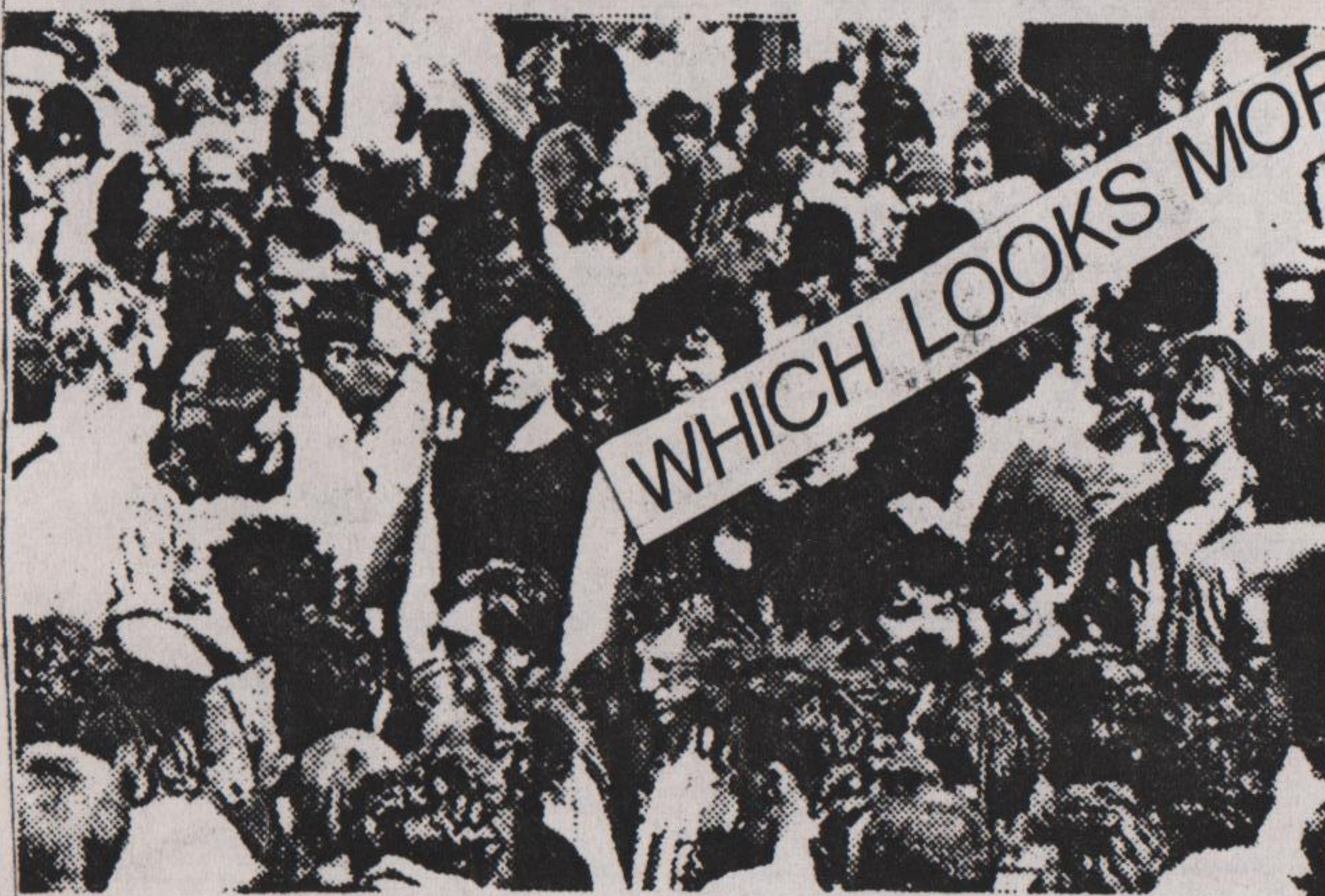


Anarcho day - trip to Henley



Mass class struggle in Denmark



Insurgents Bashing In The Door Of The PM's Office.



They present themselves as the spokesmen for a whole section of the proletariat : those who hate the rich, swear a lot and riot. Public anger without public strategy reminds us of Mao's theory of the vanguard swimming like fish swim in water.

"Here's a brief scenario... Thanks to the Electricity Board's publicising where blackouts occur, we could assemble in a certain area at a pre-arranged time ... At a pre-arranged signal upon the advent of lights-out, the mob could condense within seconds, swinging into action..... Headlines captured it wouldn't take long for the example to spread. Against this background we'd blend, time to add our political dimension... ...We're not the vanguard....."
Class War, Charles and Di issue.

A dozen interviews in Time Out, New Society or the Guardian, which add up to bragging + a search for some kind of acceptability, aren't worth as much to those who oppose capital as a tin of cat-food nicked from Sainsbury's.

To use insulting images such as an aggressive arrogant pride in being streetwise is to stand in

the way of radicalisation. An old copy of CW saw the defeats of the riots of July 1981 as mainly a problem of organisation. As if pious hopes or real efforts to spread ideas of getting organised would alone lead to "victorious" riots. No, revolution is the only form of war where victory is prepared by a series of defeats. There are long struggles ahead. Leftists with their manipulative practices and off-pat "solutions" ("Collectivise all mines outside Notts."; "Bash the rich"; "Organise") only stand in the way. Organisation is organisation of something. It's true that riots and strikes must begin to be better organised, and that the most militant proletarians must organise as minorities explicitly to play a part in escalating the fights, but to confuse the two is pure and simple vanguardism.

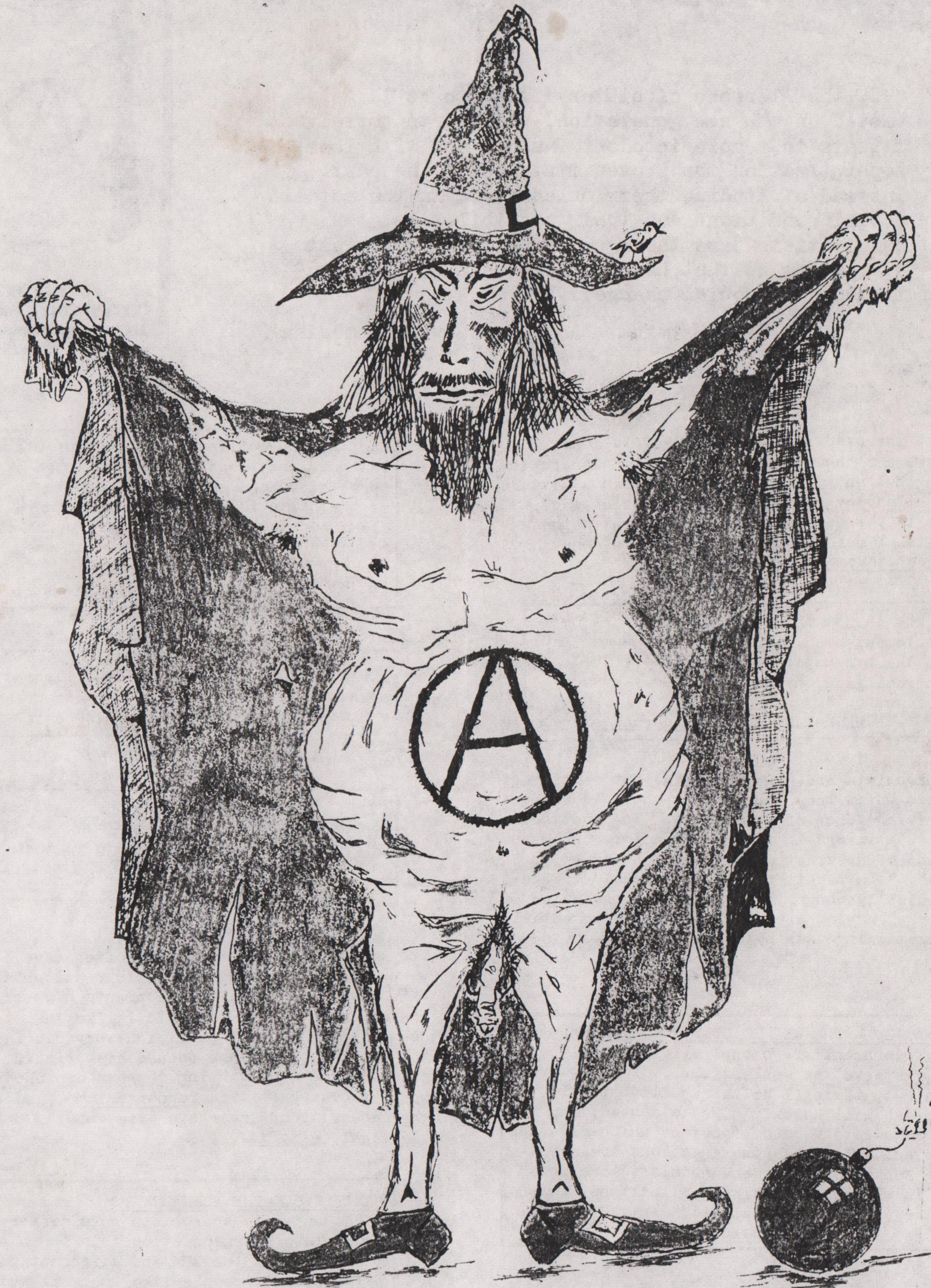
Like all anarchists, Class War's supposed grasp of the key to the jihad to save humanity (in their case, getting rid of the rich and trendies -- an aim with which we totally agree) leads them to a line of thought which is designed, in their case through the public anger of their paper, to make "ordinary" people realise the acceptability of what they already know but suppress. To accomplish the feat of coming across as serious, CW themselves suppress what they know : that the unions are always part of the enemy, that mass class confrontations aren't anywhere near as close as they imply, etc.

It's the old con. Present yourself as allies of what's going on (which means opportunisticly refraining from criticising what you know to be its weaknesses), and hope to add your "political dimension" once you've won confidence and been accepted as knowing the business.

The Red Menace, 84b, Whitechapel High St., LONDON, E1 7QX.

ANARCHISM

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EXPOSED!

anarchism exposed!

"...the 'lessons of history' seem to be largely wasted on the new generation, which often merely repeats in a more insolent fashion and with less sophistication the proven mistakes of the past. Instead of finding their orientation in the actual social conditions and their possibilities, the new leftists base their concerns mainly on a set of ideologies that have no relevance to the requirements of social change..."

Paul Mattick, 'Anti-Bolshevik Communism'

Anarchism, wherever it puts up a "revolutionary" appearance, and however violent or anti-hierarchic, is nothing but an ideology. It maintains a mixture of the "philosophy of enlightenment" which was necessary to the bourgeois revolution, with the organisational methods and assumptions of the old workers' movement.

"Anarchy is not the ideal of some particular element or class, but of all humanity".
"Even the big capitalist has little to lose by the changing of the present-day system to one of anarchy".
A. BIRK-MAN, "ABC of Anarchism".

Active anarchists are always looking for fertile ground into which they hope to sow their ideas, seen as the driving force of revolution. In practice, those who see things in this way, in terms of the realisation of abstract absolutes such as "No authority", "the rights of the individual" or even "Total social harmony", always have a conception of themselves as having already grasped the essential, with the remaining task being to awaken everyone else.

STARVATION - THE KEY TO CONSCIOUSNESS.
"The government ... cannot allow themselves to really starve the workers If the workers don't eat, there'll be two positive results : the clash will quickly come to a head, and it will immediately become obvious which side the trade union leaders (whose actions are even being supported by some anarchists) are on. That is why we are against collections, which are the stuff of the Salvation Army."
Insurrection, Issue 2.

Once their abstract desires have found their "goal" in terms of ideals, the present struggle is suddenly remembered, and areas are sought for the application of these ideals. Trade unions, working class culture, the alternative scene, the peace movement, national liberation movements, protests and other bulwarks against revolution are often "entered into" and thus defended.



"As the controlling instrument of State organs, the government has now ceased to be a repressive force exercised against the working class, just as the State is no longer the organ dividing class society. And both shall cease even more to repress the people because of the intervention of CNT elements in them."
Solidaridad Obrera, 4/11/1936.

"Critical support [of national liberation movements] is one way to stop the creation of a State."
Insurrection, Issue 3.

"Yes, independence and self-determination for Ireland and its people, but that would only be the first step towards the breakdown of this, and all, centralised nation States."
ANGRY.

The more political anarchists often have specific views on working class conditions and on the past -and possible future- developments of society. They are not openly anti-historical like the alternative scene freaks or self-sufficient organic farmers. On the contrary, they are pseudo-historical. Their practice rests on varying degrees of support for "the working class" as it is (opportunism), and belief in the necessity of their own existence as bringers of the light (elitism).

DON'T KNOCK THE BUREAUCRATS.
"Although we as anarchists have different ideas about labour organisation than the hierarchical structures of the NUM and different political principles to people like Scargill and Taylor, this is not the fight we are engaged in. There is little that we can criticise these two on during this strike. Both of them have thrown themselves into the front line, both have been assaulted by the police, they like all other paid NUM officials have given up their wages and during this strike have been nothing more than propaganda and symbolic figure heads."
Black Flag, Vol. VII 6C No. 114.

"Revolutionary propaganda can be seen as the education and agitation which increases people's understanding of the present society, whilst anarchist propaganda is presenting the anarchist approach to changing society....
....Therefore the best way to put over anarchism is not by claiming to have the solution to the miners' strike, the world and everything, but by proving ourselves as useful allies in the struggle."
Black Flag, Vol VII 6C No. 116.

These two "properties" of practical anarchism are neither exclusive of each other nor exclusive to anarchism. They sum up leftism as a whole. They are the inevitable results of "revolutionary" ideology, understood in the sense of a set of holy ideas, from which practice is then derived.

When we say that anarchism is idealist, we don't mean that the destruction of the State, for example, is mere pie in the sky. Quite the contrary. But it has nothing to do with the realisation of any ideal.

The search by practical anarchists to apply their ideas has taken many forms. It has been a fusion of conceptions of the future as a matter of realising abstract absolutes (Justice, Reason, Rights, Democracy) with ideas about the working class being led to social revolution thanks to the intervention of self-sacrificial idealists, professional educators, or secret elites.

"Invisible pilots in the centre of the popular storm, we must direct it, not with a visible power, but with the collective dictatorship of all the allies. A dictatorship without badge, without official right, yet all the more powerful because it will have none of the appearances of power."
M. BAKUNIN.

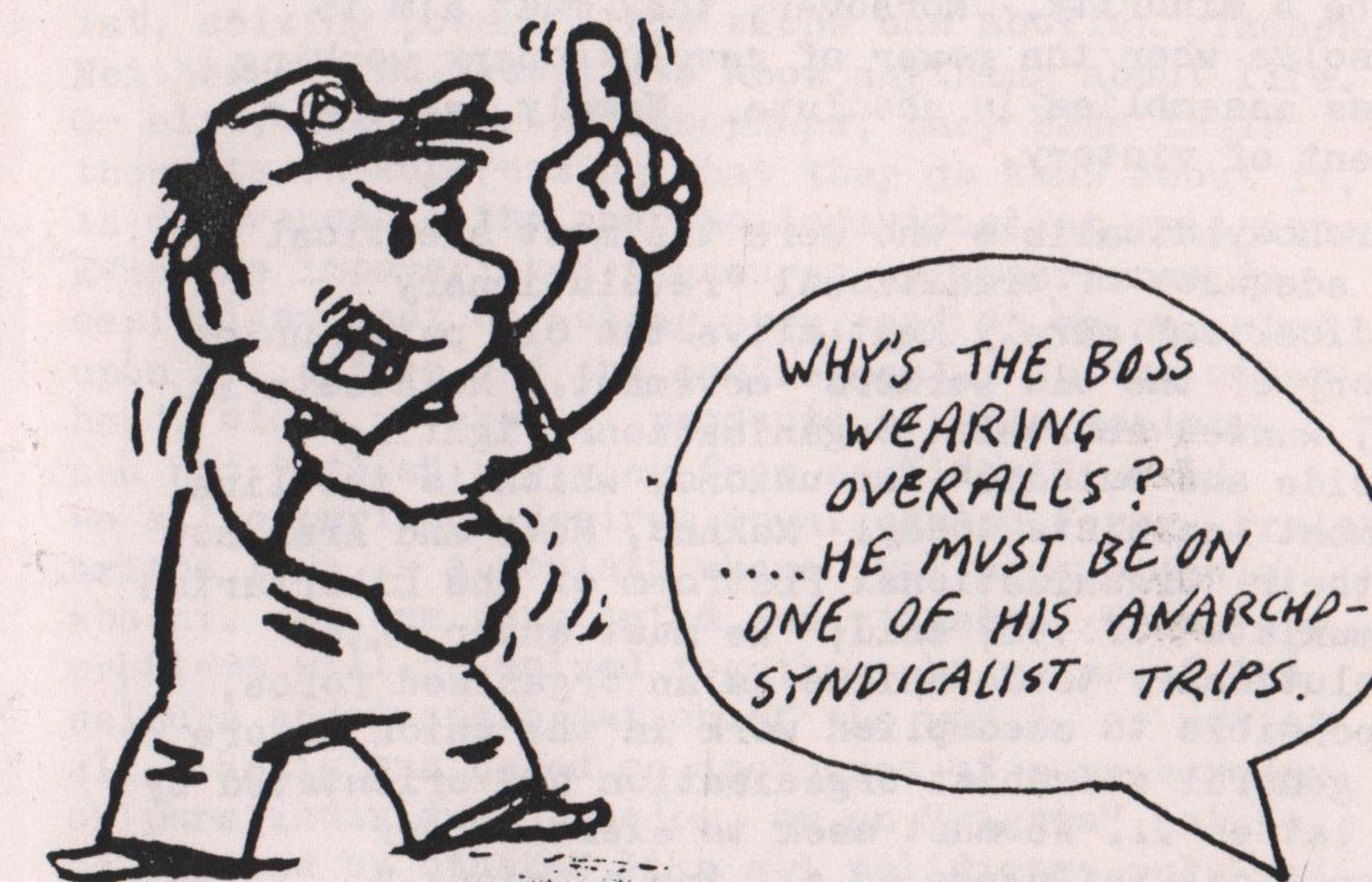
Syndicalism

As a form of trade-unionism, syndicalism has been the traditional anarchist sowing-ground. It was trade-unionism based on industrial syndicates, grouping together as many workers as possible on the basis of trade and industry. It saw the working class, through the educational process of strikes, demands and workplace sabotage, being prepared for eventual syndical management of workplaces by an anarchist elite propagating the myth of the General Strike on some indeterminate Glorious Day. Present-day union cells, preferably grouping together all workers, would in the future become units of economic management of society.

"The syndicate, today in the form of resistance groups, will tomorrow be groups of production and distribution, the foundation of social exchange.... AS far as individuals are concerned, the Congress affirms complete freedom for any member of the syndicate to participate outside it in whatever kind of struggle corresponds to his philosophical or political ideas."
1906 syndicalist Charter of Amiens.

Syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism, like all trade-unionisms and other ways employed by the old workers' movement, have become definitively reactionary. There can be no mass revolutionary organisation without mass revolutionary struggle

and consciousness. All other ideas rest on overt or veiled elitism, whether this means Leninist mass parties with their factory cells, or anarchist use of syndicalism as a means, as a transmission belt.



Many experiences of revolutionary moments have shown that the most adequate form for the organisation of working class communication and power is the workers' council or mass assembly, neither a union nor a party. The possibilities for the flourishing of these assemblies had always come into conflict with all mass organisations which has previously regrouped working class people in a non-revolutionary period.

It's not a coincidence that those who see mass revolutionary organisations existing before a revolution (which, by their very nature, would regroup many non-revolutionary proletarians) have also adopted theories of the necessity for crack bands of professional "revolutionaries" such as the Bolsheviks or the Iberian Anarchist Federation.

Anarchism: the Dettol of Revolution.
"It would be a great and fatal illusion to believe ... that the workers' movement can and must in itself, by its very nature, lead to revolution. Hence the impelling necessity of truly anarchist organisations which fight inside as well as outside the unions for the total realisation of anarchism and seek to sterilise all the germs of degeneration and reaction."
Malatesta, 1927.



The opposite to this is not spontaneism, or theories which oppose forming organisations until the revolution breaks out. The point is that the aim of revolutionary groupings existing before a revolution is not to gather people around them in order to build themselves up as a power within this society. Such organisations, including revolutionary workers' groups, must know themselves to be a minority. Moreover, they must aim to dissolve when the power of revolutionary working class assemblies is absolute. Namely, at their moment of victory.

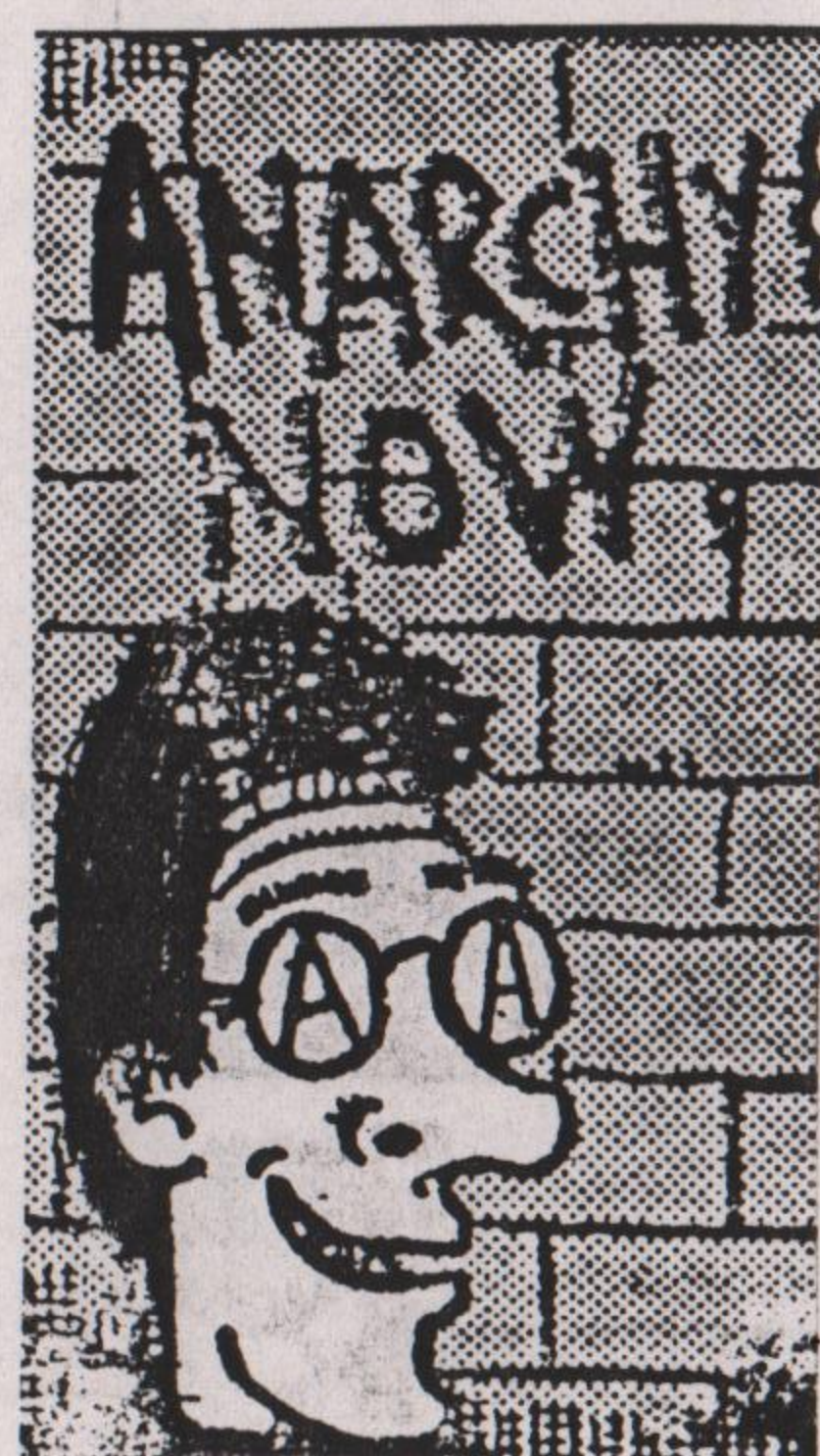
Anarchosyndicalists who were the most sceptical of the adequacy of traditional "revolutionary syndicalism" merely kept alive the old party/union theory of the old workers' movement. Malatesta in 1927 wanted anarchist organisations fighting "inside and outside" the unions, which is the line of most Leninists today. Makhno, Mett and Arshinov in their "Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists" of 1927 said, "We must enter into revolutionary trade unions as an organised force, responsible to accomplish work in the union before the general anarchist organisation and orientated by the latter ... We must seek to exercise our theoretical influence on all trade unions." In other words, the union is one transmission mechanism for the party.

Self-Management

THE SYNDICALIST SOLUTION — inhale your own coal-dust and forget about the scabs. "Also, there is no reason why collectivisation should be restricted to those mines in danger of closure. The whole industry could be collectivised, with each pit under the control of the local mineworking/community syndicates. If a few, such as the Nottinghamshire miners, wish to stay with their bosses, let them. That's their choice." *Black Flag*, Vol VII 5C No.111.



This extract from a famous society of brain-dead anarchists calls, supposedly in total seriousness, for the collectivisation of the mines as an ongoing perspective, leaving the Notts. scabs to themselves. So much for individual freedom! Leaving aside the similarity with Trotskyist "transitional demands", this advocates building the new society within the shell of the old, where the "new" society means running what used to be run by the bosses. It doesn't take a genius to see that if strikers had been in possession of mines at any time during the strike, the only sensible thing to do would have been to use the coal as ammunition, just as miners in at least two villages used NCB cranes not to build mineshafts but to build barricades. Syndicalists say "Run the mines yourselves". Revolutionaries aim for a world where no-one works down them at all. The only purpose of defending jobs should be to make things a bit more bearable before we abolish wage-labour and social separations.



We have no time for people who think that the difference between capitalism and communism is the difference between bosses' management and workers' management. Yes, in communism, the masses will run everything, but the essential is the differing content of human activity. The beginning of free human creativity and experience doesn't mean running one's "own" factory.

Self-management theories rest on people running "their" factories, their "communities", etc. Mostly in order to market and sell "their" products, e.g. Proudhon, kibbutzim, ... Go and laugh at the article "Weighing up our Past" in *Freedom*, July '85. The descriptions of words are well worth reading, and the defence of the money/market economy should provoke itches in all revolutionaries' trigger-fingers. Communism is described as distribution according to need (amongst other things, we would say). Collectivism and individualism, the anarchist answers to Tweedledum and Tweedledee, are both described as a system of co-ops trading among themselves on the market, with consumption being according to money received according to work done. The only difference between them would be that collectivism gets rid of the right to employ others.

But self-managementists who oppose the market, like Kropotkin or the group "Solidarity" at the time of "As We Don't See It", are no better. They defend the social separations where people are assumed to be attached to one particular kind of work. Even if this remained the case for a little while, revolution abolishes private property; it doesn't fragment it into geographical or industrial portions, or have it managed by the workers. Revolution smashes such

social separations as exist between areas of the economy, as well as the separation between work and non-work. We want a society where one would not be able to say "This factory belongs to these workers". Projects based on factory councils to run factories, neighbourhood councils to run neighbourhoods, etc., only maintain capitalist divisions. They remind us of early-'70s libertarianism. On the contrary, a free society would develop so that one could cook in the morning, paint a house in the afternoon, and criticise in the evening, without ever being a cook, house-painter or critic. Communism has nothing to do with latter-day Kropotkins who want decentralised self-sufficient "communes", or any other ways to maintain social isolation. Wherever there is decentralisation, there is a form of private property, e.g. "This is our little area, and we say what we do with what we produce".

Communism is the development of world human community, the abolition of all property, including localised self-managed property.

"We look both forwards and backwards. Backward, indeed, to the free city, with its guilds of craftsmen and groups of scholars, its folk-meeting and loose federal association." S.Christie/A.Meltzer, *Floodgates of Anarchy*.

Localism and federalism.

Localism and federalism are a related aim of anarchy. Many local anarchist groups are only interested in struggles going on in their own towns, and see the autonomy of groups and individuals as a good thing. Propaganda becomes a matter of addressing "local people", of pandering to isolationist perspectives which many people have but which they generally try to break down when they are involved in struggle. The overwhelming lack of articles in *Class War* about anything happening outside Britain is an example at a different level, the national level. They prefer to write about their antics at Henley rather than the Danish mass strike.

Many anarchists adhere to the idea of Anarchy in One Country, where the extension of the revolution beyond what used to be State boundaries is seen to be too "authoritarian" (!) An article by Stuart Christie in a book on leftist national defence says that an anarchist Britain would only trade with democratic nations.



ALBERT MELTZER

The Israelis have taken over the "self-defence" idea with major success. That the Israeli Army is nationalistic is beside the point. Its mode of organization within the nation state is largely voluntary. Anarchism -- Arguments For and Against.

Individualism.

Those who see everything in terms of the "autonomy of the individual" are only good for a laugh. They obviously know nothing about history. History is the history of classes. The suppression of capitalism depends on one of its classes, which it continually dispossesses, becoming a class for itself, which is inseparable from that class, the proletariat, seizing power. This alone can abolish classes. Neither do individualists know anything about life. Or else, like true philosophers, they base their thoughts on suppressing what they do know about it, in deference to the anarcho-individualist religion. Even the impoverished pleasures we experience in capitalism rest on acting upon, and on being acted upon by, others and the environment. On the other hand, since we are all products of this society, and not "souls" arriving from an "ideal" world, we all experience desires in alienated form. Proletarians live in a society where real community is absent. We are fragmented individuals. These two problems will be solved together — by means of the seizure and transformation of the world — or not at all. Religions based on doctrines of pure harmony or pure individual freedom, or on "rights" not to be limited by others, like all religions, only stand in the way. Consistent individualists would try to solve their own problems in isolation from the tendencies towards community in struggle. They would be the most selfish and untrustworthy scum.

The alternative scene.



Many anarchists today are attracted to anarchism out of a love of the "alternative". In other words, they relish the non-conformist areas of capitalist society, where citizens can be "different" and proud. Over the years, different ways of surviving under capitalism have attempted to justify themselves in terms of being more moral, liberal, conservative, trendy or "rebellious" than other ways. "Alternative" anarchists identify with the supposed "security" of various compensations for poverty, such as "rebellious" fashions like punk, cosy squats, protests, demonstrations, vegetarianism, dropping-out, self-sufficiency, not to forget hippy festivals, the anarchist answer to Butlin's!

The alternative scene, like all "scenes", is rooted solely in a quest for means to cope with survival. Sneaking desires to challenge capitalist everyday life are continually rejected. This much should be obvious from the fact that working class people spending years with the Convoy or the London squatting scene must know very well that it's not what it's cracked up to be. Of course squatting

is an important means of struggle for the homeless, but to over-estimate what are merely different ways of coping with poverty is to shy away from the necessity of total social revolution. Revolutionaries are those who don't feel at home anywhere, and want to feel at home everywhere, Alternative scene anarchism is the easiest to mow down. Running a vegetarian café and a claimants' union to "get people involved in the community", are respectively little different from running a

butcher's shop or a trade union to get people involved in industrial democracy. The libertarianism of "everyone doing their own thing" is little different from the democratic myths of participation or liberal permissiveness. Tolerance of heroin amongst some squatting circles is no doubt based on "individual rights". In itself, squatting is no more revolutionary than renting a flat, and punk fashion is as counterrevolutionary as any other kind of fashion.

WHO PUT THE "T" IN TRAITOR ?

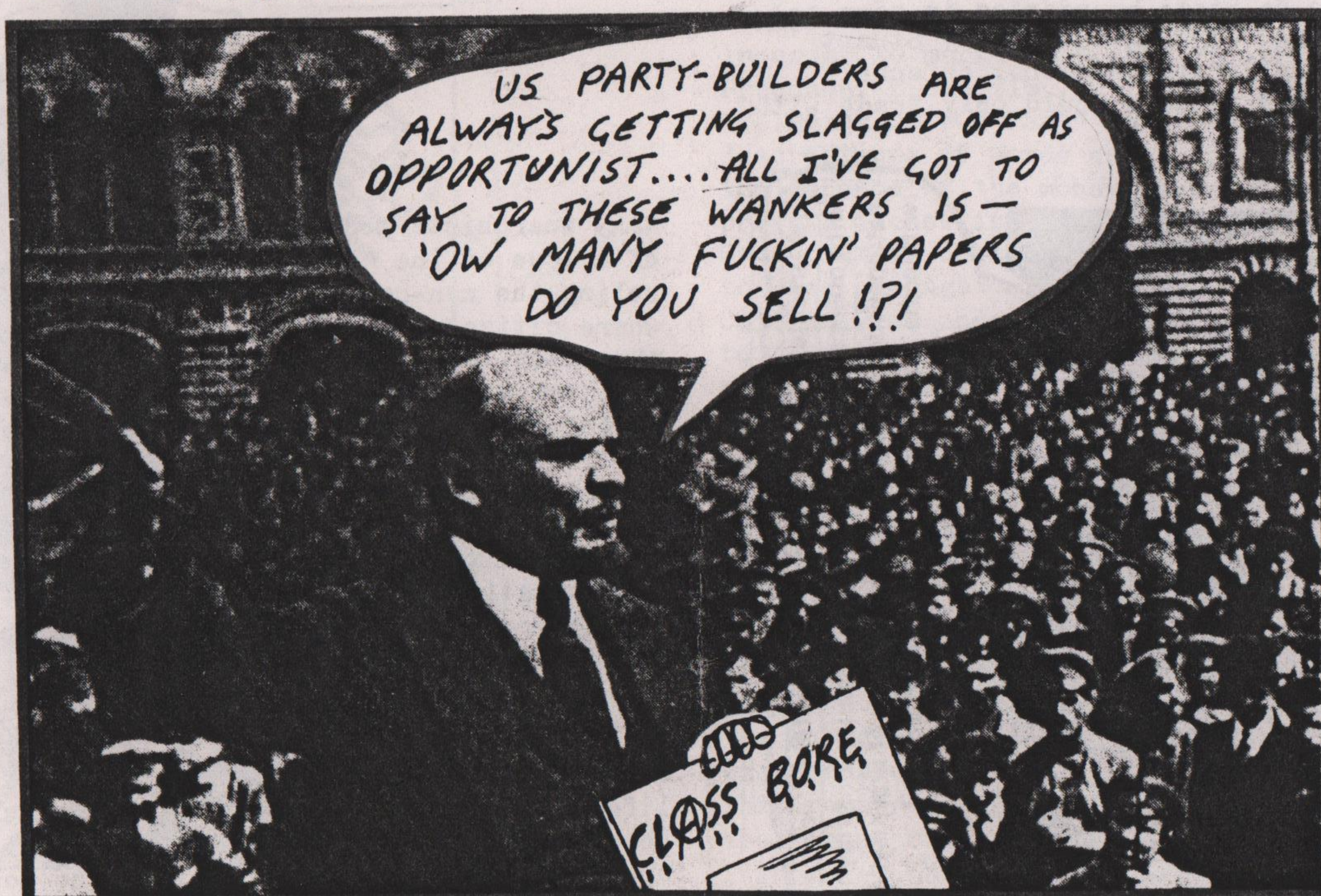
Just when you thought we'd stopped going on about anarchist opportunism.....

This is from a leaflet handed out by Clydeside Anarchists at a miners' gala addressed by Kinnock. Of course these anarchists know that it's absurd to describe a member of the ruling class as a scab or traitor but being regarded as complete wallies by the small minority of miners who've broken with Labourism is a small price to pay for popularity.



We won't forget
KINNOCK THE SCAB !

And talking of populism.....



"Class War"

Finally, the most popular and famous anti-syndicalist anarchists in this country are the group "Class War". Whilst we know who we would prefer between them and Federica Montseny, a Spanish anarchist government minister during the Civil War, we see their practice and theory as resting on a popular front against the rich. It's obvious that their paper is designed to rally around them any proletarians who hate the rich, defined as hoity-toity gentry + hooray henries + middle class wankers + trendy muesli-eating lefties from Hampstead. (What rigour!) It doesn't matter if they're pro-IRA, pro-trade-unionist or pro-Sandinista. Supporters of Irish Republicanism and the Sandinista government in Nicaragua were allowed to speak at a Class War conference. What matters to them is numbers in the party, numbers on marches, numbers of working class people involved in violence with some anti-rich content.



The first glimmers of fear flit across the faces of the rich as the rising tide of class anger rattles at their front gate.

"It's not the purpose of this article to 'criticise' Scargill and the NUM. Sufficient to say that we don't in any way regard the unions as revolutionary organisations. The time for post-mortems will be after any sell-out. But neither is it our task to berate other comrades for their rightful criticisms."

Class War, issue with Prince Charles + family on the front.

"The trade unions are the only workers' organisation that can protect us but they are always going down a dead end."

Class War, issue with "Victory to the Hit Squads" on the front.

We too are for an increase in the numbers of working class people fighting in the streets. But experiences in places like Italy have shown that the illusions of advances made merely because of the number of people involved in riots or identifying with violent rhetoric, always tend to disappear when it's revealed that this streetfighting wasn't part of a general -including theoretical- advance in the pitch of class struggle. At the very least, one could not speak of real advances until previously disunited sections of the proletariat were beginning to come together in riots and between riots.

If punks were violent hippies, Class War are punks with a greater anti-rich publicity. Front is the word, in two senses: image and "popular front". Apart from opportunism, they also embody the other side of practical anarchism, elitism. Witness the weirdly affected tone of articles with titles such as "Why I hate the rich", written as though throughout our lives we only experience poverty because we're bossed about and because we have less money than the rich. There is no doubt that readers of Class War are supposed to be recruited opportunistically. The perfect reaction would be for Joe Worker or Joan Housewife to say, "Class War is the only paper which really puts the verbal boot in against the rich in real working class language; they really know the business."

"For us it's not a question of setting up paper organisations, but of supporting and backing, helping create an attitude, combative in the extreme with flair and imagination our presence must be on the streets, with a brick in one hand, flogging Class War with the other Today's actions, seemingly trivial, could take on tremendous proportions some time in the not too distant future."

Class War, issue with Kinnock, Thatcher and noose on the front.

"We've got to make revolutionary and sexual politics the property of the working class, ourselves." Class War, issue with Thatcher and meat-cleaver on the front.

Even if Class War denounce proletarians who are muggers, rapists and scabs, they still glorify much of the working class as it is. This is their "alternative" to intellectualism.

Theory is necessary to make transparent all the forms of poverty we experience. It's necessary to situate practice with regard to the overall trends, as well as to grasp what's positive in present struggles apart from violence. It's nothing but a set of conclusions from past and present activity to be used in achieving revolutionary aims. It is in no way drawn from abstract pontification about the future results of its aims.

Class War's ideology of "Action" is knowingly one-sided. Traditional anarchists still indulge in ancestor-worship and worship of the past in places like Kronstadt and Spain, where supposedly pure anarchist experiences took place. They stupidly waffle on about syndicalist unionism and the Glorious General Strike as the key to revolution, ideas which were already wrong when they were used in the past. Class War have rejected many of the stinking remains of anarchist ideology, but have kept the less obviously ossified parts of it.