were meanwhile setting themselves up as commandos. And the response was: nothing.

On June 21st Stewart Carr appeared at the remand hearing. He had been arrested five days before in Gillingham and held incommunicado. The support campaign was beginning to concentrate on Iris' conditions and demanding that, if she were not given bail, then at least she should be moved to Holloway where she could associate with other prisoners. Harassment of the support group in London was stepped up. Rising Free bookshop, the contact address, was under constant surveillance. On July 4th a member of the group, Vince Stevenson, was lifted in the street in a KGB-type snatch while on his way to a meeting. After being kept in isolation (illegally as it happens, since the PTA had not been invoked) he was charged with conspiracy. On July 7th the press again took an interest. 'Anarchist Cell Hit In Arms Raid'. The police claimed to have discovered a suitcase containing guns and 'hundreds' of rounds of ammunition. This later became 'thousands'. Trevor Dawton, who lived in the raided flat, was arrested and charged along with Vince on July 10th.

In the meantime we had some actual explosions on left wing targets. During one of these, in *Peace News'* office (July 4th) someone was badly injured by a letter bomb. The Anti-Terrorist Squad took no interest, as this was 'fire-raising'. Arson is, apparently, not terrorism. (Ironically enough, 'Arson in Her Majesty's Dockyards' is one of the couple of offences which still carry the death penalty). Neither, it would seem, is the campaign of intimidation and violence to the extent of murder, carried out against blacks and anti-fascists.

On July 13th the six defendants appeared together at Lambeth. When they attempted to protest about their conditions they were dragged from the court, beaten up and then brought back one at a time. 'We are your dissidents' shouted Ronan, but the British press seemed unable to notice the parallel, preferring to continue to wallow in self-righteous moralising about the Soviet Union. The week after something like actual charges were brought. Vince and Trev were accused of possession of firearms (the ones linked with the raid on Trev's flat); Iris, Ronan and Taff with assorted charges like 'dishonestly handling' air guns, and Stew with a number of counts of armed robbery (the only specific such charge). By this time Det. Supt Bradbury felt able to refer to an actual explosion in the East End earlier in the year. He said he could produce a witness "who had heard a bang". There was talk of extensive identity parades and an interim report had gone to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The next couple of months saw the height of the police domination of events. They completely swamped the remand

hearings. As one remarked, "We're in charge of this court". (Oddly, the armed

guards had Traffic Division insignia). The magistrates submitted meekly. When a barrister complained that consultation was being interfered with (lawyers had to meet the prisoners in the presence of guards) he was told, "It's difficult for me to deal with this, it goes on outside the court". Magistrates continually refused to do anything about the handcuffing and beating of the prisoners, even when it happened in front of them. They quietly accepted totally unsubstantiated police allegations about the vicious, depraved nature of the six and refused bail.

Things hotted up further when three Iraqis accused of terrorist offences began to appear in the court. (As one of these was a woman, Iris was no longer entirely alone. However, as Khloud al Mugrabi spoke no English it was not a vast improvement). By now, the security was so obtrusive that some newspapers actually printed pictures (eg. *The Guardian*, 10/8), citing the Iraqis but making no mention of the anarchists. Around the beginning of August considerable comment was made in dissident circles when Jeremy Thorpe, accused of conspiracy and incitement to murder for political ends, was given bail and allowed his passport to make overseas trips.

On August 5th Merlyn Rees, the Home Secretary, was picketed and hassled at a meeting in Bolton. He agreed to read a leaflet on the case. About this time, David McNee, Metropolitan Commissioner of Police, demanded that the customary bending of rules in relation to suspects' rights should be legitimised (in evidence to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure). Another excuse for security procedures came with claims that there was a gun loose in Brixton prison. Press reports did not fail to mention that the prison contained anarchists. After a search, with everybody confined to their cells, this gun was to vanish without trace.

On August 24th harassment of the support group reached a new level as one member was picked up in the court and told there was a warrant for her arrest. She was threatened with the PTA. It then emerged that they had got the wrong person. The procedure was repeated with the 'right' person. Eventually it turned out that the whole thing was over a small unpaid fine. After payment, the PTA was put away again. On September 14th the police searched one of the lawyers and read through his defence papers. Protests to the magistrate were waived aside.

This was the peak of police power. Afterwards, the cracks in their case extended until they joined up and it fell apart. On September 19th the identity parades finally began. These were held at Paddington Green police station, home of the ATS. No mention was made for security, which had transferred the remand hearings to Lambeth. For the convenience of the police the prisoners could now be moved half way across London. No reports leaked out of rescue attempts by armed mobs. From the police point of

view the parades were a failure. In dozens of parades they achieved three identifications, none of which fitted their charges. With this collapse pressure for bail increased. Police spokespeople now resorted to claims of '1000 pages of evidence'. (Sometime later this was '800'). This was not actually waived in court. In the complete absence of anything like a suitable explosion or armed robbery, the emphasis shifted to the setting up of false identities, bank accounts and safe houses. Det. Insp. McClellan, who had taken over from Bradbury, admitted that the evidence against Vince was 'difficult to describe'. When pressed he revealed that it consisted of his fingerprints on a copy of the *Hackney Gazette*, allegedly found at the site of the alleged 'test explosions'. This newspaper contained an advert for a workshop to hire; said workshop had reportedly been hired under a false name for the setting up of an alleged bomb factory. No bombs or forensic evidence were available. This kind of evidence is known as 'association'.



Even by the standards of this case this wouldn't do, a fact which came out during a bail application for Trev and Vince on September 29th. The case against the two was substantially the same, and Trev was granted bail.

His advantage over Vince was evidently his 'respectable' home background. Conditions were strict. £20,000 sureties, a nightly curfew (10.00 - 6.00) and daily reports to the police. Ironically, Trev, the first to be bailed, was the only one of the prisoners against whom 'hard' evidence was claimed (the guns). On October 26th Iris was freed under equally strict conditions. The framed flour and sugar was returned to her. Meanwhile harassment of the support continued. Members were shadowed to and from meetings. On one occasion a car was broken into and pages torn from an address book.

In November Stewart Carr disassociated himself from the other five defendants and from Persons Unknown. This was precipitated both by political differences and different legal situations, making a collective defence possible only for the five.

Also in November it emerged that the 'conspiracy to cause explosions' charges against Vince and Trev had been abandoned; the police hadn't even bothered to submit them along with the others, and on the 16th it was announced that the Attorney General had refused consent to these charges against the other four. They were replaced by 'conspiracy to rob'. Iris and Ronan were additionally charged with 'possession of explosive substances' ... one was daily expecting announcements

that they had conspired to use the weed-killer on Buckingham House's gardens and ruin the parties) and 'dishonestly handling a black imitation leather briefcase'. On 11th December Vince was given bail.

On 21st December the committal for trial proceedings finally began, against a background of 'Week of Action'. The defence had opted for short committals, rather than a full run through of the prosecution case. Barry McGill, from the DPP, gave a speech. The defendants were 'self-confessed anarchists' (as usual, this is apparently a crime in itself). 'The prosecution case is that they were members of a London-based gang whose objective was to bring about a radical change in society'. (Sounds like the Tory party!) A catalogue of allegations was run through. It was said that Stewart Carr had made 'substantial admissions' relating to robberies. No details were given. Otherwise it was impossible to say whether any other defendant had taken part in any specific robberies.

Taff was granted bail, still against police opposition. There followed two months of intense struggle before he was finally freed. The police kept finding reasons for delay. Sureties were queried and rejected. They were subjected to intimidatory visits. Taff was finally released on March 1st. Bail applications for Ronan were still rejected. It was apparent that his 'Irish connection' told against him. McClellan brought up (irregularly) that Ronan had a conviction for attempting to escape from Long Kesh. What he omitted was that this was his only previous conviction and that he had been acquitted of the original charge for which he was in Long Kesh. In respect of the 'escape attempt' he was bound over for £10 for two years. The smallness of the sum showed that the court did not take the offence very seriously, and indeed the judge said as much.

In May, a year after the first arrests, the indictments were served; that is, the formal charges. There was a bit of re-writing. In addition, two new names, Graham Rua and Michelle Poree, were added to the conspiracy. New charges of 'conspiracy to defraud' were added. This is also an entirely new charge, made possible by the 1977 Criminal Law Act. The specific robbery charges against Stew were dropped.

On August 10th there was a pre-trial review. The 'conspiracy to defraud' charges had vanished again. More seriously, the prosecution brought, and were granted, an application to vet the jury. In order to gain this the political nature of the case had to be emphasised. The defendants were described as 'self-styled AN-ARCHISTS' (sic). Plans to 'kidnap members of the Royal Family' and 'blow up nuclear power stations' were mentioned.

Immediately the application was granted the prosecution said that the trial was to be a 'criminal one' and politics were not going to be emphasised.

Finally, on August 16th, Ronan was granted bail, which will give him time (four whole weeks) to prepare his defence.

The trial is now fixed to start on Monday, September 17th at the Old Bailey.

General

Conditions inside prison are by definition bad. To this must be added the effects, in Britain, of old buildings and overcrowding (as well as of long periods of solitary confinement in punishment block). In this case there were additional factors. The prisoners were on remand: as one said, 'one of the worst things about being a prisoner on remand is the psychological anxiety caused by waiting for one's future to be determined'. Conditions in Brixton are notorious. There is a long waiting list for trial, resulting in severe overcrowding. For example:-

- there are two toilets for use by 80 men
- there are five showers for use by 150 men
- the statutory one hour exercise per day is reduced to between 15-45 minutes
- prisoners are locked up for at least 22 hours per day
- there is no proper work, educational or recreational facilities

Remember that all this is for people who have not been convicted of anything. And at the end of a long period on remand, they must get their minds straight to face trial.

Category A

The sex were defined as Category A. That is, 'maximum security'. This involves a stricter regime and tighter security. Remand prisoners are allowed one visit a day and a specific quantity of food, cigarettes etc. For Cat A these things become, in practice at least, subject to the whim of the authorities. All potential visitors are vetted by the police. In this case visits were in a small room in the hearing of warders. This applied to visits by lawyers as well. Letters and incoming literature (especially if political) frequently did not get through. Any protests could result in going 'on the block', that is into solitary confinement.

Women

Iris Mills was the first woman to be placed in Brixton prison since Marion and Dolores Price. The excuse for placing her there was that Holloway, the main women's prison in London, was being rebuilt and would not be able to

THE Bail Act (1976) is, on the surface, a sensible measure. Its general trend is that bail should be granted wherever possible. This is obviously practical as well as liberal. There is a long backlog of cases to be tried. All the people involved could not be kept in prison - think of the expense. Accordingly, only the most desperate villains are remanded in custody. The Act gives only four grounds on which bail may be refused:

- a) That the defendant will abscond
- b) That the defendant will interfere with witnesses

Prisons

prevent such a dangerous prisoner from breaking out. Merlyn Rees said as much in a letter to Persons Unknown, when he wrote that in view of the fact that the six prisoners had been classed as Category A, 'it is, I am afraid, necessary for Miss Mills to be held in special accommodation in Brixton prison as no other accommodation in the South East of England offers the degree of security required for an unconvicted female prisoner in Category 'A'".

Yet, as Iris was to point out, there were no facilities for women at all in Brixton, and because no other women were there at the time she was *de facto* in solitary confinement.

The conditions in which she was placed were quite extraordinary. No better

example can exist of the ordeal (the indignities, the absurdities, the loneliness) faced by a prisoner who has not yet been brought to trial. In addition, Iris' detention in Brixton, preceded by that of the Price sisters and followed by that of Khloud al Mugrabi and Astrid Proll, seemed to provide further evidence of the adoption of anti-terrorist practices being applied on the Continent. Women belonging to political groups in Italy have been placed in isolation in men's prisons, and in November 1977 the RAF member Ingrid Schubert died in total isolation in the men's prison of Stadelheim in Munich. Stammheim too is a men's prison, and Irmgard Moeller has been held there in isolation since the deaths of her companions in October 1977. There are many other examples of 'terror' women being held in men's prisons deliberately to prevent their association with other prisoners and, through isolation, either to destroy their identity or to lead them to 'suicide'.

In Iris' case she was allowed two half hour periods of exercise at irregular times each day. While the other prisoners exercised together, Iris had to walk around on her own in a narrow space fenced off from the rest of the yard and topped with barbed wire. Three cameras watched her movements, as well as three screws. In a letter to a member of the FREEDOM collective Iris wrote, 'It

seems that I get less association the more people there are! (By then Khloud al Mugrabi and Astrid Proll were at Brixton.) When I was by myself I was unlocked for a further two hours in the evening to watch television, so I was 'out' for about eight hours a day, though it was pretty pointless as I had no-one to talk to.

'When Khloud came they stopped the television - so as I have just explained we had about six hours a day. Now there is someone else here I've got about three hours! I just hope no-one else comes or they might as well throw away the key.

'As far as I'm concerned, conditions have got worse. They seem to have taken it into their heads that I have become a dangerous person - I don't know why. I'm really living a Jekyll and Hyde existence, I know I am a quiet kind of person, yet they treat me like a homicidal maniac. For example, I'm not allowed my knitting or my typewriter in my cell, they said that I might use them against them as dangerous weapons. It's quite ridiculous, I'm only allowed to knit and type in my association period and as that has been cut down so drastically, I have no time hardly to do them. I would still like to try to get to Holloway, I really don't see how I can be any worse off'.

In the event, Iris was released on bail in October. That she could be simply freed on bail after the Home Office insistence that she was such a security risk at last brought it home to the liberal reformers that there was something a bit wrong here. The NCCL and Howard League began to admit an interest in the issue. Yet Astrid Proll remained for almost a year in the same conditions as Iris with her friends crying in very much the same wilderness as Persons Unknown.

Decategorisation

In January the two remaining in Brixton, Taff and Ronan were 'decategorised', that is, moved to 'A' wing.

This was part of the move to 'depoliticise' the case, although political beliefs remained at the core of the charges. It could also represent an attempt to isolate them from the other maximum security prisoners, to prevent any further development of solidarity. Paradoxically, conditions deteriorated (see under 'General'). This was true especially for Ronan after Taff's bail finally came through

bail application was turned down on the unsubstantiated word of the police that these four points applied - the first not even being a valid cause under the Act. No evidence was produced. The magistrates simply accepted the word of the police, reinforced by the atmosphere of security.

By September 29th the thinness of the police case was apparent, especially since the failure of the identity parades to substantiate any of the charges. As bail was granted in one case after another the police continued their opposition in a variety of ways.

cont. on p.17

BAIL

- c) That the defendant will commit further offences
- d) That it is necessary for their own protection

It can be seen from the general account of the case how these points have been interpreted in practice. It will be noted that 'seriousness of the offence' is not a valid reason for refusing bail under the Act. Yet, week after week, at the remand hearings, this was the first reason given by the police for their opposition, followed by grounds a), b) and c). From May 27th (the first court appearance of Iris and Ronan) until September 29th every

A.T.S.

THE ATS is a specialist police set up in January 1971. It was then called the Bomb Squad. (The name changed in 1976). The stimulus for its formation was the bombing outside the home of Robert Carr, then Home Secretary. Originally the Squad consisted of only four officers, under DCI Roy Habershon, who happened to be in charge of the local police station at Barnet. In August 1971 the Bomb Squad was placed on a permanent footing, under Commander Ernest Bond. The Squad had the responsibility for anything connected with 'terrorism'. This obviously leads to some demarcation conflict with the Special Branch.

The Bomb Squad expanded rapidly during the 1973 Provisional IRA bombing campaign and by the end of the year it had over 200 members. After that campaign was over there was little for these officers to do and some were 'lent' to other units. In 1975 the current head, Cdr James Nevill, took over. Members of the Squad were drawn mainly from the Special Branch and the CID.

The Squad's methods of working combine traditional police practices with political surveillance. The latter has involved widespread raids under explosives warrants, which were clearly information gathering expeditions. Notebooks, personal mail, address books etc. were seized. The Squad's record in securing convictions has been mixed. Irish people, charged with links with the Provisional IRA have been convicted amid repeated statements of excessive force, maltreatment of defendants and falsification of evidence. Against British citizens the record has been poor. Of 12 people arrested for involvement in the Angry Brigade (original reason for the Squad's formation) two had the charges withdrawn for lack of evidence, while five more were acquitted. Again, there were indications of fabricated evidence. On two occasions (in 1971 and 1973) charges have had to be withdrawn after the use of agents provocateurs became clear.

In autumn 1977 it was considered that the maintenance of such a large squad, in the absence of any bombings, was wasteful and it was reduced to 30. In May 1978 the public were startled by newspaper reports of an extensive anarchist bomb conspiracy...



Government surplus
WIRING
FOR SALE
Contact: M. Thacker
genuine offer

Daily Mail

THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, 1978 8p (domestic)

WEEDKILLER DEFUSED IN PARLIAMENT

**A POLICE SPOKESMAN
SAID 'THIS IS OBVIOUSLY
AN ATTEMPT TO
OVERTHROW SOCIETY'**

POLICE WISH to contact a Mr G. Fawkes who they believe may be able to help them with their inquiries. In the meantime a gardeners have been interviewed in Brixton Prison until more information can be produced.

The Prime Minister, James Callaghan, who considers this to be the work of a highly organised terrorist gang on the scale of the Maender, Beinhof and Dread Brigades, commented, 'I thought I might something funny in the House but I thought it was only Dennis'.

DRACONIAN MEASURES

As a result of the ensuing crisis, new draconian measures have been introduced overnight and a state of emergency has been declared.

Meanwhile the 12 prisoners have been refused bail at the specially built court. Each of them was brought into the courtroom handcuffed, while outside the actual building, armed police and tanks prevented members of the general public from entering the vicinity.

Friends of the six who attempted to (unsuccessfully) get into the Public Gallery were photographed and it is reported that further arrests are expected in the near future.

WEEDKILLER
bring cheap
Bring your own
pump
see below for details

**OUTRAGEOUS
TREATMENT OF
RUSSIAN DISSIDENTS**

PRIME MINISTER JAMES CALLAGHAN SAYS
'Such a violation of human rights would never happen in this country.'

see page 97

— ADVERTISEMENT —

Anyone wishing to find out more about the six (Iris Mills, Ronan Bennett, Taff Ladd, Stuart Carr, Vince Stevenson, Trevor Dawson) at present being held in Brixton Prison, then please contact:
'Persons Unknown', Box 123,
Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1

PERSONS UNKNOWN

"THEY say lightning doesn't strike in the same place twice" said the inserted stop press in FREEDOM (vol. 39 no. 10) and indeed the opening of the case bore an uncanny resemblance to the events a year previously, when Iris and Ronan were held under the PTA in Huddersfield. The press reports, whilst dramatic "Bomb Material Seized in Hunt for Anarchists" had no details. In fact the identities of those arrested were found out in the same way. A friend, the same one, happened to phone and was answered by a strange voice, saying that they were out and inviting him round. Well, all intelligent revolutionaries learn from experience and this time a lawyer was quickly found. By the time we were despatching FREEDOM, on the Thursday (25th), we could reveal all this (something of a scoop really! Remember you read it first...) if the reasons for it all remained somewhat obscure.

Within a few days, a group had come together to mobilise support. This took a while, as everybody was in something of a state of shock. There seemed no logic or reason behind any of it. Taff was arrested, raids were going on, seemingly randomly. It may seem a bit naive; after all in other countries this sort of thing is a fact of life and everyone could, intellectually, discuss it. But people just weren't used to it. At its peak it was the whole bit: shadowing in the street, mysterious figures with hats pulled down, jumping on and off tube trains. Whatever entertainment value it may have on the other side of a television screen is rather diminished in practice. It was the random nature of it that worried so. As far as could be seen, anyone could be picked up and implicated - 'Conspiracy'.

From the beginning the idea of a 'defence committee' was rejected - nothing was being

cont. on p. 17

CONSPIRACY

AT A TIME when 6 people are being held in Brixton prison, charged with 'conspiracy with persons known and unknown', it may be useful to provide a reminder of what 'conspiracy' means.

The offence first appeared in law during the reign of Edward I. It was used extensively against strikers and pickets during the nineteenth century. In 1875 the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act was passed, in theory to clarify the situation and to distinguish between peaceful and violent picketing. During this century the use of the law in political cases lapsed for a while. However, since the 1960s its usefulness has been recognised again and it has been increasingly invoked as a political weapon.

The point of the law is that it is vague to the point of non-existence. This means that it can signify whatever the police and courts choose it to. A conspiracy is an agreement between two or more people to do something illegal, or to do something legal by illegal means. In other words, the act that is agreed on does not have to be criminal in itself. One of the first of the recent political cases where the law has been applied, occurred in 1967 following an occupation of the Greek embassy. Forty two people were eventually arrested on a shifting series of charges. When they reached the court these included 'conspiracy to trespass.' So one has the interesting situation whereby one can receive an indefinite prison sentence (another useful aspect of the conspiracy laws) for an offence which, in itself, is trivial.

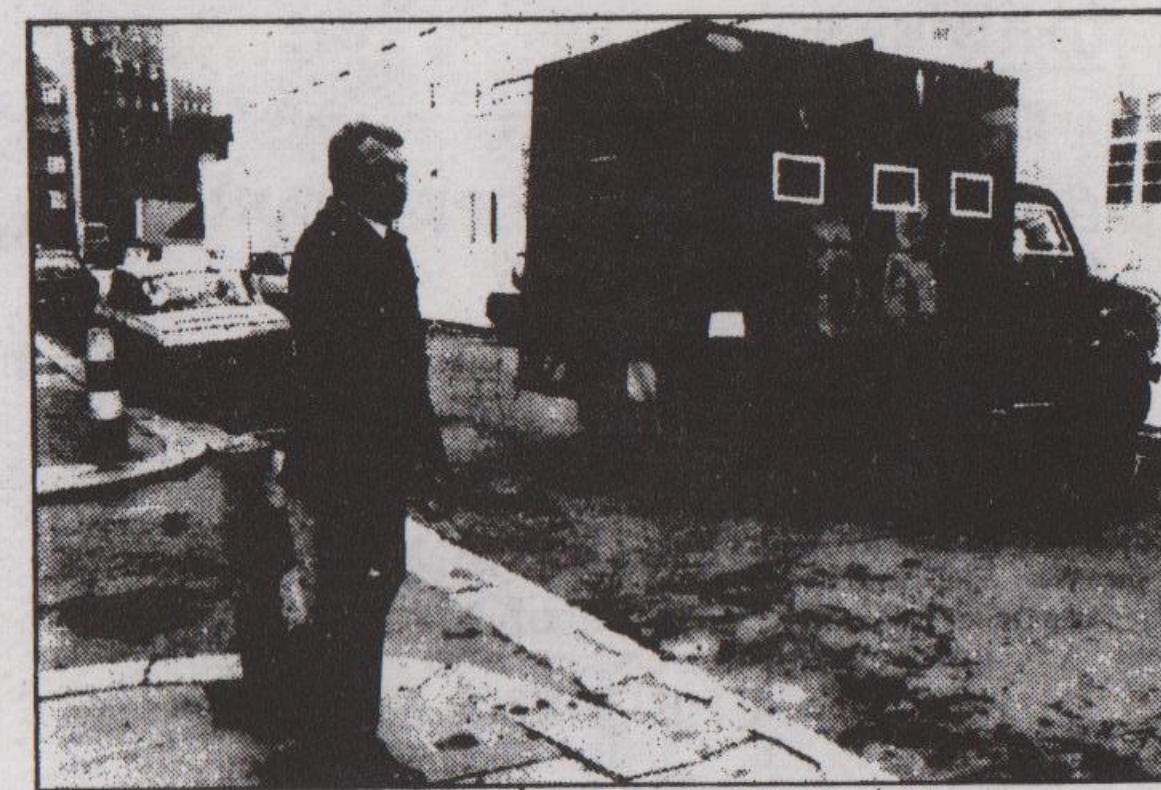
The same charge was used after an occupation of the Sierra Leone High Commission in 1972. On the appeal against conviction Lord Justice Lawton said, "an agreement to trespass is an indictable conspiracy, no matter what absurd results can be envisaged if prosecutors and judges do not use common sense." As so much of British law is 'case law', i.e. ad hoc decisions made by judges and then quoted as precedents, this statement now represents the law. Judge Lawton may hope for common sense in its application; other members of the law enforcement business are more cynical.

The laws have been used on a number of occasions since, including one in which, due to the pattern of charges, convictions and acquittals, a defendant was effectively found guilty of conspiring with himself.

This kind of paradox can be dealt with by use of the phrase 'with persons unknown', as in the present cases. Particularly noteworthy political cases have included the imprisonment of three people during the 1972 building workers' strike and the 'Angry Brigade' trials of 1972. Here a total of 12 people were arrested and charged on a variety of counts, including possession of explosives and conspiracy. Two had the charges against them withdrawn. Two were

tried in late 1971, Ian Purdie was acquitted, Jake Prescott was sentenced to 15 years on conspiracy but acquitted on actual bombings. (He is still in prison). The following year saw the trial of the Stoke Newington 8. Four were acquitted on all counts and the other four were imprisoned on conspiracy charges. (All have since been released). Not a single person was ever convicted for actually committing any of the 27 bombings and shootings attributed to the 'conspiracy.'

* * * *



Top security: Ladd, Bennett and Mills arrive at Lambeth last week.

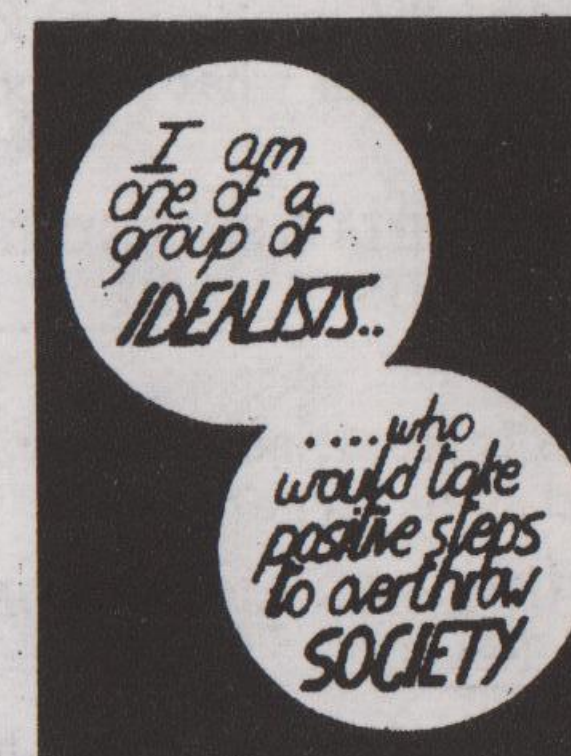
IT IS often proudly stated that there are no political trials in Britain. The advantages of having 'political prisoner' status have often been debated. At the moment Irish prisoners are trying to achieve it. Apparently, according to one who is in a position to know, a certain Andrew Young, the USA have thousands of political prisoners. However, we are assured that such is not the case in Britain. Let us examine the claim by reference to a conspiracy trial.

During the trial of Prescott and Purdie, Justice Melford Stevenson pointed out "conspiracies are always hatched in whispers... it is, or nearly always is, a matter of inference." He proceeded to draw several inferences. He commented that politics were relevant insofar as they may be seen to provide evidence of motive. This, apparently, included such hard facts as that an Angry Brigade communique ended with the words 'Solidarity, revolution and love', and there was a letter from Prescott in prison signed 'Love, solidarity and revolution.'

The Stoke Newington 8 trial followed similar lines. It was asserted that it was not a political trial; yet the basis of the prosecution was that the defendants were anarchists who 'sought to attack the



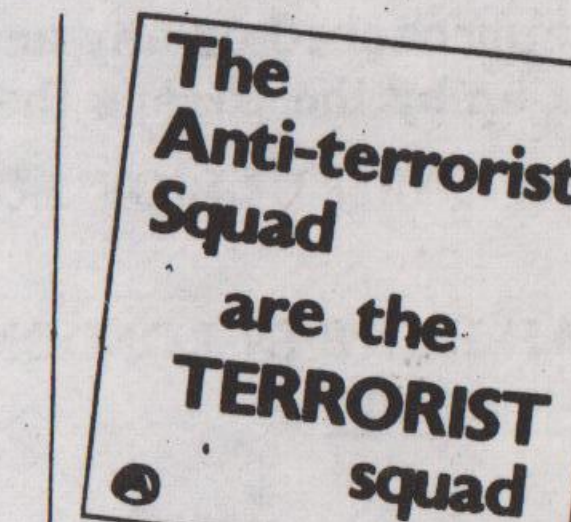
WHERE HAVE WE HEARD THIS BEFORE?



democratic structures of this society with whose politics they disagreed." More tenuous connections were produced; Hilary Creek was refused bail on the grounds that the address she gave was in NI and "there are many people of a similar ideology living in Islington." Justice James further clarified the definition of conspiracy as "a wink or a nod, without a word being spoken."

So this gives an idea of how a conspiracy trial works. The pattern is being repeated now. The defendants are held under rigid conditions. The police carry out a series of raids and seize, in particular, address books. The evidence then largely consists of a range of 'inferences', i.e. insinuations amounting to little more than that the defendants know each other and are radical. 'An

atmosphere of tension is created. In addition, some 'hard' evidence is produced - guns, weedkiller, wiring or whatever. (But remember that despite the arsenal produced in the Stoke Newington trial, in the end the convictions were for conspiracy).



A poster produced by supporters of the defendants

It can be seen that the conspiracy laws are very useful for the state. They can be used against almost anybody. Together with other neat pieces of legislation, such as the Official Secrets Act, the Prevention of Terrorism Acts, the Criminal Law Act, etc., they provide the British state with a particularly impressive battery of catchall laws. No other European country, has a conspiracy law.

Role of the Press

THE way the press handled the case is instructive. Most of the time they didn't handle it at all, occasionally they went overboard. Remember that for most members of the public (including potential jurors) this is what has coloured their impressions.

BOMB MATERIAL SEIZED IN HUNT FOR ANARCHISTS (Daily Telegraph, 25th May)

This is typical; notice how 'anarchists' are legitimate targets for a 'hunt'.

YARD HUNT FOR MORE BOMBERS (Evening News)

No question but that those held were 'bombers'. In fact the original stories were obviously rewritten police handouts. There were no actual facts given. Just a series of assertions.

By the next day 'human interest' was being dragged in. As there were no facts to be had, anyone who could give a quote was questioned.

'I KNEW GIRL AT 'BOMB FLAT' - Actress' (Daily Express)

'ACTRESS IN 'BOMB-BEDSIT' SHOCK' (Sun)

The 'actress' was the person who owned the flat. She is, of course, entirely irrelevant.

Over entirely pertinent points, culled from neighbours, were that the man was "pleasant, with a soft accent and not a hippy type", the woman (girl in the report) was "attractive" "with long dark hair". It was established that they had annoyed some neighbours by feeding pigeons.

This is the total unearthed by the full investigative might of Fleet Street. Not at all chastened by this fact, full play was made of 'bomb', 'bombers', 'terror', 'anarchist'. The first paper to actually print their names was FREEDOM.

Next we had the dramatic television flash (May 27th) about a bomb-laden car not to be approached on any account. This was taken up by the papers the next day.

HUNT FOR CAR FULL OF BOMBS (Sun)

BOMB CAR HUNT IN LONDON (Daily Telegraph)

Only The Guardian (3/6) carried a small paragraph: 'Wanted Car Found Dumped'.

Taff's arrest was covered similarly (June 5th):

ARRESTS FOIL BLAST PLAN (Evening Standard)

TERROR SQUAD DETAIN MAN IN FLAT (Daily Telegraph)

MAN ON BOMB PLOT CHARGE (Guardian)

After the hearing (the 'idealistic persons' etc one):

BOMB CHARGE, TWO DRAGGED SCREAMING FROM DOCK (Telegraph)

ANARCHIST PLOT. COURT IN UPROAR (Daily Express)

Even more damning:

BOMB PAIR FACE MORE CHARGES (Guardian, June 9th)

No trace of doubt here. They are 'Bomb Pair'.

The Guardian did try its liberal best a bit later (June 28th) with one of the clumsiest headlines of all:

ALLEGED TERRORISTS GET SUPPORT

That, believe it or not, reports the setting up of Persons Unknown.

On July 6th, out of nowhere, after a media blanket, the Daily Mail carried an intriguing piece:

YARD SQUAD HUNT FOR TERROR GANG

According to this story, 'Four terrorists thought to be planning attacks on Establishment targets are being hunted throughout Britain'.

Now consider the state of mind of the person in the street. They have already been fed a series of insinuations about 'anarchist bomb plot'. This new story must be very plausible. But! The police are on top of it. "A possible connection with the Baader-Meinhof gang has been investigated". Certainly this adds to the atmosphere, but what does it mean?

'Home secretary Merlyn Rees is being kept closely informed'. Ditto

The question is, why does the Mail and no other paper suddenly an interest

next day:

GUN HAUL SEIZED IN LONDON (Evening Standard). This was the raid on Trev's flat.

After this, nothing. We shouldn't really expect much more from the national press. But just mark the atmosphere that has been created. Only the ever diligent police protect us from the bombers/plotters/terrorists/anarchists.

Police behaviour with respect to raids and the remand hearings was totally ignored, except for a photo in The Guardian (10/8) claiming that the security was because of the Iraqis, who had begun to appear. It had, of course, been there for weeks.

The collapse of the police case was also ignored, except for a couple of mentions of the ID parades. Now that The Guardian has started to report the jury-vetting, it mentions 'alleged anarchists'. (Alleged indeed! - but this is the Guardian being liberal. They no doubt think it's better than 'self-confessed'. But notice how anarchism is still something to be accused of, rather than proud of). According to the report (15/8) by David Leigh, who certainly knows better, "the six face robbery charges". Bullshit, they face conspiracy to rob charges, which is very far from the same thing.

And nowhere do they mention that, a year ago, there was a vast bomb plot which has since disappeared.

But perhaps we should expect no better from Fleet Street. We did expect more from the left. Obviously the anarchist press all gave extensive coverage. So did People's News Service, Newsline, Time Out and The Leveller. Big Flame printed one good article. Other than that the support group had to apply heavy pressure (even to threats of occupation of their offices) to get any mention at all.

For an account of the policy of deliberate media manipulation, as revealed in such publications as Army Land Operations Manual and the report of the Institute for Conflict Studies, see The Technology of Political Control by Ackroyd, Margolis, Rosenhead and Shallice and the new Persons Unknown pamphlet.

VETTING

AT the pre-trial review on August 10th an application was made and granted for vetting of the jury. This is the first time the practice has been openly applied for. Indeed, it was completely unheard of until it emerged that the jury in the ABC Official Secrets trial last year had been screened for 'loyalty'. The revelation caused widespread concern and in the wake of this it was admitted that jury-vetting had been used 25 times since 1975. At that time guidelines for vetting were drawn up by the Attorney General, Home Secretary and Director of Public Prosecutions. The reason given was the current IRA bombing campaign. Only one example is known before 1975 (an espionage case). Since then the cases have included 11 of serious crime (where Criminal Records Office records only were used) and 14 of a political nature (12 IRA and two Official Secrets, where both CID and Special Branch records were involved). In the present case, for the first time, local CID are to 'discreetly' make inquiries about potential jurors' associates.

This is obviously disturbing news. There will be a panel of jurors, probably about 80. (The reason for this vagueness will become apparent in a moment). The prosecution have the opportunity to reject any who, on the basis of extensive enquiries, they consider unsuitable. The situation for the defence is somewhat more restricted. For one thing they have the right to only three challenges, compared with the prosecution's unlimited number. Their access to information is obviously less extensive. In this case there is the unprecedented concession of a private detective, paid for by order of the court! This is to be balanced against the full resources of the national police force.

So there we have the position on August 10th. The list of potential jurors would be provided, and there were then five weeks during which the prosecution would use its resources to rule out those it considered unsuitable and the defence had the facilities of a private detective to sort out which three it liked least or disliked most or whatever.

Except as our review goes to press, more than two weeks later and exactly three weeks before the start of the trial - the defence have not yet received the jury list.

BAIL cont from p.13

The first to be named was Trev (Sept. 29th). It was evident that the respectability of his home background was the deciding factor between his case and that of Vince. (Under the conditions of his bail he had to live with his parents). Yet the cases against the two were essentially the same. If anything that against Trev was stronger, as the police claimed to have found firearms in his flat.

When Iris was granted bail (Oct 26th) the police repeated their claim that she would interfere with witnesses. To back this up they said one witness had received a threatening phone call from a man with an Australian accent. How Iris was supposed to have done this from the maximum wing of Brixton prison, let alone how she managed the double sex change operation, was not disclosed.

Vince finally received bail on Dec. 11th. In all these cases the conditions were stringent, involving high sureties (£20,000, £10,000, £16,000 respectively), curfews and daily reporting to the police station. Later, after 'declassification' in prison these were eased.

Police opposition to Taff's bail was intense. At the hearing (Dec. 21st) the DPP representative, Barry McGill, asserted that Taff had close links with West Germany and therefore was likely to abscond. As he had been deported from there in 1977 and banned from returning, this did not seem likely. McGill then brought up an 'escape attempt' Taff had made. This turned out to consist of having broken away from the police for a few steps while visiting a hospital. (Taff has suffered from chronic enteritis throughout). Bail was granted, but as one of his sureties was away he was returned

PERSONS UNKNOWN cont. from p.14 defended. The early work consisted of getting out press statements, coordinating visits and collecting money. Visits were difficult, people were understandably wary of putting their names forward for police vetting (necessary for Cat A). Everyone knew what 'vetting' meant. But things like that became accepted, though there was a renewed upsurge of paranoia when Vince was snatched in the street on his way to a support group meeting.

The group arranged pickets of Brixton, a demonstration outside Paddington Green and weekly attendance at the remand hearings, followed by press statements which were delivered by hand around Fleet St that afternoon. This was discouraging, as the press were only interested in dramatic headlines. Their version of what might be called dramatic differed from ours. We thought that the swamping of a South London district with armed police (seemingly from the Traffic Division) would merit at least a mention. Apparently not. The "left" press was little better. It needed heavy pressure to get most of it to even mention the story.

In the way of these things the Support Group made stirring demands, "Scrap the Conspiracy Laws, the PTA and the ATS". But we all knew that this was unrealistic. The State needs these things. The work of the group was more prosaic. It fell into three areas, support (moral, legal etc.) for

to Brixton until Jan. 2nd, when she could sign the necessary papers. Responsibility for vetting sureties lies with the police. Accordingly, the other surety was meantime visited by the ATS and told she was unacceptable. When the second surety returned from holiday the ATS visited her home and attempted to bring pressure through her husband. It was said that if Taff were released he would carry out bombings and shoot innocent citizens. "Don't you think it's significant that both the sureties are women. Why is your wife standing bail. What is her relationship to Ladd? Don't you have any control over your wife?" After several more weeks a replacement for the first surety was found and Taff was freed on March 1st.

The question of Ronan's bail was even more fraught. As mentioned, at the hearing on March 23rd McClellan, against the regulations, slipped in a mention of Long Kesh. The Recorder, George Shindler, refused bail on the grounds of the 'Irish connection'. "There are associations and there are dangers. We cannot have a man disappearing over the water". Bail was refused. By implication any Irish persons charged with any offence could be refused bail. Ronan was finally given bail on August 16th, after 15 months' imprisonment. This is to enable him to prepare his defence. He has three weeks to do so.

Stew's case has always been somewhat separate. He was charged with specific cases of robbery and according to the police made 'substantial admissions'. However, these charges were dropped in the indictment, so the position of these 'admissions' is unclear. He is still in Brixton.

the prisoners, publicity and investigation (of the use of the ATS etc.)

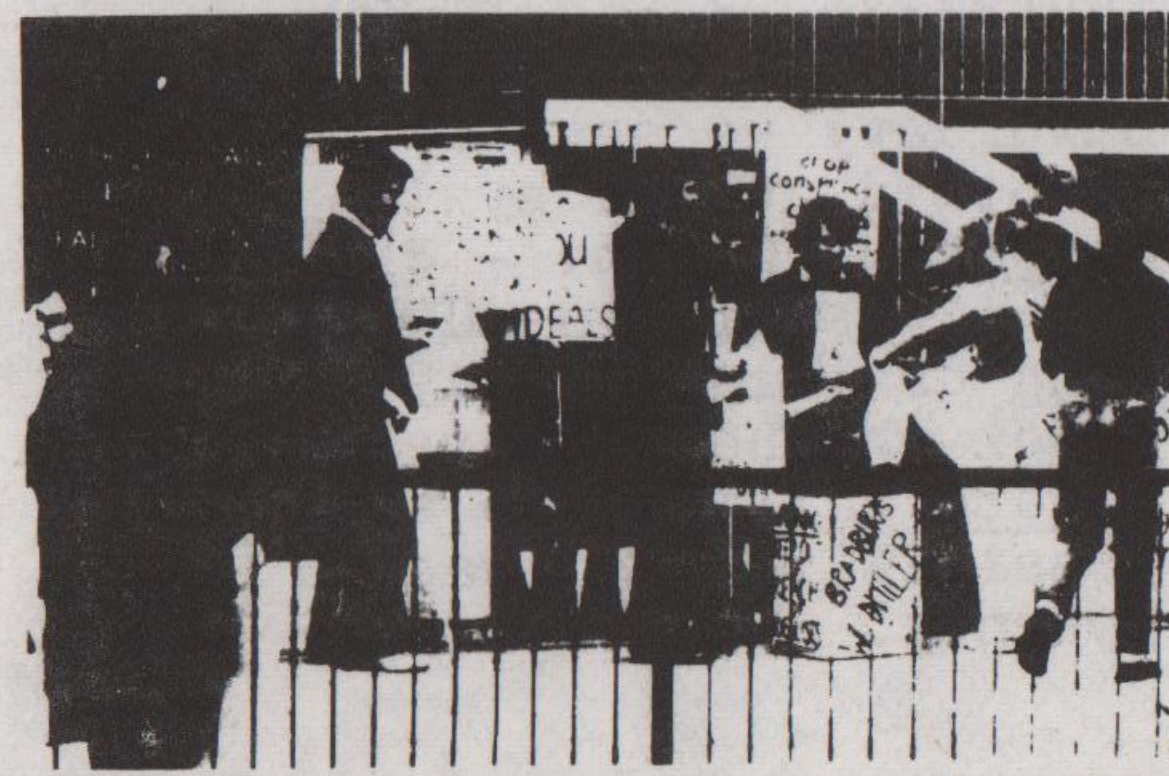
What have been the achievements of the Support Campaign and what lessons can be learnt from the experience? Well, it provided support, and without false modesty this is essential. "Solidarity" may be a word overused to the point of cliché but that doesn't reduce its importance. This aspect is itself enough to justify the campaign.

The other major work of the campaign was in publicity and here the record is more patchy. There are a number of reasons for this. The press, both national and "left" just weren't interested, which meant that things were thrown back on the resources of the anarchist movement, which, frankly, weren't enough. Co-ordination within the group itself was also lacking at times. All that can be said is that we learn by experience.

A constant tightrope to be walked was the balance between being a straight support group and a political campaign. Obviously the two cannot be neatly separated. No one likes to sully their hands in legalisms, equally, we didn't want any martyrs. This point was a source of tension in the group. In any future event (god forbid) this will have to be worked out early. (as a purely personal comment, I think that it is an unrealistic argument. The responsibility of the support group is help get the people off. This is a political point in itself. Others can be made along the way)



PAMPHLET PAMPHLET PAMPHLET
A new publication is available from Persons Unknown. About 60 pages, including graphics. Price 40p (+15p postage) from Box 123, 182 Upper St. London N1



"Persons Unknown" Event in London, in support of those arrested, outside Paddington Green Police Station.