

anarchist fortnightly

Freedom

Vol. 62 No. 4

24th February 2001

50p



Hannibal dines out

The movie *Hannibal* has finally opened in the UK after weeks of hype. The Baltimore doctor now resides in Florence, where he runs a library. The film made \$58m in the US in its opening weekend, the third biggest US opener ever. Why?

The heavily relentless marketing is part of the explanation, but not all. It's not because the film is particularly good

either, as it's a disappointment after *The Silence of the Lambs*.

What it does is catch the mood of its time. As a society we have moved beyond heroes, because people are presented to us as heroes only when it suits the bosses' interests to have us look up to them. Churchill, a hero. JFK, a hero. Blair, a hero. Branson, a hero.

We know these people have brought us

nothing but blood, toil, tears and sweat (although funnily enough, never their own). And so we write off all heroes as a result.

The film has a villain in Mason Verger, but it has no hero. The anti-hero of the movie is the psychopathic killer, Hannibal Lecter himself. Capitalism's fitting anti-hero, for the anti-social way it makes us live.

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Blockade Faslane!

Over a thousand anarchists and peace activists gathered outside Faslane naval base on Monday last week to protest, as Britain's final Trident nuclear submarine entered service.

385 people were arrested during and after a blockade of the base, thirty miles from Glasgow, in what is believed to have been the biggest demonstration in Scotland since 1961. A similar action a year ago saw a turnout of 400, with 185 arrests.

Demonstrators began to assemble before dawn, and staged sit-down protests in front of the main gates of the base, which is the home of the Trident fleet. Many of the arrests were made during the first hour, in a series of police swoops on the crowd.

David MacKenzie, of anti-nuclear campaign group Trident Ploughshares, said a powerful message had been sent. "The number of people ready and willing to share in this urgent disarmament task is growing all the time."

But some activists claimed that, though the demo was welcome, it could have achieved more. "The police knew exactly what we were going to do, they got workers into the base from another entrance", said Ollie, who travelled from Manchester for the blockade. He went on to argue that actions should be "less predictable", and that lessons in organisation could be learned from the direct action movement.

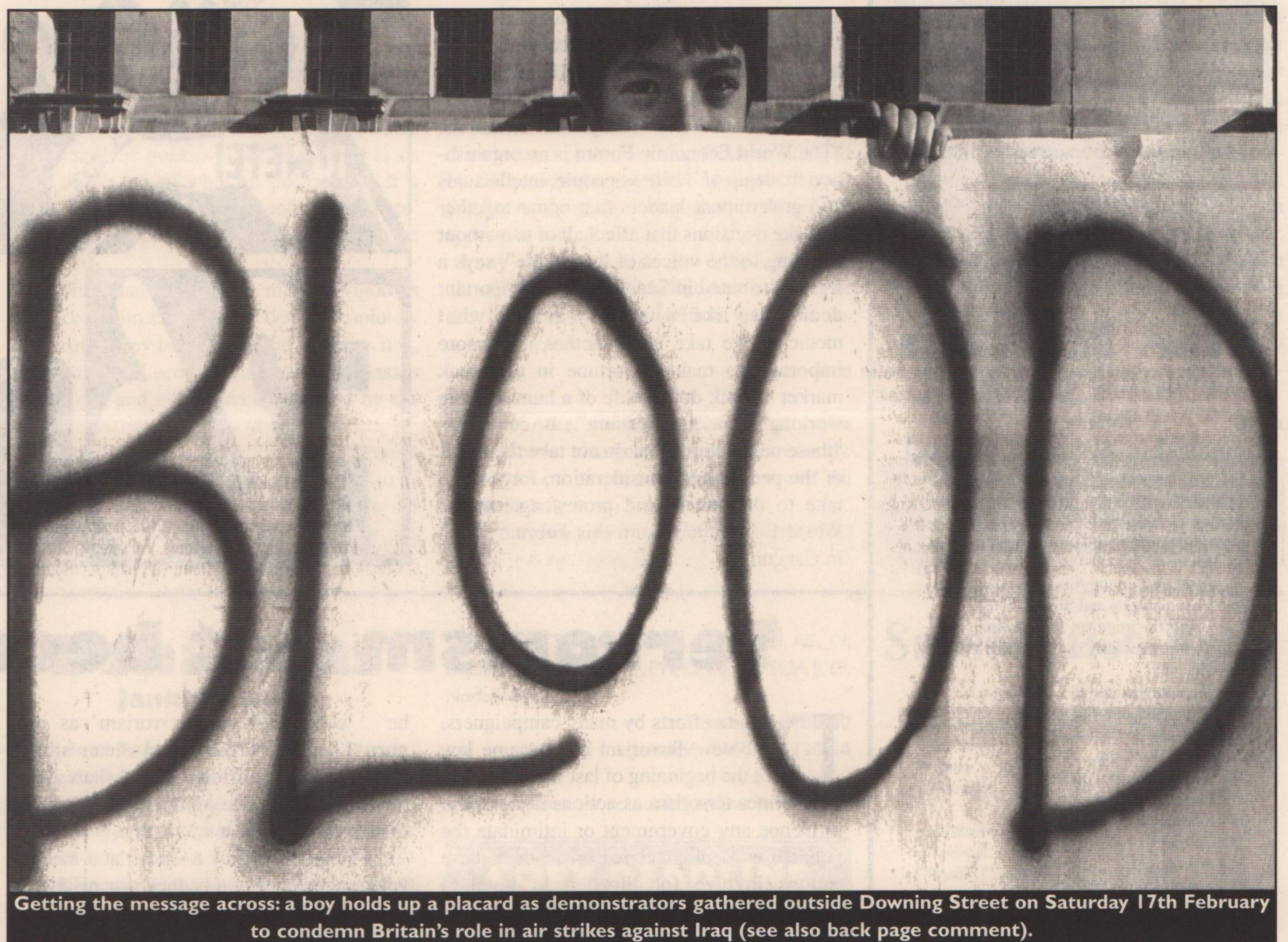
Of those arrested, all but one had been released within 24 hours. This included six members of Belgium's Titanic Trident affinity group, arrested after the blockade had broken up as they tried to cut their way through the perimeter fence.

The demonstration took place on the day the navy's fourth and final Trident missile submarine, now based at Faslane, entered service. HMS Vengeance will carry up to fourteen missiles when on patrol, each armed with eight warheads. Defence minister John Spellar last week welcomed the boat to the fleet, saying that "the officers and men who serve in her will now begin to play their part in the maintenance of deterrent patrols".

A representative of Trident Ploughshares replied "John Spellar's statement confirms our suspicion that this government's paper commitment to rid us of its nuclear arsenal is just so much window dressing".

There has been a peace camp outside the Faslane base since 1982. Three years ago, Argyll & Bute Council won a court case to evict the camp, but backed down when the determination of activists to stay became clear. Councillors are thought to be considering another attempt.

Stop the bombing



Getting the message across: a boy holds up a placard as demonstrators gathered outside Downing Street on Saturday 17th February to condemn Britain's role in air strikes against Iraq (see also back page comment).

Terrorism Act becomes law

Despite the activities of several organisations and campaigners over the last year, the new Terrorism Act finally became law at the beginning of last week.

Described by UK human rights group Liberty as 'draconian', there are widespread fears that it could be used to target and harass dissidents, trade unionists and activists who engage in activities the government, and its business sponsors, do not like.

'Terrorism' is now defined as actions designed to influence any government or to intimidate a section of the public for ideological purposes, when these actions involve (or threaten to involve) serious injury or serious damage to property, serious risk to public health, or which interfere with an electronic system.

Critics have been quick to point out the wide range of things which could fall foul of

the new law – from demonstrating against the Chinese president on a state visit to Britain, to a nurses' strike, to a mass fax of protest to embassies of a repressive regime which happens to be a bulk buyer of British armaments.

"Much political dissent, even if it was not illegal before the act, is caught due to its reactionary redefinition of terrorism", says Raif, a London-based campaigner against the act. "The Act could be used to target, harass and imprison dissidents, exiles, solidarity groups, trade unionists and protesters who engage in or support activities the government and their richer friends don't like. At a time when greater numbers of people are spurning the ballot box and turning to direct action, the act could not have come at a better time for the powers that be. But then it's more about terrorising people than it is protecting us from terrorism".

In cases where 'terrorism' is suspected (according to the new definition), the law now gives police wide-ranging powers of search and arrest. It denies those detained their usual rights of access to lawyers; it extends the period they can be held for without charge; and it shifts the burden of proof from the prosecution to the defence when cases come to court.

James Hammerton, another campaigner says "this legislation marks a serious assault on civil liberties, using an extremely broad definition of terrorism". He goes on, "these are powers a potential Hitler or Stalin would love to have on the books, on gaining office".

The new law replaces the old Prevention of Terrorism Act, first passed in 1974 in response to the activities of paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland.

See also page 2

Freedom anarchist fortnightly

"The only thing for which authority is needed is to maintain social inequality."

Mexicanos: Death to Authority!"

Ricardo Flores Magon

Anarchists work towards a society of mutual aid and voluntary co-operation. We reject all government and economic repression.

Freedom Press is an independent anarchist publisher. Besides the fortnightly newspaper *Freedom*, we also produce *The Raven* quarterly journal and many books on all aspects of anarchism. We also run Britain's biggest anarchist bookshop.

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The Raven anarchist quarterly

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Mexico's F26 actions

Activists in Mexico are preparing to demonstrate against capitalism, when the Mexican summit of the World Economic Forum (WEF) begins on Monday.

This is the WEF's first outing since its main annual meeting, which was held in the Swiss ski resort of Davos last month. The first regional summit to be held this year, it has been organised to help bring Mexico even more fully on to the globalisation agenda, following last July's defeat of the Institutional Revolutionary Party government.

"Mexico is facing a new era of alternative political power", says a WEF press release. The new government, it claims, "is committed to promoting extensive political and economic reforms and a promising future for the country".

VIPs from Coca-Cola, Compaq, Nestlé, Audi and other multinational conglomerates with Mexican operations will gather in the seaside town of Cancun, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico, to plot their next moves with leading politicians and economists.

Anti-globalisation campaigners say that their protest, which they are calling F26, will show world bosses that they can't ignore the voices of those affected by their decisions. "The World Economic Forum is an organisation made up of business-people, intellectuals and government leaders that come together to make decisions that affect all of us without listening to the voices of the people", says a flyer distributed in San Cristobal. "Important decisions, like what we eat and what medicine we take and whether it is more important to make a fortune in the stock market or suck dry the life of a human being working in a maquiladora". It continues, "these negotiations that do not take the needs of the people into consideration, force us to take to the streets and protest against the World Economic Forum this February 26th in Cancun".



Terrorism Act becomes law

Despite efforts by many campaigners, the new Terrorism Act became law at the beginning of last week. Section one defines terrorism as actions designed to influence any government or intimidate the public for ideological reasons, when these actions involve (or threaten to involve) serious injury or serious damage to property, serious risk to public health, or which interfere with an electronic system.

Opponents of the law point out that this could cover many things, from nurses organising a strike to sending a mass fax of protest to embassies of a repressive regime.

Under the Act, the Home Secretary will be able to ban any organisation he believes to

be 'concerned with terrorism' as it is now defined. This could mean simply giving support to Trident Ploughshares, next time its activists carry out a disabling action on the state's nuclear weaponry.

It is now an offence to speak at a meeting where a member of a banned organisation is also speaking. Such a meeting could comprise as few as three people, "whether or not the public are admitted". If you are the person who actually arranges the meeting, you could face up to ten years in jail. Amnesty International has attacked this provision of the Act as an infringement on the rights to freedom of association and expression.

Police have been given power to arrest and search people without warrants, when they suspect someone of being a 'terrorist'.

It has been made an offence to collect information which is likely to be useful to a person preparing an act of terrorism, or to possess information of this kind. Critics argue that this could include the address of the local hardware store, as it sells hammers which could later be used to seriously damage property.

It is also illegal now for someone to possess an article "in circumstances which give rise to a reasonable suspicion that his possession is for the purposes connected with the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism". Commentators say that this could mean anything, from a mobile phone to a tin of paint, and that in any case no action need be carried out - it is enough

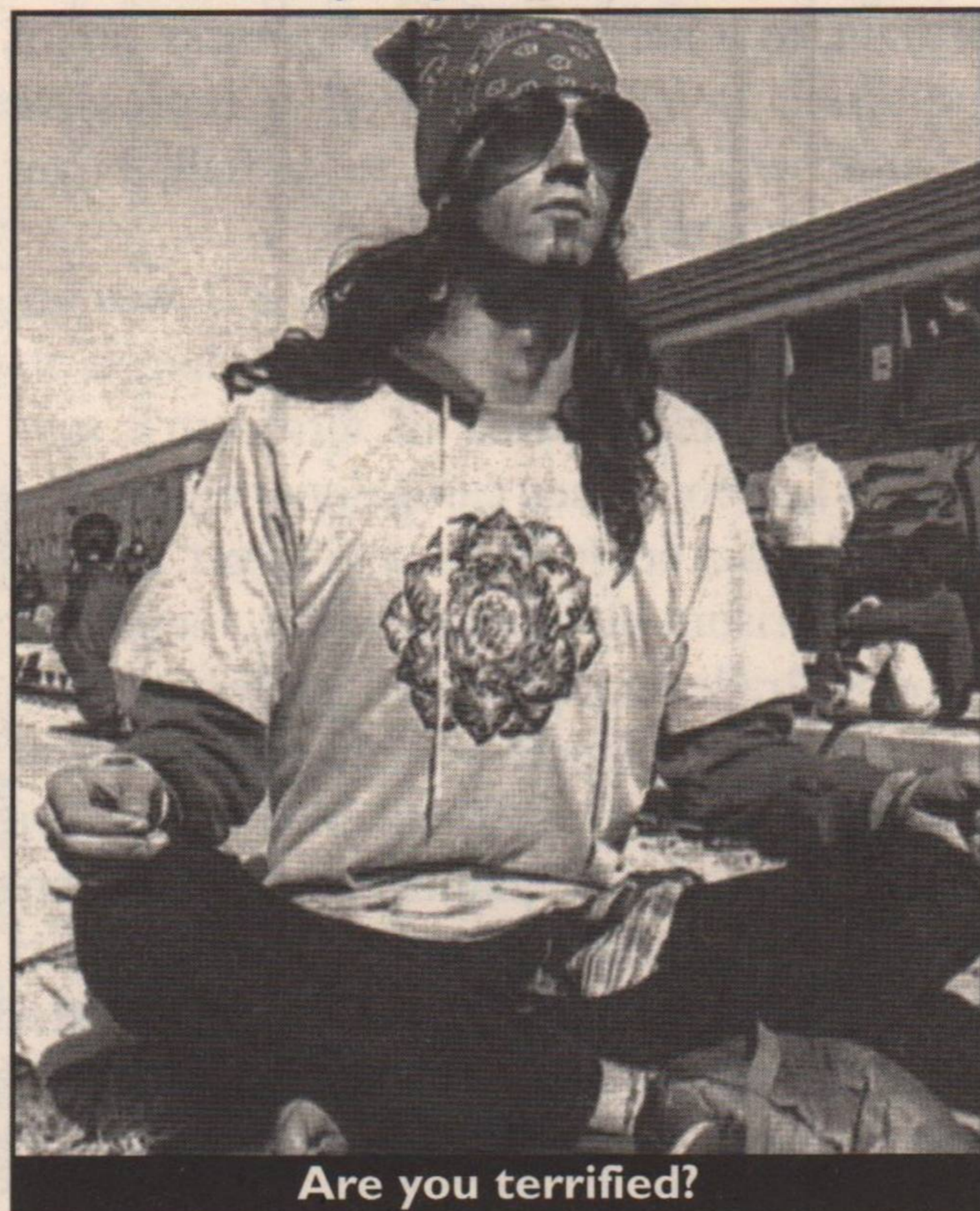
to secure a conviction if 'reasonable suspicion' existed that it might.

The Act makes it illegal to wear an item of clothing or to carry an article in such a way as to arouse suspicion that you are a member or supporter of a banned organisation. Breaking this law could lead to six months jail.

One of the most criticised aspects of the new law is its reversal of the burden of proof. British law claims to rest on the basis that defendants are innocent until proved guilty, but this certainly does not apply in offences created by the Terrorism Act.

If you are charged, you must now prove that you are not a member of a banned organisation; that you have not collected information likely to be useful to a person preparing a terrorist act; that you have not possessed an article in circumstances which give rise to a reasonable suspicion that your possession is for purposes 'connected' with the commission of such an act.

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Are you terrified?

Whoops! The report in our last issue on J20, 'Bloc march against Bush', was an edited article from *Barricada*, the monthly publication of Boston's *Barricada Collective*. The magazine costs \$3 per issue (or a six month subscription is \$15) obtainable from: *Barricada*, PO Box 73, Boston, MA 02133.

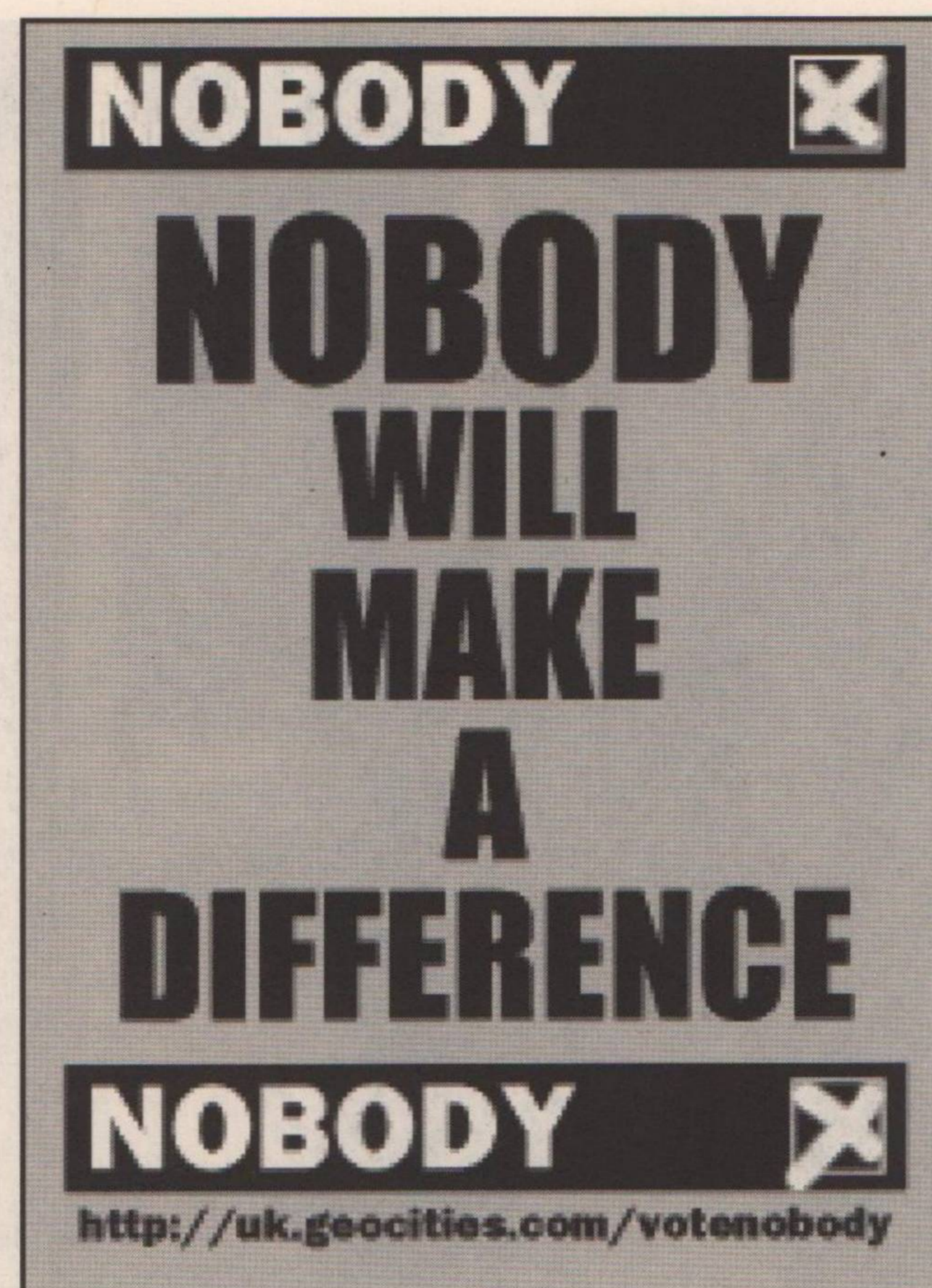
Bristol's election campaign

Trotskyists and liberals have reacted with indignation to Bristol anarchists' launch of a 'VOTE NOBODY' campaign for local elections in the city on 3rd May.

Mike Taylor, a supporter of the Socialist Alliance (a Trotskyist grouping dominated by the Socialist Workers Party), said "I think that the 'Vote Nobody' campaign is wrong to go round depoliticising people. People have fought for the vote and millions of people still believe and hope for governments that deliver left-wing reforms".

"Come and tell my Asian neighbours that voting nobody is a good idea" said Noel, a pro-voter, after detailing the activities in Bristol of the British National Party.

But members of the campaign remain committed to the anarchist position on elections, and point out that it isn't them who are depoliticising people but people's own experiences of party politics. "We are a group of people who believe that voting is useless, and only serves as an illusion in making us believe that we have a say in what happens in this country", they say. "We have the choice of voting for two practically identical political parties, otherwise a selection of



parties that know they can promise what they like as there's no chance of them winning a seat".

The campaign promises that if spoilt ballot papers outnumber votes for the winning candidates in the Easton and Ashley wards,

where they are concentrating their efforts, then the areas will be declared 'autonomous free zones' outside state control.

"The idea is not just to make a mockery out of the election (though that is obviously part of it), but if we can produce more spoiled ballot papers with 'Nobody' scrawled across them than the official winning candidate – then 'Nobody' gets in and nobody has a mandate to push their version of big business-friendly/community-bashing policies through".

They point out that Labour's 1997 'landslide' wasn't supported by over two-thirds of those eligible to vote, while the MP for West Bristol was elected on a quarter of possible votes. The councillors in both Easton and Ashley were elected with under 20% of the vote.

The campaign says "though born in Easton and Ashley, the 'Nobody' campaign knows no boundaries and carries no card. Wherever there is disillusionment with the sham of British electoral politics, 'Nobody' is ready to make a stand. After all, 'Nobody' will make a difference".

uk.geocities.com/votenobody
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Doubts on murder verdict

The case of George Kelly, hanged fifty years ago for a double murder at Liverpool's Cameo cinema, is to be reconsidered by the Court of Appeal.

The murders had remained unsolved for months, until police informers came forward to finger Kelly, known to cops as a petty thief. Despite a powerful alibi, he was convicted. His execution took place at Walton jail on 28th March 1951.

Liverpool solicitor Rex Makin, who is representing the Kelly family, says "we cannot bring the man back, and money cannot compensate. But we want justice. There was so much police malpractice then that it needs to be exposed".

Ronnie Williams, a Liverpoolian who has studied the Kelly case, argues that despite the abolition of the death penalty in 1964, there can be little real change while people are still imprisoned. In the past, he says, "the state could bury the people it had failed in unmarked graves. It can no longer do that, but a prison is no more than a marked grave for the living".

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Tate Blake demo

Police were called to London's Tate Britain art gallery last week, as demonstrators met to protest at drug giant GlaxoSmithKline's sponsorship of an exhibition there.

Around thirty people gathered for the 11th February demo, marking the last day of the William Blake exhibition. Some were dressed as chimneysweeps, angels and other characters from the artist's work.

They handed out leaflets to visitors entering the Pimlico gallery, accompanied by music and readings from Blake's poetry.

Their aim, they said, was to reclaim his work from the "dead hand of capital, empire and state" and to denounce the recently merged pharmaceutical multinational. The leaflet they distributed said "the William Blake exhibition at the Tate Britain gallery makes it clear that Blake was a revolutionary as well as a visionary – yet bizarrely it is sponsored by one of the world's biggest pharmaceutical companies".

"While Blake rallied against poverty and oppression, GlaxoSmithKline is denying millions of African people with HIV access to drugs that could save their lives. In Britain and the USA, combination therapy with anti-retroviral drugs has transformed the life chances of people with HIV. But of the world's 34 million people infected with HIV, 25 million live in sub-Saharan Africa – and only 25,000 Africans (0.001% of those infected) receive the drugs. The reason is that they and their governments cannot afford to pay the market price for them. Anti-retroviral drugs can be manufactured for a fraction of the price they are sold for by GlaxoSmithKline but this would undermine profits. That is why Glaxo and other drugs companies are taking the South African government to court to defend their 'intellectual property rights'."

The leaflet continued, "in placing their logo on the art exhibitions, corporations like Glaxo Wellcome are laying claim to the creative energies of the past. In denying life-saving drug treatments, they are demonstrating how the creative energies of all of us, including medical knowledge, are subordinated to the creation of wealth rather than the meeting of our needs".

The Tate action, which was staged the day

before a march in Cape Town to demand affordable treatments, seemed to win support from many of those who were paying the £8 entry fee to see the exhibition. One passer-by told activists that "the spirit of Blake is here on the steps".

But managers inside the gallery were less impressed and called the police. There were no arrests, but protesters were barred from entering the premises.

GlaxoSmithKline, the result of a recent merger between Glaxo Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham, manufactures anti-HIV drugs AZT and 3TC, given together in the combination drug Combivir.

Their resistance to cheap copies of patent drugs is supported by the British government and also by the World Trade Organisation's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement.

Barnsley jail picket

Campaigners for anarchist prisoner Mark Barnsley will meet outside Wakefield Prison tomorrow afternoon (25th February). This follows an action which was planned for Prison Service Headquarters in London on Tuesday.

Members of the Justice for Mark Barnsley campaign group planned to picket the building in Westminster just weeks after Mark was moved to Wakefield from Frankland Prison in County Durham, his twentieth move so far.

The campaign says "since arriving at HMP Wakefield, Mark has been kept in a dungeon-like, unheated segregation cell with only one blanket. A few days after arriving at HMP Wakefield, in what can only be seen as an act of provocation, Mark was told he was being put on one of the wings, in a dormitory with sex offenders! Not

surprisingly he refused and was sent back to segregation, this time on a charge".

The campaign adds "unless we increase the pressure on the authorities now, we expect things to get even worse for Mark. It is clear that this latest move to Wakefield is a cynical attempt to set him up for further punishment". The planned protest outside the prison is part of this strategy of increasing the pressure.

The campaign is also appealing for supporters to contact the Prison Service, and particularly the governor at Wakefield, to demand better conditions for Mark.

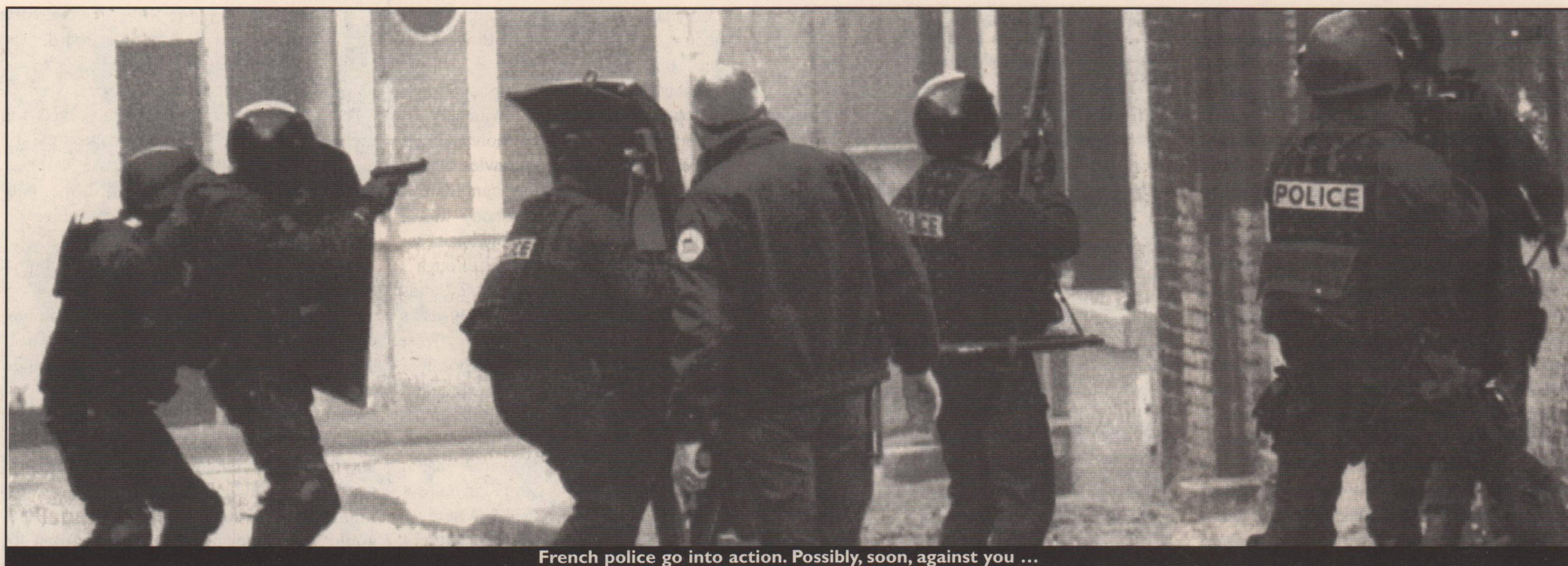
Addresses:

Governor, HMP Wakefield, 5 Love Lane, Wakefield WF2 9AG

Martin Narey, Director General of Prisons, Prison Service HQ, Cleland House, Page Street, London SW1 4LN



Europol mirror their masters



French police go into action. Possibly, soon, against you ...

European police forces have been accused of trying to turn the European Union into a police state, after a secretive meeting of several hundred senior police chiefs in Madrid.

While their masters from business and politics rubbed shoulders at the Swiss meeting of the World Economic Forum, police bosses from every state of the EU snuggled down at the Canillas police base to discuss their response to what they referred to as 'terrorism'.

Although the conference passed directives which will steer European policing in the years ahead, it has so far attracted almost no

attention in the mainstream media, even within Spain itself.

Spanish Interior Minister Jaime Mayor Oreja opened the conference of European police alliance Europol, describing it as "the main institution in the struggle against terrorism".

He urged his listeners to lobby politicians for the adoption of the so-called 'Euro-order', more formally known as the Order of European Search and Capture. This abolishes extradition procedures between EU states, providing instead for immediate deportation to the state where the most serious crimes

are alleged to have taken place.

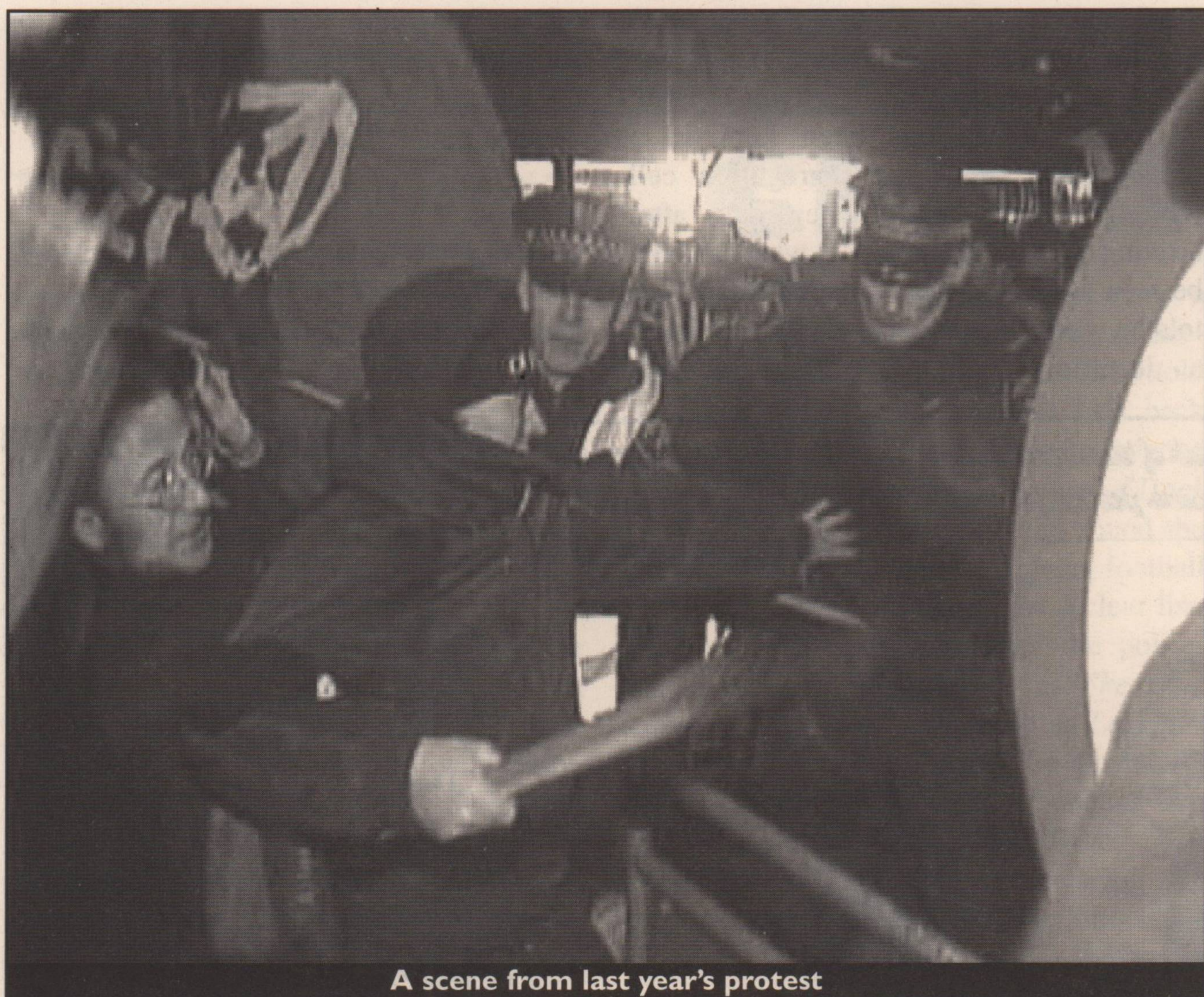
Mayor Oreja said that "terrorism is not only a group of commandos who act, but is a project that tries to root itself in society. And to combat it, it is also necessary to struggle against the social, economic, political and also communication structures which support and nourish it".

As the conference ended on 2nd February, attendees agreed a new Europol strategy for the 'anti-terrorism struggle', called the Madrid Document. This will fully implement a Spanish proposal for a joint investigation team in cases of 'anarchist terrorism'.

Spanish radical journalist Endika Zulueta condemns the new plans, pointing out that for the first time "groups called 'radicals' or 'anarchists' officially enter into the field of activity of Europol. It is not chance that this happened immediately after the anti-globalisation struggles which took place in Prague and Davos".

Endika points out that from now on – so far as Europol is concerned, and in parallel to the UK's new Terrorism Act – "a political project which is based on radically dissenting political activity, even if not violent in any way can qualify as terrorism".

Charity protest



A scene from last year's protest

Members of the Polish Anarchist Federation (FA, or Federacja Anarchistyczna) are planning their annual demonstration against a banquet in the Polish city of Krakow next week.

Anarchists have protested at the charity gala, organised by the city government and local businesses, for the last eight years. "The banquet is organised every year by prominent capitalists and other scum who have power in Krakow, to show a spectacle of charity to the population", say the FA.

"It's a pity the food served at these banquets costs ten times more than the funds raised for the poor! People wouldn't need to live on the scraps from the table of the

wealthy if they didn't spend all their lives stealing from the poor".

The Krakow branch of the Federation will picket the event and publicise the activities of its sponsors in union-busting, misappropriation of public funds and mistreatment of employees. In previous years, they have also organised free food distributions to homeless people.

City police are expected to take a dim view of the proceedings, however. At the 2000 event, riot cops turned out in large numbers, leading to violence and many arrests. The FA says that many of its members still have suspended prison sentences hanging over them.

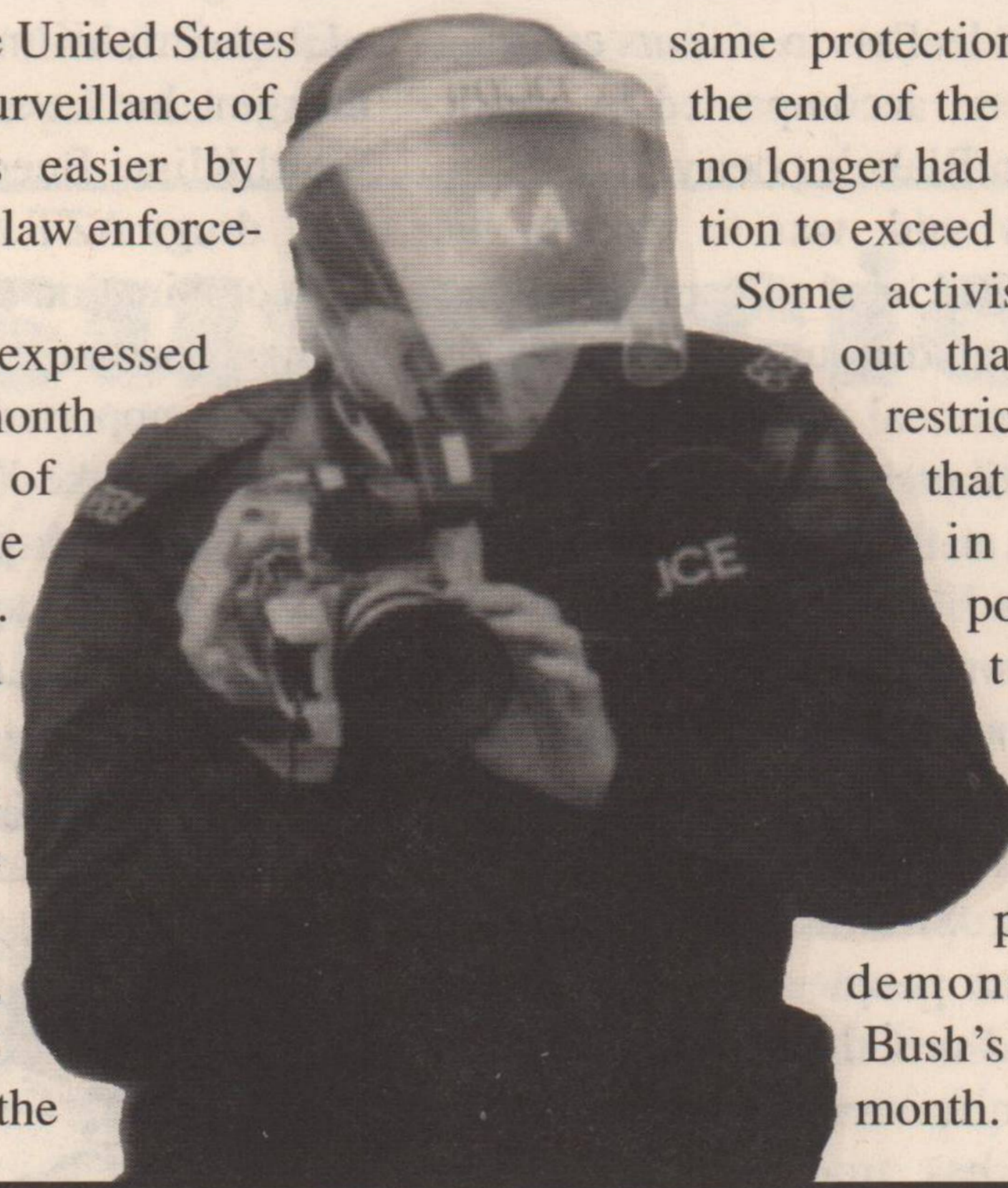
Watching US

A federal court in the United States has made police surveillance of political activists easier by easing legal restrictions on law enforcement agencies.

Legal observers have expressed alarm at the decision last month by the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, relating to the Chicago police department.

The restrictions were in place in 1981, after revelations of anti-communist police surveillance in the 1970s.

Explaining their decision, the judges said that US citizens no longer needed the



same protection, because since the end of the Cold War police no longer had the same motivation to exceed their powers.

Some activists have pointed out that the abolished restrictions never gave that much protection in any case, as police in Washington DC have boasted openly that they infiltrated the protesters who demonstrated against Bush's inauguration last month.

Gent Fair

Belgian anarchists have organised an alternative bookfair, to be held in Gent on Saturday 17th March 2001. Over thirty organisations are scheduled to attend, mostly from Belgium and the Netherlands. Britain's AK Distribution, Active Distribution and Elephant Editions will be there, while Freedom Press (publishers of this newspaper) will be represented by Zwart & Rood.

Anarchist archives have also been invited from Switzerland, Holland and Belgium.

There will also be lectures throughout the day. "We've got only one spare room for the lectures – of course we can't start as big as the bookfair in London!" says Ludwig, one of the organisers.

Contact aboekenbeurs@hotmail.com
www.xs4all.be/++verdan/aboek

Editorial on page 7

Free trade

The Australian government is backing an addition to its school curriculum, designed to teach students that free trade and globalisation are the key to their prosperity as adults.

Earlier this month, Trade Minister Mark Valie joined with Mike Moore, chief executive of the World Trade Organisation, to launch the two-year teaching programme.

Designed by trade body Austrade together with the Department of Foreign Affairs, the campaign follows recent anti-globalisation demonstrations around the world, and particularly the protests against the Pacific meeting of the World Economic Forum in Melbourne last September. It will be part of a Aus\$60m package, targeted at younger people.

Moonfriend, an Australian anarchist, told *Freedom* last week: "It sucks!"

Alternatives to education

Real Education – varieties of freedom
by David Gribble
published by Libertarian Education
262 pages, £8.95

Everyone knows that anarchy is an appealing idea that could never work in practice. David Gribble's book overturns conventional wisdom and describes anarchy in action. Gribble provides detailed case studies of fourteen schools around the world where libertarian principles inspired effective educational practice.

The variety of schools described is both wide-ranging and challenging and few readers are likely to approve of all aspects of the way each one is organised. The Tamariki School in New Zealand, for example, is happy to accept State funding whilst Sands School, Devon, prefers to rely on its parents paying fees and although the Pestalozzi School, Ecuador, provides no conventional or compulsory lessons it still refuses to describe itself as anti-authoritarian. There is a libertarian thread running through all the schools Gribble describes but he has been careful to avoid the trap of trying to extract a single ideal model.

Variety and perpetual change are essential features of healthy organisms and organisations and this is reflected in these accounts. Gribble has taken care to capture the evolution of each of these schools, which in some cases has created a different funding mechanism whilst others have radically modified their size or curriculum. Although a couple of schools have closed down even this has sometimes been transformed into a sort of radical evolution where, in the case of Dartington Hall, a new reinvigorated venture arose from the ashes.

The Barbara Taylor School, New York, had no such rebirth. It was a success for the children it served but failed to attract a sustainable mix of kids. Gribble does not shy away from identifying this as a real problem for alternative schools, which are typically reluctant to refuse entry to any kids seeking their help. Some believe the existing school

community should not be destabilised by taking on too much, whilst others believe they can't turn away individuals already rejected by the wider society.

Gribble's central task is to illustrate viable, real-life alternatives to conventional authoritarian schooling and has reasonably left extended, critical analysis to others. Numerous photographic illustrations and the inclusion of the voices of young people exploring their feelings about education strengthen the book's inspirational effect. An addendum listing the addresses of the schools described provides an opportunity for readers to seek further information from the institutions themselves.

The fact that the conventional authoritarian schools which surround us in our everyday lives continue to operate provides sufficient evidence to most people that they 'work'. *Real Education's* counter-examples go some way towards redressing the balance. There may be infinite theoretical alternatives to the present standardised, state model of schooling but an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory. In providing these inspiring real-life examples *Real Education – varieties of freedom* is worth its weight in gold.

Christopher Draper



Neel Bagh school in southern India (picture from *Real Education* by David Gribble)

— OBITUARY —

André Nédelec

André 'Dédé' Nédelec died on 15th October 2000 in France just before his 65th birthday, after long years of suffering from a crippling illness. Up to the end he maintained a lively intellect and a continuing interest in the libertarian movement.

He was one of the founders of the Organisation Pensée Bataille (OPB) tendency inside the Federation Anarchiste, alongside Georges Fontenis.

The bitter controversy over the OPB still continues to this day – was this secret group that gained control of the FA and drove out its adversaries devious and intolerant or was it an attempt by the most active in the FA members to reaffirm the class struggle and organisational bases of anarchism?

Nédelec was one of the founders of the factory group, the Groupe Makhno in the factories at Boulogne-Billancourt. He and Gilbert Devillard met in the factory in 1949 after several strikes and stoppages. Devillard was a member of the Sacco and Vanzetti group (FA) of the 5th and 6th arrondissements of Paris. They decided to start selling the FA paper *Le Libertaire* at the factory gates and at the entrances to the Billancourt and Marcel-Semhat metro stations.

There was much opposition from the Stalinists who thought the factory belonged to them. Bear in mind that this was a period of triumphant Stalinism when the Communist Party gained 25% at elections.

They sold a hundred papers on a regular weekly basis and decided to move from the normal activities of paper-selling in the Latin Quarter and the Saturday night public meetings to establishing a factory group. Two Spanish comrades of around the same age as they – mid 20s – who had been in the Argelès concentration camp, joined them. During the month long strike at Renault in 1950 they sold *Le Libertaire* at the factory gate under very difficult circumstances. They took a small quantity of papers at a time, hiding the rest in the pouches of motor scooters, as the thugs of the Communist Party were often hovering around, and they



were forced to defend themselves physically on many occasions. In the end the combined pressure of the Renault management and the Stalinists forced them to give up paper sales.

Nédelec continued to be active after the FA changed its name to the Federation Communiste Libertaire (FCL). He was imprisoned during the Algerian war as the result of an attack on the offices of the far right Poujadists. In this period the FCL was forced underground and *Le Libertaire* shut down by the authorities. As a result he experienced further difficulties. With the disappearance of the FCL Nédelec joined the Union des Gauches Socialistes which then transformed itself into the Parti Socialiste Unifiée (nearest British equivalent would be the Independent Labour Party). He returned to the Ile de Groix where he was born. As a good sailor and an exceptional metal worker, he strongly contributed to the rebirth of the coastal fishing vessels. He remained in contact with old comrades from the FA/FCL days.

Gilbert Devillard reminisces 'The Billancourt factory' has practically disappeared. There now no more production workshops where they made automobiles. I live not far from these ruins. When I frequently pass by these places where we were present, memories come flooding back. André Nédelec was present.

Adieu comrade Nédelec.

Nick Heath

A new publication from Freedom Press out now

Charlotte Wilson Anarchist Essays

edited by Nicolas Walter



Charlotte Wilson was the principal founder of Freedom Press and the first editor of *Freedom* in 1886. Like the work of her better-known contemporary Peter Kropotkin, whom she invited to England to join the *Freedom* group, her anarchist writings are scholarly, original and clear.

Nicolas Walter finished editing this compilation for Freedom Press a few days before his untimely death.

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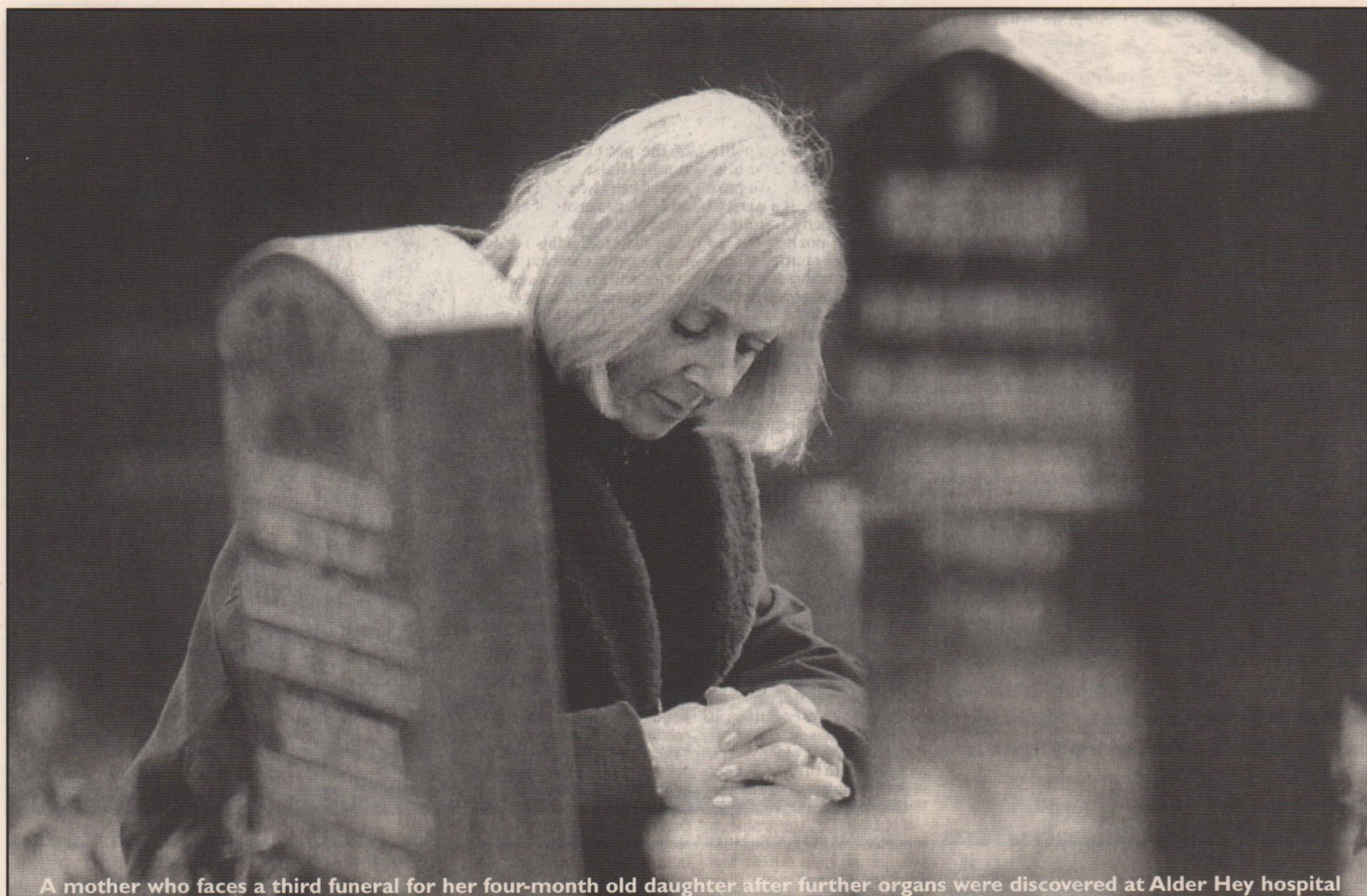
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The Bodysnatchers



A mother who faces a third funeral for her four-month old daughter after further organs were discovered at Alder Hey hospital

Undercover reporters from the *Sunday Times*, passing themselves off as mortuary staff at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, witnessed the bodies of dead babies transported between hospitals in unrefrigerated boxes. The personal effects of the dead were routinely stolen. Bodies were abused by staff as they went about their duties (*Sunday Times*, 21st January 2001). At Bedford Hospital bodies were strewn on the chapel floor, semi-covered, like battlefield casualties, because the hospital mortuary was full. The Alder Hey Inquiry, chaired by

Michael Redfern QC, was set up in 1999 because of reported concerns that human organ and tissue retention following post-mortem examination had been carried out unlawfully on a massive scale.

We now know that at Alder Hey between 1988 and 1995 (the 'van Velzen years', when the Pathology Department was headed by Professor van Velzen) there was systematic full scale removal of organs during post mortem examination.

Just as the liberal left couldn't comprehend the anger of the parents involved in anti-

paedophile protests on Paulsgrove estate, so the response to the Alder Hey inquiry has been to condemn the excesses but seek also to problematise the parents' 'sentimentalising' of the deaths of their children. The humanist intelligentsia have routinely trotted out la Rouchefoucauld's seventeenth century quote that "Neither the sun nor death can be looked at steadily" and some, such as *Guardian* journalist Sarah Boseley, suggest that the reaction to Alder Hey and the Bedford Hospital scandal reveal only our refusal to comprehend "the grim nakedness

of death" (*The Guardian*, 16th January 2001). All of this, of course, neglects to reflect on whose bodies are being abused. You can bet that the bodies left semi-covered on an unrefrigerated chapel floor weren't the bodies of journalists, or professors of public science. The bodies so routinely abused have been, always, the bodies of the poor.

As the science fiction writer William Gibson once noted, for capital we are, in death as in life, nothing more than 'meat'.

The 1832 Anatomy Act replaced the fear of 'Burking' in working class communities – murdering and grave robbing for dissection – with a fear of poverty *per se*. The Act requisitioned the corpses of the workhouse poor for the purposes of 'science'. One commentator of the time, dismissing the protests against the Anatomy Act and the New Poor Law, remarked that: "There was a clamour against the anatomists, emanating, it is true, from a frothy, democratic class, blind to their own interests, and ungrateful for the many benefits they had received from the medical profession." It is in such terms that the anger of the parents of Alder Hey and the families of the Bedford dead are dismissed by the 'humanists' of today. Fear of the pauper's grave and the anatomist's table have marked working class life for centuries. The historian Ruth Richardson, in her *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* (Pelican, 1988) comments that "the fact that the misfortune of poverty could qualify a person for dismemberment after death became too intensely painful for contemplation; became taboo. The memory went underground of a fate literally unspeakable." Alder Hey goes to show that was purportedly proscribed by the Human Tissue Act 1961, and replaced by the requesting of bodies to the state for purposes of anatomy, was carried on covertly as routine, simply because, as in 1832, the bodies of the working class are not our own, whether in life or death. Under capital, meat is all we ever are.

Nick S.

In 1949 a double murder took place at the Cameo cinema in Liverpool. A man shot both the manager and his assistant in a bungled attempt at stealing the night's takings. The murder had the Liverpool City Police baffled for some months, but eventually one name entered the frame. That of George Kelly, a frequenter of city centre pubs and known to the police as a suspected dealer in black market goods. Kelly was also known as someone who would not walk away from a fight, but he was never known to have possessed a gun. Kelly had an alibi for the night of the murder in that he was seen drinking in a pub owned by a retired policeman at the time the murder was being committed. However, on the strength of evidence given by people who were police informers – one of whom claimed Kelly confessed to him while in Walton prison – Kelly was hanged.

The Kelly case is, it would now seem, just one of a number of miscarriages of justice which have come to light in recent years, and which have been successfully challenged after campaigns on behalf of those wrongly convicted on falsified confessions or on the evidence of police informers. In another recent case, Stephen Downing was freed after serving 27 years in prison.

Anyone who has followed such cases, even from a distance, will be aware of dark mutterings from the state and its allies in the press against those who have successfully had their convictions overturned. Even those no longer alive to speak for themselves have had doubt cast upon their character by those in no position to moralise in any way. The

popular myths that police corruption is a modern phenomenon and that most policemen/women are honest simply does not hold up under closer scrutiny. People look back through rose-tinted spectacles to a bygone age when every copper was a *Dixon of Dock Green*. The urban myth of a clip round the ear and chased off home for playing football in the street persists. There was a clear line between right and wrong and the police, thanks to such film classics as *The Blue Lamp* or television series such as *Lockhart* and *Z Cars*, were never wrong. So it naturally follows if the police 'lifted' someone, then that someone must have been a baddie.

The prime mover behind securing the conviction of George Kelly was one Chief Inspector Herbert Balmer. In the years following Kelly's death, more and more irregularities came to light throwing doubt upon the conviction. Two books and a Radio Four drama-documentary have appeared and it is now almost impossible to find anyone who thinks George Kelly killed the two men at the Cameo cinema all those years ago. However, there is a school of thought that believes that as Kelly was a dealer in black market goods, he deserved everything that came his way. Who put the story out that Kelly was a petty thief? The Liverpool and Bootle Constabulary. How did they know? One of Kelly's best customers was none other than Chief Inspector Balmer. Balmer was also having a relationship with Kelly's partner while Kelly was touring the city

Clouds of suspicion

centre pubs. So, the family and friends of George Kelly have lived all these years with the idea of George's innocence of having been a murderer, but of still having the finger of suspicion pointed at him by those who have not bothered to find out the details of the case and chose to believe the police.

How much have things changed? The cases of the Maguire Seven, The Guildford Four, The Birmingham Six, Stefan Kichco, Judith Ward, the Bridgewater Four, The Tottenham Three and a host of other fit-ups all helped dispel any idea of a police force concerned

with the interests of the public.

How many more cases are waiting to be exposed? Who will be next to walk free and then have the State pass moral judgement on them and imply that 'they must have done something'? Eddie Gilfoyle? John Taft? Mark Barnsley? Rana Khalifa? Satpal Ram? Winston Silcott? Gary Mills and Tony Poole? You name them, the State will make sure the rest of their lives are spent under a cloud of concocted suspicion. Law and Order? A bit of justice would do for a start.

Ronnie Williams



People queue outside St George's Hall, Liverpool, for the trial of Kelly and Connolly

What we say ...

New Terrorism Act

When the old Prevention of Terrorism Act was first passed in 1974, we were told that it was a regrettable but necessary response to what its defenders tended to call the 'Irish troubles' (this being used to mean that the British state bore no responsibility for it).

Regrettable it certainly was, but for all its many faults (it was a crude and repressive piece of legislation), at least it was only ever a temporary expediency. So they said.

Its opponents all those years ago argued that it wouldn't work out like this, that the 'normal' law would become increasingly contaminated by the draconian powers granted by anti-terrorism laws.

The good news is that those people were quite wrong. The rest of the law hasn't been contaminated by the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The bad news is that the rest of the law is becoming more and more repressive nevertheless, only for a different reason – because it suits our political masters and their paymasters in industry to keep us under ever-tighter control.

The definition of 'terrorism' has now changed drastically. Now a terrorist is practically anyone the Home Secretary wants out of the way.

But more subtly too, the definition has changed. It's all in the name. The Prevention of Terrorism Act, we were told, was to prevent terrorist acts. Its replacement is itself a terrorist act, the act of a state determined to terrify other people. And since you are reading this in a self-declared anarchist newspaper, those other people are you ...

Vote for Nobody

Aw, pity Tony Blair. He's been moaning about how his prospects for a glorious second term are threatened by our selfish apathy in refusing to vote for him.

But Tony's mistaken if he thinks we give a monkeys. We don't. On 3rd May, or whenever an election is finally called, we won't be voting and we don't recommend you do either.

"Nobody will make a difference, vote for Nobody" as they say in Bristol. But in Bristol Nobody's name will be on the ballot paper.

Everywhere else, only Somebody will be. Voting for Somebody has got us nowhere. Somebody doesn't deserve another chance. Our advice: stay at home.

Anarchist Bookfairs

Anarchy is about action. But action uninformed by theory can sometimes be worse than no action at all. That is why we must reflect and encourage others to do the same.

This newspaper seeks to be part of that crucial process. The London Anarchist Bookfair, like others around the world, is part of it as well.

We can only welcome the news that a Belgian alternative fair is joining the club. It's starting small, but so did the UK one, twenty years ago this year. From small acorns the biggest oak trees grow, as some moralist once said. From small buds of anarchist knowledge, let mighty resistance flower.

Readers' letters

Race and class

Dear Editors,

In his letter (27th January), Mil deliberately mangles Nick S's quote in order to promote his own anti-class analysis position. He writes that he finds it odd that Nick S can say "the current debate about racism [is] 'a means of focusing our thoughts on the distribution of resources within the working class'."

The original quote did not read like this at all, it made no reference to any debate. It said "after the Macpherson Report the ideological agenda (of the state-capital connection) becomes clearer. Both New Labour and the Tories compete to play the race card as a means of focusing our thoughts on the distribution of resources within the working class, between black and white ... rather than on the distribution of wealth between classes".

Mil replaces the class analysis with the more abstract 'debate'. This is because he wants to make the point that it is inconceivable that racism can be reduced to class; a typically academic manoeuvre.

Nick S. made his assertions within the frame of an explicit politics whereas Mil gives us little indication of what his politics are, if it consists of participating in political 'debate' we must suppose he is more leftist than anarchist.

It is important that Nick S. makes a vigorous defence of himself. We must defend absolutely our proficiency in grasping the world as it is, the struggle of economically defined classes in society, and not become confused by the appearance of symptoms of this struggle.

The terms of classification and diagnosis used by Mil of (in this case) race, but also of any other arbitrary category, is precisely the form by which working class experience is appropriated by the state.

To re-use this classificatory system as a ground for a theory of liberation is absolutely incompatible with an anarchist politics.

MD

Reasons of space

Dear Freedom,

Thank you for publishing part of my letter ('Billy Edited', 13th January). Readers may have noticed that you used up to 150 words to explain your leaving out 200 of mine.

As regards restrictions on length; you published a letter of Nick S. not long ago that occupied virtually an entire half page. In the same issue he had a full page article. All letter-writers are equal, but some are more equal than others?

A pity you don't read *Private Eye's* ironic 'St Albion Parish News' which, like you, has a letters column: a Mr Prescott is always writing to this, but has his letters cut after two lines, "for reasons of space".

In my "long letter", I analysed (not described) the film to show its not being a diatribe against the Working Class (as alleged by the previous critic): for example, I cited the fun made of the Hampstead middle class types that interview Billy.

Irony seems to pass the editors by. The "hostility to gays and ballet dancers" was in the original review, which paraded its anarchist credentials.

Jonn Roe

[Editors' note: Jonn has noticed that we've made some changes to *Freedom* recently. What do other readers think of them? All opinions welcome.

What is irony, by the way? Never heard of it. Or are we being ironic?]

Inauthentic rebel

Dear Freedom,

Contrary to the claims made in your front page article (10th February), Marshall Mathers (aka Eminem) is not a man with "real talent by the bucketload". He is simply another example of inauthentic, corporate-sponsored rebellion.

Like his predecessors and successors he is a popular cultural product engineered to prize disaffected youngsters away from their pocket money and onto the merry-go-round of consumer capitalism. We should not kid ourselves into believing that he is anything more than a cynical exploitation of youthful revolt.

However, this does not mean that his crass ramblings should be censored. In fact, I think that we should resist the temptation of seeing this issue in terms of 'censorship' versus 'free speech'. Instead, it would be far more productive to examine the deeper cultural processes that create such phenomena as Eminem. After all, he does not exist in a vacuum. He is part and parcel of a celebrity culture which creates idolatry and inhibits the expression of true individuality. With the aid of corporate paymasters, mediocre 'celebrities' like Mathers twist the authentic rebellion of youth into a form that is amenable to hierarchical power. If we want to resist this, we need to smash the image factories in order to allow young people the opportunity to rebel on their own terms. Only then will they be able to develop the unfettered individuality that is the lifeblood of any free society.

Dean

Correspondents are asked to keep their letters short. The editors regret that they may have to cut letters for reasons of space.

Donations January 2001

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total for January 2001 = £259.00

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total for January 2001 = £402.00

Raven Deficit Fund

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Tynemouth, CS, £4; Mexico, JB, £10; Bristol, AC, £9; Dudley, AM, £2; London E7, PW, £3; London SE24, JJ, £9; Norfolk, BH, £2.

total = £160.00

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This completes our acknowledgements for January

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The Anarchist Alternative

Cruelty of government

Last week's airstrike by British and American forces on Iraqi radar sites, and the reports of civilian casualties, reminds us how often this paper has in the past given publicity to those who have protested against government-imposed sanctions which harm the lives of ordinary people, and those who have visited Iraq in attempts to defy the sanctions.

In our issue of 27th January we carried a report by Milan Rai on his recent visit to Baghdad as part of a Voices in the Wilderness sanction-breaking delegation, but we do not as anarchists appeal to the governments of the world to adopt humane policies.

We say that the only way to prevent civilian casualties – in Iraq as everywhere – is to prevent the situations that cause them, and we attempt to expose the nature of power politics in the Middle East.

The airstrike against Iraqi targets should occasion no surprise. Such raids have been carried out routinely for the last ten years, and the only reason for the current media publicity is the draw the attention of the public in America and in Britain to their respective leaders – in the United States President George W. Bush is having to establish himself as head of a new administration, while in Britain Tony Blair is travelling to the United States for his first meeting with the new President.

While we are assured that the raid was personally approved by Prime Minister Tony Blair, we are also told that the plans had been drawn up "over the last few weeks after a dramatic increase in the number of missile and anti-aircraft artillery attacks against American and British aircraft taking part in the combat air-patrols over southern and northern Iraq".

So the decision must, as one might suppose, have been made at a high military level on strategic grounds long before Bush was elected, and it would not have made the slightest difference who the President was. Just as it would not make any difference who the Prime Minister of Britain was – a Conservative government under William Hague or a Labour government under any other Prime Minister would have done just the same.

Britain is linked politically, militarily and economically to the United States. Mrs Thatcher's success in the Falklands War was due to US support, and she supported the use of British airbases for American airstrikes against Libya in 1986. In fact Britain is the only country allowing the US to use its airbases or fly over its territory.

Saddam's regime is no doubt a tyranny, but even were he to be deposed, the US would insist on a regime which was amenable to US foreign policy. We reject the demonising of Saddam, just as we reject Saddam's call to Iraqis to think of Americans as the aggressors. We call on Iraqis not to support Saddam, but also not to support the US-backed Iraqi opposition in exile.

And we call on our British readers not to support the Labour Party at the general election, and not to support any of the opposition parties either. To recognise that our enemy is not any external aggressor, but rather the means by which we are governed.

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Meetings & Events

London Anarchist Forum

23rd February Internet symposium

2nd March Anarchy and Women (symposium)

9th March Open dialogue

All talks are free (voluntary contribution encouraged) at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, every Friday from 8pm to 10pm. For more information see: www.trak.to/LAF or LAF@anarchic.co.uk

Forum Coordinator Steve Ash (steveash1@hotmail.com)

Secretary Peter Neville, 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth TW7 4AD

Demonstration at Campsfield

Saturday 24th February from 12 noon to 2pm

Transport pick up and offers: 11.30-11.45am outside Taylorian
(corner of St Giles and Beaumont Street)

or take bus 2B/C/D from outside Debenham's to Langford Lane

Justice for Mark Barnsley Campaign

**Make some noise at Wakefield Prison
on Sunday 25th February at 3.30pm**

'Organising at Work' – abolish wages system

Tuesday 27th February at 7.30pm

Wood Green Labour Club, Stuart Crescent, London N22

Organised by Haringey Solidarity Group, PO Box 2474, London N8

Condemn Iraqi bombings

**Protest outside Downing Street on
Saturday 1st March at 1pm**

Organised by Voices in the Wilderness (08856 243232 / 020 8554 2205)

voices@viwuk.freemove.co.uk <http://welcome.to/voicesuk>

Northern Anarchist Network

Spring meeting on Saturday 3rd March from 10am to 6pm

Bury Unemployed Centre, 12 Tithebarn Street (off The Rock)

contact: Harry on 01422 842558

Belgian Anarchist Bookfair

17th March 2001

e-mail aboekenbeurs@hotmail.com for details

Anarchist Federation Day School

Saturday 7th April from 10am to 5pm

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn

£2 waged, free or donation unwaged, disabled access

Anarchist Federation, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

e-mail anarchistfederation@bigfoot.com

Red Rambles 2001

Red Rambles walks and rambles for Radicals, Libertarians, Anarchists, Greens, Socialists, Syndicalists, et al. See <http://members.tripod.co.uk/ainema/index-2.html>

Mayday bank holiday 7th May 2001

Meet at 12 noon outside Hurt Arms Hotel, Ambergate, Derbyshire, on the A6 road (also on bus route R1 for Nottingham to Manchester, 100 yards from Ambergate railway station) for a short and easy walk four miles in length through Shining Cliff Woods. Walk concludes with a Mayday picnic, so bring food and drink to share, musical instruments, blankets to sit on, etc. Walk leader Jonathan.

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