

# Evita

**ORGANISE! CONTINUES ITS** series Myths and Legends with a look at Eva Peron. Turned into a Latin American saint, worshipped by thousands of Argentinians, the subject of an Andrew Lloyd Webber musical and more recently a film starring Madonna, "Evita" has been the subject of much attention over the years. Part of this cult is due to her working class background, her ability to become a "working girl makes good" which appealed to a Tory like Lloyd Webber tuning into the Thatcherite yuppie boom where some people from a working class upbringing were able to make large sums of money. Also superficially appealing are her apparent championing of the poor and her welfare reforms which appeals to a Labourite like Alan Parker, director of the film and supporter of old Labour.

## Hitler

Eva Duarte was born in a village 150 miles to the west of Buenos Aires. The facts of her early life are obscure, not least because of her efforts in later life to make out that she was younger and had come from a poorer background than was true. When her father died at seven, the financial position of her family took a plunge. By 1934, however, Eva's mother had increased her wealth by her running of a boarding-house. Eva Duarte moved to Buenos Aires, where she became an actress. She was a successful radio performer in 1943 when the Army overthrew the Castillo government. Realising that the Army were the important people to know now, Eva Duarte became the lover of Colonel Imbert, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs. But her aims were higher. She deliberately sought out Colonel Juan Peron, seen as the strong man among the colonels. Peron, an ardent admirer of Hitler, had been a driving force in the Group of United Officers that had engineered the coup.

Peron realised the regime could not survive for long without the help of other sectors of Argentinian society outside the military. He looked for the active support of the working class. He was put in charge of the ministry of Labour as a first step in this manoeuvre. Peron first met Eva Duarte at a concert given for survivors of an earthquake in January 1944. The charity work she did there was to become a large part of her future career. The publicity given from the charity work put her in the spotlight, helping her in her showbusiness career. Peron was also using the earthquake tragedy to put himself forward as a champion of the

poor, indeed Eva Duarte sang his praises on the radio before she had met him. At the concert Eva jettisoned Imbert, and became Peron's lover.

## Corporatism

As a result Eva Duarte began to get leading roles in radio plays, as well as starting to appear in movies. Now

Peron became Minister of War, an important position. At the same time he had been building up his control of the trade unions. The union leaders were coming together in an alliance to force a reformist project on Argentinian society. This coincided with Peron's populist plans, based on the tactics of Mussolini, to bind the unions to him. He encouraged a rank and file leader, Cipriano Reyes, to set up a meat-packers union in opposition to the one controlled by the Communists. In return for a no-strike pledge Peron engineered a small wage rise and better conditions. This tactic of corporatism, fully integrating the unions into the State apparatus and thus controlling the working class, was met with hostility by sections of the ruling class, the aristocracy, the landowners and big ranchers, who were wedded to the old ideas of outright repression. Peron did this too with the metalworkers, where a union led by a Trotskyist, was set up in opposition to the Communists! Where he could not control, outright repression was used, as with the building workers. Those who objected to Peron's politics were imprisoned and tortured.

Eva became a key player in this strategy. By now Peron had become Vice-President. He increasingly used nationalist rhetoric against British foreign investment and interests in Argentina (British companies owned most of the infrastructure- Argentina was virtually a British colony). The landowners and industrialists forced Peron to resign in 1945, after a wave of protests and strikes to defend the reforms put through by Peron. When Peron was arrested, Eva threw herself into frenetic activity to build up support among the unions. It is rumoured that the large amounts of cash used during this campaign was from that she had embezzled from the earthquake fund. In alliance with Cipriano Reyes, she visited many factories, docks and union HQs, singing the praises of Peron as the workers' friend. This culminated in a



mass demonstration on October 17th, when 50,000 workers demonstrated in the capital.

## Populist

It was Eva who had shown remarkable resolve when Peron was wavering and preparing to go into exile. It was she who was a chief architect in mobilising the masses in a populist show of support for Peron.

The following year Peron swept to power in a landslide election victory. In the next 3 years Eva, now officially married to Peron, would show how valuable she was to Peronism in enchanting the masses, tying them enthusiastically to the regime and thwarting any independent organisation of the working class. She began to deliver dramatic addresses to mass meetings and over the radio waves, bringing up her working class credentials, calling on the working class to back her and Peron. In the meantime she continued to do what she had been doing before Peron became President. She moved her relatives into positions of power. Her brother became Peron's private secretary. Husbands and lovers of her sister and mother were given influential positions. This nepotism benefited her family - it also allowed her access to provincial government, the Senate, the judiciary, communications, and her husband's daily schedule. At the same time she spent a fortune on jewellery, hats and clothes and an extravagant lifestyle- a long way from the lives of the people she made her impassioned speeches to.

Then there was the Eva Peron Foundation. She had set this up when she had been refused the Presidency of a national establishment charity sponsored by upper class women, shortly after Peron became President. From a show of egotism, the Foundation developed into a kind of welfare state, which built hospitals, schools, orphanages and old peoples' homes, distributing food, medicine and money. But each act of the Foundation was used as a

*continues on page 18*

# ORGANISE!

for revolutionary anarchism

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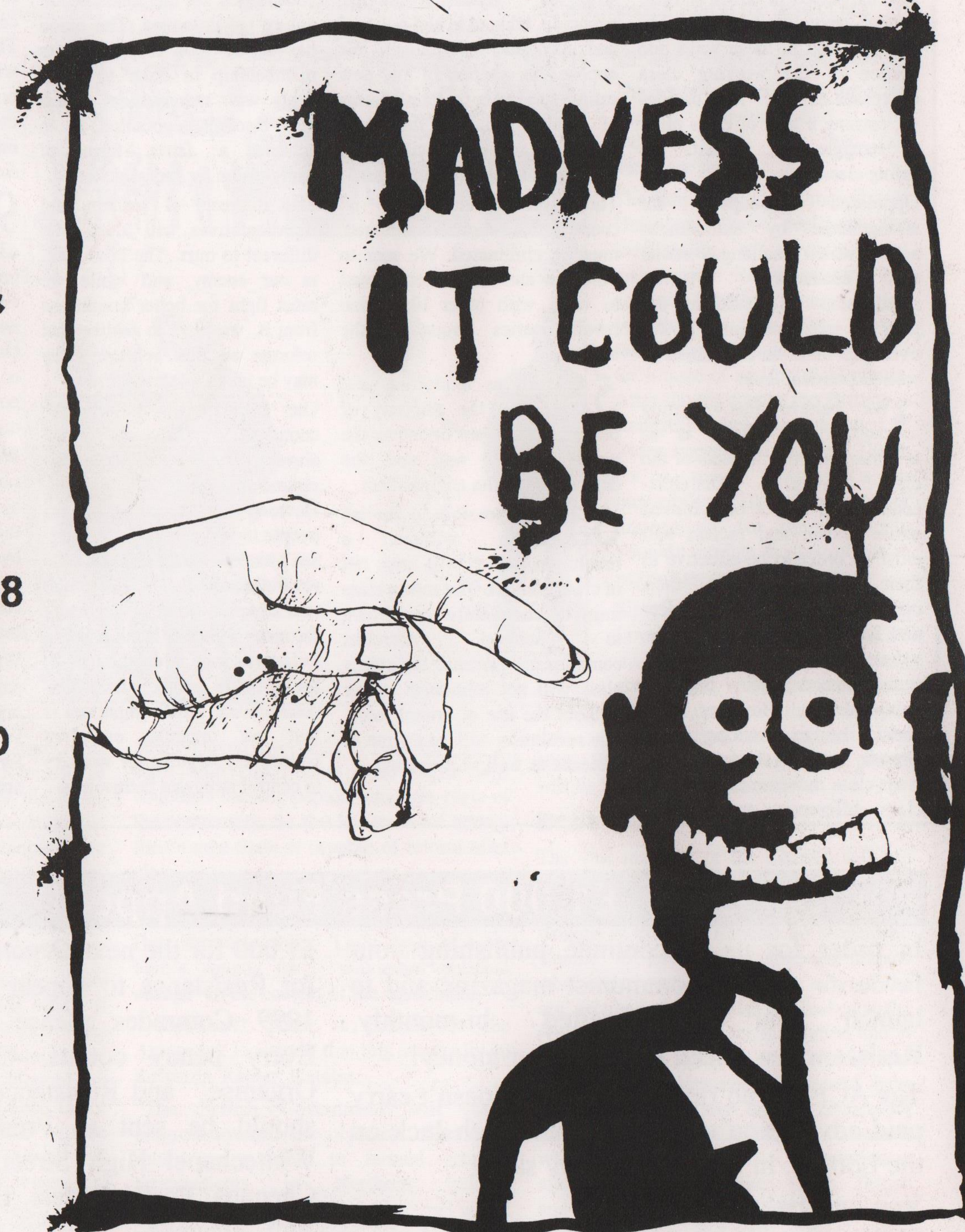
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MENTAL  
ILLNESS &  
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BRADFORD '98

FRENCH  
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MAY '68



MAGAZINE OF THE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST FEDERATION



## Aims and Principles

**1** The Anarchist Communist Federation is an organisation of revolutionary class struggle anarchists. We aim for the abolition of all hierarchy, and work for the creation of a world-wide classless society: anarchist communism.

**2** Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. But inequality and exploitation are also expressed in terms of race, gender, sexuality, health, ability and age, and in these ways one section of the working class oppresses another. This divides us, causing a lack of class unity in struggle that benefits the ruling class.

Oppressed groups are strengthened by autonomous action which challenges social and economic power relationships. To achieve our goal we must relinquish power over each other on a personal as well as political level.

**3** We believe that fighting racism and sexism is as important as other aspects of the class struggle. Anarchist-communism cannot be achieved while sexism and racism still exist. In order to be effective in their struggle against their oppression both within society and within the working class, women and black people may at times need to organise independently. However, this should be as working class women and black people as cross-class movements hide real class differences and achieve

little for them. Full emancipation cannot be achieved without the abolition of capitalism.

**4** We are opposed to the ideology of national liberation movements which claims that there is some common interest between native bosses and the working class in face of foreign domination. We do support working class struggles against racism, genocide, ethnocide and political and economic colonialism. We oppose the creation of any new ruling class. We reject all forms of nationalism, as this only serves to redefine divisions in the international working class.

The working class has no country and national boundaries must be eliminated. We seek to build an anarchist international to work with other libertarian revolutionaries throughout the world.

**5** As well as exploiting and oppressing the majority of people, Capitalism threatens the world through war and the destruction of the environment.

**6** It is not possible to abolish Capitalism without a revolution, which will arise out of class conflict. The ruling class must be completely overthrown to achieve anarchist communism. Because the ruling class will not relinquish power without the use of armed force, this revolution will be a time of violence as well as liberation.

**7** Unions by their very nature cannot become vehicles for the revolutionary transformation of society. They have to be accepted by capitalism in order to function and so cannot play a part on its overthrow. Trade unions divide the working class (between employed and unemployed, trade and craft, skilled and unskilled, etc.).

Even syndicalist unions are constrained by the fundamental nature of unionism. The union has to be able to control its membership in order to make deals with management. Their aim, through negotiation, is to achieve a fairer form of exploitation for the workforce.

The interests of leaders and representatives will always be different to ours. The boss class is our enemy, and while we must fight for better conditions from it, we have to realise that reforms we may achieve today may be taken away tomorrow.

Our ultimate aim must be the complete abolition of wage slavery. Working within the unions can never achieve this. However, we do not argue for people to leave unions until they are made irrelevant by the revolutionary event. The union is a common point of departure for many workers. Rank and file initiatives may strengthen us in the battle for anarchist-communism. What's important is that we organise ourselves collectively, arguing for workers to control struggles themselves.

**8** Genuine liberation can only come about through the revolutionary self-activity of the working class on a mass scale. An anarchist communist society means not only co-operation between equals, but active involvement in the shaping and creating of that society during and after the revolution. In times of upheaval and struggle, people will need to create their own revolutionary organisations controlled by everyone in them. These autonomous organisations will be outside the control of political parties, and within them we will learn many important lessons of self-activity.

**9** As anarchists we organise in all areas of life to try to advance the revolutionary process. We believe a strong anarchist organisation is necessary to help us to this end. Unlike other so-called socialists or communists we do not want power or control for our organisation.

We recognise that the revolution can only be carried out directly by the working class. However, the revolution must be preceded by organisations able to convince people of the anarchist communist alternative and method.

We participate in struggle as anarchist communists, and organise on a federative basis. We reject sectarianism and work for a united revolutionary anarchist movement.

## a big YES to what?

Since *Organise!* 48 a considerable amount of troubled water has gone under the bridge in Ireland. Contrary to our expectations (see 'Is the 'peace process' collapsing' Spring 1998) the 'Agreement' was made, the 'people consulted' and the 'Yes' vote achieved according to schedule.

The 'Yes' vote was emphatic, over 71% in an 80.9% turn-out. The strength of the 'Yes' vote must have been a sickening blow for the 'No' camp of United Unionists (sic) and intransigent Republicans.

The 'Yes' victory was no surprise however, as it had the support of the main players of Irish and British *realpolitik*, whose support and whose propaganda machines dwarfed the opposition. But the 'Yes' vote was so particularly high because the alternatives, as put forward by the Democratic and UK Unionists and the likes of Republican Sinn Fein, seemed to represent nothing so much as the status quo.

Not of course that the new set-up constitutes any fundamental break with the old order. This is accepted by Sinn Fein itself, as An Phoblacht/Republican News puts it "We do not have a political settlement and the only way in which we can advance towards that goal is by pursuing maximum political change. If things are to stand still, the Six-County state will remain frozen in time..." (AP/RN 28 May 1998). And this "maximum political change"? Removal of the British Army, disbanding of the RUC, ending of Orange marches in nationalist areas, Irish language rights, employment equality and "effective all-Ireland bodies" (ipid.) And the only way practical way to achieve this "maximum political change"? By voting Sinn Fein!

Sinn Fein's good showing in the 'New Stormont' elections on June 26th, where it received 17.65% of first preference votes and probably 17 seats, will temporarily keep the spirits of the Republican movement high but such a feel good factor will not last forever. The trouble will be when "maximum political change" is pursued through the corridors of power.

**Reforming the Orange State**  
The Agreement is an attempt to do something which leftists have said for years

is impossible, namely reform the Orange State. The agreement, if implemented, promises a kinder, gentler Unionist dominated state with new, improved Nationalist representation at all levels. Increased cross-border structures, including a North-South Ministerial Council, a British-Irish Council and a British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference will bring jobs for bureaucrats and pen-pushers both sides of a slowly blurring border. Irish Language road signs may be erected (rather

progress may be very, very, slow indeed. There is no question of a staged withdrawal or even a rapid demilitarisation. And what exactly are "normal" security arrangements in Northern Ireland?

Disbanding of the RUC? Other than rhetoric about fairness and impartiality and freedom from "partisan political control", there exists no suggestion whatsoever that the RUC will even be radically reformed, never mind disbanded! And at the head of any

reform...Chris Patton, former Tory MP and Governor of Hong Kong!

The repressive power of the state remains undiminished. The securocrats, as Sinn Fein call them, are secure.

The simple fact is that mainstream Unionism has realised the inevitability of 'change' and mainstream Republicanism has accepted that that 'change' means opportunities for the partial realisation of its programme and for a taste of real political power. After having fought the Brits to a standstill it has accommodated to wider Imperialist realities. That's not a moral failing, it's an inevitability. The *destruction* of Imperialism, we argue, is only possible through the destruction of *capitalism* on a world scale.

Sinn Fein and the 'working class' Loyalist parties' (PUP and UDP) involvement in 'national' government will expose them for what, despite the socialist rhetoric, they are. Capitalist to the core. Increasingly, working class people will be looking for an alternative.

### British Left

The vast majority of the Leninist left has historically supported, critically or uncritically, the National Liberation struggle of the Irish Republican Movement. Unable to have any significant impact whatsoever on politics either side of the sea, sections of the British left looked to the republican movement for inspiration and to fight the good fight by proxy through the IRA. The developments in Ireland have meant that they have had to re-consider their positions. What remains to be seen is whether an authentic revolutionary alternative to Nationalism (Irish, British and Ulster) can be built. That is dependent upon the ability and will of the working class to fight for its own interests.



than removed) overnight by the forces of the state and Ulster-Scots road signs will doubtless become popular amongst parts of the community. So the leftists were wrong, the Orange State is capable of reform after all.

### Maximum political change

But, seriously folks. Let's look at Sinn Fein's agenda for "maximum political change" in the context of the Agreement.

Troops out? There is nothing in the Agreement to suggest that this is actually on the cards. Rather, it states,

"The British Government will make progress towards the objective of as early return as possible to normal security arrangements in Northern Ireland, consistent with the level of threat and with a published overall strategy" (The Agreement p.21, our emphasis). With the present furore around IRA de-commissioning this

## £1,000 Press Fund Appeal

In order for us to continue publishing your favourite anarcho-communist magazine and to launch our long-awaited bi-monthly, **Resistance**, we need money. Your money!

The ACF has no rich benefactors, doesn't carry paid advertising and hasn't had much luck on the Lottery. In fact we're pretty skint!

### You and Us!

So basically it's down to you and us to raise the funds. The Press Fund needs a cool grand, 2 *Organise!*

£1,000 for the next *Organise!* to come out and for *Resistance* to appear in January/February 1999. Comrades, please send what you can. Every penny counts. Contributions to the *Organise!* and *Resistance* £1,000 Press Fund should be sent to Press Fund, ACF, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. Cheques, Postal Orders, IMO's payable to the ACF. Thanks.



# NEWSBITES

**While Chancellor Gordon Brown** is busy telling us that rises in workers' pay will only drive up inflation, the bosses own Institute of Management report admits that company directors pay has leapt by more than 10% in past year-that's three times the rate of inflation.

**Levels of radioactivity** in Irish Sea shellfish near the Sellafield discharge point are forty two times higher than 'accepted' European standards for food contamination after a nuclear accident.

**Following on** from the fall of Suharto in Indonesia, thousands of Zimbabwean students turned out to denounce the eighteen year rule of President Robert Mugabe by chanting: 'Suharto, Mugabe, Indonesia, Zimbabwe!'

**After the low Pay Commission** recommended a minimum wage of £3.20 per hour for under 21s and £3.60 for older wage slaves, CBI president Sir Colin Marshall reckoned this was an 'acceptable' rate - incidentally, he earns a mere £265,000 a year.

**More on Sellafield** - a house in nearby Seascale had to be 'decontaminated' after it was covered in droppings from radioactive pigeons. According to Nuclear physicist Dr Gerald Kirchner of the University of Bremen, the birds were heavily contaminated with plutonium and a variety of other radioactive substances.

**In May**, after a 3,000 strong rally in Prague against the effects of the world economy on the environment, demonstrators fought with the police, smashed shop windows and wrecked the McDonalds in Wenceslas Square.

**Brighton's local Federation of Small Businesses** hit the nail on the head when posters advertising a meeting to promote the New Deal slave labour scheme said, 'Have you ever thought how profitable your business would be if you didn't pay out wages?'

**while** we're on the subject of slavery, did you know that almost one million women

workers in this country earn less than £2.25 an hour?

**The United Nations Children's Fund** estimates that 5 to 6,000 Iraqi children under 5 years old die every month as a direct result of the US-led trade embargo on Iraq.

**Pie in the Sky? Pie in the Face!** - After the cheering aquatic attack on John Prescott and the pastry in the mashes of Bill Gates, Microsoft multimillionaire and John Peppar of Proctor and Gamble, that nasty little turncoat and ex-anarchist Dany 'the Red' (now very pale pink) Cohn-Bendit, got a tasty tarte of Chantilly cream square in the old boat race. Dany 'sell-out' Cohn-Bendit, the only libertarian to have sold out in the March 22nd Movement at Nanterre University, which had a key role in May 1968 in France, now praises the market economy. On the occasion of an anniversary celebration of May 68 at Nanterre University, Cohn-Bendit was meant to deliver a lecture on Political engagement in the year 2000. A member of the CNT at Nanterre leapt into action. As for other sell-out merchants like Alain Geismar, ex-Maoist student leader and in the same sell-out racket, he was too afraid to honour his appointment!

**The struggle continues...** with Suharto gone and the new boss Habibie trying to keep a firm grip on the situation in Indonesia, poor peasants occupied a new golf course built solely for the wealthy, and started growing crops in an attempt to reclaim land for the landless. They blocked all roads to the site demanding compensation for environmental damage caused to farms by oilfields. Meanwhile some of the 10,000 striking workers from the KASOGI International Ogarto Oilfield factory blocked the main road to Surabaya (the east Java capital) with tree branches to the site.

**OK, so we** know we keep on telling you it's Labour/Tory, same old story, Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee parties which only serve to represent the left and right factions

of the boss class as they screw the working class. But, down in Hackney, these factions are now well and truly united in an

unofficial coalition against the "neo-leftist" Lib Dems and so vote together at every debate. One "independent" councillor forced to resign from the Labour Party now sits with the Tories in order to vote with Labour. Confused? We're not!

**On June 26th** teenage prisoners rioted at a show piece Group 4 "children's prison" in Rochester, Kent. They caused thousands of pounds worth of damage to the quaintly named Medway secure Training centre. £ screws were also injured during the inmates rebellion.

## Friends and Neighbours

If you like what you read in *Organise!* you might be interested in these publications:

**Counter Information.** Quarterly newsheet produced by independent collective. Information on struggle worldwide. Free copy with SAE from Pigeonhole Cl, c/o Transmission, 28 King Street, Glasgow, G1 5QP, Scotland.

**Subversion.** Quarterly magazine of group of same name, with politics close to ours. Free copy from Dept 10, 1 Newton St, Manchester M1 1HW.

**Collective Action Notes.** Bulletin produced by CAN. Information on struggles worldwide. Contact PO Box 22962 Baltimore, MD 212, USA.

## THE ANARCHIST MARCHING SEASON...

Recent weeks have seen a large number of demonstrations called by a variety of groups on a number of issues. Here we report back on these events.

### Picket of the Irish Embassy, London 23<sup>rd</sup> April

A request for solidarity demonstrations was sent over the Internet by the Irish anarchist groups, Workers Solidarity Movement and Organise!-IWA. Marches were being organised in Ireland to protest against the racist treatment of refugees arriving in Ireland and anarchists were asked to picket outside Irish embassies all over the world to coincide with this. Organising a picket simply involved one person contacting all the anarchist groups and Irish newspapers in London and someone writing a leaflet so we'd have something to hand out on the day. About 15 people turned out for the event and we even managed to leaflet another march going to the Turkish embassy around the corner! In Ireland, 1200 people marched in Dublin and 600 in Cork. There were also other solidarity actions in Belfast and at four other embassies around the world.

### Reclaim The Streets, Birmingham 16<sup>th</sup> May

This was organised to coincide with the G8 meeting of the leaders of the world's richest countries which was held in Birmingham at the time. Similar events happened in as many as 37 other cities! Thousands of people turned out to party around the biggest roundabout in central Birmingham. Traffic was brought to a halt and we danced away in the sunshine. Though there were some of the inevitable fluffy idiots present a lot of people were very clued up about the danger cameras are and we were able to discourage one camera man from setting up opposite the point of most conflict. On another note people were still throwing things at the cops from too far back and hitting demonstrators. People doing this have to be stopped as serious injuries happen. If a jobs worth doing it's worth doing properly!

### Anti-Fascist Demonstration, London 23<sup>rd</sup> May

The National Front were having a march to Downing Street so the Anti-Nazi No 49 1998



League/Socialist Workers Party had called a counter demonstration. Fortunately most of the demonstrators were wise enough to not get stuck behind the police so avoided waving lollipops and chanting robotically miles from the actual fascists. On anti-fascist demos the only way of doing anything effective is if you can avoid getting penned in by the police. If you stick in small groups with people you know there is a chance of getting to grips with the fascists to explain the error of their ways. It's all very well calling for mass action but there aren't very often masses of us! Unfortunately, most of the people who were 'up for it' were later trapped by the police outside Downing Street, though after successfully stopping the fascists getting there to hand in their petition. This left only a few small groups of us able to still go after the fascists. We came across four of them lurking around the end of the fascist contingent, one of whom inexplicably threw himself at our feet, causing some of us to stub our toes on him and even accidentally drop a bottle on his head!

### March for Social Justice, London 30<sup>th</sup> May

The first March for Social Justice last year, coming during the middle of the Liverpool Dockers struggle and the only major 'left' mobilisation last summer saw 30,000 people on the streets of London and some serious confrontation with the police. This year the march drew about 600. The march, in support of the Dockers Charter, a left-wing wish list which came out of the struggle, had a sizeable libertarian contingent including comrades from the ACF and SolFed who handed out a leaflet calling for Social Justice through Social Revolution, a perspective which did not go down to well with the Stalinists and social democrats present.

### Reclaim The Streets, North London 6<sup>th</sup> June

This event started with a crash despite police attempts to sabotage it by closing down the nearest tube stations. This only backfired as people marched all the way from Kings Cross to Seven Sisters to join in the fun, stopping even more traffic along the way. This caused one hysterical radio reporter to warn motorists "the Reclaim the Streets movement has taken over the whole of north-east London". The police decided to be adopt a fairly low-key attitude, as opposed to the massed ranks in riot gear we were treated to in Birmingham. They did manage to capture a tripod though, so perhaps we need to look into defending actions better - the tactical moving of a sound system certainly helped get people where they were needed.

### Reclaim The Streets, South London 6<sup>th</sup> June

The South London event started with less trouble than in the North with staged car crashes at each end of Brixton High Street. The coppers tried to grab the legs of people climbing lamp posts to put banners up and cover the CCTVs but with the crowd surging forward they soon saw the error of their ways. After that we could settle down to partying away on a beautiful day free from traffic fumes.

There were a few minor scuffles at the end, particularly as the sound systems left but the cops quickly backed off. They did have their teams of photographers present throughout the day as well, so next time we'll have to remember to come prepared with counter measures.

### Next stop Cardiff!

ACF comrades from South Wales, London and Leeds attended a demonstration in



Cardiff on Saturday 13th June to demonstrate against the European Summit being held there. There were less demonstrators than on the Social Justice march earlier in the month. Comrades handed out 1,000 leaflets produced by South Wales ACF and marched behind the Ffederacion Comiwnistaidd Anarchaidd (Welsh ACF) banner along with 3 huge ACF flags and with other libertarians.

Again the revolutionary message of the

leaflet didn't seem to go down too well with the Stalinists and Trotskyists on the demo. A total news blackout followed, just in case you were wondering.

### Revolutionary Prisoners Day Picket of the Italian Tourist Office, London

On Friday June 19th the ACF were amongst the initiators of an informational picket of the Italian State Tourist Office in Central

London. We were drawing attention to the repression the Italian anarchist movement has been experiencing for the past two years. Alongside ACFers were people from the Anarchist Black Cross, the Revolutionary Communist Group and independent anarchists. We distributed 1,000 leaflets and talked with many people concerning the events in Italy (see separate article in this *Organise!*).

## Vampires Down Your Way



For generations the Provident Financial company has been providing Britain's poorest with loans to buy vital items such as furniture. The Provident however, far from being a benevolent body is actually a vampire, extorting a huge rate of interest from those in society least able to pay it, the low-paid and unemployed.

The Provident redistributes wealth from the very poorest to the very rich. Typically banks charge interest at around 16%. The Provident, in contrast, takes a massive 164% on loans. This business is paying so well that its share price has rocketed by two thirds in the space of a year. And profits have grown by 15% to £136.5 million. It's lending sector made an enormous £127 million profits on loans to the desperate, of £733 million.

So, those with absolutely nothing to spare are paying back their loans plus interest to the rich and the super rich. The Provident of course, does not go out of its way to spell out exactly what rate of interest is being charged. And, given this deception, the company and its shareholders get richer and richer. The latest news is that £93 million is to be given to shareholders, the reason being the company is awash with cash and doesn't need it to expand the business.

## Hillsborough - The Truth

Few people, particularly Merseysiders, will have forgotten the events of April 15th 1989, when 96 football fans died at Hillsborough. The survivors and the relatives of the dead certainly haven't forgotten, however much the state wishes they would. Rather, after nine years of struggling to find the truth about the events of that day, after nine years of facing all the obstacles put before them and after nine years of having to deal with police lying and manipulation, they continue to seek justice. They have no doubt where the responsibility for the Hillsborough events lie- with the South Yorkshire Police.

The Survivors, Relatives and Supporters for Justice Campaign are taking the struggle to the streets but they need your support. They expect no help from the state. As they say 'The establishment have never trodden softly on our dreams. They have, time after time, trampled and crushed them underfoot, in the hope that they would die in the same manner as our loved ones...rather than admit their guilt.'

Contact the campaign at: 134 Oakfield Road, Liverpool. Tel: 0151 260 5262.

### Stormy Petrel Pamphlets

*Towards a Fresh Revolution by The Friends of Durruti*, writings from the much misunderstood group who attempted to defend and extend the Spanish Revolution of 1936. 75p plus postage.

*Malatesta's Anarchism and Violence*, an important document in the history of anarchist theory refutes the common misrepresentation of anarchism as mindless destruction while restating the need for revolution to create a free and equal society. 50p plus postage.

London ACF are proud to announce the appearance of a new pamphlet in the Stormy Petrel series:

*A Brief Flowering of Freedom: The Hungarian Revolution 1956*. An exciting account of one of the first post-war uprisings against the Stalinist monolith. Also includes a history of the Hungarian anarchist movement. 60p plus postage.

All Stormy Petrel pamphlets are available from ACF (London), c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX.

Coming next: *The Italian Factory Councils 1920-21*.

# Bradford Mayday98

In previous issues of *Organise!* we have reported on the aftermath of the dissolving of Class War Federation, and possible initiatives for growth of anarchist organisation since then. We now report on the exciting Mayday98 "Struggles for social change - New ideas, new approaches" conference which took place in Bradford on 2-4 May alongside the 1 in 12 Club's second Reclaim Mayday weekend. In the run up to the Mayday weekend, regular meetings had taken place to organise the event which were attended by a mix of individuals, some from anarchist organisations (ACF and Solidarity Federation), some anarchists around Anti-Fascist Action, but mostly non-aligned anarchists and libertarian communists, including ex-CWF. Out of these meetings emerged the conference content and structure, which comprised group discussion of four broad themes: "Land, Ecology and the Environment", "All Worked Up", "Dream Time" and "Away from the Margins".

### British revolutionaries

The intention of the conference was to bring revolutionaries in Britain together without political baggage, so as to foster a cross-fertilisation of ideas of people from different backgrounds who had little contact with each other. In the end, around 250 people registered to attend over the 3 days from the Saturday to Monday. A handful of these came from the authoritarian left like International Communist Current and the Green Party, right through to right-wing 'libertarian', but most were anarchists and the anti-authoritarian left. 10 ACF

members were present during the weekend as both attendees and organisers. Participants were divided into groups of 15-20. After each day of themed discussion, each group wrote a summary for feedback to the other groups. On the last day, groups discussed practical issues arising from the weekend before coming together for a closing session, which then split up again into 'focus groups' which enabled people to look at how things might go forward practically.

### Class struggle

So how did it go? The overall impression is one of great success, especially as so many people were brought together, which is a significant thing in itself as it confirms we are not content with the status quo. There was remarkably little sectarianism. On the first day an opening speech had expressed the need to respect differing views, and this did go a long way to make people feel comfortable with each other in groups where people didn't know each other. Unfortunately it was clear after the first day that this had gone a bit far and many groups reported too much agreement and that discussions hadn't really gone deep enough to find differences in opinion. In fact, some groups remedied that the next day by deliberately focusing on controversial points! Most participants had a class struggle position, which was surprising, including large numbers with environmental bias, like Earth First!. Most were critical of existing or past organisations, and although the majority who registered said they were in an organisation of some kind, these were mainly activist or campaign groups. Most interestingly from the



ACF's point of view, few expressed the need for specific or permanent 'ideological' organisations.

### West/"Third World"

Though it is not possible to summarise all of the debates here, some interesting issues raised were on the nature of globalisation and whether ecological problems are due to over-consumption or over-production. The consumption argument blames the arrogant 'West' and is thus quite moralistic and doesn't use a class analysis, whereas the production argument puts the blame on the capitalists or state bureaucrats, but lets individuals who benefit from exploitation of the 'Third World' off the hook. Traditionally the former has been favoured, by some environmentalists and the latter by the political left (the Revolutionary Communist Group being a notable exception, with their view that a 'labour aristocracy' in the West precludes meaningful solidarity with workers in the 'Third World'), but it appears that more environmentalists are now coming over to a global anti-capitalist position.

### The future

In "Dream Time" the nature of revolution was also discussed. There was some disagreement over the personal and political - 'too personal' being seen by some as lifestyleist and not changing anything fundamental, 'too political' being seen by others as not doing enough to experiment with alternative ways of living which may be (or become) a threat to capitalist ideology. The 'culture of resistance' we are fond of talking about in the ACF may be defined somewhere in between, as preparation for revolution. Unfortunately, some will take this to mean that 'The Revolution' is something we can live right now, rather than the single event where we take on the power of the state and capitalist forces.

### The movement

"Away from the Margins" mostly looked at how 'the movement' marginalises itself from the mainstream. Depending on your viewpoint, this is either a good or a bad thing. Many people want to be seen as different but at the same time want revolutionary politics



to be attractive to 'ordinary people' and minorities. Unfortunately being open about your politics can lead to victimisation especially in work, which is why many people keep their heads down and won't get involved in the first place, whereas the unemployed activist apparently has less to lose. This is still an unresolved problem, but may come together as the nature of work and dole changes. Most groups talked more about the movement rather than marginalisation of groups outside of it. This inward-looking approach was recognised by some as part of the problem why the movement is so small - not exactly a new idea, but still one that needs to be addressed, especially as we want more than just a re-alignment of existing groups, and want the revolutionary movement to expand and be more inclusive.

The biggest eye-opener came from the environmental groups which the Class War "Open Letter" previously labelled as part of the 'unofficial anarchist movement'. This turned out to be quite incisive as many of

them were at pains to explain how they had taken on class struggle or at least 'revolutionary' positions and that not everyone was a 'primitivist', but that this wasn't really recognised by the 'official' groups. On the other hand, the conference was deliberately not promoted as an 'anarchist' event, but it was noticeable that many participants wrongly made the assumption that most people there would identify themselves as such. Some felt disappointed that more SolFed members hadn't been at the conference, though many of them were at Bradford involved in other Reclaim Mayday events. This led to an unhelpful boycott rumour, which whilst unfounded, should at least make them think they should have engaged better. This was a very important event for the revolutionary movement which should have been taken seriously by all the existing organisations.

#### Next year

A repeat event is planned for next year. In the meantime increased dialogue between

individuals and groups with environmental concerns and the mainstream organisations and non-aligned individuals seems likely, probably at a local level. Nationally, this is already happening at events like the Birmingham G8 and Cardiff Euro-summit actions. This is positive step, and could result in a growth of revolutionary ideas in what are seen by many as 'protest' campaigns. However, this still does not address the continued problem of (lack of) workplace intervention by anarchists, especially now the Liverpool Docks and Magnet disputes have been settled. It is probably true to say that nothing new came out of the conference in this respect, which may have something to do with an understandable reluctance to discuss competing workplace strategies in any depth at the conference. Over the last year, concentration on community struggles has been one of our strengths as it is clear that the rest of the left is unable to go beyond trade-unionism and workerism. But, it is also the case that the New Deal will attack wages and conditions as unemployed people are forced

into compulsory work, and that consolidation of Europe will have a huge impact on the workplace. In spite of great efforts in Groundswell and other groups opposing the New Deal, we are still not encouraging the mass of the unemployed to get involved in political activity, let alone workers who will be also affected by it. It will be interesting to see whether this situation has changed in a years time.

#### More details...

More information about Mayday98 will be available soon in the form of a pamphlet which should include details of the themed discussions which we don't have space to go into here, and the third issue of Smash Hits magazine intends to carry the debate forwards. For more info write to: London Mayday Group, Box BM 5538, London, WC1N 3XX. Copies of Smash Hits "A Discussion Bulletin for Revolutionary Ideas" are available from the same address, send £1.

## ACE Anarchist Communist Editions

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## the unemployed struggle in france and germany-update



"Wanted - Shit job paid with crumbs"

The unemployed movement has not vanished, as predicted by some. The relative strength of the demonstrations of March 7th attest to this. The CGT, the union confederation controlled by the Communist Party, has two preoccupations, within the unemployed movement, to make a "fix" with the government, and to sideline those who it regards as junior partners-the unemployed organisation AC! or as enemies- the independent union confederation SUD.

One campaign set up by unemployed organisations involves targeting the most wealthy, responsible for huge tax evasions, tying this in with the theme of redistribution of wealth. The head office of the Pinault group was occupied and other occupations are planned. In Montpellier, several apartments were requisitioned and 4 families moved in on 13th March. In Clermont Ferrand, on 21st April, a bus was occupied with unemployed activists refusing to pay the fare and demanding free transport. The same action carried out in the afternoon at the train station was met with physical attacks by the police and arrests. One, with a face swollen from a police truncheon, was charged with public order offences. At Grenoble the unemployed set up a camp in the main square in front of the prefecture on May 1st, as well as over the last few months taken part in many other actions. At Gueret in the Creuse department, a piece of land in the middle of town, long neglected, was turned into a garden by unemployed activists, workplace militants and anarchists on 7th May, and received widespread local backing.

#### Metz

In Metz, where the unemployed have remained very active, 40 adults and 15 children occupied an estate of 15 houses left empty for 2 years on 31st May. This action, strongly supported by the Metz group of the Federation Anarchiste, led to the renovation of these houses, many of which had no doors or window frames. But things did not stop there. The object was to make the houses a place for all who were homeless in Metz and to provide a meeting place for all the homeless. The project is based firmly on the principles of mutual aid, solidarity and self-organisation and provides a library and theatre/concert hall.

Christophe Fetat, a member of the Federation Anarchiste, mentioned in *Organise!* 48 was charged with "resisting with violence" after an occupation of a dole office by a group of unemployed. In fact Christophe had been the victim of violence, that

of the police. This arrest set off a strong solidarity movement. After a trial which exposed the violence of the police, Christophe was released because of "benefit of doubt". But another trial of an unemployed activist is due 17th June in Montpellier as well as another militant in Clermont Ferrand on 22nd June.

## Other news from France

#### Reims

As well as the above legal attacks Le Monde Libertaire, weekly paper of the Federation Anarchiste faces a trial for defamation. Radio Libertaire, the FA's radio station broadcasting over the Paris region, also faces a similar trial.

Le Chat Noir, local paper of the Reims group of the Organisation Communiste Libertaire, has been fined over 26,000 francs (About 2,600 pounds!) fine for defamation. One member of the OCL after an anti-fascist demo risks 3 months prison, and 300,000 francs fine. Two other OCL members face an "anti-terrorist" trial for harbouring Spanish Basque refugees. In the face of this repression, the French libertarian organisations are standing united as never before. It is precisely because the French anarchist movement has grown so massively that it is now facing repression.

#### Antifascist mobilisations

At Nantes a demonstration against the Front National leader Le Pen gathered 6,000 of which 2,000 marched with the anarchists at the head of the march. On 28th March, Bruno Megret, the rising star of the racist Front National spoke in St. Etienne. 4,000 demonstrated against him. A quarter of the demonstration was made up of anarchists, in a sea of black flags and red and black flags, with a united contingent of the Federation Anarchiste and the CNT (anarcho-syndicalist union) This is phenomenal for St Etienne. More and more people are open to anarchist ideas and are prepared to march with the anarchists.

#### Volron

Following an attack by a fascist commando, masked and armed with clubs, smoke bombs and tear gas on a meeting of Ras l'Front, an anti-fascist group at Voiron in the Isere department, on 5th June, a large demonstration took place there on 8th June. The large anarchist/libertarian presence was remarked upon and comrades from Lyon, Grenoble and St Etienne mobilised. Many people marched with the anarchist contingent taking up the slogans of anti-fascism AND anti-capitalism.

Two actions against the expulsion of immigrants took place at Lyon rail station on 21st April and 5 May. These involved militants in the SUD Rail union, as well as those in the SUD post, education, energy and air transport unions, the anarcho-syndicalist CNT union, and unemployed groups. The first time the police attacked the activists who were trying to stop a train leaving for Marseilles where the deportees would be sent to Algeria. The second time, after the train had left the station after 3/4 hour delay, it was stopped afresh by a hundred militants. Railworkers heeded the



call not to be the servants of the Minister of the Interior in sending many of the deportees to death in Algeria. Whilst the train reached its destination both times, the actions showed the growing unity of action, and the possibility of influencing railworkers. It is important that links be built between workers on the rail, on the airlines and at sea, so that united action can prevent deportation by any of these means of transport.

## Germany

In Germany the associations and unions of the unemployed took the decision to demonstrate every month against unemployed from February. In February 40,000 demonstrated, with the same numbers the following month. Their demands are close to those of the French movement, with emphasis on a minimum wage for all. The mobilisations are initiated

by the European Market Networks, in which the unemployed organisations are active, and opposition unions in the DGB confederation, close to the Social Democratic Party, SPD.

The DGB is the sole union in most workplaces, and is the faithful servant of the SPD, co-managing the system with the bosses. So 90% of the workforce is under the control of social democracy. It is an obligation to join a union if you want to stay in a job for a long time. The union meetings, even in the workplace, bring together only the union officials and elected delegates, with a very rare participation of the mass of the workforce. French delegates of unemployed associations noticed the warm welcome from the unemployed activists and their associations, and hostility from the union bureaucrats at meetings. Demonstrations usually only marched 500 metres, and the bureaucrats sabotaged any sections on demonstrations with slogans too

radical for them, like the redistribution of wealth, often put forward by the unemployed. The DGB would like to end the demonstrations in September. If the forthcoming elections result in a victory for the SPD, they will attempt to shut down all actions against unemployment.

### Anarchists

Also in Germany: 6,000 fascists marched in the Eastern German town of Leipzig on May 1st. The official May Day demo of the DGB attracted only 3,000. Its leaders refused to act against the fascist march BUT 6,000 people organised mainly by the anarchists and attracting many young people tried to break through the 6,000 police protecting the fascists. Some of the young people from the DGB demo also joined in. This points to large numbers of young people hostile to capitalism and to the growth of fascism who could be rallied to the anarchist cause.

# MAY 1968

1968 was marked by numerous events- the huge demonstrations throughout Europe and America against the American intervention in Vietnam, unrest in Czechoslovakia, riots in the black ghettos of the USA and student occupations in Britain. What surged to the fore in that fateful year was the events of May-June 1968 in France.

Today, in a period which seems the opposite of 1968, it seems hard to realise that a vast movement of struggle, with youth at its forefront, shook the world. But 1968 was prepared for on a number of fronts- counter-cultural as well as political. Beatniks, hippies, drop-outs of all sorts refused the restraints of bourgeois life, and emphasised mutual aid, community life, and sexual liberty. This large counter-cultural movement flourished above all in the United States, but also in Northern Europe. By 1968, however, this movement was beginning to run out of steam. Its most politicised form, the Dutch Provos, inspired by a number of anarchists, had attempted to break through apathy on both cultural and political fronts, with some

success. But it dissolved itself in May 1967.

### Mexico

In the USA the Students for a Democratic Society, coming after the civil rights and disarmament movements, mobilised against the war in Vietnam, both inside and outside the country. Similar movements emerged in Japan with the Zengakuren student movement, in West Germany with Rudi Dutschke at its head, in France, Italy and Great Britain. There were student movements in countries ruled by the old dictatorships, like Franco's Spain, and in the Third World, like Mexico with very large student demonstrations, leading up to the massacre by the military in Mexico City in September 1968.

However, it is too easy to point to a world movement that had inevitable consequences in the events in France. Before May 1968, tiny minorities were engaged in agitation, and these tiny minorities were ignored by practically every political observer in France. One inquiry published in a book before the events, described young people as completely depoliticised and



eager to integrate as quickly as possible into work and "adult life", which was never questioned. (The White Book of Youth by Francois Mitterrand) This is not that far off the appearance of young people in France and indeed in Britain today!

### Obsolete Communism

It was at Nanterre University where the March 22nd Movement formed with libertarian students like Danny Cohn-Bendit and Jean-Pierre Duteuil, as well as the tiny Enrages group of situationists with Rene Reisel. These groups led off the occupation of the admin block after the arrest of

militants of the Vietnam Committees. This agitation came together with that led in the university living quarters against sexual repression and the segregation of young women and young men. It also points to the influence of Anarchism and dissident Marxism through the politics of groups like Socialisme ou Barbarie, the neo-anarchism of the group around the magazine Noir et Rouge and the radical ideas of the Situationists. This was directly admitted in the book jointly written by Gabriel Cohn-Bendit and his brother Daniel- Obsolete Communism-the Left Wing Alternative. Also of importance were the ideas coming out of the

sociology department at Nanterre with Henri Lefebvre- Marxist sociologist and philosopher, close at one time to the Situationists, with his critique of everyday life and "the bureaucratic society of directed consumerism". This concept was simplified by various spokespeople of the movement as the "consumer society". Lefebvre, Jean Baudrillard, Rene Lora in the sociology department all had their influence on the student movement there.

But the originality of May-June 1968 was down, not to the student revolt, but to the generalisation of struggle, and the entrance onto the scene of the workers, from 15th May. Indeed before that, young workers, in particular blousons noirs, those belonging to street gangs, were joining the students on the barricades. The participation of the workers gave the events an importance far beyond the ferment in Germany and the United States, where workers regarded radical students with little sympathy.

### Strike

If the libertarian and situationist students lit the first spark of revolt, it was at Nantes, the day after the great demo at Paris and the occupation of the Sorbonne on the 13th May, where the revolt spread to the workers. The Sud-Aviation Bougenais factory was occupied by the workers, among whom were a number of Trotskyists and anarcho-syndicalists. This movement spread through the region, and across all of France. From the 15th May, a strike began at Renault-Cleon at Rouen. The industrial workers, followed by those in the public sector, set off a chain of events that spared few sectors of society. Action committees were set up among film-makers, architects, in the high schools and teaching faculties, the banks and offices, each offering a savage analysis of the institutions and where the Sorbonne was the most eloquent example of discussion and debate between different sectors of society.

However, except at Nantes, where students were admitted to meetings of the strike committee, co-ordination between students and workers was difficult. The union bureaucrats, many in the Communist Party, exploited the differences between the "adventurism" of the students and the "realism" of the workers. Many workers perceived students as spoiled children of the bourgeoisie who could reject what they



themselves had never had the privilege to experience. But equally there was little sign of revolutionary tendencies among workers to go beyond the limits set by the union bureaucrats. The thousand workplaces occupied and open as forums for free discussions were not seen as ways of moving forward. Soon, the occupations were abandoned by the majority of workers who left only the Communist Party and the union central it controlled, the CGT, running things. As for realism, the bureaucrats fixed a deal of vague promises on retirement payments and conditions and family payouts, and a pay rise that was swiftly wiped out by a galloping rate of inflation. This

was in the context of a movement of factory occupations three times that of those in June 1936 which had secured much greater gains in terms of holiday allowances and other concessions.

### The Anarchists in the May Events

May 1968: Demonstrations in the street with tens and hundreds of thousands of participants, millions of workers

The militants were present in all the struggles but their number was in total very small, and they had different ways of operating.

The Federation Anarchiste of May 68 members were in the demonstrations but it often limited itself to holding conferences and bookstalls at the Sorbonne. On the night of the barricades of 10-11 May, it held its annual gala (benefit concert) at the Mutualite close by, despite the insistence of its activist tendency, inspired by platformism, the Organisation Revolutionnaire Anarchiste, to cancel.

### Nanterre

In fact, the majority of the FA made only sporadic appearances, on different struggle fronts, whilst the ORA was in the street with other libertarian communists, those of the Jeunesse Anarchiste Communiste, ex-members of the old Federation Communiste Libertaire, militants of the Union des Groupes Anarchistes Communistes, and the 22nd March Movement, a unitary body at Nanterre University which had absorbed various pre-existing libertarian groups like Noir et Rouge.

Anarchists were present in the occupations of the universities, not only at Nanterre and the Sorbonne, but also at Lille, Rennes, Nantes, Toulouse, Marseilles, Tours, Poitiers, Strasbourg. Not to call for a redefining of teaching or exams, but to call for the coming together of student and workers struggles in a revolutionary perspective. The JAC, notably, condemned all reformist illusions and played a major role in the creation of the CALS (High School Action Committees) In the workplaces, in the strike movements, there were often libertarian communists or anarcho-syndicalists who had an important role. This was the case, not only in western France, at Nantes, Saint-Nazaire, Lorient and Brest, but also at Tours where railworkers and metalworkers of Schmidt and SKF and textile workers of Indreco were in the forefront; at

continues on page 15



# Mental Health and Social Control

It is a fairly common belief that mental disorders are a medical problem, a disease like any other. This, however, is not necessarily the case and is often completely false. The history of psychiatric care is plagued with falsifications and the effect of politics. We need only think back to the attempts to save money that led to the last government's 'care in the community' policy to see that this is the case.

Until the last century the care of the mentally 'ill' was not left in the hands of doctors at all.

The majority of asylums were run by charities and the church. Doctors fought desperately for what they considered their exclusive right to treat the sick. This led to the creation of 'psychiatry' and the abuse of human rights which has continued to the present day.

## Bedlam

An 'illness' favoured by psychiatrists to justify their continued dominance of the mental health field is schizophrenia. In fact there is very little evidence that such a condition actually exists, though that hasn't stopped biologically based methods being used to "treat" it. Following the doctors take-over of the asylums the standard of care actually dropped dramatically and this change actually resulted in the creation of institutions such as the infamous Bedlam. The medical emphasis also led to treatments such as lobotomisation and, later, electro-convulsive therapy. These barbaric methods of treatments were akin to torture, yet the latter remains in use today. Indeed it can be argued that the main role of psychiatry is not treatment at all, but social control.

The most obvious concern posed by psychiatry, other than the nature of the treatment, is the use of sectioning (involuntary incarceration in a mental institution). Not only are mental patients subjected to imprisonment, they are also treated with drugs whose use would be illegal with any other group of patients. For example, the neuroleptics used to treat psychoses are often totally ineffective, usually not particularly effective, and have horrendous side-effects including

dyskinesia, a disorder of the nervous system which effects the facial muscles and is irreversible. In addition many delusional patients find it extremely difficult to live after having been "cured" as they have lost a valuable part of the meaning in their lives. The question can be posed, why "cure" people who behave strangely if they harm no-one and are happy the way they are? The answer is social control.



## Schizophrenia

A couple of ways in which this manifests itself are apparent in 'DSM-IV', psychiatry's diagnostic manual. The criteria by which schizophrenia is judged is; 1. the patient does not act in a socially acceptable manner, they are social misfits, and 2. they suffer from socially unacceptable delusions. Notably, this does not include religions, which are, of course socially acceptable delusions. This caused problems for the World Health Organisation survey of schizophrenia because what is and what is not socially acceptable varies from culture to culture. Nevertheless, they did find far fewer relapses in Third World countries-our society (i.e. advanced capitalism) actually fosters mental disorders by denying

those it brands "mentally ill" a useful part to play in society.

Perhaps the worst example of psychiatry as social control was undoubtedly the eugenics programme enacted under the Nazi dictatorship in Germany. This writer lost a family member during this period. Suffering merely from temporal lobe epilepsy, she was branded genetically too impure to be part of the German Reich. This elimination of the 'mentally ill' owes much to the work of the Psychiatrist Kallmann, who claimed to have proven that schizophrenia was genetic. His definition of schizophrenia was even more blatantly social control orientated than that used today, he included petty criminality and, Organise! readers take note, political dissidence!

The activities of the Nazi's, however, were an exaggerated version of mainstream psychiatric practice which continues to this day. People who think and act differently from the majority continue to be incarcerated without trial, poisoned with "therapeutic" drugs or practically electrocuted. Neither should we forget all those given lobotomies, throughout the 50s and 60s, some because their husbands thought they talked too much!

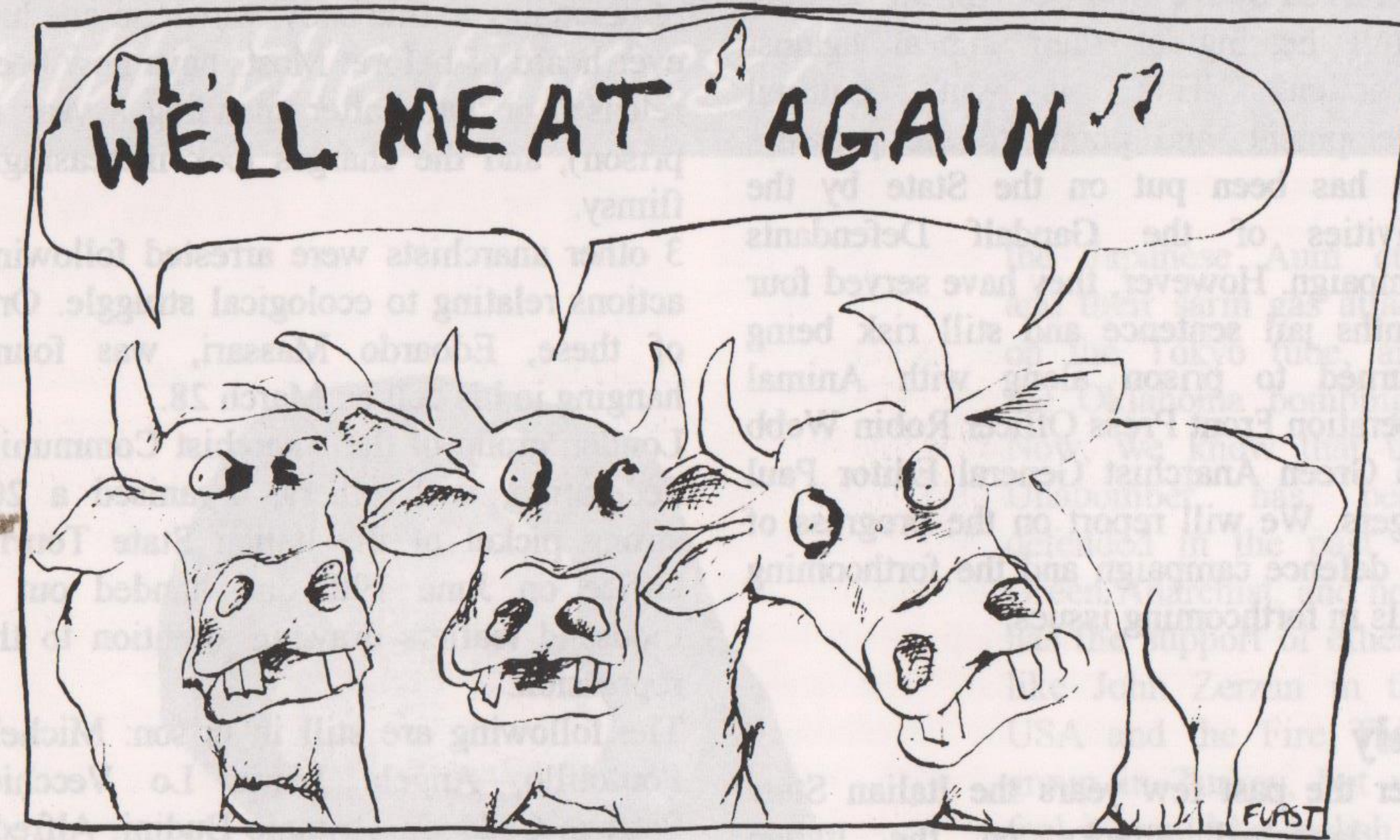
## Asylum

So what is the answer? Obviously some people do need appropriate treatment- some even request it.

But what must not be allowed to happen is a return to the old asylum system as recently recommended by Frank Dobson. Yes, 'care in the community' has failed, but this is not because the idea is necessarily flawed. As usual the problem is resources and money. Charles Crosby, a researcher at the University of Wales at Bangor, found that a real care in the community programme would be preferable to care in institutions but that it would cost a lot more.

It seems obvious that all anarchists and libertarians should be fighting to defend the rights of the 'mentally ill'. In the long term we must aim to create a society which does not breed social alienation but rather creates a truly human community where difference is celebrated.

# BSE - Mad Capitalists Disease



## Research

The funding for scientific research is now very tightly controlled and 'pure research' when something is investigated so it can be understood better is almost non-existent. To receive funding definite practical applications have to be the aim of modern research. This, of course, means scientists are always in the business of emphasising the importance of their work, and in the case of food safety research, the dangers of eating all types of food and thus the need for more research into food safety.

So, back to the prion theory. As prions are little understood there is a lot of mileage that scientists can get out of this and reports started to trickle out that humans may be susceptible to the agent that causes BSE. The media (who know a food scare makes great headlines and boosts sales), and the scientists (always on the look out for more funding) impressively over hyped this. The politicians reacted with desperate panic measures. The governments' Chief Veterinary Officer and his deputy tried to censor conclusions they didn't like and a law was passed that brains and spinal cords had to be removed from beef carcasses. Quite how this was supposed to protect the public is not made clear. If cows get BSE from prion proteins in feed passing through the digestive system to the brain via the blood stream then surely the prion will be present all over the cow. The latest scare that blood donated by people with new variant CJD (nvCJD) might be infections illustrates this point.

Despite pleading from a succession of ministers other countries refused to lift the ban on British beef (leading to deranged little Englanders proudly displaying "eat British beef" car stickers). Strict control were put in place about what could go into animal feed and a mass slaughter policy was stated, with of course compensation to the farmers (expected to cost at least £3.5 billion) which continues to this day. The number of cattle infected with BSE has now started to decline though it has remained a stubbornly persistent disease.

It's now over ten years since BSE was first discovered and after all this time and expenditure the disease is still in cattle and we still understand very little about the possible dangers to humans. But one thing we can be clear on is that in a world not driven solely by the profit motive this crisis would never have occurred.

For several years the BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) crisis has been simmering away, boiling over into a tabloid fuelled food scare with frightening frequency. The recent piece of legislation when all beef on the bone was banned from sale is only the latest in a long line of panic measures from politicians.

The actual reasons for BSE, and if it can be passed to humans, is poorly understood, even by the so-called experts. I certainly can't answer these questions either, though it seems at the moment that the risk is very small. But what I can do is look at the disastrous way this crisis has been handled and the incompetence and greed of the politicians, scientists, farmers and media.

## BSE and government

BSE first came to public attention way back in the days when John Gummer was still Minister of Agriculture. The government adopted the standard 'deny everything' line so we were told BSE posed no risk to humans and Gummer arranged for cameras to film him force feeding his children beef burgers to prove the point. Not surprisingly few people were convinced by this and British beef was quickly banned from being sold overseas. A lot of money was then put into investigating BSE and the Scientists quickly reached the conclusion that it was the bovine (i.e. cow) form of Scrapie a brain disease which has affected sheep for hundreds of years. How cows came to be suffering from this was explained by the fact that the cows were actually eating feed made from sheep carcasses (and in fact cow carcasses as well). Cheap and high in protein maybe but obviously not the best food for herbivores. Cows are now fed such large amounts of protein that they can't digest it all and it is absorbed directly from the gut. The theory was that the cows were absorbing a type of protein called Prions

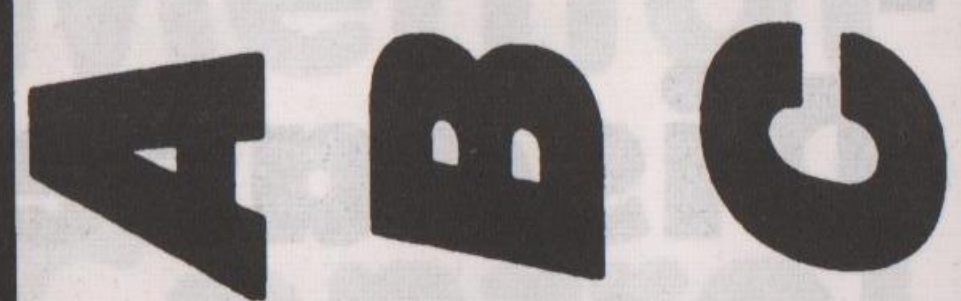
from sheep infected with Scrapie when they ate feed made from sheep. This prion then travelled from the cow's digestive system to the brain and caused the disease. The first outbreaks of BSE could also be shown to have happened after Thatcherite deregulation had relaxed the controls on how sheep were turned into cow food. This theory fitted the facts well but what has never been made clear is just how little is understood about it.

## Science

Prion proteins are found in the brains of animals suffering from diseases like Scrapie and BSE; and in people suffering from Kuru (the disease found in cannibals who have eaten human brains) and Creutzfeldt Jakobs Disease (CJD). No infectious organism has ever been found to cause these so the theory is that the prion proteins themselves cause the infection. No mechanism for how this happens has been put forward though. So far as today's science can tell all proteins replicate through the use of DNA or RNA templates, even in the smallest of viruses. The prion theory therefore proposes some new, as yet unknown, way of protein replication. This has not, however, stopped it becoming the accepted explanation for BSE and almost all scientific investigation has been based on this starting point. Alternative explanations, such as that organo-phosphate pesticides (chemically closely related to nerve gasses) were to blame has been ignored. It may well be that this theory is incorrect but it deserved more examination than it got. The fact that despite farmers claiming for many years to have suffered severe side effects from using organo-phosphates they have consistently been declared safe might have something to do with this. Another theory that small and hard to detect spiroplasma bacteria are the cause has similarly been ignored.



ANARCHIST

BLACK  
CROSSAbolish crime.  
Abolish prison.

### Setting up a Prisoners Support Fund

Over the years many prisoners have tried to obtain legal redress through courts without success, because of the shortcomings of solicitors whom we've been led to believe represent prisoners rights.

We are hoping to establish a fund with donations from prisoners, families and other outside organisations, to set up a board of trustees who will oversee the fund to set up our own firm of solicitors solely to represent us in all avenues of prison law, which we're entitled to challenge.

I am attempting to seek legal counsel on establishing this firm and what undertakings we would be needed from the legal aid board. We are also looking for nominees to form a board, who have no criminal records or affiliations to prisoners. We are also looking for ideas from the whole prison community in getting this off the ground. Once further information is to hand it will be published by groups who are fully aware of our aims. If you wish to be involved contact myself at:

Ray Gilbert H10111

HMP Woodhill

CSC 'B' Wing

Tattenhoe Street

Milton Keynes

MK4 4JE

Let's start fighting back for our rights that the system is slowly eroding.

### Winston Silcott

Winston Silcott, one of the Tottenham Three, whose conviction for the murder of PC Blakelock was quashed in 1991, is serving a life sentence for murder even though substantial evidence proves he acted in self-defence. A book *A Chronology of Injustice* compiled by Niki Adams has been produced explaining why his defence was never put to the jury. Available for £4 from Legal action for women, Crossroads Women's Centre PO Box 287 London NW6 5QU.

### GANDALF Campaign

All three editors of Green Anarchist have been freed by the Court of Appeal pending a full hearing of their appeal against conviction. This is an unusual development, and points to the pressure that has been put on the State by the activities of the Gandalf Defendants Campaign. However, they have served four months jail sentence and still risk being returned to prison along with Animal Liberation Front Press Officer Robin Webb and Green Anarchist General Editor Paul Rogers. We will report on the progress of the defence campaign and the forthcoming trials in forthcoming issues.

### Italy

Over the past few years the Italian State has launched attacks on the Italian anarchist movement with a number of raids and arrests. 68 people were arrested, and 9 still remain in prison to date. Justifying the large number of arrests, the police cooked up charges of "subversive association" and "association with terrorist intent to overthrow the democratic order". A non-existent organisation, the Organizzazione

### Defendants

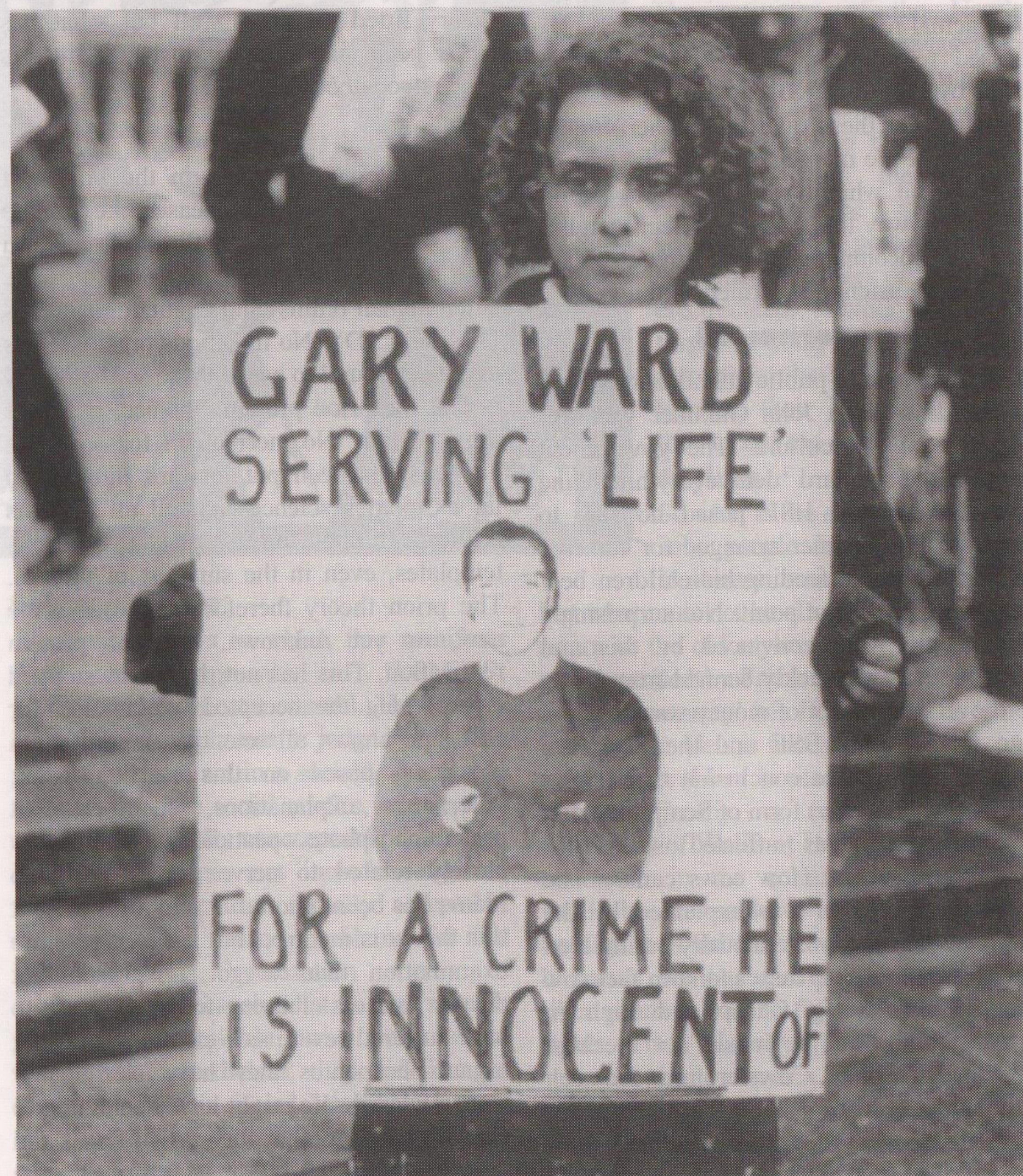
rivoluzionaria  
insurrezionalista-Insurrectionary  
Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists-  
was fabricated, and those arrested accused of belonging to this body, which no one had ever heard of before! Most have now been released on bail (after spending a year in prison), and the charges look increasingly flimsy.

3 other anarchists were arrested following actions relating to ecological struggle. One of these, Edoardo Massari, was found hanging in his cell on March 28.

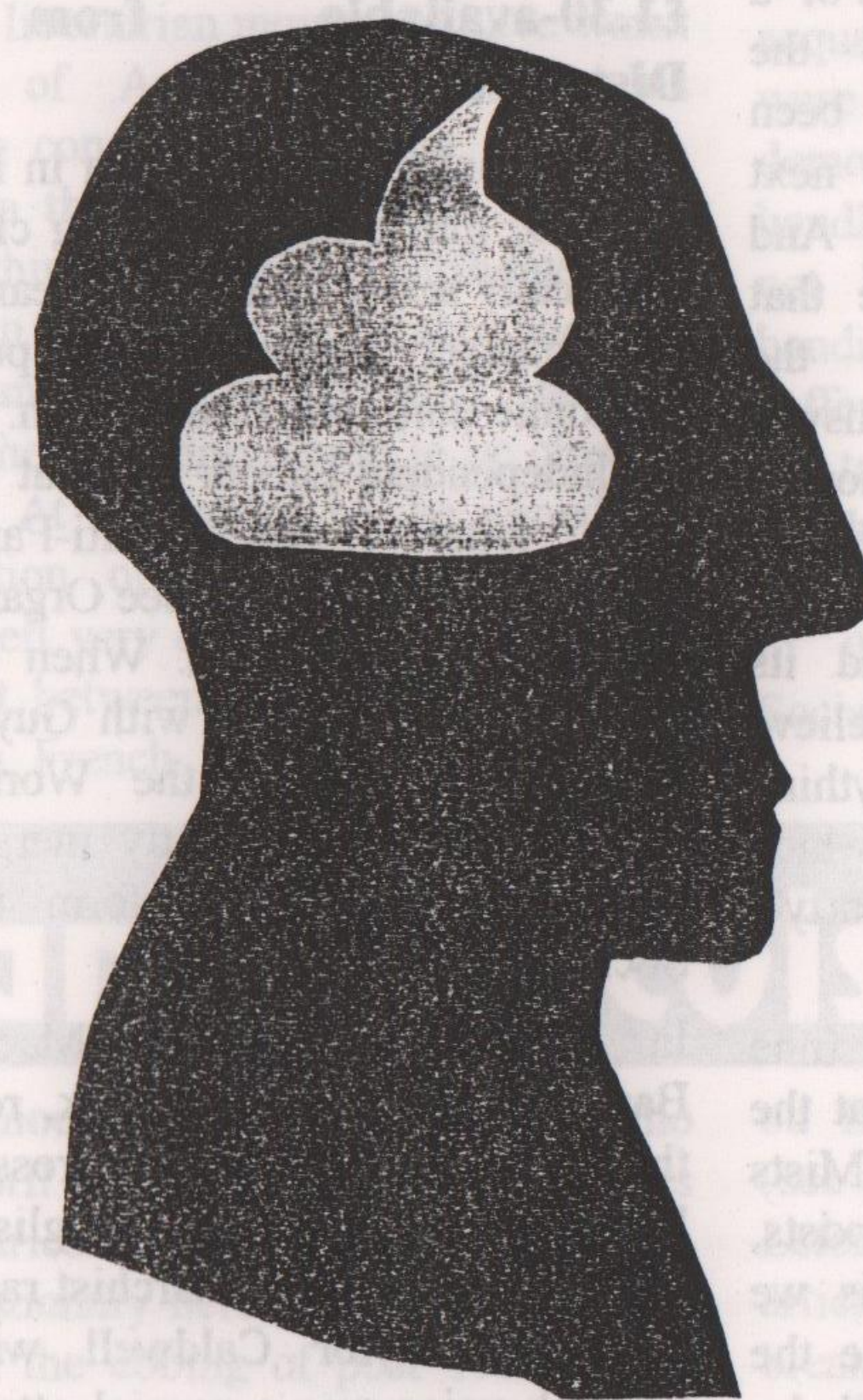
London group of the Anarchist Communist Federation, with others, organised a 20-strong picket of the Italian State Tourist Office on June 19th and handed out a thousand leaflets drawing attention to the repression.

The following are still in prison: Michele Pontolillo, Angela Maria Lo Vecchio, Patrizia Caddedu, Antonio Budini, Alfredo Cospito, Carlo tesseri, Christos Stratigopoulos, Claudio Lavazza, Marco Camenisch, Horst Fantazzini and Giorgio Eduardo Rodrigues.

For support and correspondence with the imprisoned anarchists, contact CAAA, Casella Postale 67 (66010) Ari-Chieti, Italy.



## Green Anarchist- bombs away? or away with the fairies?



Whilst the ACF defend the editors of Green Anarchist imprisoned for merely reporting on direct action, this does not mean that we can extend that defence to the politics of Green Anarchist. The last Green Anarchist had an article applauding the actions of among others, the Unabomber,

the Japanese Aum cult and their sarin gas attack on the Tokyo tube, and the Oklahoma bombings. Now, we know that the Unabomber has been defended in the past by Green Anarchist, and now has the support of others, like John Zerzan in the USA and the Fire Thief group in Turkey, but we feel it would be foolish to describe him as an anarchist. Neither can we support the actions of someone whose bombings caused grievous injury and death to those who did not deserve it as well as the possibility of death and injury to postal and office workers.

Obviously, the Unabomber statements with their anti-technological message and their anger against a system that is destroying

the planet would meet with sympathy from Green Anarchist. But in the case of the Oklahoma bombers and the Aum cult, no such politics can be used to justify support. The Oklahoma bombings were the work of right wing militias, and when we say right

wing, we mean extreme right wing (that is, if the American secret services were not involved as provocateurs or engineered the bombing themselves). If this support is blanket for such bombings, then it could quite easily be widened for support for the bombings carried out by fascists and their secret service manipulators in Italy- or anywhere else for that matter.

### Entrapment

As for the Aum cult, we find it amazing that people who regard themselves as anarchists can support any religious cult. Their purpose is to confuse and mystify, to entrap people often from an impoverished background and to act as an antidote to radicalism. Look at similar cults like the Jonestown and the Waco cults as other examples. These cults always involve a charismatic and manipulating leader who imposes strict discipline and hierarchy, often making recruits part with all of their earnings and possessions and often sexually exploiting them into the bargain. In no way can indiscriminate attacks on ordinary people travelling to work be condoned, especially when carried out by paranoid cults. These actions may be symptomatic of a system in terminal decline but they are not examples of a new, libertarian and egalitarian world emerging from the chaos of hierarchical capitalism.

Green Anarchist's support for such 'spectacular' actions, a product of their political confusion, must be condemned

## MAY 1968 continued from page 11

Auxerre with the CNT, at the Renault plant at Billancourt, at Cleon, Courbevoie, and at Paris among the proof-readers in the printing industry.

The Comites d'action revolutionnaire also sprang up in many places. The CARs gathered together Trotskyists, Maoists, dissidents of the Communist Party, with the principal activists being libertarian communists. This was particularly true at Tours

which was in contact with the leading anarchist communist at Nanterre, Jean-Pierre Duteuil, the situationists of Paris and Nantes, with Jussieu University (in the centre of Paris and with a proportionately higher working class intake than elsewhere). It had contacts among the peasants and soldiers. But it was above all among the railworkers that it played a very important role, with a real grip on the lines and

stations and with the beginnings of self-organisation of the service.

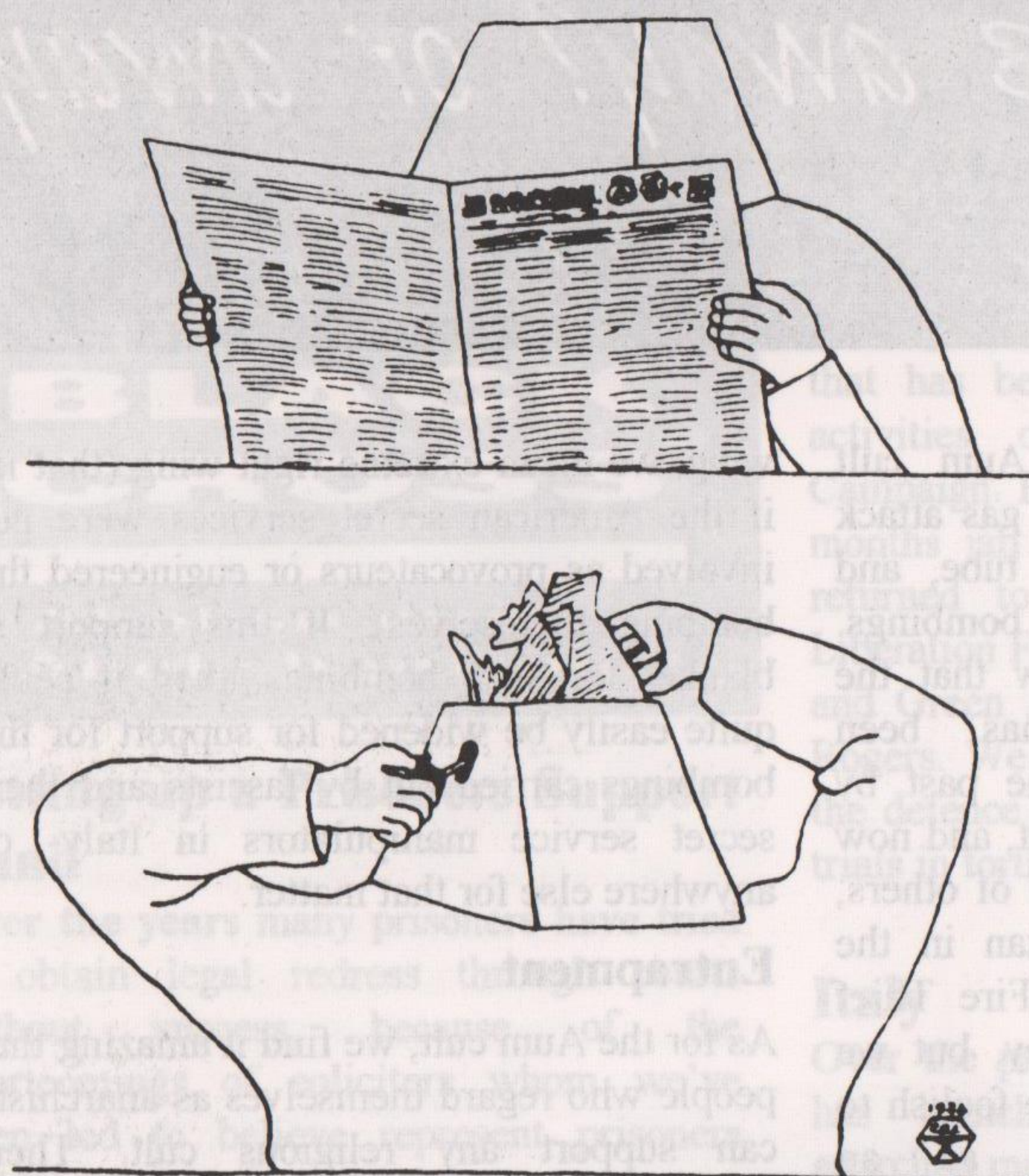
### And the Communist Party?

"Everybody could recognise among those digging up cobble stones and the builders of barriers, baptised barricades, the scum of Bordeaux: pimps, thieves and wanted criminals, commandos of ex-paratroopers, fascists of every sort" (Gironde Federation of the Communist

Party, May 1968).

"We were told 'but these are revolutionary militants'. In truth, they had nothing to do with the revolutionary movement. This isn't the first time that unscrupulous agitators have concealed their infamies under the noble flag of the revolution. The fascists have also always pretended to be revolutionaries". (Georges Marchais, Communist Party leader).





of the proletariat... (p.40) We are patronisingly told that "What novelties they introduced to anarchist theory may well have been old Marxist postulates, themselves merely elementary lessons from the class struggle" (p.70) and "After the necessity of a dictatorship of the proletariat had been acknowledged, the next issue to arise was: And who is to exercise that dictatorship of the proletariat? The answer was; the revolutionary Junta, promptly defined as the vanguard of revolutionaries. And its role? we cannot believe that it can be anything other than the one which

Marxists ascribe to the revolutionary party". (p.68)

Now, Guillaumon spends considerable time in his book demolishing the myths that the FoD were under the influence of POUMists and Trotskyists, that they were Marxists, that they were insignificant. For this we should be grateful. But to then make the equation that the FoD's formulas equalled a form of Marxism is, to say the least, to cloud the issue. The FoD did not use the term dictatorship of the proletariat because it is an ambiguous term. If it means as the FoD proposed, that the working class established its own organisations to suppress the boss class and lead on to libertarian communism, then all well and good. But if it means the rule of a few, even of an "enlightened few" who were somehow the revolutionary vanguard, then we, and the FoD, are right to reject the term. The FoD meant for the whole working class to come to power. This is what they struggled for. Similarly, whilst we recognise that some elements of the working class may well be in theoretical and indeed practical advance of others, and that anarchist communists should strive for a leadership of ideas- that is the widespread understanding and grasp of anarchist communism- we find the term revolutionary vanguard just as ambiguous.

Read this book with these criticisms in mind. But remember that this book is flawed because of these criticisms. It is a shame that Georges Fontenis' book on the FoD has not been translated from the French- a far better book in many ways. If you want a good and far cheaper account of

the FoD then read our pamphlet **Towards a Fresh Revolution by the Friends of**

**Durruti**, produced by London ACF in the Stormy Petrel series at only 75p. This offers two texts from the Friends, and a historical and critical analysis- a winner!

**Ethel MacDonald- Glasgow Woman Anarchist. By Rhona M. Hodgart. Pirate Press/ Kate Sharpley Library. £1.30-available from AK Distribution.**

**Ethel MacDonald** was born in Motherwell in 1909, into a large working class family. Politically active from a very early age, she was intensely opposed to the political and economic domination of women. She joined the Independent Labour Party at 16. In 1931 she joined the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation (see *Organise!* 42 for account of the A-PCF). When the A-PCF split in 1934, she left with Guy Aldred to form a new group, the Workers Open Forum. This subsequently merged with a branch of the ILP to form the United Socialist Movement.

In 1936 the USM sent MacDonald to Barcelona with Jenny Patrick, representing the A-PCF, by hitchhiking across France. In Barcelona she became the English speaking propagandist for the Anarchist radio station. As John Taylor Caldwell wrote: "Her Scottish voice was a special attraction, and her broadcasts aroused comment as far afield as the USA". She continued these broadcasts until May 1937 when the Stalinist attack on the Telephone Exchange in Barcelona controlled by members of the Anarcho-syndicalist union the CNT led to street fighting and subsequent repression of the POUM (independent Marxist party) and the Anarchists. Whilst Jenny Patrick returned to Glasgow on May 24, Ethel remained in Spain until November. On June 16th POUM members and foreign activists were rounded up. She visited comrades in prison, smuggling in food and letters. She helped several foreign Anarchists escape from Spain, borrowing clothes for their disguise and getting them on board foreign ships. She was captured and imprisoned. In prison she helped organise a hunger strike in every prison where there were anarchist prisoners. Released in July 1937 she remained in Barcelona underground until September, when she was deported to France. Back in Scotland, she spoke out consistently against the Stalinist attacks on the POUM and Anarchists, working up to her death in 1960 with Aldred, Patrick, and Caldwell on the USM paper *The Word*. This pamphlet tells her story and in particular her role during the May Days of Barcelona.

**The Friends of Durruti Group 1937-1939. By Agustin Guillaumon. AK Press. £7.95 116 pages**

The Friends of Durruti (FoD) were the group of Anarchists on the Left of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism who organised against the machinations of the leadership of the CNT-FAI (Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo -the mass Anarcho-syndicalist union and Federacion Anarquista Iberica -the specific anarchist organisation) and against the Stalinist provocations of May 1937.

This book is useful for the wealth of factual evidence, quotes from Friends of Durruti publications, identification of FoD members, that it provides. This is refreshing after all the nonsense that has been written in the past about this group. But on the other hand, it attempts to prove unsubstantiated theories, theories that members of the Friends of Durruti Group would reject themselves. Guillaumon's work first appeared in a Barcelona paper called *Balance*, which AK Press comrades tell us is an anarchist publication. If so, these are anarchists very much under the influence of Left Communism. In short, they are intent on showing that the actions of the FoD made them a revolutionary vanguard, and that they were fighting for a dictatorship of the proletariat, even though they themselves never acknowledged this. In other words the FoD were unconsciously arriving at the same conclusions as revolutionary Marxists! Thus the FoD watchwords of *all power to the working class* and *all economic power to the unions* put out on a poster in April 1937 led to "the political program implicit in this poster...makes of the Friends of Durruti Group a revolutionary vanguard

## Andre Senez

Over the years, the name Andre Senez could be read at the foot of the back page of many French anarchist and libertarian papers as "Director" of the publication- a paper cannot by law be published in France unless it has this State requirement and risks instant confiscation. Many veterans of the French libertarian movement have warm memories of Andre Senez, with his unflinching convictions and his solidarity. He died on the evening of 20th February after reaching his 80th birthday last October. An old worker in the shoe industry in Paris, an expert in his work, he had retired to the Touraine region to be close to his family. At the age of 15, he joined the youth section of the Communist Party, which he left very quickly after the signing of the pact between Stalin and Laval, the right wing French premier, in 1935. He

became an anarchist and was a militant in the Jeunesse Anarchiste Communiste (Anarchist Communist Youth) then in the Union Anarchiste, its parent organisation and then in the post-war Federation Anarchiste.

Georges Fontenis writes: "I made his acquaintance at the start of the war and we were at all the rallies together, at all the demonstrations where he impressively handled his walking stick which he could not be separated from because of his handicapped status (as a child he had suffered an attack of poliomyelitis that was not taken care of properly, the lot of many children from a poor background in that period)". Leaving the Federation Anarchiste in the 50s, he attended meetings of Socialisme ou Barbarie along with Fontenis

(On Socialisme ou Barbarie see the obituary of Cornelius Castoriadis in *Organise!* 48)

With Fontenis and Daniel Guerin, he was one of the founders of the Mouvement Communiste Libertaire (MCL). He remained in this group when it transformed itself into the (first) Organisation Communiste Libertaire. With its collapse in 1976, Senez joined the (second) Organisation Communiste Libertaire, the result of a changing of name by the Organisation Revolutionnaire Anarchiste! He was subsequently active in the Union des Travailleurs Communistes Libertaires and its successor Alternative Libertaire. With the deterioration of his health, he became housebound, nevertheless continuing correspondence with various publications. "We are all sad at having lost an old brother"-Georges Fontenis.

## Jean-Francois Lyotard

The post-modern French philosopher who died on April 21 is of little interest to us as revolutionaries. We wish to recall his time as a revolutionary before the pressures of a career and the ebbing of post 1968 hopes turned him into a darling of the sociologists.

Born in Versailles, educated at the Sorbonne, he spent 10 years as a philosophy teacher in secondary schools. A stay in French-occupied Algeria radicalised him, when he took sides against the French state and for Algerian "independence". Returning to France in 1956, he joined the Socialisme

ou Barbarie group, alongside Castoriadis (see his obituary in *Organise!* 48) and Lefort. He contributed many important articles to its magazine. He joined Lefort in breaking away from S ou B in 1963 to form Pouvoir Ouvrier (Workers Power) This had originally been the name of a paper set up by S ou B to appeal to shop-floor workers. Pouvoir Ouvrier retained many of the original ideas of S ou B, believing that a revolutionary organisation was necessary to help bring about the establishment of workers councils. He left this group after 2

years. In 1968, as a lecturer at Nanterre University, he joined the March 22nd Movement made up of students from the Nanterre Anarchist Group and other elements. Here he was active alongside Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Jean-Pierre Duteuil (the first a sell-out to social-democracy, the second still an active libertarian communist) The March 22nd Movement had great influence on the events of May-June 1968 in France.

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*As We See It* is available in Welsh, Serbo-Croat, Greek and now, thanks to our Austrian comrades, in German. They are each available for 70p including postage and packaging from our London address.

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If you know anybody who speaks Serbo-Croat in Britain, or you have contacts in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Slovenia or Macedonia where Serbo-Croat is understood then why not send them copies?

German, Greek, Portuguese, French, Italian, Esperanto and Spanish translations of our *Aims and Principles* are also available for 20p plus postage.

Write to the London address for bulk orders.



# Evita Continued from back page

publicity stunt to show how benevolent Eva Peron was. At the same time many gimmicks were used as grist for the publicity mill. Very poor children were housed and fed for a few days and then flung back into poverty, peso notes were flung at random into the crowd. At the same time money was raised by the Foundation by a compulsory levy on union members (3 days pay) a national lottery and enforced contributions from the industrialists. The Foundation gained publicity for Peronism for its good deeds, it bolstered popular support through its "good deeds"- and Eva was able to divert up to \$700 million into overseas accounts!

## Saint of the Poor

The years 1946-9 saw workers wages go up by a third. But in February 1949 the stock market collapsed and after this Peronism became more openly anti-working class, with austerity measures being introduced. Spending was cut by 20% and real wages fell by 32% between 1949 and 1953. In 1950 Eva Peron attempted to stop a railworkers strike. When the strike action spread the following year, the Peronists declared military rule, sacked 3,000 workers and jailed 300. She began to be associated with the brutal methods of the

regime.

Her early death in 1951 meant that the reputation she had built up was not too damaged by the increasing attacks of Peronism on the working class. In death she was transformed into a Virgin Mary style icon, a Saint of the Poor, easily managed in a predominantly Catholic country. In reality she was a corrupt and power-mad manipulator of the masses, helping bring about, in Juan Peron's own words "A fascism that is careful to avoid all the errors of Mussolini".

## Letter

*Organise!* comrades,

We are not sure if the screw-ups in the letter published in *Organise!* 48 were the result of cack-handed typing, poor proof-reading or mischievous fun on the part of the editor. Typing shouldn't have been necessary because the comments were sent on disc. However, in the interests of accuracy we would appreciate a little of your letters space in issue 49 to make a couple of corrections and to add a brief comment on the latest critique of anarcho-syndicalism.

We did not quote L.Kombo Ervin as saying that anarcho-syndicalists believe "...that somehow unions are progressive, and what's more the unions are some kind of force that can *not* be revolutionised" as the addition of "not" makes nonsense of Ervin's (admittedly strange) view of anarcho-syndicalism and our criticism. Likewise it was not said that "...it is this horizontal co-ordination that *names* the workers' union" but that such horizontal co-ordination "makes" the workers' union (in the sense that nothing more is required than workers' solidarity and horizontal co-

ordination by workers to create a revolutionary union. That's how we see it.)

With regard to the latest analysis (issue 48), everything you say that a revolutionary organisation should be doing is currently being done by the Solidarity Federation, as you know from contacts and reading the material. Anarcho-syndicalists do not cease to be involved in the wider struggle once they leave the workplace (assuming they have a job in the first place). You may well prefer it to be otherwise but the fact is that the SF is not a 'one dimensional' organisation and its members are very much rooted in the myriad struggles of the real world. We could discuss the factory committees in Russia and the failures arising from lack of structured co-ordination in other revolutionary periods for page after page but that's best left for another time.

We are confident that you will publish this as written in the interests of anarchist solidarity.

R.E. (Somerset Solidarity)

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## ORGANISE!

*ORGANISE!* IS THE magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation (ACF). *Organise!* is a quarterly theoretical journal published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debates on areas not normally covered by agitational journals. All articles in the magazine are by ACF members unless signed. Some reflect ACF policy and others open up debate in undiscussed areas, helping us to develop our ideas further.

Please feel welcome to contribute articles to *Organise!* as long as they don't conflict with our Aims and Principles we will publish them.. (Letters, of course, need not agree with our A&Ps at all.). Deadlines for next issue are 1st May for features and reviews, and 8th May for letters and news.

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## ORGANISE! BACK ISSUES

BACK ISSUES OF *Organise!* (from issues 19-48) are still available from the London address. They cost 20p each plus SAE. Issues 25, 30, 32, 33, 36, 38, 39, 43, 47 are sold out.

Issue 26: Women and revolution; Direct action.

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## Anarchist Communist Federation

The Anarchist Communist Federation is an organisation of class struggle anarchists. For contacts :

**Wales:** PO Box 10, Cwmbran, Cymru, Wales

**Merseyside:** Merseyside ACF, PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 8DP

**Newcastle:** ACF, PO Box 11A, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE99 1TA

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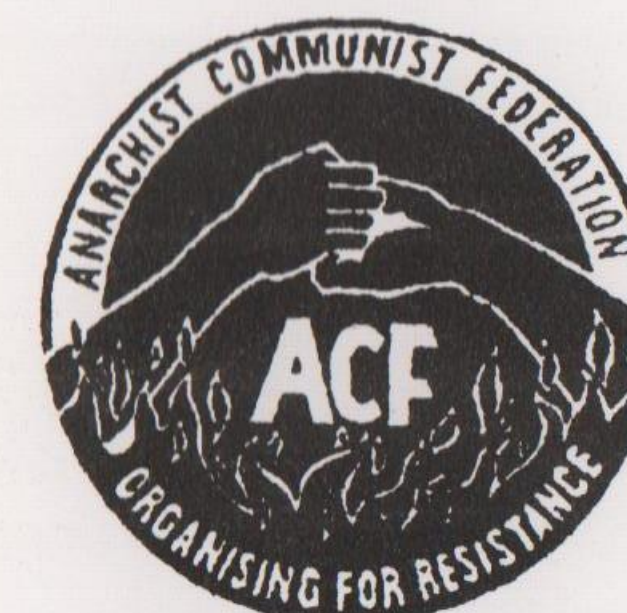
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