

13724

Nos

No. 3

May 1992

donation

56a Info Shop,

BULLETIN

56 Crampton Street, London SE17. UK



NEWS OF RESISTANCE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

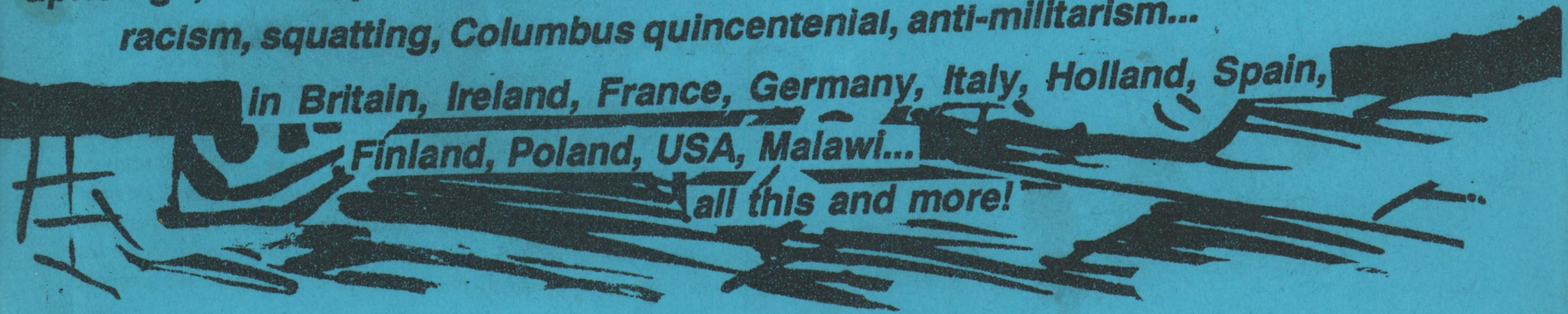
NO SOCIAL PEACE



uprisings, strikes, prisoners, lesbian and gay struggles, anti-racism, squatting, Columbus quincennial, anti-militarism...

In Britain, Ireland, France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Spain, Finland, Poland, USA, Malawi...

all this and more!



Info Bulletin

★ Welcome to the latest expanded bumper-size 56a Info Bulletin, packed full of riot, rebellion and all your usual favourite features. We hope you will enjoy it, although we don't just put this bulletin out to give people a good read. We hope that by circulating information about different struggles worldwide, we can improve communication between them and so strengthen the international forces of subversion!

At present the bulletin is mostly compiled from radical journals and leaflets sent to us from around the world, combined with reports of what we did on our holidays. We have also received info for this issue via the European Counter Network (ECN).

LONDON ECN OFFICE

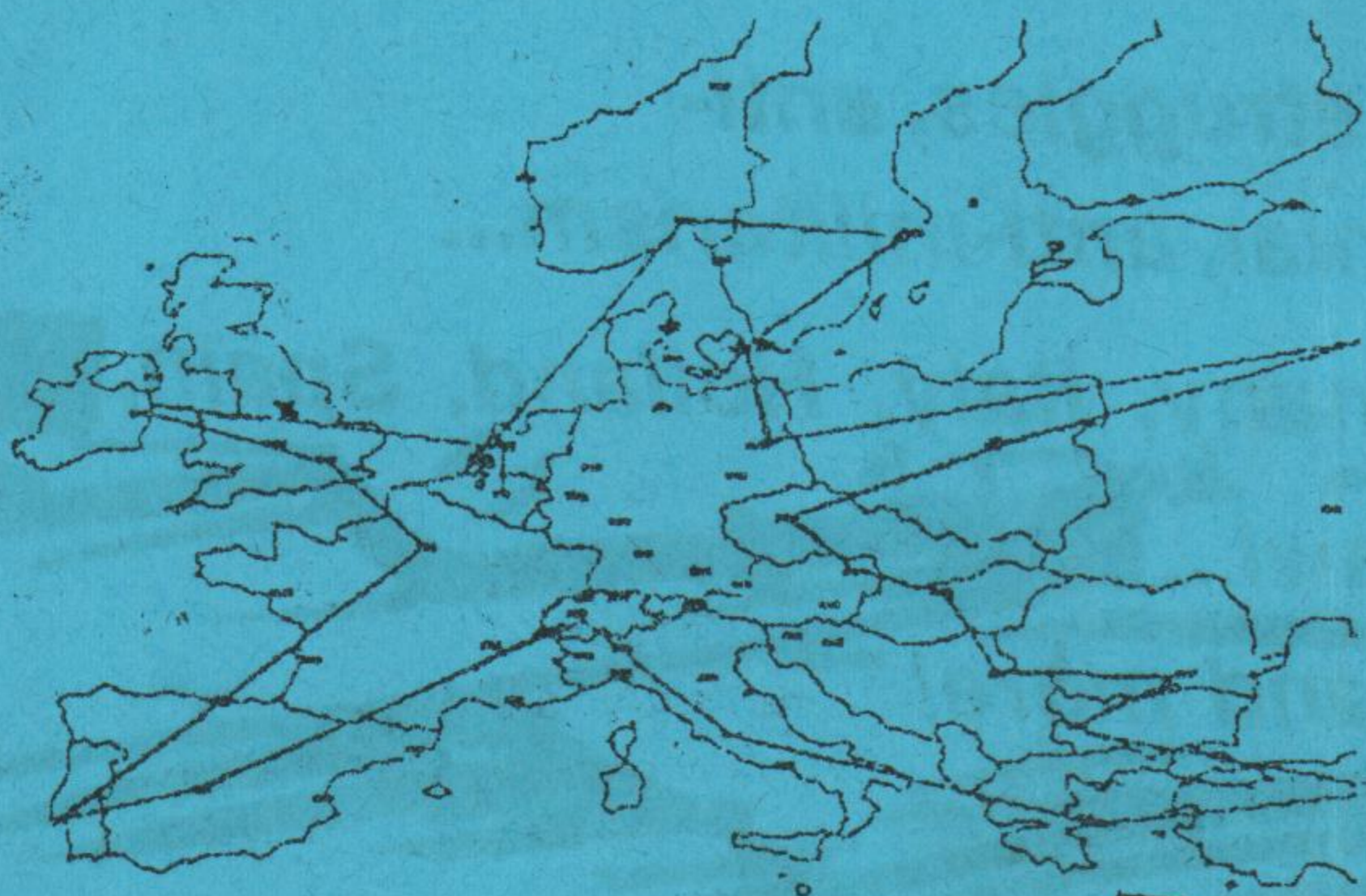
The ECN is an evolving network based on the exchange of information between computers via telephone lines. At present it connects a number of different radical/activist groups in Europe, as well as having links with the USA. In addition to circulating news, the ECN can be used to organise and co-ordinate activities (e.g. organising simultaneous demonstrations in different counties).

We are in the process of helping to set up an ECN office in London, which we hope will be used by all sorts of different movements, groups and projects. Naturally this is quite an expensive affair, **SO WE NEED YOUR MONEY** (donations to the usual address).

In the longer term we want to look at setting up some kind of radical computer network (bulletin board) within the UK. If you might be interested in this project, let us know.

Obviously computers are no substitute for real human contact, nor do they replace other more traditional means of communication. We appeal for news, info, bulletins, magazines, leaflets etc from any individual, group, tendency, milieu, scene, current or federation enabling us to cover the many different and developing strands of anti-capitalist resistance. We ask that, finances allowing, 56a be included on your mailing list and we will endeavour to keep in contact by letter or by sending you the bulletin. Donations of stamps gratefully accepted too! Salud.

(note for ECN users: Most of the material in this bulletin, and other news, is available on the ECN via the Dutch-based Activist Press Service (+31 (0) 20 6894198). Our files begin with the letters 'UK'. At present it is not possible to call us directly. Messages for '56a InfoShop' can be left on APS.)



What is the international info shop network?

Since 1984 there have been Info Shops in an increasing number of European cities. The shops serve for communication and discussion between various radical groups and currents and also offer specialised, local support for projects and initiatives. Info Shops are used and run by many different people including autonomes, radical feminists, anti-imperialists, anarchists, communists, gays and lesbians etc.

Each shop has its own political character but a summary of an Info Shop structure would be something like this - to sell newspapers, pamphlets, books, posters, distribute leaflets and texts, organise meetings and events, announce dates of demos and meetings, encourage International solidarity, support prisoners, spread texts from proscribed organisations (IRA, RAF etc)

Our ideals are not abstract. We try to relate them to our daily lives and give ourselves more space to realise our dreams and fantasies. We try to get away from the hierarchical system and interact with each other in an egalitarian and collective manner.

The thematical emphasis differs from shop to shop (eg. tackling Yuppification; support for movements in Euskadi, Palestine, Kurdistan, Six Counties, El Salvador; Europe '92; Anti-fascism) but the important link is the treatment of information. Information is not a commodity to be bought and sold but a factor between various struggles worldwide. The mass media falsifies or censors anti-capitalist news and so we seek to inform ourselves and others and to recognise the international perspective of all of our struggles (from the Gaza strip via Berlin to London).

Resisting criminalisation

Wherever people have joined together against isolation to fight back (eg. squatters and refugees in Naples), the State has intervened with criminalisation and repression. The secret services in different European countries have launched press campaigns against the Info Shop network to build up a false picture of "euro-terrorism". The secretive, unaccountable TREVI group (a working group of European police chiefs and Ministers Of The Interiors concerned with internal security of Fortress Europe) has been exchanging personal data on refugees and political activists and developing counter-insurgency programs. By falsely describing the Info Shops in the context of the "euro terror front" (as appeared in the British press when friends from abroad supported different Anti Poll Tax demos in London), they try to create a climate where they can easily criminalise people at will and jail them via hysterical, press supported political trials.

The press campaign against the Info Shop Network tries to assert that we are the legal wing of different armed groups in Europe (RAF; ETA, etc) but we will not be stopped by this manipulation. State intimidation of Info Shops continues (M99 Info Shop raided in Berlin last year, council pressure to close the Infoshop in Freiburg) but we will continue to distribute suppressed information and encourage worldwide anti-capitalist solidarity. (adapted from International Info Shop statement)

About 56a Info Shop

Our Info Shop in South London was established in June 1991 by a loose collective of friends and activists. We decided to associate our shop with the Info Shop network in Europe because it allowed for easier and less sectarian communication and because we liked the analysis of post-industrial Capitalism which entails a personal politics as well as a political politics (!). The emphasis is on the info side as opposed to being merely a bookshop. We produce

leaflets, posters and an (irregular) monthly Calendar of events as well as a tri-monthly News Bulletin (voila!) distributed in England by Anarchist Distribution Service and abroad by us. We have also worked with the International Solidarity Network, publicising and supporting demos for the homeless in New York, Greek Anarchist prisoners and Gerardo C. Ferre, a CNT prisoner in Barcelona.

Although the inspiration for 56a has been from our observation and occasional participation in the European autonomous social "movement", we remain critical of some of its analysis and practice. As observers of the autonomous "scenes" in Holland, Germany, Italy etc we are able to be informed about the various actions that groups carry out. We are also able (and want) to publicise their statements and communiques to enable comrades over here to add their own thoughts on how such actions relate to the struggle in the U.K.

The situation in Britain with its relatively volatile class struggle denies the need for an armed group to intervene on its behalf (if such a strategy fits anyway in the context of the European situation where the control of the population is a more sophisticated and elusive than in other parts of the world and not just a question of the people vs a repressive dictatorship). There is an important difference between sabotage and violent action which comes out of the struggle and armed action by self-proclaimed vanguards which seeks to 'radicalise the struggle by bringing out the true nature of the State, ie more repressive measures'. Western European armed struggle generally divorces itself from the "popular" class struggle by being forced to remain underground and unaccountable.

One of the most impressive moves within the U.K "anarchist" movement of the last few years has been to re-structure itself away from dogmatic and self-alienating Anarchist groups and to put effort into supporting local and national class struggles as participants and not just as propagandists. The miners strike, Wapping, housing struggles, Anti-Poll Tax etc have been the catalyst for the small change in the anarchist outlook and the work done by activists in those struggles has made the creation of local Solidarity groups easier and anti-capitalist struggle a bit more realistic. We hope that these groups continue and will encourage other areas to form their own local groups. At 56a, we seek to publicise the idea and work of local Solidarity groups, both here and abroad and to stimulate discussion on anti-capitalist tactics and initiatives within the differing strategies of the various anarchist strands and Federations, and beyond in the different social movements.

News from the UK

ELECTION NEWS

A general election was held in Britain on April 9th. Although it was won by the Conservative Party, this does not mean that they have majority support. Only 32% of registered electors voted Conservative, 46% voted for someone else or spoilt their ballot papers, 22% didn't vote. Many other people didn't even register to vote, often to avoid paying the poll tax (the list of registered electors is used by the poll tax authorities). The Tories lost in Scotland and Wales and in most English urban areas.

Politicians often faced angry protests on the streets during the election campaign. On March 19th prime minister John Major was

forced to abandon his first walkabout of the election campaign by an angry crowd in Bolton, Lancashire. Missiles were thrown and police helmets sent flying as Major sneaked back on to his campaign bus. In Luton (March 28th) Major's words were drowned out as he was surrounded by demonstrators. Major's face was cut by an egg thrown at him in Portsmouth. Senior Tory Norman Tebbit was hit by eggs in Colchester.

There were also attacks on party offices and workers. A Conservative canvasser was put in hospital in Luton after being hit in the eye by an egg, and a man was arrested in Streatham (South London) for causing damage and attacking a worker at the Tory office. There were several attacks in Wrexham (Wales), where the Tory candidate was beaten up and his car damaged.

On March 20th 'Camden Stop the Poll Tax' turned up with their banner to protest when ex-prime minister Margaret Thatcher was campaigning for the Conservative Party in North London. They were violently attacked by the police without warning and four people were arrested.

In Norwich, ACT-UP (the AIDS direct action group) put up posters condemning political silence on HIV. The posters pictured the main party leaders with the logo "Silence = Death". The group described the election campaign as "another example of a consistent failure to listen to the demands and needs of those people politicians are supposed to represent. Voting alone changes nothing".

Three members of the lesbian and gay group OutRage were arrested for trying to stage a protest with "Glad to be gay" banners when John Major gave his victory speech in Downing Street on the day after the election.

● The Anti-Election Alliance, including Class War and other libertarian groups, held an anti-election rally (with about 1000 people) in Trafalgar Square in Central London on April 4th. They stated that: "We know from experience that parliament is part of the ruling establishment which controls and uses the working class majority everyday- where we work and live. However, where there is oppression there is resistance. Strikes, demonstrations and protests, non payment of taxes and bills, defiance of authorities, self education and self organisation. This is the real politics we will be enthusiastically promoting." Although the Department of the Environment refused permission for the rally to be held in the Square, this ban was defied and the police made no attempt to stop the demo.

PRISON NEWS

● At the end of January, there were 46,770 prisoners in England and Wales, 1253 of being held in police stations because there was no room in the jails. The government is considering using prison ships to hold remand prisoners. They are also experimenting with the privatisation of the prisons. A private company, Group 4 Security, is to manage the Wolds prison on Humberside. The Home Secretary has also called for bids for the contract to manage some other prisons.

STRANGWAYS SHOWTRIAL

On 1st April 1990, hundreds of prisoners in Strangeways Prison in Manchester took over the prison and drove out the prison officers. They went on to pretty much demolish Strangeways, notorious for its squalid and brutal conditions and to stage a rooftop protest that lasted for 25 days. This action inspired a wave of riots, sit-downs, strikes and other protests across Britain's prisons in April '90. For its own survival, these uprisings forced the prison system to review conditions and suggest changes although whether anything will

come out of it is doubtful.

In January '92, the trial of 9 of the Strangeways "rioters" began with charges of murder (of another prisoner) and riot. This attempt to punish "ringleaders" ended with all the murder charges being dropped but four men being found guilty of riot and receiving sentences of up to 10 years (four more were found not guilty on all charges). The men are Paul Taylor, Sidney Doran, John Spence and James Miller. It is vital that we support these prisoners who dared to take on the prison system.

Contact LONDON A.B.C (address below) to find out addresses of Strangeways prisoners.

WHITEMOOR PRISON STRIKE

Whitemoor Prison is a new jail in Cambridgeshire which is being used as an experiment in total control of prisoners varying from psychological techniques and pastel-coloured walls to lockdowns. On March 2nd and 3rd 1992, prisoners at Whitemoor staged a work strike over the strict regime and oppressive conditions having got nowhere with peaceful negotiations. After a dispute between kitchen workers and the administration, 2 wings came out in solidarity. On March 3rd, Prisoners Strike Committee met an official to negotiate but later that day the prison was totally locked down and 30 "ringleaders" were moved out of the prison by riot squads to Lincoln and Pentonville jails. Whitemoor stayed locked down.

Whitemoor is now the new "end of the line hate factory" for long term prisoners who resist the prison system but the prisoners there have learned that peaceful negotiation gets nowhere.

One of the 30 "ghosted" prisoners was John Bowden, a long term fighter and prison organiser. You can write to him:

John Bowden, B41173, HMP Pentonville. Caledonian Rd. London N7 (he may be moved soon)

On 25th March, various prison support groups picketed the Home Office in London in solidarity with the Whitemoor strikers, the 30 who were moved and John Bowden.

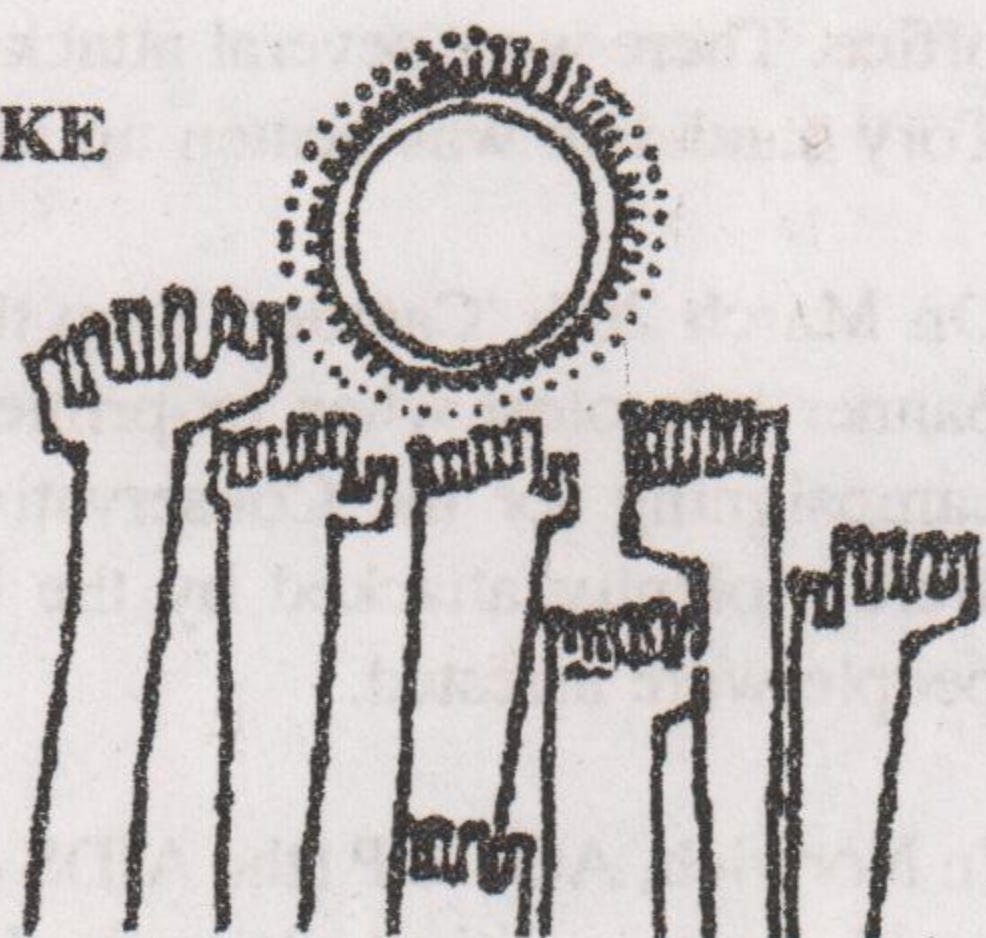
Postscript: On 3rd April, Tim Sullivan, one of the Whitemoor 30 at Pentonville, went up onto roof to demand dental treatment. Despite the cops/prison admin over reacting and hassling prisoners and visitors and passersby, Tim got a lot of media attention and got his operation the next waking day.

PRISON REVOLTS:

- December 21st: 80 prisoners clashed with prison officers at **Full Sutton** prison on Humberside. They refused to return to their cells for two hours.

- At the end of December 1991 prisoners rioted at **Moorland** prison, near Doncaster. 19 cells were wrecked and 65 partly damaged. The riot started when ten inmates were dragged inside by prison officers in riot gear after refusing to return to their cells at the end of an exercise period. 120 prisoners were disciplined for taking part. Moorland is a showpiece jail for young offenders (15 to 21 year olds) which opened at a cost of £56 million in July 1991: during the riot the prisoners' slogan was "Moorland- opened '91, closed '92". In August a recreation room and staff rooms were wrecked in another riot.

- In the 12 months up to the end of



November 1991, there were 188 escapes from prisons (involving 317 prisoners) in England and Wales, compared with 130 in the year before. In the same period there were 110 escapes of prisoners travelling under escort between jails and courts, compared with 81 in the previous year. There were also record numbers of acts of concerted indiscipline, fires and barricades. Between May 1991 and the end of November there were 81 'acts of concerted indiscipline', 21 bomb threats, 17 losses of keys and 13 rooftop demonstrations. 881 people absconded (mostly from open prisons), and 862 people failed to return from home leave. The Government is now planning a Prison Security Bill which will increase penalties for protesting prisoners, including introducing the offence of prison mutiny.

JANET GARDNER

A campaign has been launched in support of Janet Gardner, a woman in prison for killing a man in self-defence. On November 20th 1991, Janet was jailed for five years for killing Peter Iles. Since knowing Iles, Janet had lived a life of hell, defending herself from continual violent attacks. The night she killed him she was suffering yet another beating. Janet stabbed him out of sheer panic and desperation, to save her own life that Iles had threatened for so long.

Send messages of support to Janice: Janice Gardner Campaign, c/o P.O. Box 26, Portsmouth, Hampshire, UK. (tel: 071 704 0651).

FRAMED PRISONERS

Britain is notorious for the number of people in prison for crimes they did not commit: framed up by the cops and the courts for being the wrong class/colour or creed.

Winston Silcott, one of the Tottenham Three has had his conviction for the killing of P.C. Blakelock in the 1985 Broadwater Farm riot quashed. He is still fighting another "murder" conviction for killing a man in self-defence. He is going back to appeal: Letters of support to:

* Winston Silcott, B74053. HMP Gartree. Market Harborough. Leics. LE16 7RP.

Kenny Carter: framed up (for life) for the death of his cellmate who committed suicide. He has constantly fought his conviction. Write to:

* Kenny Carter, AD3434, HMP Whitemoor. Longhill Rd, March. Cambridgeshire.

Glen Lewis: Framed up for ten years for armed robbery by the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad (who framed the Birmingham Six) has had his conviction quashed but is to be tried again on the same charge (this has never happened before !)

* Glen Lewis, W56246. HMP The Dana. Salop, Shrewsbury. SY1 2HR

There are many other framed prisoners. For more info you can contact either * LONDON A.B.C (address below) or * CONVICTION, PO BOX 522. Sheffield. S1 3FF (a framed prisoners organisation)

OPERATION IGLOO - A.L.F TRIAL
On 14th October, Keith Mann and Vivien Smith were arrested and charged with "conspiracy to commit arson" and other offences for alleged attacks against 86 meat industry vehicles in Kent in '91. Vivien was arrested after a high speed car chase during which she was rammed off of



the road. Keith was nicked as he entered a friend's house. The aim of Operation Igloo, the police initiative, was to break an ALF cell where they proclaimed Keith as "second in command" and Vivien as "the Commander". The cops used cameras, phone taps, bugs and vehicle tracking devices with the aid of 12 permanently assigned cops and 6 cars for this massive surveillance exercise.

Both prisoners are still on remand but Keith has been moved up to Manchester to face questioning and further charges. On 11th March, eight people were charged at Manchester Magistrates Court with conspiracy to commit criminal damage. (SOURCE: ALF Supporters Group March-May 1992)

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Regular pickets are being held of the Spanish Consulate in Manchester, in support of Pablo Serrano. Pablo, an anarchist, was jailed in Spain in 1984, having been convicted of the political murder of an Employers' Association consultant. Pablo is now due for parole, but it has been refused him ten times. The Manchester pickets happen on the first Monday of every month. On the 4th November and 5th December 1991, the pickets succeeded in closing the consulate for two hours. (Details from: Bolton Anarchist Black Cross, Box 47, Bolton, England.

Write to: Pablo Serrano Serrano, Prison de Torrero, Av. America 80, 50007, Zaragoza, Spain).

●16.3.92: The Spanish airlines office was picketed in London in support of Gerardo C. Ferre, a 27 year old anarchist from Barcelona who was jailed in the summer of 1991 for burning a Spanish flag.

Prisoners news here was mostly supplied for us by London Anarchist Black Cross -

" We support prisoners of the class system, people inside for revolutionary activities, framed prisoners and people resisting inside. We support campaigns for better conditions inside but ultimately believe in destroying the prison system as it stands as part of a social revolution.

We produce a regular news-bulletin and various leaflets. Send us a donation for info or if you want to, we can put you in touch with other ABC groups in your area". (London A.B.C: 121 Railton Road. London SE24)

NO POLL TAX...EVER!

Although the government has announced that the poll tax is to be abolished, people are being told that they will have to continue paying it until a new local government tax ("the Council Tax") is introduced. Resistance to the poll tax, including mass non-payment is continuing. In Scotland only half of the 1991/92 tax has been collected, with non-payment standing at £690 million. In England and Wales 26% of people registered for the poll tax have been summonsed to court for non-payment.

• *Strikes against the Poll Tax cuts continue. Back in December, many Camden council workers took strike action and joined a Day Of Action against poll tax cuts and rent increases. Later on, 200 tenants, squatters, workers and Anti-Poll Tax folk lobbied a Council meeting where further cuts were agreed on. Recently all of Southwark council's finance department struck against compulsory redundancy for 30 workers. The Council had payed CAPITA (a private firm) 250,000 to phone non-payers and intimidate them but this caused a large deficit in the Dept. budget which the redundancies hoped to clear. In Newham, teachers went on a half day strike and marched on the Town Hall to protest at £11 million being cut from the education budget. (A further £35 million of cuts is in the offing). On the same day NALGO held their second one-day strike over the sacking of eight Poll Tax staff. In Ealing on 5th March, the day that Council set the coming years Poll Tax rate, many council workers went*

on a one day strike and 1000 people demonstrated and marched against the Tax and cuts. The council promising to keep the Poll Tax below £300 set the rate at £299!

bailliffs ! We have long memories...

On 10th December bailiffs (called Sheriff Officers in Scotland) planned to enter up to 300 homes in the Glasgow area to seize non-payers' goods. Resistance meant that they were only able to enter one of the targeted homes. Up to 1000 people went on to the streets of the Springburn area of the city. Crowds of up to 200 blockaded the entrances to non-payers homes, kids on bikes carried messages, and fleets of cars chased bailiffs. 29 people were arrested during the protests, and 300 people surrounded a police station demanding their release.

Bailiffs from the firm Gaults sexually and racially abused a Bromley woman on March 6th. When the cops arrived they continued the assault and helped with the theft of her property. A private prosecution against these two bailiffs was dropped on the grounds that it was the woman's word against theirs. A demo was held outside Penge police station to protest at the cops behaviour in this case and that of another woman assaulted by Gaults on the same day. Police are now meeting with Bromley Anti-Poll Tax Union to discuss possible charges in the second case.

The case of two Pate Wallis Today bailiffs who are being privately prosecuted by a Southwark resident for assault continues.

we are still winning

On March 19th, activists from Haringey and Camden staged a "go-in" on Haringey Council's Poll Tax office in Wood Green. After easily obtaining access, they handed out leaflets to the workers and explained that they were protesting the jailing of Lingval Cousins for non-payment on March 16th.

Gravesend non-payer Jill Emerson gave a political defence during her liability order hearing on March 25th and was sent down to the cells for contempt. In solidarity, all the other non-payers present trooped down to the cells and were all fined £50 for contempt as well. Some have vowed not to pay the contempt fine.

On April 21st, 22 people were arrested (but none charged) for staging a sit-in at Highbury Magistrates Court, where a number of people were threatened with jail for non-payment. 120 people picketed the court. Cases were adjourned.

support the poll tax prisoners...

By May, it is likely that only Tim Donaghy will still be incarcerated from the Trafalgar Sq. riot in March '90. Tim got knocked back on his parole and may not be out until Feb. '93. A campaign to fight for early parole is under way to allow Tim to re-attend his College course. Write to Tim at:

Tim Donaghy MW0105. HMP Down View, Sutton Lane. Sutton. Surrey SM2 5PD.

(A man was picked up by the cops in April and found to have charges outstanding from Trafalgar SQ. First court date April 22nd).

• *Over 1500 people marched through Glasgow Pollock on March 27th demanding the release of local poll tax prisoner Tommy Sheridan.*

Colchester 15

The trial of the Colchester 15 continues. Of the first eight defendants (arrested at an Anti Poll Tax demo in Colchester in March '90) four were found not guilty but the rest were jailed. The next seven face a pre-trial hearing in May. All those found guilty are appealing.

Terry Frost DL1911 A-Wing HMP Norwich. Knox Rd. Mousehold. Norwich NR1 4LU.

(Riot, two years. Earliest parole date. 6.12.92. Earliest Release: 6.8.93)

Andy Hester NL2430 HMP Britannia, Knox Rd. Norwich.

(Riot, 18 months. Earliest parole date 6.10.92. Earliest Release: 6.4.93

Christine Hammett TV0063 HMP Holloway, Parkhurst Rd, London. N7 ONU

(Violent disorder, nine months. EDR 20.8.92)

Patrick Tyler HMYOI Norwich, Knox Rd. Norwich

(Violent disorder, six months. EDR 6.7.92)

(The info above was mostly compiled from the excellent monthly London Fight The Poll Tax bulletin which is the only regular source for news about the Anti-Poll Tax struggle inc. liability order legal challenges, committal news, prisoners, bailiffs (addresses, car numbers), etc.

The bulletin always needs money (about £35 a month) and so donations (and/or requests for copies) can be sent to:

London Fight The Poll Tax c/o BM CRL, London WC1N 3XX.)

SQUATTING/HOUSING

SQUATTING - the truth and nothing but...

Well, the Government (old one) finally did something about squatting. The Home Office held a six month "consultation" period to gather the nation's property owners views on squatting and to pretend that new laws on squatting are needed. Needless to say, before the consultation ended, the Tories announced during their election campaign that if re-elected they would make squatting a criminal offence. Well, they got back in but the Queen's Speech on 6th May didn't put forward the Criminal Justice Bill (which was expected to contain the changes in the squatting laws) for the next Parliamentary session. The Home Office news desk said that the criminalisation of squatting will be considered by the Minister and made the subject of its own bill later in the year.

The news that 50,000 squatters in the U.K could be criminals in the near future brought about a new lease of life in the organised squatting communities (although this is only a tiny percentage of all those who squat). A demo of 150 marched through Hackney on 21st Dec and George Young, the Housing Minister was given a noisy reception by Hackney squatters during a recent visit to the area. Local groups in Birmingham, Cardiff, Bristol and London held occupations of city centre buildings to highlight the proposed criminalisation. The campaigning group Squatters Action For Secure Homes (SQUASH) was started and put in a lot of hard work to encourage advice centres and national housing charities to respond to the Government "consultation" paper and also informed the media with the true facts about squatting. The pro-squatting coverage in the media was tiny compared to the massive anti-squatting hysteria put over by The Daily Mail and The London Standard (amongst others).

National squatters chat and prepare action...

On March 28th, a national conference on squatting was held in Birmingham which, although badly attended due to late publicity, initiated a national squatting information network (S.I.N) which mails out news and stuff between all the known squatting groups in the U.K. every fortnight and a Day Of Action against criminalisation. (Tuesday 26th May with the focus on each regional group occupying a Town Hall, Housing Office etc and a joint national press statement announcing the action). On March 31st, the end of the "consultation" period, about 50 squatters demonstrated outside the Home Office with banners and a small push and shove with the cops who prevented us from going en masse into the Office to present a formal complaint about the phony consultation.

Right now, it's just a case of working out the best strategies for defeating the new law. Realistically, the squatting movement is not

strong in the U.K (precisely because squatting is only a civil offence and not a criminal one). There is no need for people to defend their houses against the cops etc and when evicted it isn't too difficult to find another empty place, although evictions in council properties have risen dramatically in the last year in the heavily squatted London areas of Hackney, Lambeth and Southwark.

Cops get in early practice for new law

On 1st February, a gig at a squatted bank in Mile End, East London was attacked by the police. Hundreds of police arrived at about 11pm and smashed their way through the doors, attacking the occupants as they forced everyone outside. 50 people were arrested and eventually 22 were charged (initially all with violent disorder but later some charges were dropped down to threatening behaviour and affray). Immediately, the Mile End 22 Campaign was established to collate evidence of the police's brutal and illegal eviction of the Bank. The court cases continue.

Again on 23rd February, the police attacked a squatted centre, the Nevil Arms (a squatted pub) in Hackney. 9 people were arrested and charged with violent disorder. Some of the court cases have been won by the squatters but other cases are still ongoing.

Elsewhere, in London, squatters occupied the empty Dole Office in Brixton and put the space to good use (excellent meeting by friends from Italy about Italian squatted social centres on 18th March) with a regular cafe and occasional gigs (even a hip-hop night). Despite going to court and winning a two-month adjournment, the place has now been evicted.

Some squatters and tenants in Southwark hit back at the local council's poster campaign announcing that they would be evicting 1250 tenants for rent arrears. Using the same typeface and graphic (a silhouetted family holding packed bags) they printed and flyposted their own propaganda - "EVICT SOUTHWARK COUNCIL" and "RENT STRIKE - EVICT US ALL".

Contacts: S.I.N c/o 612 Old Kent Road. London SE15. U.K.
SQUASH - 2 St Pauls Rd. London. N1. U.K

- At the beginning of January homeless people occupied a temporary shelter in Fulham, West London. Hammersmith and Fulham Labour Council opened the homeless hostel at Munster Road School on December 7th, but threatened to close it on December 16th. After residents occupied the council leader's office, it was agreed to keep it open until the new year. When the council again tried to close it, residents refused to leave and began running the building themselves. A woman involved said: "Here we are living as a community. We meet every morning to decide what to do. We set our own rules. We are showing we could run our own lives- if we had the chance". (donations/messages of support c/o Hammersmith Unemployed Workers Centre, 190 Shepherds Bush Rd, London W6 7NL.)

- On February 5th SQUASH activists occupied an empty office block in the City of London to highlight the amount of empty office space in London. The occupation lasted three days during which banners were hung from the building and leaflets given out in the street outside. The building was owned by Prudential, a company currently making mortgage defaulters homeless by repossessing their homes.

- 20/1/91: Squatters resisted evictions on Haggerston Estate in Hackney. The housing office door was glued up, banners were hung out, tyres let down on a police van, and a council official's clipboard stolen. 4 people were arrested but all were released with cautions.



LESBIANS AND GAY MEN

● Lesbian and gay activist group **OutRage** have been busy with their "Equality Now" campaign in the last few months. 45 people were arrested on the 6th February on an Outrage march on Parliament demanding the repeal of all anti-gay laws. After marching through London's West End, the demo was stopped by the police on Charing Cross Road. Demonstrations near Parliament are illegal when MPs are sitting.

● In 1989, there were 3500 prosecutions for consenting homosexual relations between men over 16, up to 50 men went to prison. More than 460 men were convicted simply for cruising or chatting up other people in public. This fact was highlighted by Outrage in March when they held a "wink-in" at Piccadilly Circus in Central London, where gay couples looked lovingly at each other and winked- illegal under Section 32 of the 1956 Sexual Offences Act. This time however nobody was arrested.

(OutRage c/o London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 67-69 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6BP)

ANTI-RACISM

● The re-elected Tory government has announced it is to re-introduce the Asylum Bill, which will make it harder for refugees to settle in Britain. On the 18th of January thousands marched against the Asylum Bill in London.

● 15/2/92: The British National Party had to abandon plans for a public meeting in Rochdale, Lancashire, after hundreds of people occupied the pub where the meeting was supposed to be held. Local Asian taxi drivers kept a look out for fascists, and any who showed their face were quickly chased away. 600 people turned out to oppose the BNP.



● 20/2/92: Taxi drivers in South Manchester took strike action for four hours to attend the funeral of Mohammed Sarwar, a taxi driver beaten to death by racists in January. More than 200 cabs joined the funeral procession. Two days earlier, 300 people spontaneously blocked the streets of Withington in Manchester to mark the funeral of Sadiq Dada, a 60 year old Asian shopkeeper hacked to death by white youths.

● 22/2/92: On the first anniversary of the racist murder of 15 year old Rolan Adams, 3000 people marched to the British National Party bookshop in Welling, South-East London. Racist attacks in the areas have increased by 140 per cent since the shop opened. The march was called by the Rolan Adams Family Campaign.

● 22/2/92: 25 BNP papers attempting to hold a paper sale in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, had to be escorted out of the area by police after 600 people turned out to oppose them.

● Over 2000 people marched through Newham, east London on March 28th in protest at racist attacks and police violence. In particular they were marching in defence of two local black men, the Deanes. Mr Deane, aged 53, and his son Tony were viciously assaulted by police on 4th November 1991. Both required hospital treatment. Despite this, the Deanes were charged with assaulting the police. On the 29th of December a Tamil refugee, Mr Sanithara, was murdered by a racist gang less than a mile away

from the scene of the assault on the Deanes. As the Newham Monitoring Project point out: "We simply cannot rely on the police to protect us from racist attacks. For, as the case of the Deane family shows, the Police policy of criminalising innocent Black people makes them a part of the problem of racism. Policing is not carried out for Black people but against us".

contact: Defend the Deane Family, P.O. Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7 (tel: 081 555 8151)

● Anti-Fascist Action put a stop to fascist paper sales in Bermondsey, South London one Saturday at the end of March. BNP and National Front paper sellers were physically surrounded and prevented from carrying on. One person was arrested when a brief fight broke out.

● The BNP held an election rally in Tower Hamlets, east London on April 6th. 500 people protested outside the meeting, and placards, coins and bottles were thrown at BNP supporters. 6 people were arrested.

ACT-UP

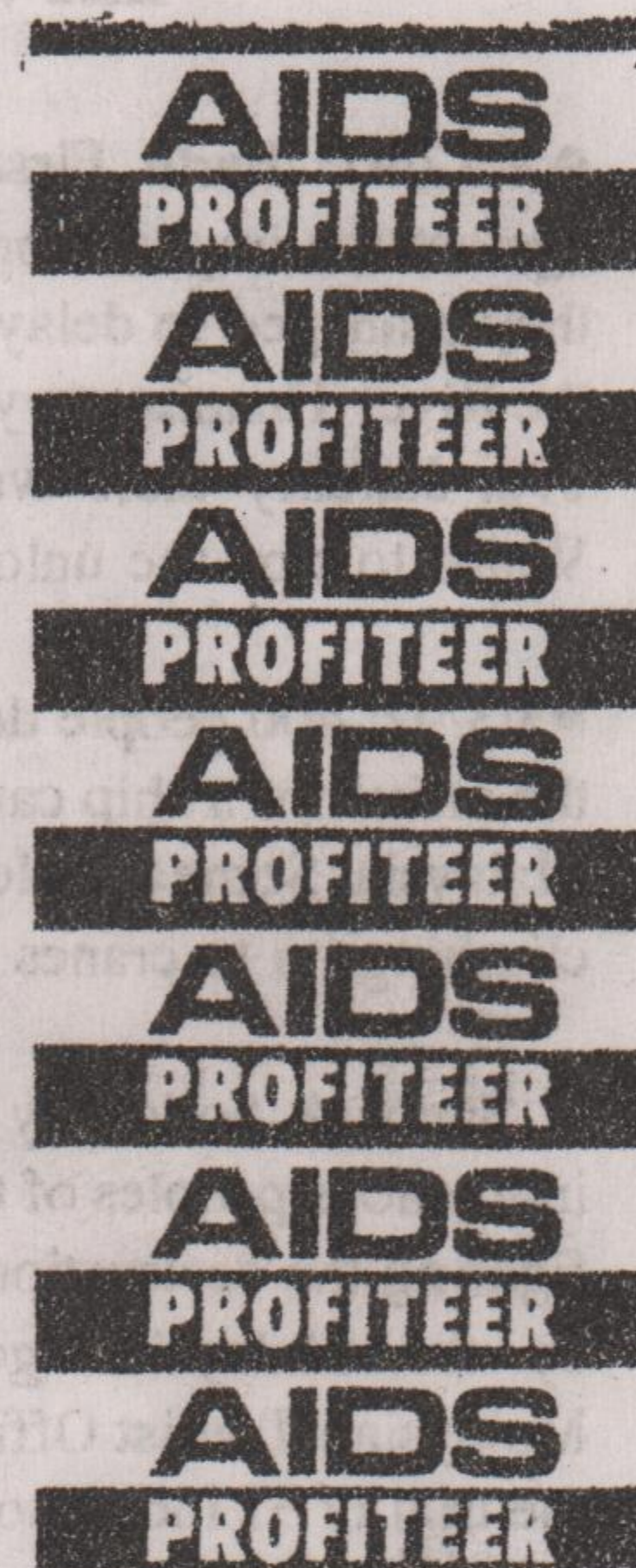
● Fashion house Benetton announced plans to use a picture of a man dying from AIDS in an advertising campaign in January. ACT-UP Norwich picketed their local Benetton store with a banner stating "The true colours of Benetton: turning death into dollars". On February 15th, ACT-UP protested at a Benetton shop in central London. On March 7th, there were protests all over Europe, marked in London by people visiting Benetton outlets unfolding pullovers and shirts. There have also been protests in Manchester, and in Dublin where the AIDS Alliance picketed a Benetton store.

● March 1992: ACT-UP activists flyposted the offices of stockbrokers Robert Fleming in London, with the message: "This company is guilty of AIDS profiteering". Flemings will make an estimated £2 million from handling the new £5 billion share issue by the Wellcome Trust, manufacturer of the anti-HIV drug AZT.

● 11 April: Around twenty activists from OutRage and ACT UP stormed Tower Records store in Piccadilly Circus, Central London to protest against the American rock band Guns 'n Roses. The band's song 'One in a million' includes the lyrics: "Immigrants and faggots, they make no sense to me. They come to our country and think they'll do as they please. Like start some mini-Iran and spread some fucking disease". The protestors plastered the band's records with stickers saying "Queers say Fuck U", "Women say Fuck U" and "Blacks say Fuck U". One person was arrested.
(ACT-UP London, BM 2995, London WC1N 3XX)

FOOTBALL

● Football supporters up and down the country have been staging protests against money making schemes which will make it harder for working class fans to watch football. West Ham FC launched a bond scheme under which fans were asked to pay up to £975 each for the privilege of seeing the team play in the future. The scheme aimed to raise money to build a new All-Seater stadium-



a move also opposed by fans.

At West Ham 5000 stayed behind to call for the sacking of the board after the match against Wimbledon on 11th January. They stormed the pitch and laid siege to the Board Room waving red cards with "resign" written on the back. On 29th February West Ham fans released 11,000 red balloons, sat down on the terraces and stood up in the stands. Later play was held up for 5 minutes by a pitch invasion.

On February 1st, 1000 Arsenal fans remained at Highbury after the match against Manchester Utd to protest about the club's debenture plans and chanting "Board out". West Ham and Arsenal fans staged a joint protest against bond schemes and all-seat stadiums before the match between the two teams on March 14th. Thousands of balloons were launched, and two large banners unfurled saying "United we stand" and "Stuff the bond".



ENVIRONMENT

● 4/12/91: Earth First! co-ordinated the first action in Britain against the importation of tropical rainforest timber. Using boats, they managed to delay the docking of a ship at Tilbury Docks on the River Thames carrying timber from Malaysia and Indonesia. On 19th January there was a blockade of Newport Dock in South Wales to stop the unloading of rainforest timber from Sarawak.

● 3/3/92: 400 people demonstrated at Liverpool docks to protest at the arrival of a ship carrying hardwood cleared from rain forests in Malaysia. Some people got inside the docks, blocking the gates and climbing on to cranes with banners.

A Sarawak Solidarity Campaign has been set up to support the indigenous peoples of the Sarawak Forest in East Malaysia who are fighting the destruction of their home by logging companies aided by the Malaysian government. On October 7th 1991, the Malaysian Tourist Office in London was occupied to coincide with the trial of 31 indigenous people in Sarawak. Sawdust was emptied over a word processor and other office equipment. For information contact: London Rainforest Action Group and Earth First!, 9 Cazenove Rd, London N16 9PA (tel: 081 806 1561, fax: 081 806 5226).

● At Twyford Down in Hampshire there have been protests against the extension of the M3 motorway. The project will involve the destruction of an area of outstanding natural beauty. On 13th March police with boltcutters removed protestors who had chained themselves across the entrance to Twyford Down, stopping the contractors for five days. On 17th March, protestors temporarily stopped clearance of meadowland after they confronted a bulldozer.

● Earth First have initiated a Carmageddon campaign against what they call the "car empire" (recently in London people were officially advised to stay indoors because of traffic pollution). On 21st December, they carried out a road blockade in Brighton, "reclaiming the streets" by stopping traffic for half an hour.

contact: South Downs Earth First!, c/o Prior House, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2GY

● In April one of the first major ecosabotage actions took place in Britain. A group destroyed hundreds of thousands of



pounds worth of equipment belonging to Fisons fertiliser company in South Yorkshire. They cut wires and poured sand into the engines of nine tractors and earthmovers, and wrecked pumps and fire fighting equipment. This machinery was being used in the stripping of peat from the few remaining lowland peat bogs in the country.

POLICE

● As we go to press there have been two nights of rioting on the Wood End estate in Coventry. The trouble started on May 12th when the police arrested three youths and confiscated their motorbikes. Around 200 youths congregated and threw bricks and stones at police. Petrol bombs have been thrown at police vans and a shop looted.

● A minor argument in an east London bagel shop ended in a battle between 150 youths and the police on April 6th. When police turned up at the bakery in Dalston the crowd turned on them, throwing bottles and glasses. 12 cops were injured and the tyres of police vehicles were slashed.

● 5 police were injured when they were attacked by a crowd on Stonebridge Park estate, Harlesden, West London, on April 27th. When police tried to arrest a man, a crowd gathered and threw bricks and bottles. 6 people were arrested.

MET POLICE ATTACK DEMO

On 24th March at 11am, a demonstration by 400 Kurdish people outside the Turkish Embassy in Belgrave Square was violently attacked by the police. Over 30 people were injured, 9 people put in hospital and 17 arrested. A ten year old girl was set upon whilst lying on the ground by cops with truncheons. Other children were bitten by police dogs.

The protest was against the slaughter by Turkey's military of Kurdish people celebrating Newroz (21st March...New year). Within minutes of the demos arrival, the police raced up in vans and began laying into demonstrators who attempted to disperse. One protestor was ferried to hospital by helicopter and was put into intensive care. In Rochester Row police station, four injured people were denied treatment for eight hours.

(From Press Statement - KURDISH INFORMATION CENTRE 24.3.92)

On 17th April, 40 Kurdish men and women started an indefinite hungerstrike in London in protest against the continuing savagery of the Turkish state against Kurdish people. In April, the Turkish Airforce bombed villages in the districts of Awine, Deris, Soylu, Yazir, Taslik and Birek near the towns of Bismil and Savur killing 39 people. During the bombing, many people were arrested and two were tortured and shot. Later, the military occupied the villages and held all residents captive for 24 hours without food and water in a local school hall. The soldiers looted the houses. On 19th April, shopkeepers in Savur, Bismil, Cizre, Idil, Nusaybin and Silopi started a strike against the massacre in Savur. In Idil, people left the town and gathered on the E-24 motorway to protest. The crowd of 10,000 was attacked by the security forces using helicopters. One man was killed and many injured.

The hunger strike in London is part of a European-wide action organised by supporters of the ERNK (National Liberation Front Of Kurdistan).

Hungerstrike Committee Press Statement - 17th April '92. (Tel: 081-880-1759)

CRIME NEWS

● Enterprising saboteurs crawled down a 100 yard tunnel at a

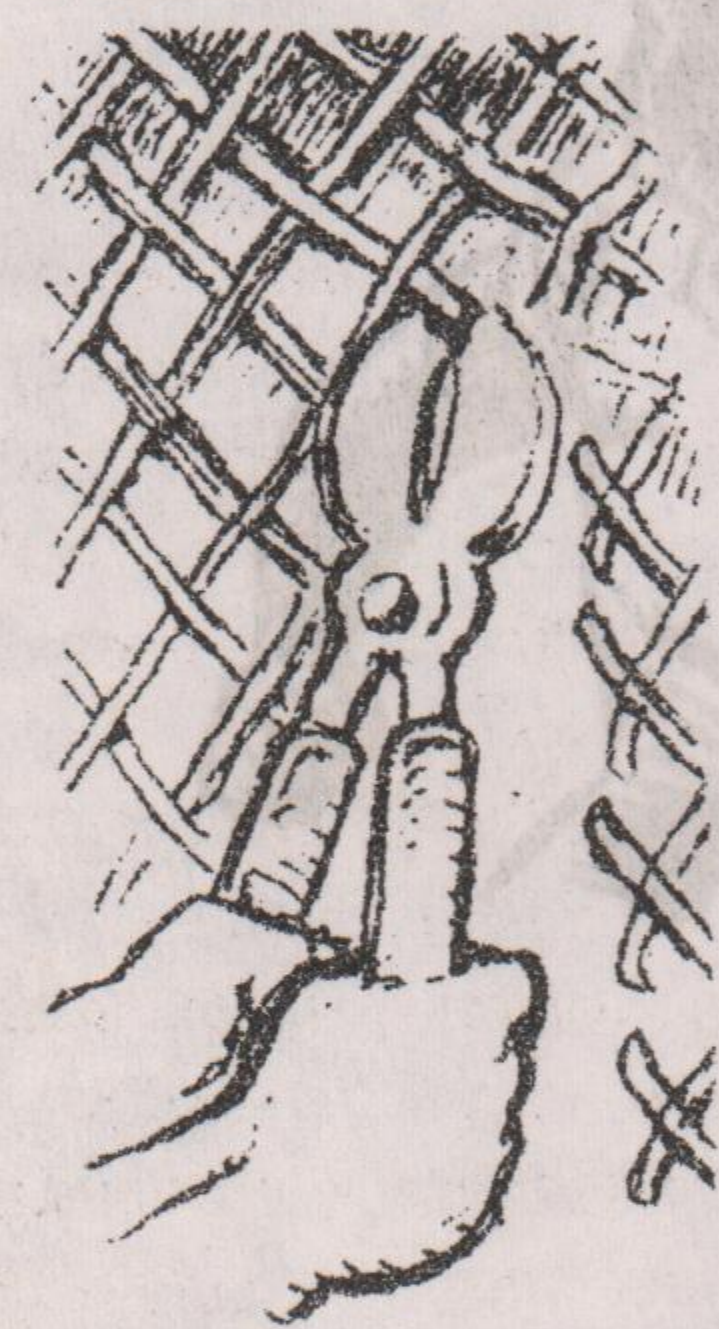
Walsall electricity sub-station which carried eight 33,000 volt mains cables, dragging with them a lorry tyre which they then set alight causing a black-out in 30,000 homes. During the electricity-free Monday night, more than 20 shops were looted as shop windows were smashed with bricks. At two stores, cars were unsuccessfully used as battering rams against steel security shutters.

● Ram raiders in a stolen £60,000 Porsche and another car got away with £10,000 of video equipment after reversing into the shopfront of a shop in Marlborough, Wiltshire. Police were unable to give chase because all the squad cars at the local police station had had their tyres slashed!

OTHER UK NEWS

● Lambeth council in South London has been condemned for plans to erect a statue marking Columbus' "discovery" of the Caribbean. Local black actor Norman Beaton said "Black residents will probably tear it down if the council puts it up". William Trant, of the West Indian Standing Conference, said: "We have nothing to celebrate, as it brings to mind a lot of sadness and hardship for Black people. It represents a history of exploitation, and what they should be saying is that they realise the damage this has caused to the Caribbean".

U.S.A.F - Off!



During March, B52 bombers returned to RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire to take part in a NATO exercise although the last time they turned up was to bomb Iraq...next stop Libya?

On March 12th, Emma Westwood, Chris Cole and Stephen Hancock entered the base and spent 2 hours inside painting slogans on buildings. Then they found 6 B52 bombers and daubed "Mass Murder Machine" and other slogans on the nose and bomb bay doors of the planes. As they attempted to occupy a plane, a van load of USAF men arrived and handcuffed their hands behind their backs as they were forcefully held down. When MOD cops arrived, the cuffs were removed and they were arrested for suspected criminal damage. At Chichester cop shop, a Police Inspector agreed to an MOD request to search Stephen's room in Northampton for lists of "other targeted information and articles for use to cause damage". Subsequently a community house in Northampton was "burgled" by 5 CID officers who took away documents.

Ireland

BLOODY SUNDAY

On Sunday January 30th 1972, British soldiers opened fire on a demonstration against internment in Derry. 13 unarmed demonstrators were killed, and 29 injured, one of whom later died of his injuries.

There were a number of demonstrations to mark the twentieth anniversary of the massacre. In London on January 25th, several thousand people marched from Hyde park to Kilburn, passing

Paddington Green police station where Irish people detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act are often interrogated. Some people from London went over to Derry the next day for the commemoration march there. Here is one person's impression of the day:

"My first real taste of the British military presence came when the bus bringing us from Belfast was stopped at an army check point outside of Derry. Troops boarded the bus, with one soldier walking slowly up the bus pointing his rifle at the heads of passengers.

In Derry itself, the "security forces" were keeping a low profile (by Irish standards), presumably because of the large international press presence. A low profile involved three helicopters in the sky, armoured police land rovers following the march and heavily armed RUC police officers overlooking the route.

The march, organised by the Bloody Sunday Initiative, came at the end of a week of events in the city on the theme "One World, One Struggle" to mark the anniversary of the massacre. Thousands of people marched from the Creggan Estate, through the Bogside and into the Guildhall Square in the City centre- the planned destination of the 1972 demonstration. As well as contingents from different parts of Ireland, there were supporters from Britain, Germany and elsewhere. A huge 50-foot long banner proclaimed: "We are the people of struggle, ours is the culture of change". Relatives of those killed in 1972 marched at the front, and pictures of the dead were carried by marchers (as well as being displayed on street murals along the route). At the end of the route a large crowd listened to speeches from Gerry Adams and Bernadette McAliskey.

Young children threw bottles and stones at the police vehicles (already colourfully decorated by paint bombs) as they passed, but apart from this traditional local custom there was no trouble. However on the way back to Belfast, a window was smashed in our bus by Loyalists. Two people had to go to hospital to have their eyes examined for glass injuries.

Within ten days of the demo three people had been killed by an RUC officer at Sinn Fein's Falls Road offices in Belfast, and five more people had been killed by a pro-British loyalist gang in a bookmakers shop in Belfast's Ormeau Road. However the size of the demonstration in Derry, estimated by the organisers as up to 20,000 strong, showed that the spirit of resistance has not been broken in the North of Ireland."

●WOMEN ATTACKED IN MAGHABERRY

Irish republican prisoners of war were brutally attacked during a mass strip search of women prisoners in Maghaberry jail in the north of Ireland of March 2nd. The women refused to co-operate with the strip searches and were violently assaulted. According to the prisoners' statement: "The governor of Maghaberry jail, Mr Bob Gibson, and the Northern Ireland Office decided that their contribution to International Women's Day should be spectacular. After much thought the male hierarchy decided that the best way to contribute to International Women's Day was to assert their control over one of the most vulnerable groups within society...

What happened over the next two hours can only be described as sexual, physical and psychological torture. Gangs of screws dressed in riot gear and armed with batons and shields entered the wings. A gang of screws entered a cell and set upon the defenceless women inside (anything up to 16 screws in each cell). The POWs were dragged to the floor, their faces pushed tightly into the floor so that they could not see their attackers and their mouths covered to stifle their screams. Once the screws had the woman into a secure lock, more screws began to remove her clothes until she was totally naked... All 21 women who resisted the sexual assault on that day sustained injuries of some description... To add insult to injury, 21 POWs are now to

be charged with assault".

Hundreds of people demonstrated outside the prison to protest at the assaults, and there was also a picket in Dublin where women held a banner saying "Strip searching = state rape".

• Women from Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp took action at two army training areas on Salisbury Plain in the south of England over Christmas. Just before 1943 the villagers of Imber were forcibly evacuated from their homes on the orders of the Ministry of War. They were never allowed to return, and the ruined village is now used for training for British troops in fighting in built up areas before they go to Ireland.

On the anniversary of the eviction, 7 women occupied the mock West Belfast streets, lighting a fire in the road and disrupting a live fire exercise. On Christmas day women entered the purpose-built mock village of FIBUA (fighting in built up areas). On the mock headstones in the mock graves they wrote the names of people killed by plastic bullets in Ireland. Three women have been charged with causing criminal damage to 45 headstones. In a statement the women said they wanted to "expose the hypocrisies and double standards of the British government's policies on the north of Ireland: on the one hand, they tell the people of Ireland to stop killing each other, while on the other hand the British Army is constantly training men how to kill in built up areas".

• 5/3/92: an army recruitment day at Birley Community Education Centre, Moss Side, Manchester failed to take place as planned. The day was designed to recruit local young unemployed people into the army, but there was very little interest from the local youth. A demonstration called by the Manchester Martyrs Commemoration Committee (a local Irish solidarity group) was held outside the centre.

• Following the shooting of an army recruitment sergeant in Derby by the Irish National Liberation Army in April, there have been at least 11 arrests of innocent Irish people. The police announced that they were looking for a man called Joseph Magee in connection with the killing, and anybody who has ever had any connection with him seems to have been rounded up.

His sister Kathleen (30) was arrested and is being held in custody charged with "failing to disclose information which could lead to an arrest for a terrorist act" - failing to grass up your own brother is now a crime it seems. She went on hunger strike for a while after being arrested.

Patrick Magee (Kathleen and Joseph's brother) was brutally arrested in Saltby, Leicestershire. He was dragged out of his local pub by police (sustaining an eye injury in the process) while his partner Angie Wild was held with their young daughter by armed police in their own home. Neither Patrick nor Angie were charged, and in a statement Patrick said that neither he nor his sister Kathleen had had contact with Joseph Magee for years.

Another woman, Catherine Ogle, said in court to have been Joseph Magee's fiancée was jailed for six weeks for wasting police time. She was accused of deliberately giving the police misleading information to give her fiance more time to escape.

Joseph Magee is still being sought, but if he is unlucky enough to get caught he has no chance of a fair trial, having been already convicted by the police and the media as a "mad dog gunman".

Last year 153 people were detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act in Britain; 30 were held for more than 48 hours. Not one was found guilty of any crime. In addition this act is used to stop and question an average 1000 Irish people every week.

Uprisings

LOS ANGELES

In the aftermath of the rebellion, Los Angeles is a city under military occupation. Repressive forces amassed by the city, state and federal government include: 8,000 police, 9,800 National Guard troops, 1,400 Marines, 1,800 Army soldiers and 1,000 federal marshals. Over 12,000 people have been arrested, and there is every indication this number will climb even higher. In some areas the police are going door to door, often demanding receipts for any items that look new. The Immigration and Naturalization Service has conducted major sweeps, arresting people who seem Latino, demanding identification on no cause. Many people have been arrested for simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time. According to Michael Demby, head deputy public defender, "They're calling them burglaries but in some cases, it's people who came out of a grocery store with food, or parents in the area looking for their children."



"NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!"

By Harry Cleaver- Austin, Texas, USA, May 1, 1992

We haven't had a May 1st like this in years. The massive upheavals shaking the United States, from Los Angeles to San Francisco, from Atlanta to New York, are more than protests against the "not guilty" verdict in the trial of the policemen who brutally beat Rodney King. The verdict touched off a rebellion whose energies spring from many sources. As rebellion spread, first flaming across Los Angeles and then exploding across the United States, the angry cry that has accompanied it "NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!" refers not only to the verdict but to life in America, especially life in the central cities during these last years of the Reagan-Bush administrations. "NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!" is an outcry of fed-up rebellion against systematically unjust state policies of slashing wages, welfare programs and decent paying jobs. It is also an outcry against the flagrant racism of this last decade of economic repression and especially that of the Bush presidency born wrapped in the racist iconography of Willie Horton. The American "years of lead" have weighted most heavily on the people now in revolt. Their fires, it seems, are melting the lead, those years are over.

As in the Watts Rebellion of 1965, the anger boiling out into the streets has been expressed primarily in massive direct appropriation and the burning of almost two thousand buildings in

Los Angeles. While mass media reports have tended to emphasize scattered incidents of brutality -such as a truck driver being dragged from his vehicle and beaten- the vast majority of actions have been directed against business property. Based on past experience, it is highly likely that the actual number of crimes against individuals has actually decreased during the rebellion.

As in the rebellions of the 1960s, reports and interviews have portrayed, mixed in with the anger, a carnevalesque atmosphere of community appropriation as thousands of citizens have collectively smashed down the glass and steel separating them from the things they need. This appropriation was systematic and spread well beyond South-Central L.A., where the rebellion began, into such high-priced shopping malls and boutiques as those of wealthy Beverly Hills.

the language of class:

Riot = business, governmental and media derogatory term for "popular rebellion"

Looting = business, governmental and media derogatory term for "direct appropriation" or "proletarian shopping"

Vandalism = business, governmental and media derogatory term for "wiping out the institutions of exploitation"

Law = euphemism for the rules of capitalist exploitation

All these "Riots", denounced by President Bush as an impermissible breakdown in law and order, have actually been creating new laws of distribution and a new kind of money-less order in which vast quantities of wealth are being, very quickly, transferred from the businesses which have, to those who do not. Beyond such direct appropriation, however, we must also see the political statement of the burnings: the demand for an end to the institutions of exploitation themselves. Sociologists may well label these rebellions, as they did those of the 1960s, "commodity riots" but we must also recognize that the rupture of the merchantile circuits of capitalist society is a political blow to its lifeblood.

A Riot in a Community is Like a Wildcat Strike in a Factory

Remarkable in the dynamics of the rebellions has been the failure of the forces of mediation. When the verdict came in on the night of Wednesday the 29th, every respectable "community leader" in Los Angeles, from black Mayor Bradley on down, strove to avert rebellion by channeling anger into manageable channels. Meetings in churches were organized, passionate gospel music was mixed with equally impassioned speeches of outrage -all designed to permit a powerless, cathartic venting of emotion. At the biggest meeting, covered by Network Television, the desperate Mayor went so far as to make an explicit plea for no action. Just as good business trade unions see their primary job as imposing the contract and maintaining labor peace, so did the good community leaders see theirs as the maintenance of "order". They failed.

Over and over again, such local leaders, city officials (including the notorious Chief of Police Gates) and the White House have tried to draw a line between a "lawless" few young thugs (the Willie Horton icon again) and the "law-abiding" majority of the community. But reports have made it clear that all kinds of people have been participating in the rebellion. Nor has this been a "black" rebellion, even though it began in a predominantly black neighborhood. Even the elite New York Times (May 1, 1992) has reported both of these phenomena, signalling to the ruling class the seriousness of the explosion:

"Some areas took on the atmosphere of a street party as black, white, Hispanic and Asian residents mingled to share in a carnival of looting. As the greatly outnumbered police looked on, people of all ages [and genders], some carrying small children, wandered in and out of stores and supermarkets with shopping bags and armloads of shoes, liquor, radios, groceries, wigs, auto parts, gumball machines and guns. Some stood patiently in line to take their turn."

Like the Brixton "Riots" in the early 1980s, this has been a multiracial community uprising. What some have called the "impossible class" and others "the tribe of moles" has coalesced and surfaced once again -against a police and against an economic system which have done their best to make their lives miserable.

Across the country, these scenes have been repeated on a smaller scale and have been supported by dozens of other kinds of demonstrations protesting the injustice of the Rodney King verdict and articulating at least some of the outcries of the rebels. Here in Austin, capitol of the state of Texas and home to the University of Texas, high-tech electronic firms and a sizeable population of blacks and Mexican Americans, news of the uprising in Los Angeles also brought people spontaneously out of their homes and jobs and into the streets. Within hours, first at the downtown, central police station and then at the state capitol building, a cross-section of the city --of all colors and ethnic backgrounds-- was speaking out angrily about the developing events. In both gatherings, chants of "NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!" echoed those of Los Angeles.

Everywhere people are meeting, discussing, arguing, debating and taking action as the struggle circulates across the nation. In school classrooms and in open areas to which they have marched, in elementary schools and universities, students are participating in this discussion and organizing for action. A week ago the nation watched as two natural earthquakes shook Northern California and wondered if "the big one" would be next ["The Big One" is the long-predicted large-scale earthquake which will cause massive destruction along the San Andreas fault in California]. Today a social earthquake in Southern California has sent shockwaves rippling across the continent, making us all wonder if the revolutionary "the big one" is far off.



OTHER UPRISINGS

TORONTO

There were six hours of rioting in Toronto, Canada, on May 4th. A protest had been called about the Rodney King verdict, but anger was further fuelled when a Toronto cop shot and killed a black man on May 2nd.

RIOTS ROCK LEBANON

On May 5th and the following days, a spontaneous explosion of

anger, which included a four day general strike, brought down the Lebanese government. The protests were a response to falling living standards (caused by the falling value of the Lebanese currency). Across the country roads were blocked with stones and burning tyres, and banks, money-changers' booths and shops were smashed. Rioters burned down the house of the finance minister, and besieged the St George's yacht club where the government was entertaining wealthy guests.

NIGERIA

Police shot dead two people in Lagos during protests against increased transport costs and fuel shortages on May 5th. Rioters looted and set fire to buildings and buses.

MALAWI

Mass strikes and anti-government riots hit Malawi in southern Africa at the beginning of May. The protests started on May 5th in Blantyre (the country's largest city) when striking workers from a textile factory owned by British-based multinational Lonrho marched for better wages. They were joined by thousands of others, and several days of rioting started in which supermarkets belonging to the president, Kamuzu Banda, were particularly targeted for looting. In the capital Lilongwe, striking tobacco workers threw stones and bottles at police and tried to block roads leading to the industrial suburb of Kanengo.

The latest news (May 13) is that the spontaneous strike wave has spread to include workers on Malawi railways, a Lilongwe clothes factory, and the mostly British-owned tea and tobacco plantations. At an estate in Thylo, hundreds of workers looted an estate office, breaking windows and removing computers. The workers blocked a road with branches and threw stones at police.

Anti-racism

FRANCE FLARES UP...

(from our Paris correspondent).

The last two months in France has seen a wave of riots, demonstrations and general unrest. Most of this was caused by people campaigning against Jean Marie Le Pen's Front National fascist party, who themselves were campaigning for the recent national elections. Activity against the FN was strong but it was also a case of too little, too late as they took 14% of the vote.



In Rouen, a demo against Le Pen in which thousands of people participated, was organised by local pacifists. It was clear that the CRS (special riot cops. Very nasty) were deliberately protecting the fascists which enraged the anarchists and others on the demo. Confrontations followed in which the cops used tear gas, fierce unmuzzled dogs and other tactics to disperse the crowd. The response was to smash the windows of the police station and to destroy the offices of the FN which were completely ransacked and later set on fire although unfortunately the fire did little damage. Ten people were later arrested and have already been found guilty in court of minor charges (more serious charges to follow).

In Tours it was the same story, with cops protecting Le Pen's scumbags and supporters at a pre-election rally. Thousands of

people were on the streets that night in opposition. Street fighting ensued between cops and anti-fascists and some people got nicked on minor charges.

In Limoges, anti-fascists condemned police brutality on the night of 2nd March outside a rally for Bruno Megret (FN no.2). The police gratuitously beat up the leader of the local Collective For Peace And Liberty smashing his teeth in with truncheons. Meanwhile, two cars driven by fascists were attacked by anti-fascists who were then forced to protect themselves from the cops who were assisted by members of the Service de l'Ordre Armee (brownshirt thugs of the FN). Naturally none of the nazis were arrested.

In Bayonne, Jean Daniel Albiston was found guilty in February of smashing the windows of a bank during a demo against Megret. He was made a scapegoat for the violence that night (most of it caused by FN and the cops) and the image presented to the public via the media was that of acts of random vandalism. Albiston received 5 months in prison and was fined as well.

In Chartres, the worst FN violence occurred at an anti-Le Pen demo. Three thousand protestors were unprovokedly attacked by 50 baseball bat and crowbar wielding members of the Service de l'Ordre Armee. Until that point the demo had been noisy and angry but also fairly well ordered. Many people were injured, some so seriously that they need to stay in hospital and no-one from the FN was charged. Eyewitnesses said that the scene was reminiscent of the pogroms in Nazi Germany and many people had their eyes opened to what the FN is really about.

These are just a few typical examples of the actions against the FN - thousands of demos took place all across France in the run up to the elections, the majority ending in violence in which the police openly sided with the fascists and used riot control tactics against demos which escalated the confrontations.

In Paris, the situation was slightly different. A large turn out of 200,000 people was in force for the January demo against Le Pen but in March, it was a different story. Scared by the Chartres attack, many stayed away and only about 20,000 turned up. As the demo assembled, a public split took place between various groups, the majority of who, decided to march in the other direction away from the fascists. Those left in the rump decided to continue as planned but were stopped 200 yards down the street by the CRS who charged several times scattering the demonstrators and forcing them to link up with the breakaway march. Truncheons were pulled and some people made a brave but foolhardy stand against the cops, setting up burning barricades in the streets and smashing bank windows etc. There simply wasn't enough people to take on the cops in the way and the media misreported everything the next day, once again portraying it as gratuitous vandalism. The breakaway march was also forcibly dispersed when it reached its destination and the police again ensured that Le Pen could hold a rally with the minimum of interruption.

The split in Paris has caused deep divisions among anti-fascists, anti-racists and anarchists concerning the tactics for fighting the FN. The majority simply do not seem willing to take on the FN where it counts - on the streets. This issue needs to be resolved quickly if the FN are to be defeated as they gain strength every day.

(Feb. 5th - in the Plaisir region of Paris, a demo prevented a FN meeting, thanks to the well-organised local youths in the inner city areas. Two youths were taken in for questioning by cops after the confrontation. In Corsica on 28th Feb., trade unionist and militant Corsicans prevented Le Pen's plane from landing. After arriving at another airport, Le Pen's meeting was prevented from taking place. 17 cops were injured during confrontations.)

LEIPZIG DEMO

67 people were arrested following an anti-racist demo in Leipzig, Germany on 22nd March. A national mobilisation was called by

anti-fascists in Halle and Leipzig against the Right Wing Alliance Of National Forces. 3000 people aimed to occupy Dimitriov Square, the rallying ground for the fascists. Police came under attack from stones and bottles and a police helicopter was struck several times by fireworks hurled by protestors as militants fought from behind barricades erected after the special riot cops (SEK) had tried to seize individual anti-fa's from the crowd at the end of the rally. The anti-fa lot had withdrawn to Connewitz, the "alternative quarter" of Leipzig where groups of people defended immigrant hostels, squats, women and youth projects from fascist attack. Later on 300 neo-nazis marched through the City centre, chanting pro-Hitler slogans and giving Nazi salutes. Needless to say, no Nazis were arrested.



DENVER CROWDS CONFRONT KKK

On January 20th, 12,000 people marched in Denver, Colorado to celebrate Martin Luther King Day. The demo went from City Park to the steps of the State Capitol where the KKK had been permitted to hold an Anti-King rally. After the "perfunctory speeches from city officials and luminaries", about 1000 folks moved towards the steps to block the Klan's exit. About 500 cops separated the two groups but as they 124 Klan members (a third imported from out of State) attempted to board the special sheriff's buses, they were bombarded with rock-filled snowballs and billiard balls. One of the bus windows was shattered, the missile hitting some Klan. Many of the Klan had to retreat to behind police protection to await another bus.

Frustrated with being unable to directly attack the Klan, many of the anti-Klan crowd set upon the police, overturning and smashing a cop car and also looting a store. Police responded with tear gas and the Klan were whisked off to safety. The usual denunciations of violence, detracting from King's dream etc, etc were heard from City officials and Left activists following the demo.

OPEN BORDERS FOR ALL

(Source: Arm The Spirit No.11 Jan/Feb '92.)

Inside the E.C nations there resides out of some 340 million persons, about 6.1 million "foreigners" - less than two per cent of the total. Nonetheless, the politicians (backed up by the media) are crying out that "the boat is full". Far-right political parties such as the Front National in France, Vlaams Blok in Belgium and the Lombardy League in Italy are actively campaigning on anti-immigration political platforms and recent electoral successes by these parties show that their racist policies are being met with an increasing acceptance. In this atmosphere, other parties are using anti-immigrant hysteria to bolster their own popularity. The French Communist Party supports the call for "French jobs for French workers" and in many countries, the Social Democrats have been demanding stricter border controls to curb "parasitic illegals" from milking the welfare system.

With the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the fallen State-socialist economies have left behind unemployment and economic despair and tens of thousands of East Europeans have begun to head westward. No longer are these people welcomed as "political refugees" as in Cold War days but now they are labelled as "economic refugees".

With European unity rapidly approaching, the ruling powers

have gone into high gear to prepare Europe as an economic super-power. Their goal has always been to establish a system of regulation, selection and control to safe-guard the European Fortress. Through various treaties like the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Accord, Europe's members are preparing the harmonization of asylum policies to end "uncontrolled" migration.

However this line is not exclusively right-wing. Europe's ruling powers do not want to eliminate the migration of cheap labour rather they wish to control it better. With the current declining birth-rate in Europe, the ruling powers will still require migration. What will be sought from migrants however is flexibility, adaptability and political submissiveness. In line with the TREVI Agreement, international co-operation in data collection and policing efforts will be greatly intensified weeding out those the States feel are unacceptable.

Two fold resistance

Resistance to these events means two things. Actively confronting the rising right-wing and neo-nazis groups and resisting the new EC asylum policies. Across Europe, refugees and immigrants have been organising and taking direct action against immigration policies as well as defending themselves from fascist attacks. In France, there have been over 4000 self-help associations set up by immigrants with the explicit aim of fighting racism.

Within the radical left there have also been many initiatives taken in solidarity with refugees and immigrants. In Germany, Revolutionary Cells (RZ) have been attacking the State apparatus that dictates and implements immigration policies. On August 2nd '91, RZ attacked the Refugee Division building in Boblingen (1). The attack caused over 375,000 dollars worth of damage and destroyed data on 10,000+ refugees. There have been similar smaller attacks by autonomous groups on administrative targets all over Germany.

Anti-fascist resistance in Germany, in it's own internal discussions, has been trying to tackle the following potential pit-fall: that the anti-fascist movement does not merely become an anti-Nazi movement and thus, that it should keep a broader "anti-imperialist" perspective. (In the U.K, the relaunch of the Anti-Nazi League (which at worst is simply a Socialist Workers Party opportunistic recruitment drive) has already fallen into the trap of being exclusively an anti-"Nazi" campaign).

The State itself is not fascist but it can and does use extreme right wing groups to further it's own agenda. Bearing this in mind, autonomous groups try to be active on both fronts - anti-fascist and anti-State. On October 15th '91, 5 buses used to forcibly transport refugees out of Berlin were firebombed and destroyed by an anti-racist group expressing solidarity with the refugees wishes to freely decide where they live. Other attacks against bus and travel companies responsible for forced re-location have occurred in Berlin. As for the Nazis, on October 28th '91, approximately 40 autonomes attacked the house of Karl Polacek, the leader of the extreme right wing Freedom Workers Party (FAP), with molotovs and stones as Polacek and 30 other nazis were meeting inside. 15 nazis were injured and no autonomes were arrested.

An important thing to be avoided in the anti-fascist/anti-racist movement is the tendency to objectify refugees and downplay their own organising efforts. The autonomous actions were carried out, not on behalf of refugees, but in support of refugee struggles. On Oct. 10th '91 in Stuttgart, after 30 autonomes and 300 or so Turkish youths had met together, they decided to split into groups and roam the streets to find neo-nazis to attack. Such co-operation

strengthens the solidarity between refugees and the radical Left/ autonomous without the refugees being merely a tool for some political agenda.

The left has a tendency to be paternalistic and even racist when it comes to comprehending the problems faced by refugees and immigrants. The only way to overcome this and to provide concrete political support is to organise alongside these groups, using means which fit the conditions under which they live.

(1) RZ communique (2 pages) concerning Boblingen attack and European asylum politics, available for SAE via 56a Info Shop.

Housing/ Squatting



LYON SQUATTERS ROAR...

In mid-March, the squatters in Lyon came under heavy fire. First there was a large demo of 250 squatters and 250 supporters, followed the next day by a mass eviction of 32 squatters. To understand why this happened, it is necessary to explain French squatting laws. As in Britain, squatting is a civil offence but here it is semi-legal. The police can only prosecute if you are caught causing damage as you enter the building. During the first 48 hours, you can be summarily evicted - that is, without going to court. But after that, the owner must start a civil eviction case against the squatters. Evictions are illegal during the winter (Oct - March) and this applies to tenant evictions also. This is to ensure that people are not thrown out onto the streets during the cold months. Thus squatters can be sure of a secure home for at least six months in the wintertime.

The demo in Lyon was against the impending spring eviction round. The squats concerned were in the Croix-Rousse district which is an anarchist area (like Brixton! (ho! ho! Ed.)) and a centre for political activity with anarchists bookshops, various locals (anarchist centres), squat cafes and so. It is also a district that has been solidly working class for generations but is now undergoing a process of gentrification.

The demo was called by spraying the info on local walls and a gig was planned for the end. According to the police, they were not informed by the organisers that the demo was taking place. It assembled about 6.30pm on 14th March in Croix-Rousse and set

off in a carnival mood. About 8pm a confrontation with the cops developed. First the police arrested two taggers (spray can wielders) at the back of the march. Then the police and the CRS charged the crowd. The demonstrators organised a quick meeting to select delegates to go to the police station and negotiate the release of the taggers. The CRS charged a second time and fired tear gas. Bottles, paint bombs and other missiles were thrown at the cops and then more arrests were made. Some shop windows were smashed and about 20 vehicles vandalised. The scuffles continued until about 1AM. Eight police and 12 squatters were injured (one woman hit in the face by a tear gas grenade fired directly into the crowd. Ed.). A total of 17 people were arrested.

Two days later, 32 squatters were evicted from several buildings. Bailiffs arrived at 6AM and builders began bricking up the doors and windows. The squatters denounced the yuppies who were speculating in property and thus causing the evictions. The authorities attacked the squatters saying that they did not squat out of necessity but because "they had chosen a way of life".

On 3rd April, the police came back at 6am and arrested another 28 squatters from various buildings including Rap Thou, a large anarchist centre which was home to a free school, community cafe and a gig venue. 23 of these were later released in the afternoon after being questioned, the other five were minors who were returned to their families or put in care. Next day, the squatters called another general meeting to discuss tactics to stop further evictions and harassment.

PEOPLE'S PARK

A recent chapter in the worldwide resistance to volleyball.
(from Fifth Estate)

In April 1969, a group of residents, street people, students etc took over an empty lot, just south of the University of California (U.C) and converted it into a park with garden and children's playground. The vacant lot had previously been the site for apartments and houses, housing many activists and "hippies" who occasionally singled out the University for protest. The U.C used the process of "eminent domain" to take over the private land for public use to build dormitories (despite its other dorms having many vacancies). After the structures were razed, U.C, contrary to the legality of its "eminent domain" order, didn't build the dorms. Within weeks, University police moved into the park and destroyed it and fenced the land off. Attempts to re-claim "People's Park" resulted in serious clashes with the authorities. On May 15th during a four hour battle, James Rector, 25, was hit by Police shotgun pellets and fell from the roof he was watching from and died.

people's park created

The lot was paved over and a basket ball court constructed although this was generally boycotted by the community. Several attempts were made over the next few years to re-take the park but it wasn't until May 1972, after a massive anti-war demo that thousands of folk knocked down the fence, pried up the paving and re-created the park. The University shied off from any further moves to evict but prevented the installation of fixed bathrooms and children's play equipment lest they be seen to be accepting the park as common ground. After a while, the park became a dwelling ground for homeless people and also a secure, free speech zone for demos and concerts.

Within the last couple of years, U.C made a deal with the "progressive" Berkeley City Council to divide the park into two bits. One part owned by U.C, the rest leased to the council. Then U.C announced it would build a sand volleyball court and basketball court. Eventually, U.C cops began arresting violaters of the 10pm curfew they had imposed on the park and even began arresting people standing on the adjoining pavement.



U.C. Volleyball...I see homeless.

On July 27th 1991, a big crowd prevented the groundbreaking ceremonies for the volleyball courts and after an unrelated arrest by City cops in the park, a lengthy siege ensued during which a cop car was damaged. On July 31st, the battle began. Hundreds of cops from the City and the University, joined by cops from other cities and campus plus "blue meanies" (Alameda County sheriffs) moved onto the park clearing a large area and arresting 35 people. Then the bulldozers went in to start construction. Throughout the day, the crowds grew and then late in the afternoon, a truck carrying dirt out of the area was blockaded and attacked. The cops counter-attacked driving the large crowd into the Telegraph Avenue shopping area where many folks selectively trashed stores and looted shops and built fires in the street. The police attacked again forcing the crowd into smaller groups who blocked street corners and attacked campus targets.

On August 1st, police warned that anyone watching the trouble was aiding the rioters and hence inviting attack from the cops. Later, the police attacked a peaceful crowd with rubber and wooden bullets. The next day, similar police assaults occurred on crowds and Beverly Kelly from the Berkeley Police Review Commission was beaten up by a Berkeley cop!

An attempted march through the city on August 3rd was attacked by police who batoned the first few lines, knocking a woman unconscious, her police assailant having to be pulled off by his commander. Many of the protesters managed to blockade Telegraph Avenue and after two hours the cops withdrew. Later that night, another demo marched to the park and was again attacked by cops firing wooden/rubber bullets. By this time, criticism of police action was mounting. The Alameda County Sheriff announced plans to sue U.C for the costs of his operation, charging the University had instigated the violence with it's actions. On August 8th, the courts were completed and a sit-in resulted in a dozen more arrests. Two days later, during a volleyball match (mainly students from the U.C Athletic Programme), the ball was taken and stuffed into a porta-loo and the perpetrator arrested. A crowd of over 200 then marched around the courts and took it over tearing down a net and court markers. The cops arrived and charged the occupation clearing the courts.

A concert in the Free Speech part of the park (City owned) was prevented and later on when the stage was re-set on a truck, the cops cut the power. After a generator was installed and the music began, people were arrested for touching the volleyballs. One man was arrested for reaching out to touch one. On September 8th, after an impro-theatre show in the park, about 100 people stormed the

courts and destroyed the net and tarp covers and filled the courts with rubbish. Four arrests were made.

People's Park -the sequel.

On 14th, some people began to dig up a nearby vacant lot on the corner of Telegraph Ave proclaiming it as "People's Park Annex". The lot had been filled with rubbish since the original structure had burnt down in dubious circumstances. Some people had turned it into an anti-commodity museum focusing specially on T.V's. but this had been cleared during the battles for the park. Eventually the gardens created became a space for homeless people and conditions deteriorated as the greenery wilted and less and less people hung out there. Tents occupied each corner and after a rainstorm the place turned into a swamp. A City Council meeting (dealing with People's Park Annex) on Nov.5th was disrupted by folks spraying foul-smelling liquids but the next day the Annex was cleared with little opposition.

Chainsaw Massacre

On Nov. 22nd a crowd of about 100 attacked the volleyball courts covering the wood with graffiti and burning a section with firebombs.

During a big music festival in the Park on December 15th, the courts suffered another attack. At 4.15pm, a rope was attached to the centre post but an attempt to topple it was foiled by the rope breaking. A second go at another post similarly failed. People cursed and ranted but one person armed with a small chainsaw cut down the centre post, the cops view blocked by a crowd of people. As the cops sussed it out and began to pursue recognizable individuals, stones, rubbish and bottles were hurled in their direction. A rope was attached to a railing and people started to pull it but the cops rushed in, batons swinging. More cops were hit with bottles and finally withdrew.

The next day, a demo entitled "Berkeley Is Not For Sale" abandoned an attempt to blockade/occupy City Hall but after a speak-out, a decision was made to march on the Rent Board due to a 30 percent increase in rents. Folks took over the offices and after an hour moved on to Milton Fujii's office, a U.C representative responsible for some of the decisions which resulted in numerous activists injuries. After some confusion about where his office was, an office of the Assistant Vice Chancellor, Property Development was found and two individuals tried to kick in the door. When two U.C employees peered out, the office was rushed and trashed. No arrests were made.

New York: " whose fuckin' world...Our fuckin' world ! "

At the same time as this was happening in Berkeley, in New York, the same conflict came to a head over Tompkins Square Park in the Lower East Side, a traditional working class area. The park and surrounding area has many homeless people and squatters in it. Gradually the area is being gentrified by property speculation and gerrymandered voting districts creating new neighbourhoods with an increased middle class population. After many battles for the park in the last few years (including the August '88 riot during which the Christodora yuppie housing was attacked), the place was bulldozed in June 91 and the bandshell, the site of many demos and festivals was demolished in August. For months afterwards the cops occupied the Lower East Side area.

Outraged at the destruction of Tompkins Sq. Park, a group of eco-terrorists took direct action last November. Armed with heavy chain and locks, they closed down Gramercy Park - New York's only private park.

Their "Notice Of Park Closing" reads: "Sorry for the inconvenience. Gramercy Park is being closed today in memorial



to Tompkins Sq. Park. Our "new" neighbours to the south (the area has just been gerrymandered bringing some of the Lower East Side area into posher Gramercy Park) have been robbed of their park and we believe the only civilised steps are in solidarity with them..."

The chains were cut at 10am the next day so hopefully some of the ruling classes missed their morning run and their dogs had to shit elsewhere!

"NO SOCIAL PEACE !"

In both San Francisco and New York (as in Barcelona, Berlin, London, etc) the fightback against the social engineering of a nice, squeaky clean society continues. Wherever Government and big business (property developers, banks and financiers) work hand in hand to drive out the poor or silence those who refuse their alienated and oppressed position in the system, there will be some level of fightback. Our fight in London against cops busting our squats and centre's is the same struggle as the residents of the Kowloon Walled City in Hong Kong evicted to make way for a town park (resistance to eviction on March 3rd and April 4th '92 when two government workers and one cop were attacked by a resident with a cleaver as they tried to evict him). It is the fight of the exploited class against our "owners", the bosses. The connections between Yuppification in the 80's and the harmonization of Europe '92 are not tenuous. They are strategies to flatten out resistance to the new model Europe. The de-squatting of various European cities from the late eighties onwards, the forced closure of Needle Park (a traditional heroin addicts place) in Zurich (and Bern) in February this year, repression of Anti-Expo '92 sentiment in Spain. These examples show what sort of Europe the bosses are building. Their vision is a trouble free Europe where there is no public face for resistance or behaviour outside of the bland normality such a new Europe promises us (unless it's good for the tourist business eg. Amsterdam's red light area).

Amongst all of this city-forming (Dutch term for gentrification), there has been some great shows of resistance. In Hamburg, violent protest against the opening of The Phantom Of The Opera show for rich and yuppies in the Schanzenviertel district in June 1990 resulting in the failure of plans for the new theatre there. (Ironically, the theatre was torn down and the remaining hall was squatted for a social centre. The adjacent land was turned into Flora Park by the squatters and residents (sounds familiar?). The city council hated the free space and drew up a plan to divide the squatters from the residents by saying the space was needed for flats for poor people. On July 23rd '91, at 4am about 500 people turned up to defend the park. Barricades were erected to stop the cops entering but police violence made sure that they got inside.

Some cop vehicles got trashed but the park was lost and bulldozed flat. Over the next week, cops filled the area even blocking off one street only letting residents with I-D in. The police occupation of the area resulted in "Troops Out" posters being put in shops and "No Entrance To Cops" being displayed in restaurants.)

Another inspiring action against consensus normality happened when Bush visited Athens on July 18th '91. Various anarchist groups met before hand determined to "destroy the image of social peace" that the Greek Government wanted to present to Bush and the world. "Our only way was violent direct action". The anarchists occupied the Polytechnic and used it as an info and action centre. They prepared thousands of posters and leaflets and also more than a hundred molotovs. When Bush arrived "the usual party began - barricades, fires, CS Gas, molotovs, burning banks, buses and luxury cars".

"Social peace" is a spot-on term, accurately summing up the Europe envisaged by the bosses that we described above. For those who want to destroy the social peace in their own countries, it is vital that we recognise the connections between the above listed struggles (and hundreds of others worldwide). Solidarity with those resisting the same battles in other places brings us out of our isolated local struggle and into the international fightback against those who wish to speak on our behalf and control our lives. By understanding the international dimension of oppression and the factors common to all of our resistance, we empower ourselves a little bit more as each fight connects up.

America's war on the poor: Detroit.

On October 1st, 1991, the State of Michigan ended General Assistance (G.A) welfare, a programme for single adults, leaving 83,000 people literally penniless. In late November, 2 men died of asphyxiation from a charcoal burner they were using in an abandoned house in Detroit's south-west side. They were homeless after having been cut off of G.A. On the same night, an old man everyone knew as Leroy froze to death in another unheated building. Upstate, a woman dumped from State Aid was forced to cut her blood pressure medicine dosage in half to save money and died from a stroke days later. These incidents are the direct and indirect result of State budget cuts.

With the cut-off of G.A, entire buildings housing state aid recipients were emptied rendering thousands homeless over night. On October 29th, about 70 former G.A recipients occupied a long empty and neglected public housing complex. The City responded by sending in 100 cops to evict the squat. The cops, who were met with chants of "Ruff. ruff, ruff...who let the dogs out!" by over 250 homeless activists and residents, arrested 8 people for breaking and entering the unused apartments. The presence of the Police chief and many officials from the Mayor's office indicated that the City had no intention to let the homeless create their own solution, to their plight.

The homeless, with help from many housing groups, secured big tents and erected them on the property of a generous apartment owner nearby to the housing project. Just as the inhabitants began to call the tent city, dubbed Englerville, the name of the State Governor who had initiated the cuts which made them homeless, their home, the Council declared the space a health hazard and sent the cops in to dismantle it leaving it's residents again on the streets.



Anti-militarism

FINLAND RESISTS!

The Finnish campaign against the military service has entered a new phase with the first presentation of a total resister together with a group of 10 people who stated they they incited him to break the law. Kaj Raninen was ordered to appear at his army unit in Sakyla on 20th March. He has refused to apply for alternative service and is now liable on charges of desertion and insubordination, both of which carry a maximum sentence of 1 year inside. Kaj and his public supporters held a demo in front of the Army HQ on 7th April but the authorities declined to arrest them. The next night, another demo and Kaj was nicked as soon as all the journalists had left the area. His supporters set up a camp outside the base. Protest to: Elisabeth Rehn, minister of defence, Puolustusministerio, PL 31 00131 Helsinki. Finland.

NON-SERVIAM - POLAND

Despite more options for substitute military service in Poland (due to religious or moral grounds), it still depends on the whim of the recruiting committees. In December '91, the Provisional Recruiting Committee in Katowice refused substitute service to Tomasz Sikora on moral grounds because he did not belong to any "pacifist organisation" as proof of objection. On January 23rd, An Arche (Katowice group associated with Polish Anarchist Federation) held a press conference to highlight T. Sikora's case and the arbitrary nature of the recruiters decisions. Ten people in Wroclaw were sentenced to imprisonment with suspended execution by a military court. Later they refused call-up cards from the army which meant that the sentences should be executed.

Some people from the Anarchist Federation (among others from Wroclaw - the Krepotkin Anarchist Group (GAK), Szczecin, Debica) took up the action of total refusal of military service connected to the refusal of premilitary registration. Most of these were fined.

On 13th October, the Anarchist Federation, Association "Objector" and Varsovian group of "Freedom And Peace" (WiP) held a demo against military service and burnt their military books. The peaceful demo (around 100 people) was attacked by the cops and more than 30 people nicked. A few more army books were burnt including one inside the copshop. An Arche: Uniwersytet Slaski, ul. Bankowa 12 b/1. 40-007 Katowice. POLAND.

"OUR WELCOME TO GENERAL SCHWARZKOPF!"

On 29th January in two small towns in Brescia, N. Italy, a group of communists bombed the homes and cars of two of the most famous Italian pilots in the Gulf War, Bellini Giammarco and Cocciolone Mauritzio, "better known as heroes of the Gulf slaughter made a year ago by the gang of murderers which calls itself the international police".

Previously, on 3rd September 1991, a Manhattan big car belonging to a US officer was torched in Padova. On 4th November, incendiary devices totalled three cars of U.S soldiers. In Longare, a nurse's Toyota of the SETAF base was burnt out and at the same time two American sergeants from Venezia had their cars fired.

The most recent car attacks coincided with the visit of General Schwarzkopf to Venice on the 1st February. Newspaper "Il Corriere della sera" warned in a piece titled "Anti-Imperialists who love molotovs", that "the Red Brigades started out their activities with cars and then passed onto armed struggle"

State Repression

Mordicus

On 27th January, Florence Tosi and Serge Quadrupani, editors of the French radical magazine Mordicus, were charged with "apologising for theft; apologising for looting, murder and arson; direct provocation to the crime of murder and complicity with these offences". The grounds for these prosecutions was the sticking up in June '91 of a poster advertising Mordicus and featuring a rap

verse (translation below) on the topic of the continuing revolt in the French suburbs. The judge expressed intention to hear the case within two months and the two were called into the cop shop for "personality interrogation". They did not respond to this summons. They risk three to five years in jail and fine of between £350 and £30,000. Although a jail sentence in a case against the press is unlikely, a

fine would bleed the paper dry.



It's your feast (C'est ton festin)

It's not in school, not in the ghetto college/ That you learn that cars are for joy-riding/ It's not in shop windows that you'll treat yourself to a good fate/ But in looting them that you'll find a real feast/ Its not the journalists who'll see us shut up/ When they come to spy, it's their heads for the chop/ It's not Harlem Tapie/ and his gang of pimps/ That will come along and put us to work/ And its not the beardies [Islamic fundamentalists] who'll empty the prisons/ But rather those who attack the cops and the screws
Chorus: No cops in the quarter, no quarter for the cops (Pas de flics dans l'quartier, pas d'quartier pour les flics)

Info: Mordicus B.P 11 - 75622. PARIS cedex 13. FRANCE.

Ralf and Knud, or ...Expose their lies!

(How The German State Protection Unit Constructed A Lie - First To Arrest And Then Keep Two Activists Imprisoned In Hamburg Without Any Evidence For More Than 6 Months. Now Their Court Case Still Continues...)

Ralf and Knud are two political activists from Hamburg who are involved in the struggle against gentrification in their area and in organising a squatted centre - the Rote Flora, occupied 2 years ago in order to prevent the "Phantom Of The Opera" Palace from being built in a poor neighbourhood. The space behind the squatted centre remained an object of speculation and was made into a park by the squatters but evicted in July '91 by 1500 riot cops. The area was then again "under siege" for several weeks and the political "scene" in that area was exposed to police attacks (informants and

plain clothed cops were also operating there too). Construction firms started to build apartment blocks on the former Flora park. It was in this situation that the 2 were persecuted and arrested when they left the Rote Flora to head off for a walk in a forest near Hamburg. A tip-off from an informant that the people in Rote Flora were interested in finding out about the building companies involved in the construction led to 4 plain clothes cops of a special state protection unit following them to the forest but losing trace of them. To cover this serious mistake in their search, the police used an incident happening in the meantime not far away. A railway line was being blocked with a concrete block put out on the track by kids from a skate site next to it. This happens at least once a week. After the state protection re-found Ralf and Knud, they confronted them with the accusation that they intended a terrorist attack on the railway line and despite the fact that no circumstantial evidence was taken, arrested the two with the help of a quickly called in prosecutor. No evidence...just a lie and the intention to find a major accusation to attack the political scene by framing two of their members and moving the whole movement close to mindless terrorists.

This intention came out clear enough when because of this lie, the two were kept for six months in prison before their case on Jan 31st, charged with "attempted murder". On the first day of the trial, they were set free. Now they are still awaiting their sentences which will be somewhere between acquittal and 3 years on parole (ie suspended sentence). There are dozens of hearings being held and the case has taken several months already. Only because of the meagre, if not missing evidence is it now that, bit by bit, their badly prepared lie starts to show some consequences.

Knud and Ralph's guilt cannot and will not be proven. It is just the State that will end up having a hell of a lot more serious enemies than before. There were numerous solidarity gigs, benefits, actions and meetings all over the country and people are highly aware of what can be done to them by the pigs if we don't watch out (even without Germany's main state protection Paragraph 129a which is usually used to prosecute the radical movement by labelling every support action activity as terrorist organisation).

RED ARMY FACTION - CEASEFIRE

"We are going to stop attacks on leading representatives from the economy/big business and the State"

- Why the RED ARMY FACTION (RAF) stated their intention to stop armed struggle, if certain demands will be met.

A long statement from the RAF including important aspects of heavy self-criticism, was first publically published in Germany on April 14th '92. It was partly a reaction to the Kinkel initiative (a State initiative for a so-called "political solution" to end the escalation of violence), which offered less restrictive prison

conditions and early releases for the longest serving prisoners. This was because Federal prosecutors, the Minister of Justice and State Security were sure that the RAF only survived and continued their struggle because their core activists were still in jail. The most interesting point however is RAF's confession in the statement that after twenty years they now consider their concept of struggle as a failure because they are politically isolated and have lost touch even with the "others who stood up as well", (i.e the radical left and resistance movement). All those years they claimed a vanguard position that represented the only anti-imperialist force "in the heart of the beast" and followed an urban guerilla concept related to the Third World revolutionary movements. Now they say they are willing to give up this concept, which was accompanied by an extremely elitist avant-garde pretension, in favour of the creation of a "new process of a strong counter-movement (anti-state power) from below". To realise this process, room for discussion and communication between any "already existing structures" and all those "who are in search of the realisation of an alternative society" must be created. This underlies, once again, the necessity for free political communication between and with the remaining prisoners but also expresses the need of opening and broadening the discussion with other social and political groups. They also emphasise the necessity of the realisation of alternative positive values today in everyday life, in a kind of counter society which they failed ^{to develop} due to their policy (and general situation of illegality) which was "reduced to mere attacks on imperialists".

All this existed in theory and practice in the squat and social movements and is even part of the autonomous movement (which also encompasses militant action) but was never acknowledged as being part of the resistance by the RAF itself. They put their "shoot-to-kill" policy forward as the only meaningful strategy.

Better late than never !

Up to now, the Government has obviously welcomed their announcement to end the violence, but doesn't think of meeting their demands.

GREECE UPDATE

The trials of the 33 people arrested on November 2nd '91 in Athens for flyposting and leafleting about the recent demos and trouble in October continue. On November 3rd, they were taken to the District Attorney's Office, after being assaulted and tortured during captivity and charges were pressed against them. On November 13th, nine days after first appearing, all 33 comrades were convicted for six months and as of November 25th they were all freed pending an appeal.

On February 27th '92, the "anarchist organisations" Revolutionary Popular Struggle and May 1st claimed a bomb attack that injured 18 cops and one bystander and announced that in the future the two groups would be combined.

ITALIAN HIV+ PRISONERS PROTEST

In November, prisoners with HIV staged the latest in a series of

Anna und Artur
halten's Maul!
Und Du?



Keine Aussagen
gegenüber Bullen
und Staatsanwaltschaft!

"Anna and Arthur keep their mouths shut. And you? No statement to the police and prosecution."

protests about their treatment in Italian prisons. The spark for the protest was the death from an overdose of Umberto Ceccato, a 29 old with AIDS who died two days after being released from Due Palazzi prison in Padua where he had been remanded for eight months before being cleared of robbing a jewellers.

Whilst in prison his health had deteriorated but he was refused a transfer to a non-prison hospital and like many others at Due Palazzi, he was offered treatment at the notorious "bunker" where 24 hour surveillance and no TV, radio, cigarettes are allowed. On 22nd October there was a general strike in Italy. As their contribution, other remand prisoners at Due Palazzi refused food and exercise for the day. 156 of the 180 remand prisoners signed a statement condemning the medical treatment at the jail and demanding freedom for Umberto and another ill prisoner. They stated "no court has sentenced them to death in jail". After Umberto's death, prisoners staged another hungerstrike. On 7th Nov. a demo was held in support of prisoners, organised by Radio Sherwood (a radical radio station), the city's squatted social centres and student and workers groups.

Messages of support to the prisoners can be sent c/o Radio Sherwood, Vicolo Pontecorvo 1A, 35100 Padova. Italy. (FAX: 010-39-49-664589)

●In Milan on May 2nd, a big meeting was organized by Centro Sociale Leoncavallo near the walls of S. Vittore prison. 2000 prisoners are held there in very bad conditions: most of them are HIV-positive, a lot of them are immigrants and there are also some political prisoners. More than 1500 people participated in a concert and, after, 500 of them staged a demonstration all around the prison with the slogan "Freedom for all the prisoners". During the demo people threw stones at the prison guards. From the jail, the prisoners answered with slogans and red flags.

MOSCOW PUNKS JAILED...

On 10th February '92, two Moscow anarchists were sentenced to three years in jail for resisting an attack by two plainclothes KGB agents.

On March 12th 1991, Alexei Rodionov and Alexander Kuznetsov were on their way to a demo held by the Democratic Union to commemorate the 74th anniversary of the October Revolution. The police version was that the two punks were accosting passersby in the Dzerzhinskaya Sq. underpass and that they attacked the two KGB men. Their version of events was that they were attacked by two men who they had no reason to believe were cops. They were punched and kicked (one of them unconscious) and then taken to a police bus where they were beaten up and had their hair forcibly cut. Here they were searched and a knife and a razor were found on them.

Since then, they have been held in a thirty-person cell containing 70 people and have been taken for questioning every morning at 4AM.

Moscow anarchists from various groups organised a hunger strike outside the Russian White House in October. Due to the attention they attracted from some Moscow Soviet deputies and Russian parliamentarians, the two anarchist were released pending the trial appearance.

This kind of charge (hooliganism) is usually dealt with in a day but their case took four months. The trial was a farce from start to finish with inconsistent evidence about the injuries suffered by the



KGB men. At the end of the trial, they were sentenced to three years. Immediately, a spontaneous demo was held by anarchists in the city centre and protestors blocked the traffic in Gorky Street. Soon after, the special troops attacked the demo, arresting 19 people including two 13 year old girls. Five hours later, due to support from some Moscow Soviet deputies, they were all released.

Moscow anarchists tried hard to publicise the trial and outcome due to this being the first political trial under the new, improved "democratic" regime but the media still remains under Government control.

In their statement, they say: "The Yeltsin regime is vulnerable to international pressure because it needs to maintain a human face so as not to jeopardise the flow of financial aid."

They called for worldwide solidarity actions against Soviet consulates on February 28th and another demo was held, in support of the jailed comrades, on the 29th Feb. in Moscow. They say: "As experience shows, Soviet authorities pay attention to actions in front of Soviet consulates and at least inform Moscow about them...If the State will manage to use the old machine of repression against two punks, whom nobody cares about, it will soon extend its reach".

(Solidarity actions on 28/2/92 were held in Moscow, Krakow, Budapest, Toronto, San Francisco and New York)

Contact: 109462 MOSCOW, Volzhinsky Boulevard 21-62, Mikhail Tsovama, Russia.

Also protest letters to Boris Yeltsin, Moscow, Russia. CAN HELP, as letters in the past have helped release political prisoners.

Columbus

1992 marks the 500th year of Columbus's expedition to America. Many governments and corporations are celebrating this as "An Encounter Of Cultures". The counter movement, loosely organised under the banner

"500 Years Of Resistance" seeks to counter the prevailing myths about such an expedition with cultural and educational events across the world. The indigenous people of America are survivors of a holocaust of immeasurable proportions. It is easy for non-Indian people to acknowledge that the atrocities committed years ago were motivated by racism and greed. What is not commonly understood is that such behaviour is continuing as they live and did not end with the Wounded Knee massacre 1890.

If examination of the past is to have any significance for the future, it is important to assess the fate of Indian people today and recognise that the Indian Wars have continued throughout this century in a more sophisticated form although just as disastrous.

The reservation system pushed Indians onto land that nobody else wanted because they were not arable or good for grazing. In this Century it was discovered that most of the nation's mineral reserves (coal, shale oil, natural gas and uranium) lie under this undesirable land. The U.S Government has colluded with private interests especially energy conglomerates to violate every treaty ever signed with Indian people. A central plank in this strategy was the



establishment of the tribal council system which gave the appearance of Native autonomy but was controlled by the Dept. Of Interior. The councils are opposed by most tribes but they are the only voice the Federal Government recognises and they are empowered to do nothing but sell or lease tribal lands.

BIG MOUNTAIN

Big Mountain is one community in the Black Mesa region of the Navaho Reservation where today hundreds of Dine families live. (Dine is the Navaho name for themselves). Peabody Coal wants to expand it's Black Mesa strip-mining operation which would entail the forced removal of the Dines. In 1974 a fabricated dispute between Navaho and Hopi Indians resulted in Congress passing Public Law 93-531 which mandated the relocation of 10,000 Dine people and secured title for the execution of mineral development leases on Black Mesa. Public Law 93-531 was the capstone of decades of lies and deceit and the plight of thousands of relocated Dines has been one of homelessness and deprivation.

Peabody Coal and the U.S Government have maintained a public face that none of the suffering is happening. The relocation has gone very slowly but things are now coming to a head. The Bush administration wants it all sorted out because Peabody Coal had negotiated big deals with Japan which require immediate expansion. It looks like the axe will fall in the summer of '92 and the dramatic increase in harassment of people on the land last autumn bears this out.

PINE RIDGE and LEONARD PELTIER

The Pine Ridge Sioux reservation in South Dakota sits on top of the largest Uranium deposits in the US. Despite longstanding opposition to Uranium mining by the traditional Lakotas, in the early 70's the tribal council headed by Dick Wilson favoured mining and murdered and assaulted it's opponents. The situation led to the Lakotas asking the American Indian Movement (AIM) for help resulting in the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973. In the next few years scores of Indian people at Pine Ridge were killed and hundreds more attacked. Despite maintaining it's highest ratio of agents to civilians in the US in Pine Ridge, the FBI were providing Wilson's vigilantes with information about AIM members and with assault weapons.

On June 25th 1975 when two FBI agents opened fire on an AIM camp near Oglala, South Dakota, a shoot-out ensued which left both agents and AIM member Joe Stuntz dead. His death was never investigated. On the same day, Dick Wilson was in Washington DC illegally signing over one-eighth of the reservation for uranium development. Eventually, after more terror on Pine Ridge, Leonard Peltier from AIM was jailed for two life sentences for aiding and abetting the agents deaths, convicted on evidence and hearsay that the Government acknowledge over ten years ago was false.

RESIST THE QUINCENTENNIAL

Reality in Indian country means nearly total unemployment and forced relocation and sterilization. It means malnutrition, the highest rate of infant mortality and the lowest life expectancy. Crocodile tears for the past will not help the situation for Indian today. The important factor is recognising the reality today. Big Mountain and Leonard Peltier are good places to start.

To this end three co-ordinated days of action have been called:

* JUNE 26th- Anniversary of Oglala shoot-out. FREE LEONARD PELTIER

* JULY 6th - Anniversary of Big Mountain relocation deadline. Support Big Mountain.

* OCTOBER 12th- Day of action in honour of 500 Years Of Ongoing Native Resistance In The Americas.

Please send reports of your solidarity to: Support For Native Solidarity, PO BOX 2014, Seattle WA 98111, USA.

* Leonard Peltier Defence Campaign. PO BOX 583, Lawrence. KS 66044. USA

* Support For Future Generations. PO BOX 22:134, Flagstaff. AZ 86002. USA (to support Big Mountain)

MOHAWK TRIAL

After a year of court proceedings, two Mohawk warriors code-named Lasagna and Noriega (Ronald Cross and Gordon Lazore) were convicted of a total of 29 charges relating to the defence of Kanasatake Mohawk Territory in the summer and fall of 1990. On February 19th, Cross got 4 years and four months in prison. Lazore got 2 years less one month. Roger Lazore, who was tried alongside the others, was acquitted of all ten charges against him.

The remaining Mohawk 39 will soon be tried on charges of obstructing peace officers, participating in a riot and possession of firearms. Jury selection began on March 2nd and it is unlikely that the jury composition will be any different from the all-white jury that convicted Ronald and Gordon. For info on the trial, contact: AKWEKS Defense Info., PO BOX 633, Kanehsatake Mohawk Territory, Kahensatake Quebec J0N 1E0

ANTI-EXPO PROTESTS



The Expo '92 festival in Seville is another part of the celebration of 500 years of murder and theft from native Indians whose land was discovered by Columbus. The opening of Expo in April was marked by militant protests and violent police repression. There were clashes with police in the city centre (where shops were trashed), and at one of the gates to the festival as protestors attempted to enter. In one incident a cop car that drove into a crowd was attacked with baseball bats, clubs and bottles.

On Sunday 19 April, 500 people staged a spontaneous demonstration after an open-air concert organised by squatters. Police opened fire on the demo and three people were seriously injured. 37 were arrested. On the next day a bridge on the way to EXPO was blocked by a sit-in protest against police brutality.

On April 21st police raided a campsite and arrested 23 more

people, most of them from abroad. By doing so they hoped to show that there were some big violent international conspiracy against EXPO. Many of those arrested were badly beaten up.

Sabotage

Even before it opened, EXPO 92 had been hit by sabotage. The centrepiece building (Pavilion Of Discoveries) was burnt to the ground on 18th February. The Expo organisers denied that the fire was started deliberately but evidence points else where notably three other fires that have happened at the Expo site. Last November, the bridge that brings the tourists to the site, caught fire and three months ago, a replica of the first vessel to circumnavigate the globe sunk 100 yards into the ocean after launch. Another two vessels suffered mutinies mid-Atlantic.

Just three days before the official opening, another fire occurred at the pavilion of the South Pacific islands (on April 17th).

● In Italy, Centro Sociale Leoncavallo (Milan) organised a 200-strong sit-in in front of the Spanish embassy in support of those arrested in Seville. In Venice, people entered the offices of Ansa (the national press agency) and wrote slogans on the walls protesting about media silence on Seville. In Padova, an Italian flower show due to be taken to EXPO was petrol bombed.

THAT SINKING FEELING...

In Amsterdam, a new committee, Comit 'Oplossing V.O.C-ship, has proposed the sinking of a famous replica colonial ship to "show to the people of Latin America its historic awareness of 500 years of plunder and oppression of the Americas and to stress its present day responsibility for the tragic state of poverty". The committee announced that the day for the sinking will be October 12 '92, 500 years after Columbus "discovered" America. Ignoring the fact that this was just a proposal, the owners of the ship, the Nautical Museum Of Amsterdam, called the police to ask for protection. Anyway, the decision to sink the ship will be made by a democratic vote of all who think they are involved.

Since 1990, the ship has been a "floating monument of a glorious era". The committee thinks of it as a "floating insult". In order to reach a just verdict, the committee will organise a public tribunal a month before the deadline. If the public decide to sink the ship then an ad-hoc commission will organise the festivities and a demonstrative rally to march to the sinking site.

Carnivalaltro Venezia, 20th Feb. - 3rd March

A counter-carnival was held in Venice on "500 years of Indios resistance- 50 years of resistance by Venetian people against gentrification". For two weeks the free carnival in Campo S. Giacomo, with concerts, theatre performances, videos, and food saw a big turnout of people who didn't accept the sick logic of sponsored "cultural events." Berlusconi, Swatch and Reebok were the big investors in the official carnival.

The free carnival started with a student strike and demo through the town, and the occupation of a palace left empty

and abandoned for fifteen years by the council. Other demos were organised where Benetton shops got sprayed and empty buildings symbolically occupied. A government minister, De Micheli, got attacked when he happened to meet the demonstrators by chance.

Strikes

SPAIN: NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL CLASS WAR...

Miners in Spain's Asturia coalfields have replied to closure plans with a series of strikes and sit-ins. The plans cut 6000 jobs from the nationalised Hunosa mining company. The cuts are part of a "Social Progress Pact" from the socialist government which has been pressured by the European Community to reduce subsidies to Spanish mines. Two days before Xmas, all 18,000 Hunosa workers walked out and 37 union leaders (!) began an underground sit-in at the Barredo pit near Mieres. At Nalon and Condol, miners held demonstrations and built barricades to stop police attack. They fought back against the cops with metal bars and stones. After Xmas, miners from private companies in Asturias joined the strike. This led to more barricades and battles. On January 3rd, a one-day stoppage paralysed the region. A plan was agreed to by regional socialist mayors and Industry Minister Aranzadi but the closures and redundancies will still go ahead. The Unions called off the strikes but the workers continued unofficially. (Source: THE MINER - N.U.M Newspaper. 2/92)

In Lodio (in the Basque country) strikes and occupations have taken place since the beginning of March over plans to restructure the metal industry. Thousands of workers have been involved in clashes with the police. On 11.3.92, striking steel workers in from the Acenor steel plant fired home made rockets and catapulted ball-bearings at cops in protest against the closure of two plants.

Madrid was brought to a standstill for three days in February by a transport workers strike- neither buses or trams were running. The strike followed the sacking of 23 workers involved in setting up the "unofficial" self-organisation of transport workers. Faced with attacks and threats in the media and by official union leaders, workers organised meetings in working class housing schemes to explain why they were on strike and ask for solidarity.

Germany: As we go to press the future of the public sector strikes in Germany looks uncertain. Leaders of the main union OTV have accepted a 5.7% wage increase, but many workers are not satisfied. The original demand was for 9.5%. Up to 2.6 million public sector workers (including post, rail, bus, hospital and local government workers) have been involved in eleven days of strikes. Rail workers in Hamburg blocked Germany's new high speed rail line. Private sector workers have also been taking action- 400,000 engineering workers walked out for half or all day at the end of April. In some places, public and private sector workers staged joint demonstrations. In Hamburg 10,000 strikers marched chanting "Dustmen and metal workers together". So far the strikes have been largely confined to the former west Germany. However, in the last few months there have also been occupations in the east in shipyards, steelworks and the building industry.

Hungary: 20,000 health workers (including nurse, doctors, cleaners and technicians) marched to their ministry in Budapest in February in protest at IMF spending cuts and in support of a 50% wage rise.

France: dockers began a one week strike on May 11th against attacks on their pay and conditions. In Rouen, three dockers attacked the head of the freight-handling companies' trade association, breaking his nose and several ribs. In April, almost all

of the country's main ports were paralysed by strikes involving 8,300 workers. Dockers occupied and blockaded a dozen ports despite court orders against the action.

Lesbians and Gay Men

CRACKER BARREL

Cracker Barrel, a restaurant chain in the U.S, instituted a company-wide policy in 1991 not to employ "persons whose sexual preferences fail to demonstrate normal heterosexual values". 12 lesbian or gay workers were then fired from the chain. Beginning on Oct. 1st, several hundred protestors picketed the opening of a Cracker Barrel in Belleville, Michagen. The brutality of the cops who wore surgical gloves and were badgeless, set the tone for the tense weekly Sunday demos. A regular crowd of pro-Cracker Barrel people turned up with placards such as "If You're Not Straight, Get Out Of The State" and "I've Got A Cure For Aids" (picture of handgun).

During one demo when the riot cops forced the protest out of the street and into a muddy ditch, one man grabbed a cop and forced him into the ditch and then escaped. The next week he was singled out by mounted cops and beaten and charged with assault. Local punks from the 404 Collective dangled donuts from bamboo fishing rods in front of the police shouting "Bad Cop...No Donut!".

The local RWL (lefties..60 members in Detroit) attempted to control the demo censuring anarchists and radical faeries for holding a same-sex kiss-in and for dancing in a circle singing "Cracker Barrel is falling down, falling down, my fair faggot". Eventually the regular pickets dwindled from the weight of an injunction against the queer liberation activists and cop violence plus from internal fights (with the lefties!).

Other pickets were held in Georgia, Illinois and Tennessee and Queer Nation is being sued for \$5000 for protests in Chicago and Detroit. Cracker Barrel retracted the directive although most employees were not re-hired.

● In March Queer Nation demonstrated outside the Academy Awards ceremony in protest at Hollywood's distorted depictions of lesbians and gay men. Riot police, many on horses, guarded the Los Angeles Civic Centre Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Eleven people were arrested, as bottles, rocks and water balloons were thrown at the red carpeted entrance and the police.

Women

A million women march! USA Washington

Nearly a million people, mostly women, marched on Washington April 5 to demand full reproductive rights for all women. It was the most massive pro-choice demonstration ever, and one of the biggest civil rights marches in U.S. history.

The participation of young women was especially noteworthy. They came from communities and campuses across the country, in buses and cars, by the dozens and hundreds. Clearly angry at the threat to their right to control their own

bodies, they infused the huge protest with a sense of urgency and militancy.

The action came just as the Supreme Court is about to hear oral arguments on a Pennsylvania law. The case could result in a ruling to overturn the High Court's 1973 decision in *Roe vs. Wade* that established abortion as a "fundamental" constitutional right.

As it is, years of attacks have already whittled away at the right to choice. Poor women in 30 states are blocked from Medicaid payment for abortion. Abortion services are medically unavailable in 83 percent of U.S. counties. Several states require parental or husband notification. Third World women continue to be subjected to forced sterilization, welfare mothers are losing their state benefits, and lesbians are faced with ongoing violence and discrimination.

Dr. Susan Wicklund was one of several physicians who spoke. After she attended the 1989 pro-choice rally in Washington, Wicklund said, she decided to commit herself to providing services for women. She rearranged her medical practice and now spends every week flying among three rural Midwest states where she is the only doctor performing abortions. Anti-abortion reactionaries have attacked her, harassed her young daughter and threatened their lives. But she said she will never stop providing reproductive medical services to women.

Bill Bell Jr. pledged his family's commitment to the struggle. His sister Becky Bell was a teenager who died from a botched abortion last year. Indiana law requires minors to get their parents' permission for an abortion. Because she was afraid to tell her parents she was pregnant, Becky Bell got a back-alley abortion that killed her. The Bells now travel the country warning that parental notification laws kill young women.

The day after almost a million people marched for choice, the Bush administration filed a friend-of-the-court brief calling for the court to overturn *Roe vs. Wade*. "In our view, a state's interest in protecting fetal life throughout pregnancy, as a general matter, outweighs a woman's liberty interest in an abortion," read the brief.



Anarchist "Black Block" banner on the Washington demo

NICARAGUA

According to the *Guardian* (1/4/92) a group of 200 armed women have set up a guerrilla group in Nicaragua called the Nora Astorga Front to fight for child care programmes, free medicine, and better housing. The group, which includes ex-Sandinista soldiers and wives of contra rebels, has yet to undertake any offensive action.