

anarchist fortnightly

# Freedom

Vol. 62 No. 13

30th June 2001

50p



## Justice for James?

**J**ames Bulger was beaten and paint was thrown in his eyes. His body was mutilated and thrown in the path of a train. His killers were two boys, aged ten.

Now, eight years later, those boys are men, and this week they were due to be released. The tabloid press, reflecting (it has to be said) the opinions of many people, is apoplectic. Vengeance has

been sworn, and quite probably will soon be exacted. But vengeance is no way forward. Whatever the horror of the original act – and it really was horrible – the murderers were little boys from squalid backgrounds, barely literate, in trouble, in need of society's help.

The one thing the establishment does not want to ask is how two children became monsters.

Robert Thompson and Jon Venables are victims of a sick society, which none of the assorted bosses who rule our lives is going to do anything about.

Thus, indirectly, little James Bulger – the one who's been overlooked a little, in all the media garbage being dumped on Thompson and Venables – was a victim, not just of them, but of the way we all choose to live.

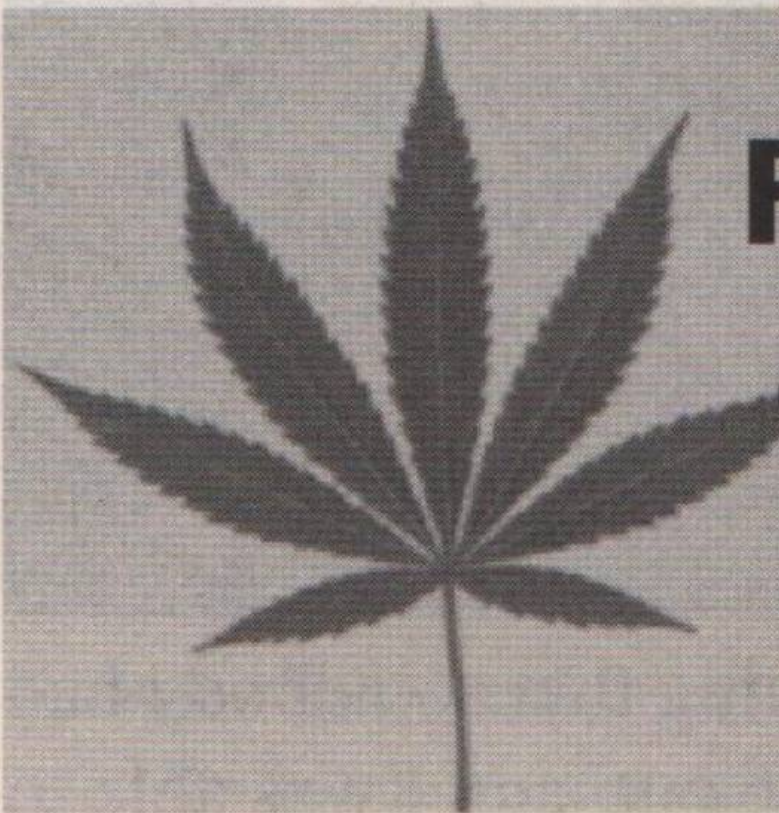


# anarchist fortnightly Freedom

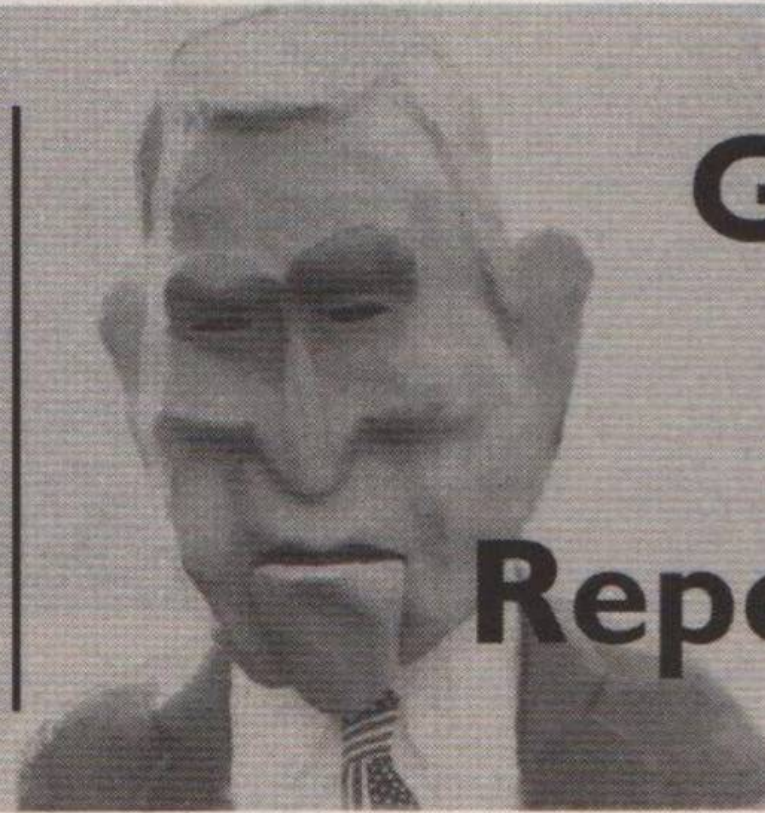
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## No turning back

**D**emonstrations were held around the world last week, as anarchists and other activists reacted with outrage to the shootings of anti-capitalist protesters in Gothenburg.

Three people, two Swedes and a German, were shot in the Swedish port city on 15th June, as they protested outside a summit of European Union bosses. One of those shot, Hannes Westberg, remained in a critical condition at the start of this week.

Tempers had flared on 14th June, after cops blockaded a school where activists were staying. This followed a massive demonstration on that day – thought to have been attended by 25,000 people – against the policies of US president George Bush, who was attending the summit during his first European visit.

The demonstrations continued on Friday 15th June, and there was sporadic stone-throwing and rioting. The shootings came after a Reclaim the Streets party in the evening.

One eyewitness said, “the mood was festive as people listened to music and danced, but it is not legal to dance in the streets in Sweden, and police chose to go in with riot gear and dogs. When one of them picked up a stone and threw it at demonstrators, the crowd became outraged and threw themselves on the police”.

He went on, “the police ran away but found themselves cornered. As the demonstrators entrapped them, the police started shooting”.

Frederik Undevik, a journalist, said, “I heard what I thought were eight or nine shots and I saw one guy fall to the floor”, he said. “There was blood coming from his stomach”.

The demonstrations continued on Saturday 16th June. Over three days of protest, twelve cops and over fifty demonstrators were wounded. Nearly 600 people were detained.

Solidarity demonstrations for activists in Gothenburg have taken place around the world. There were protests in at least eight German cities. In Dresden, this culminated in a riot involving up to a thousand people, who burned barricades and chanted ‘revenge for Gothenburg’. In London, around forty people gathered outside the Swedish embassy on 19th June. Activists from the Wombles distributed leaflets. In Coventry, members of Birmingham’s S26 collective leafletted shoppers. Other demonstrations of solidarity were held in Greece, Holland, Spain and the United States.

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### ‘I was there - this is what I saw’

**I** was in Gothenburg. This is my story and my version of what happened. The police had promised protesters that they would go easy on activists and use no violence, no horses and no dogs. The police said that they wanted to cooperate if the activists were ready to cooperate, and the activists were. They expected around 25,000 activists from around the world and they didn’t want the situation to get completely out of hand.

The city authorities rented a couple of schools to the campaign groups for people to sleep in during the night and for workshops and discussion groups during the day.

On Thursday night, police surrounded one of the schools. They had formed a line of cops and quickly thereafter built a wall of containers around the schools so nobody

could get in or out. The first reason they gave was that someone had used a slingshot to attack the police. But they changed the reason quickly, saying they suspected violence against the police was being prepared inside.

That night, about 200 activists were arrested in the school building and outside when people gathered to protest against the lock-up. So much for trying to talk things over with the authorities.

Everybody involved in the protest saw this as something very provocative and it was clear that the police had set the tone for how they wanted the rest of the weekend to be.

On Friday morning, there was a big legal meeting in the centre of Gothenburg. A lot of people were still being held by police, and activists were angry because of the brutality

and behavior the night before. After the meeting, people started to march towards the building where the politicians were having their meeting. A couple of blocks away, the police were lined up, in full riot gear, with dogs and horses, and the activists had to stop a couple of metres from the police. It was a very narrow street, and thousands of people were coming from the back. Tension was high. The cops screamed to the protesters to back off, but the activists refused. Suddenly, the police advanced. When they began to set the dogs on people, all hell broke loose.

People were running for their lives, or they picked up stones and bottles and started to throw them at the police. The police hunted the crowd, who fled in panic back to the spot

(continued on page 2)



## Freedom anarchist fortnightly

“Uh, what state is that in?”

George W. Bush

in his reply to Charlotte Church on being told that she was from Wales

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

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were the outdoor meeting was. There the clash between police and activists continued and it was very, very violent. People were attacked by cops, who were swinging their clubs at kids my own age, while people picked up stones from the street and threw them back at the police. Many kids were brutally beaten up, even people who lay down and said "I give up, don't hit me".

The police drove the crowd down on to one of the main shopping streets in Gothenburg, the Avenyn. This was the stupidest thing the police could do. People were angry, and started to smash the windows of McDonalds, H&M, Bang & Olufsen and a bank. This was widely reported in the mainstream media, and the activists were portrayed as 'hooligans and terrorists' who were destroying the city. What didn't get reported was that small businesses and cafés did not get smashed – only the big chain stores who have made a fortune by exploiting poor people and using child labour around the world.

Later that night, me and my friends went out again to participate in the 'Reclaim the City' party. The police surrounded the park, in full riot gear and with horses. Somewhere the fight between activists and police broke out and people started to run from the cops who were riding and swinging their clubs. The more militant activists responded by again throwing stones at the police. The police were driven back and then they attacked again and people fled down the



streets, but the police had surrounded the whole area and you were lucky if you got out of there. The cops were chasing people down the street and some windows were smashed.

Many people that were not participating in the demonstration were gathering around to see what was going on. And some of them started to throw rocks at the police too – people who looked quite ordinary, without black masks, throwing stones at the violent police force!

The activists advanced and started to run up against the cops again. All of a sudden, I heard a sharp bang, and then another one ... I don't know how many bangs I heard. But I looked at the police and I saw one of them holding his gun and aiming it at the activists.

I heard people screaming that somebody had been shot. Panic broke out, and I was able to escape a couple of blocks away from the scene. On my way, trying to avoid being hit (or even worse, shot) I saw random clashes with the police everywhere: in one incident, police on horseback rode over a naked man. A friend of mine too was run over by a horse and she had to go to hospital. Another friend came up to me with blood on her hands. She had been taking care of one man who had been shot in the leg. It felt so unreal ...

I was there, and I know what happened. I witnessed the whole thing, and that's why I'm writing this, to tell people not to believe everything the bourgeois media is saying.

Inga

## News in Brief

• **North West** Refugees housed in two Liverpool tower blocks were planning to picket the headquarters of the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) in Croydon on Wednesday, in protest at their treatment by the authorities. Since April 2000, NASS have sent hundreds of asylum-seekers to Liverpool under the government's 'dispersal' programme. They have been housed in The Landmark and The Inn on the Park, which they say are not fit for habitation. "The living conditions are deplorable", agree People Not Profit (PNP), a community activist group. "There are damp rooms, overcrowding, mistreatment, intimidation and manipulation by the landlords. They have also been subjected to constant racist attacks". Since their arrival in Liverpool, residents of the blocks have made hundreds of complaints, demonstrated and been on hunger strike. They say that their protests have been ignored by NASS officials.

• **Get naked** Members of the Freedom to be Yourself naked campaign group are stripping in public tomorrow, wherever they are, and they invite others to join in. The action, at 2pm, is "to encourage everybody to overcome their body image insecurity". [www.geocities.com/thehumanmind](http://www.geocities.com/thehumanmind)

• **Yorkshire** The summer conference of the Northern Anarchist Network is at Hebden Bridge next Saturday, starting at 10.30am. A range of topics will be discussed, including Mayday, recent events in Oldham, privatisation, Star Wars, Chomsky, and plans for the future. Organisers say that, as well as deepening activists' understanding of the world, they want to help nurture personal ties. "Many of us realise that giving each other friendship, support and solidarity is as important as any of our long-term goals", they say. For more details, visit <http://perso.libertysurf.co.uk/northernanarchistnet/index.htm> or call Martin on 0161 707 9652.

• **London** Campaigners against the use of compulsory treatment orders on psychiatric patients are planning to picket the annual meeting of the Royal College of Psychiatrists on Monday 9th July. This will be followed by a second picket later in the day, this time outside the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry. Campaign group Mad Pride says, "when has coercion ever been beneficial? Compulsory treatment orders force people to take heavy neuroleptic drugs, and this continues when they have been discharged because they become addicted. We're not anti-drugs, but we are wary of who's pushing them". Meet at 8am at the Royal College of Physicians annual meeting, Queen Elizabeth Centre, Broad Sanctuary, SW1; 12 noon at the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry, 12 Whitehall.

• **South Wales** The Welsh Green Gathering/Gwyl Werdd Cymru, due to be held in Llanelli's Millenium Coastal Park in August, has been cancelled as a result of opposition



from local cops. Carmarthenshire County Council refused organisers the use of the park, after lobbying from Dyfed Powys Police. "If the festival went ahead, we would be left with 25 acres of land which would be filled with human waste, diesel and cannabis,

as well as other matters which I will not go into", licensing officer, Tony Davies, was reported to have told councillors. The organisers are still trying to find another venue.

• **London** DSEI, the Defence Systems and Equipment International arms sales exhibition and conference, is being held at the Excel Centre in Docklands in the autumn. Campaign group Disarm DSEI plan "a fiesta for life against death" when the fair begins on 11th September. "Something beautiful is going to happen on the opening day", they promise. For further details, contact Disarm DSEI, PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY. See [www.disarm-trade.org](http://www.disarm-trade.org) or telephone Jo on 020-7281 0297.

• **Mayday Monopoly** The Metropolitan Police have been threatened with legal action, unless they apologise for the detention of activists at Oxford Circus on Mayday. Human rights group Liberty has joined up with solicitors representing scores of people who were held for up to eight hours. The groups director, John Wadham, says, "we have invited the police to provide us with an explanation". A representative for the police says, "the police action was proportionate in relation to the likely occurrence of violence".

• **Court cases** Two Mayday cases have finished. One person, charged with violent disorder, was sentenced to six weeks after pleading guilty to the lesser charge of using threatening words and behaviour. He also got 28 days for shoplifting. He was released soon after because of time spent on remand. Another person had a charge of violent disorder reduced to one of causing harassment, alarm or distress. After pleading guilty, she was given a six months conditional discharge. The first trial for refusing to remove a mask when ordered to do so by cops was adjourned on 18th June.



# Drug laws challenged

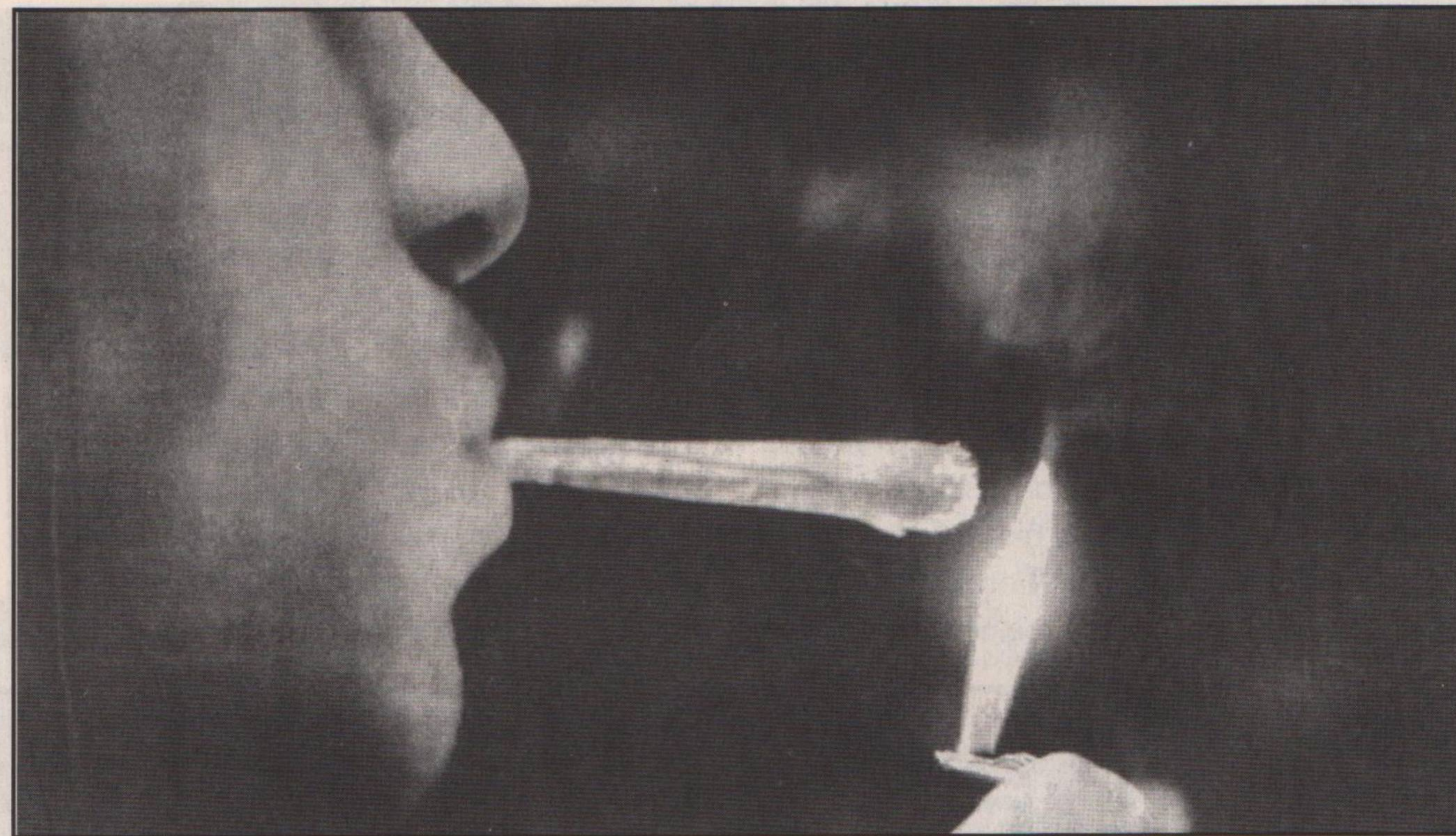
South London

Thousands of people gathered in Brockwell Park, Herne Hill, on 16th June for the annual cannabis festival. This came just days after the local top cop announced that people found carrying small amounts of the drug in the area will no longer face arrest.

The festival was attended by an estimated 15,000 people, though it was held in heavy rain. Organiser Shane Collins said that due to the weather, the event was not a financial success, but added, "other than that, it went like a dream".

The event began with a march, which left Kennington Park at 1pm, accompanied by floats. Led by a sound system, helped by a samba band, the marchers reached Brockwell Park soon after 2pm. In the park were stalls, a hemp expo, live bands and several sound systems.

The senior cop in the borough of Lambeth, which includes Brockwell Park, has ordered that from 2nd July, those found with small amounts of cannabis in their possession will receive a warning and have their stash confiscated. An arrest will only occur if the warning is refused. The move by Lambeth police is a pilot scheme which, if successful, could be extended across London. Senior officers are known to think that enforcing the law for possession of cannabis makes them look ridiculous.



## Rights case goes to court

Possession of a small amount of cannabis could be decriminalised across the UK if a court challenge under the new Human Rights Act succeeds.

A similar challenge, heard by courts in Germany in 1994, led to a change to German law on drugs.

Human rights group Liberty is supporting the defence of Jerry Ham, who stands trial at Southwark Crown Court in July, accused of possession of 1.8 grams of cannabis.

Jerry was returning to his London home a year ago from a trip, when he was stopped

and questioned by cops at the City of London's police cordon. He admitted to having the grass for personal use, but refused to accept a caution.

His lawyers will call evidence for the defence from Leslie Iverson, visiting professor of pharmacology at Oxford University. In a statement, Professor Iverson said numerous studies had shown little evidence that cannabis had long-term effects on health, that users were not prone to violence and that fears that cannabis use leads to later hard drug use were unfounded.

## Campsfield success

Oxfordshire

A protest camp, which was set up outside Campsfield detention centre, was finally dismantled last week. It had lasted for three weeks, and was organised by activists from Barbed Wire Britain, the network to end refugee and migrant detention.

The camp began on 26th May, after the regular demonstration. These are held every month, to show solidarity with people imprisoned at the centre. The campers draped banners over the fences, which read 'freedom' and 'close Campsfield'.

The protest camp was raided on 7th June, by police looking for evidence of campers' involvement in alleged criminal damage. This followed the painting of slogans on gates and walls. Road signs to Campsfield House (the official name of the centre) were also altered, to read 'Campsfield Prison'. No evidence was found, and cops went away.

Bill, an anti-detention activist from the Close Campsfield Campaign, told *Freedom* that the protest camp achieved everything he had hoped for.

"It was highly successful. Instead of the detainees knowing there was somebody demonstrating outside and supporting them once a month, they could hear us outside a couple of times a day. We'd certainly like to do it again, and we want more people to get involved" he said.

## Not so secret ballot

An anonymous letter, published in the Brighton *Evening Argus* (16th June), reports verbatim a conversation between an interviewer for a local radio station and a senior police officer, discussing the Oldham riots at the end of last month.

The conversation, which was broadcast, was taken down by the listener. We reprint it here:

**Police Officer:** Yes, we know who these extremists are, but until they actually break the law there is little we can do.

**Interviewer:** How do you know who they are?

**Police Officer:** Oh, by the electoral register.

**Interviewer:** How?

**Police Officer:** Well, they obviously need to vote to get their choice of candidate elected, so we can get their names from the electoral slips and compare them with the studs.

**Interviewer:** I'm sorry, but how can you do that? Surely the slips are not marked? Surely they are secret?

**Police Officer:** Oh no. We can check every election slip against the polling cards which are written on the stub when the election slips are torn off. Obviously, we're not interested in the three big parties – only the extremists. We have nothing to do with the majorities.

**Interviewer:** I'm sorry, I still can't believe our votes are not secret. How can you justify this?

The police then quoted some act or other which the listener did not catch.

Bob Potter

### • Election report from Norwich

The Abstain Campaign, having received 18,500,000 non-votes, is now the official non-government, in spite of the rather suspicious non-availability of their website in the run-up to 7th June. We believe this is a clear statement to those who claim to have a mandate to govern.

We don't trust you.

We don't need you.

We don't want you.

This should give encouragement to all anarchists. Maybe we should consider the next election as a vote of no confidence in the concept of government? Which we can win if less than 50% vote next time.

If there are over 18 million people who reject every candidate, then the real question must be how do we reach them with the anarchist message – something we all need to work on, I suspect.

R. Bowskill

AIN

Norwich Direct Action Forum

## Official gag on farmer

North East

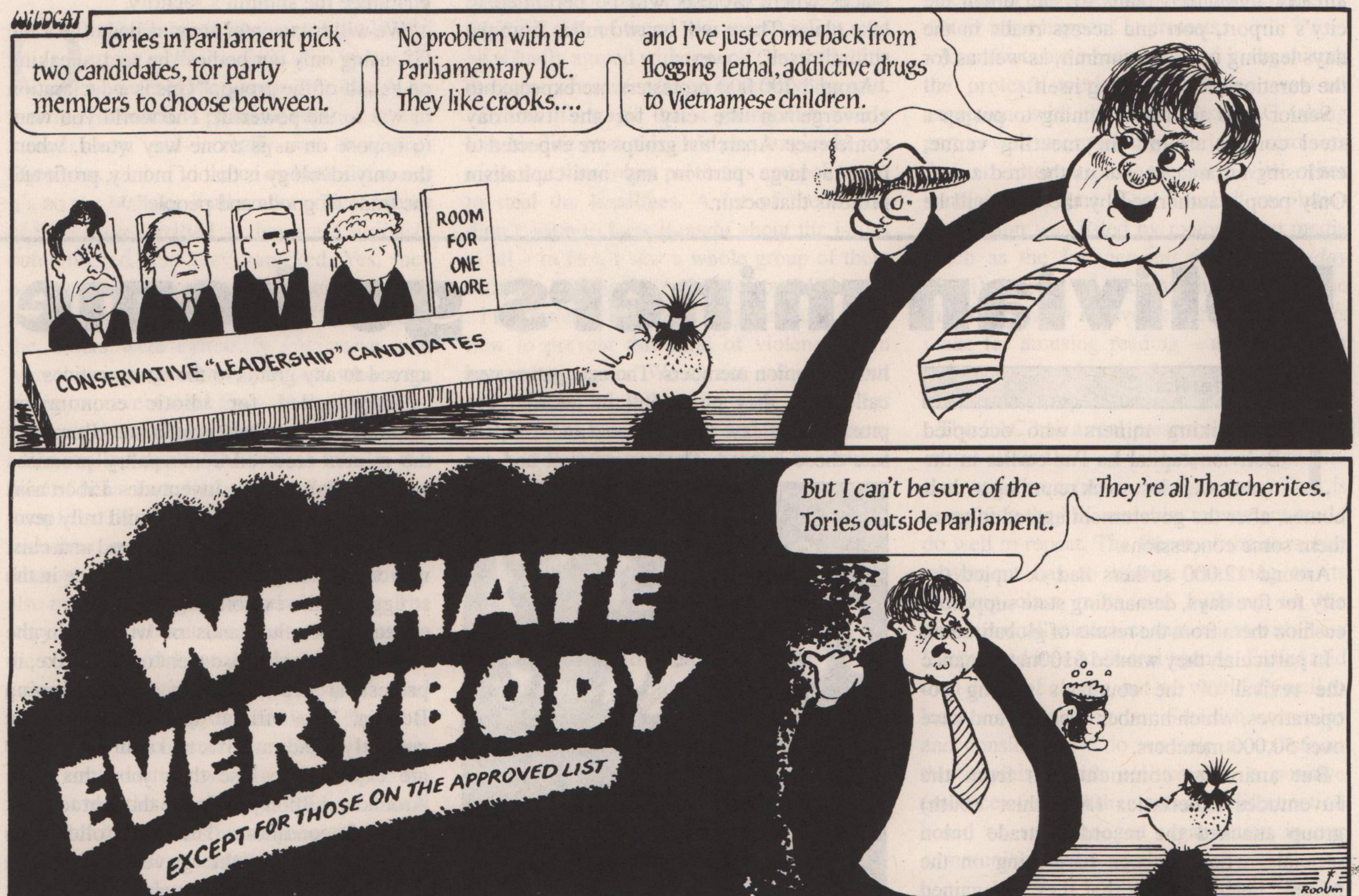
Government officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, which is now known as the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), have been accused of trying to gag Tyneside farmer Bobby Waugh with the Official Secrets Act. Bobby's supporters say that DEFRA want to silence him, after he accused them of making him a scapegoat for the foot and mouth epidemic.

It was on his pig farm, at Heddon-on-the-

Wall, that the disease was first discovered. He claims that since his animals were killed on government orders, he has been refused the official compensation he needs to pay for his premises to be cleaned up.

Now DEFRA says that he will only be given the money if he signs the act.

The government has consistently named Bobby's Burnside Farm as 'likely source' for the disease outbreak, despite increasingly widespread evidence that it was present in British sheep for months before it was found in Bobby's pigs in February.





## After Gothenberg: bosses threaten new repression

### Sweden

European bosses are threatening to introduce repressive new measures to combat the rise of the anti-capitalist movement, after the riots which marked their latest summit in Gothenburg.

Politicians and senior police from leading European states are expected use detailed police files, kept on anarchists throughout the European Union, in an effort to prevent them from travelling to countries which are hosting future meetings of EU leaders. In another move, it has been announced that

from 2002, all European summits will be held in Brussels behind tough new security barriers.

After three days of protest in Sweden a fortnight ago, bosses from Germany and France called for urgent talks on security measures aimed at preventing trouble at future summits.

Otto Schilly, the German interior minister, and Daniel Vaillant, his French equivalent, said they would be looking at a "coordinated and hard response to this new form of extremist, cross-border criminality".

Britain's Tony Blair, and Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, both attacked the actions of what

they called an "anarchists' travelling circus", and new Home Secretary David Blunkett is thought to want to prove his credentials for toughness.

An emergency meeting of Home Office and Foreign Office ministers was quickly held last week, to discuss new security measures with spooks from the so-called intelligence services. It has been suggested that a scheme similar to that used against travelling football fans might be introduced in Britain. Those suspected of involvement in 'football hooliganism' can already be required to surrender their passports and report

to police stations during periods when British football teams are playing in other countries.

The leaders of the US, Canada, Japan, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia are due to gather in Genoa next month for a meeting of the G8 group. Tough frontier checks are expected to be put in place by Silvio Berlusconi's government. Sweden's participation in the EU's Schengen Agreement, by which EU nationals can travel freely between member states, was also suspended days before the Gothenburg summit.

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## G8 summit 'may be at sea'

### Italy

Next month's Genoa summit of world leaders could be held in a military base, or on a ship anchored at sea, because of fears of protests by anti-capitalist campaigners, the head of the area's regional government revealed last week.

Sandro Biasotti, president of Liguria, also claimed that the central government in Rome was worried about possible assassination attempts on leaders of the G8 group, following events in Gothenburg two weeks ago.

"I've been seriously worried about the threat of violence for about a year, and my worries were compounded when I saw the footage of recent summits in Nice and Gothenburg", he said. "If, for security reasons, the summit were moved offshore or to a military base, I would not be shocked".

Leaders from the US, Canada, Japan, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia are due to meet in the Palazzo Ducale in the centre of the city on 20th-22nd July.

Some diplomats and officials have expressed concerns about the difficulty of public order policing in a city like Genoa, which runs along a strip of land hemmed in by the sea on one side and mountains on the other. "Genoa is clearly going to be very difficult, with all those little twisting streets, so the security is going to be very tight", said one diplomat.

The government of Silvio Berlusconi has already announced plans to shut down the city's airport, port and access roads in the days leading up to the summit, as well as for the duration of the meeting itself.

Senior cops are also planning to put up a steel cordon around the meeting venue, enclosing an area known as the 'red zone'. Only people authorised by the state will be



A Tute Bianche member in Genoa last year protesting at a biotechnology show

permitted to enter this zone by its guards.

Beyond that will be a further 'yellow zone', from which demonstrators will also be banned. The government has instead designated areas beyond the yellow zone as places where protests will be permitted to take place. These will be two miles from the summit itself, however.

Around 200,000 protesters are expected to converge on the city for the two day conference. Anarchist groups are expected to play a large part in any anti-capitalism protests that occur.

"We will block the G8", said Luca Casarini, of the Tute Bianche group. He said that the 'white overalls', as members of the group are known, were responding to a decision of the last Italian government to use the army to guarantee the summit's security.

"We will try to enter areas sealed off for the G8, using only our bodies" he said, speaking on behalf of the group. "This is a declaration of war to the powerful. The world you want to impose on us is a one-way world, where the only ideology is that of money, profit and the trade of goods and people".

## Barcelona protest

**Spain:** Anti-capitalist groups were planning to go ahead with protests against the World Bank in Barcelona this week, even though the Bank had cancelled the meeting it was due to hold there.

The meeting, which was due to begin on Monday, had been intended to improve the international image of the Bank and other institutions of global capitalism.

But many of the 25,000 campaigners who, before the cancellation in May, had been expected to travel to the Catalonian city were still thought to be planning to go there.

Organisers from Campaign Barcelona said beforehand, "we will create two different columns: one based on a non-violent, non-confrontational attitude, the other more open to different strategies". A 'popular trial' of the Bank was due to be held on Sunday, followed by a carnival. On Monday, activists were planning to congregate outside the city's stock exchange.

## WEF demo outlawed

**Austria:** Senior police and politicians have outlawed any protests in Salzburg against the meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), which is going to be held tomorrow.

The only legal place for protesters to meet will be the city's railway station, while cops trial the zoning system which is planned for Genoa later in the month (see article, left).

The Austrian border has been closed since the start of the week, after the country's membership of the Schengen agreement, allowing free movement between EU states, was suspended.

Hui, an Anti-WEF Collective activist, says, "we will still mobilise, but from now on it's a demonstration for freedom of speech and against police repression".

## Bolivian miners go home

### South America

The striking miners who occupied Bolivian capital La Paz earlier in the month were last week returning to their homes, after the government agreed to grant them some concessions.

Around 12,000 strikers had occupied the city for five days, demanding state support to cushion them from the results of globalisation.

In particular, they wanted \$100m to finance the revival of the country's mining co-operatives, which number over 500 and have over 50,000 members.

But anarchist commentators from the Juventudes Libertarias (Anarchist Youth) group attacked the record of trade union officials, who had been bargaining on the miners' behalf, saying that they had gained

little for union members. The occupation was called off, they point out, in return for a promise to release those arrested and compensate those injured. The government had not



agreed to any grants to the co-operatives.

"They called for idiotic economic solutions from a bankrupt state. Ultimately the miners received some paltry promises and crumbs", said a Juventudes Libertarias statement. "It is necessary to build truly revolutionary organisations. A renewed anarchist movement will gradually take its place in the struggle of the exploited".

Meanwhile, thousands of workers in the country's factories also went out on strike, in protest at the economic crisis gripping Bolivia. The official unemployment rate currently stands at 23%, and a further 70,000 are expected to lose their jobs this year. Around a million people are thought to work in unsafe conditions. The crisis follows the introduction by the government of a stringent liberalisation programme.

## Nigerian power strike

**West Africa:** Workers in Nigeria's oil and gas sector were set to go on strike on Thursday, plunging the country's energy supplies into chaos.

National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas (NUPENG) workers warned last week that, unless their concerns were addressed, they would down tools without hesitation.

In a further boost to the solidarity of workers in the industries, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) promised its support.

Both unions have long been concerned about increasing casualisation in the workplace, arbitrary termination of employment, and victimisation of union members.



# Summit gives food for thought

Unsurprisingly, Gothenburg was a riot. According to the *Independent*, the seeds of the riot had been sown "the night before, when police surrounded a local high school where anti-capitalist protesters were staying, making dozens of arrests". On the day itself, slabs were thrown at the police and three protesters were shot, one critically.

Tony Blair condemned the riots. "Peaceful protest is an essential part of democracy. Violent protest is not, and there is no place in a democracy for an anarchists' travelling circus that goes from summit to summit with the sole purpose of causing as much mayhem as possible."

No mention, of course, of the police actions on the previous days. Apparently the surrounding of a meeting place and attempts to forcefully enter a building by several hundred armed police does have a place in a democracy, as do numerous other police acts of repression which took place in the days leading up to the protests. Needless to say, such actions are part of the reason why anarchists oppose the current system. "The State's behaviour is violence" pointed out Stirner, "and it calls its violence 'law'; that of the individual, 'crime'."

The other, of course, is that 'democracy' in practice means the rule by a few bureaucrats and politicians who obey the dictates of big business, regardless of what the majority wants. This is clearly seen from the EU conference itself.

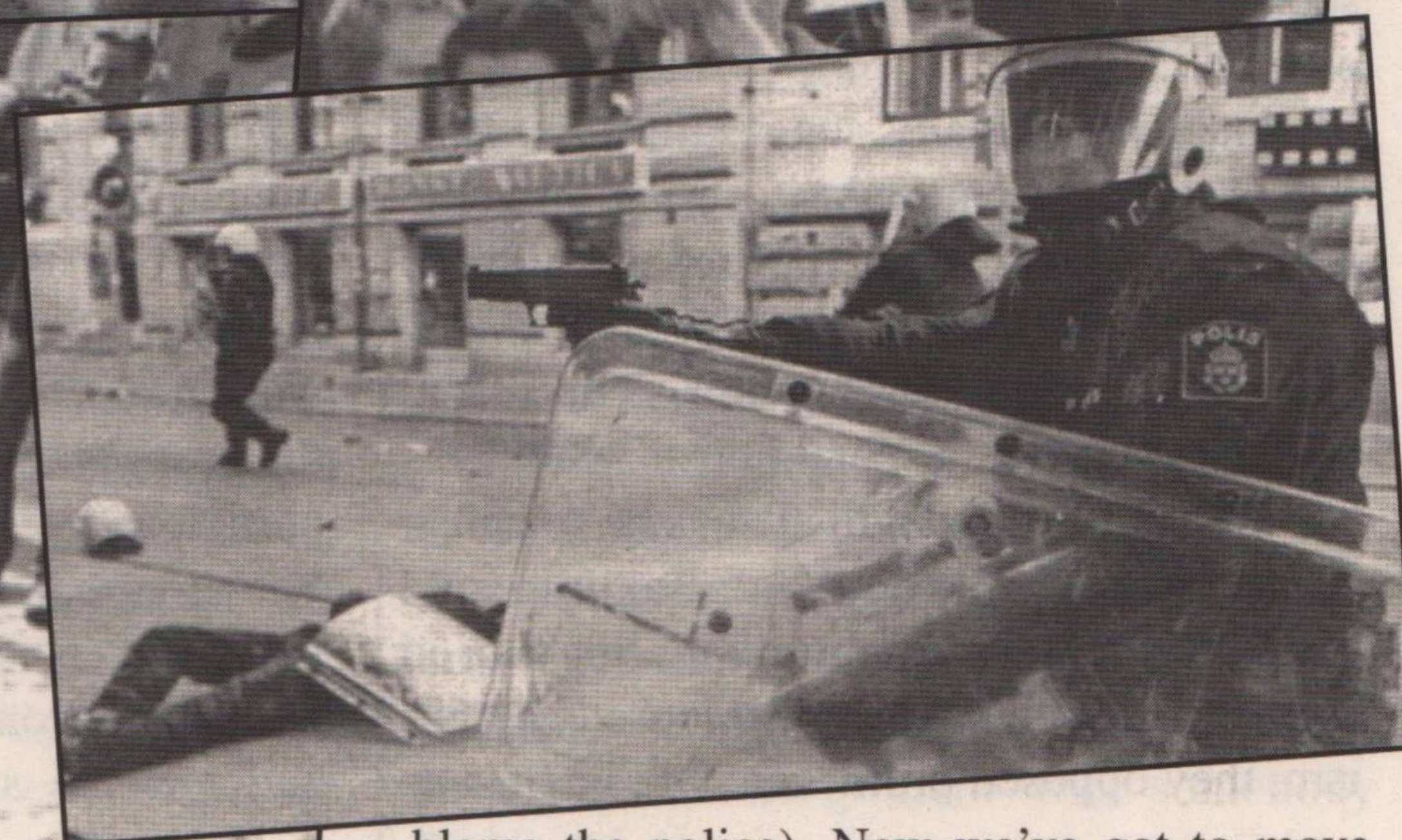
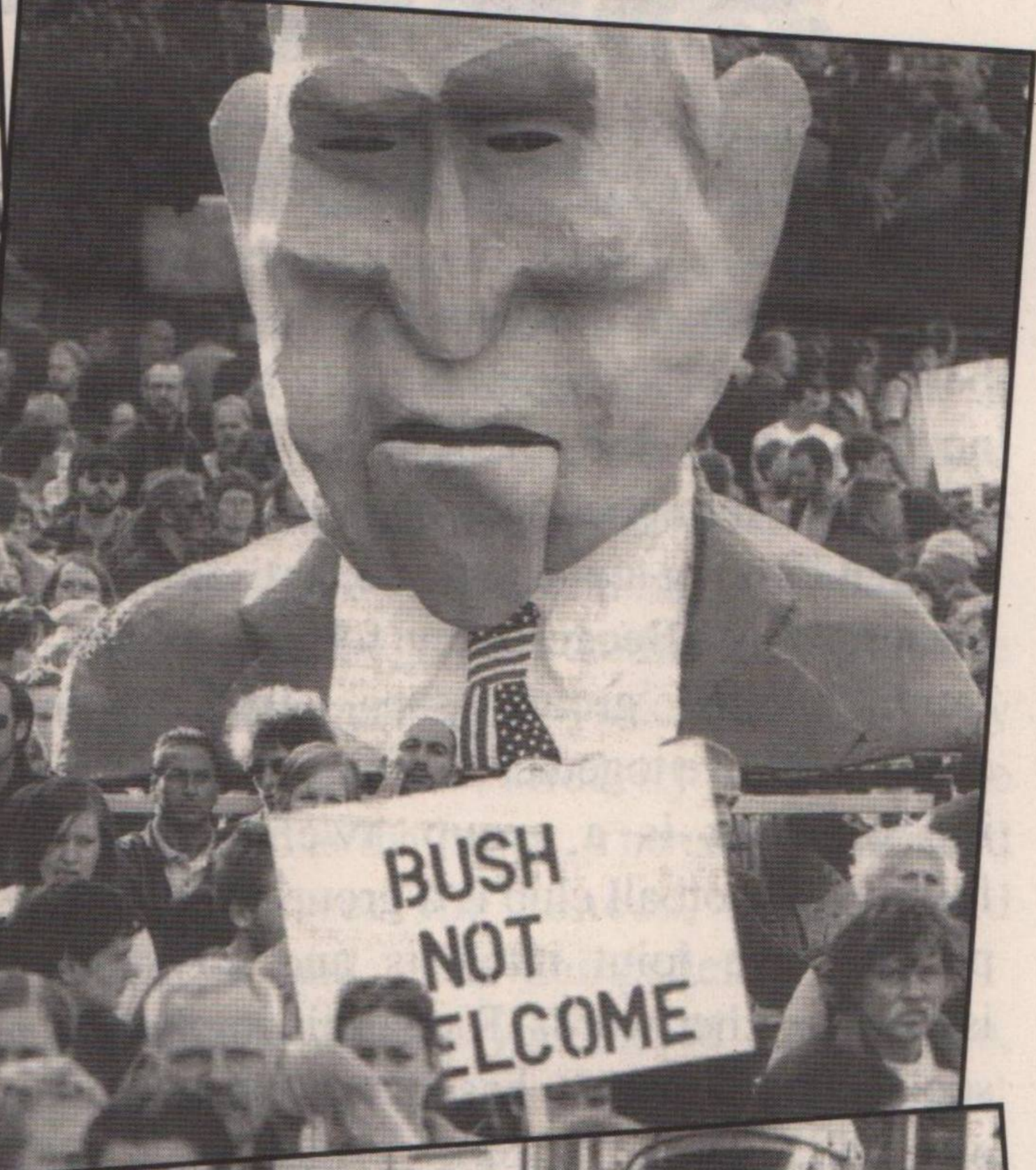
Blair, the arch democrat, said, "their actions have nothing to do with anything other than a desire to cause violence that threatens the lives and livelihoods of innocent people." Unsurprisingly, he did not tell the world how he knew this. He added that he "would like to send the clearest possible signal that such protests must not and will not disrupt the proper workings of democratic organisations."

Pretty good coming from a man elected by a quarter of the electorate. If 'democratic organisation' means 'an organisation in which the decisions of the majority rule' then, clearly, Blair has no leg to stand on.

Firstly, the majority do not make the decisions in any state. At best, the representatives elected by a majority make the decisions (under the circumstances dictated by the state bureaucracy and business interests of course). But, as Malatesta pointed out, "it is never the case that the representatives of the majority of the people are in the same mind on all questions; it is therefore necessary to have recourse again to the majority system and thus we will get closer still to the truth with 'government of the majority of the elected by the majority of the electors'." This, he notes, "is already beginning to bear a strong resemblance to minority government. Thus the EU, never mind the British State, cannot be considered as a democratic organisation."

Secondly, of course, the EU is hardly a democratic organisation, even in the narrow sense that Blair probably means. Take, for example, the Nice treaty. This was agreed at the last summit of EU leaders in December and aims to reform the EU's institutions to allow them to cope with an enlarged Union of up to 27 members. All fifteen current members must ratify the treaty before it takes effect.

At Gothenburg, the EU leaders agreed that the process of enlarging the EU into Eastern Europe must go ahead despite Ireland's shock rejection of the Nice Treaty on EU reform. "The Irish people's decision must be respected but it must not be allowed to hold up the process," German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said. Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern told the summit, "I want to make it absolutely clear that, in my view, the No vote should not



be interpreted as a vote against enlargement." Without spelling out how he planned to overcome the 54-46% defeat, Ahern said Ireland needed an "extended period of reflection" before finding a mutually acceptable way forward. Truly democracy in action – little wonder more and more people are turning to what Blair calls 'undemocratic anarchy'.

A North American anarchist wrote last week on IndyMedia ([www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org)), contrasting Québec and Gothenburg. In Québec, he noted, the area "where the protest was being held was a working-class town. Anarchist groups went door to door before the protests, and did outreach. From what I heard, people were very responsive. I saw the 'Black Bloc' marching down the street and people were cheering". He wondered if the same had happened in Sweden. Good question.

Iain McKay

On the Friday (15th June), I got caught up in a riot outside the restaurant where the delegates were meant to be meeting for lunch. A peaceful demo suddenly turned nasty, and it really was terrifying. There was a lot of violence on both sides, and it's no use blaming it all on the police – some of them were terrified as they were seriously outnumbered, and they panicked. Yes, they beat up journalists and set their dogs on innocent people – the usual stuff. But some of the rioters were extremely aggressive, and were beating up other protesters who were trying to prevent them from destroying shops. They were also throwing stones at the horses.

Personally I don't think we can tolerate this kind of behaviour. Not only were they risking people's lives by chucking bricks and fireworks around, and not only were they destroying things for the sake of it, but they also managed to hijack the whole debate. The story yet again became one of violence, while the real issues did not get aired. The violent demonstrators totally alienated the public and many of the other protesters too – the local population, who generally seemed nervous about confrontation, were in total shock.

Moreover, this is going to lead to a total clampdown on protesting in general, and our ability to protest peacefully is now seriously threatened. I also think violent protest is

incredibly exclusive – it excludes the very young, the old and the disabled – and it's worth noting that very few women participate.

Of course the police brutality was also totally unacceptable, and they were very naive in their tactics. By barricading dozens of streets with freight containers, they managed to squeeze a lot of angry people into a very confined space. Then they panicked when they found themselves cornered. A lot of Swedes are very critical of the shootings, and are also very critical of the media for being so hypocritical (refusing to provide coverage of the peaceful demos and then both condemning and sensationalising the violence.)

I didn't have much contact with the police. I interviewed one police officer, who admitted that 95% of the protesters were peaceful. I asked him if it was possible to argue that while 95% of the police force were doing their job, 5% of them, too, were violent, and he actually agreed with me (on camera!). "It's the same wherever you go in society" he said.

I think it's tragic that a young man nearly lost his life over this. It's also tragic, in my view, that the violent protesters and police get to steal the headlines. A lot of the rioters didn't seem to have thought about the issues at all – in fact, I saw a whole group of them drinking milkshakes from McDonald's!

I think we need to think very seriously about how to prevent this kind of violence from happening again. We're not talking about spontaneous brick-throwing here – it's clear that some of it was pre-planned and that there are people who go from summit to summit looking for a fight. They are a tiny minority but incredibly powerful.

The most effective protest was one in which hundreds of people in white overalls marched with tape on their mouths and their hands in the air – they claimed to be seen but not heard, forced into silent acceptance of the atrocities that are caused by global capitalism. They insisted on going out on the streets again after the shootings, refusing to allow the violent protesters and police to scare them into staying at home.

So, there was violence in Gothenburg (and again, however uncomfortable we may feel about this, I emphasise that we can't just

blame the police). Now we've got to move on. Next month is the G8 meeting in Genoa, there are other days of action to come. We need to find ways of standing up to the violent protesters within our own movement.

Angharad Jones

It is clear that any protest must have the support and understanding of the local community. If anarchists are isolated from that, then their message will be distorted and will fail to reach the people whose active participation will make real resistance and change possible. Anarchism was born in the people, and it can only be healthy as long as it remains a thing of the people. As such, international protests, no matter how useful, are no substitute for spreading the anarchist message in our communities and workplaces. After the 1990 poll tax riots, for example, there existed anti-poll tax groups in most areas which could explain what had happened and why. Only this kind of organisation and discussion can ensure that the media does not distort what happens at protests.

Anarchists have been involved in organising the protests worldwide. Sweden was no exception, with the syndicalist SAC taking part as well as organising a series of seminars and an international meeting with other syndicalist unions. The Swedish revolutionary union was listed by many in the media (such as the *Independent* and the *Sunday Times*) as part of the anarchist threat. The inevitable 'who is involved' columns always make for amusing reading – although most did manage to give the SAC as well as other libertarian groups a mention.

The SAC has a real presence in Sweden. It is, for all its flaws, a working class organisation with branches in many towns. That is something the UK anarchist movement could do well to repeat. The future of the anarchist movement has to involve returning to its working class roots and building on the obvious disillusionment that exists with New Labour and its neo-liberal agenda. Easier said than done, of course, but we would do well to learn a lesson from our Swedish comrades and consider how do we help to transform this cynicism with politics into a positive embrace of anti-parliamentarian, direct action based on self-managed organisation in our communities and workplaces.

Iain McKay



# No, Richard, we disagree

Richard says that under his system there would be no 'group issues'. Taken literally, of course, this implies that in his version of 'anarchy', there would be no forms of association at all. No groups, no families, no clubs: nothing but the isolated individual. It implies no economic activity but peasant farming and one-person artisan workplaces. Why? Because any form of organisation implies 'group issues'. Two people deciding to live together or three people working together is a group, twenty people forming a football club is a group. And these people have joint interests and so group issues. In other words, Richard is implying a social situation that has never existed nor ever will.

I doubt he is really suggesting this. Like any society, his particular form of 'anarchy' will have groups. Now, Richard was right to say in his original article (21st April) that "anarchism, is not, has not always been, and need not always be communist". But it is, has always been and will always be socialist. Anarchists like Proudhon, Bakunin and Tucker rejected communism but called themselves socialists. They opposed capitalism, they opposed profit, rent and interest as

**In recent issues, we have printed an exchange of letters between Richard Garner and his critics. Richard is a defender of capitalism who nevertheless wants to abolish the state. For this reason (and in our opinion wrongly) he calls himself an 'anarchist'. He also seems to say that in his version of 'anarchy', there would be no group issues to address, so no need for anarchist decision-making. We continue the debate here in two articles, one by Donald Room, the other by Iain McKay.**

exploitation. Their ideas automatically suggest workers' self-management of production and so the end of wage slavery (i.e. capitalism). Proudhon and Bakunin stated this explicitly, Tucker's ideas logically imply it.

There are two ways of having a group. You can be an association of equals, governing yourselves collectively as regards collective issues. Or you can have capitalists and wage slaves, bosses and servants, government and governed. As Proudhon put it, "either the workman ... will be simply the employee of the proprietor-capitalist-promoter; or he will participate ... he will become an associate." He stressed that "in the first case the workman is subordinated, exploited: his permanent condition is one of obedience" and "in the second case he resumes his

dignity as a man and citizen ... he forms part of the producing organisation, of which he was before but the slave; as, in the town, he forms part of the sovereign power, of which he was before but the subject ... we need not hesitate, for we have no choice ... it is necessary to form an association among workers ... because without that, they would remain related as subordinates and superiors, and there would ensue two ... castes of masters and wage-workers, which is repugnant to a free and democratic society."

Simply put, anarchism is based on self-management of group issues, not on their denial. Richard, by arguing that 'group issues' will not exist in his form of 'anarchy', shows that it is not anarchist. He is an 'anarcho'-capitalist, a supporter of the authority of the property owner over the worker and the tenant. In other words, private statism.

This private statism can be extreme. Henry Ford, for example, employed over three thousand private police and had his own spies (organised by his own secret police). He ensured that his employees were denied freedom of association (no unions), speech and so on. He, like other employers, could employ various private police forces to enforce their rule over their property. Yes, indeed, no 'group issues' existed, only Ford's dictatorship. As Proudhon argued, "property is despotism."

In the 'anarcho'-capitalist perspective, Ford's workers were not oppressed or exploited. They were totally and utterly free as they could leave the company and join another. Which also means that Richard is totally free - he can leave the UK at any time and join another state. No one forces him to say here. He has even described a country (Somalia) which approaches his vision. That he does not go to it implies he is happy with his current landlord (the UK state). 'Anarcho'-capitalism exists to justify tyranny by arguing that private power and authority do not count. Sadly, its faulty logic equally applies to the state.

Let us look at his example of Somalia. Ironically, Somali may be an example of 'anarchy' working, but it is not capitalist (and my source was the website he himself suggested). Rather than being an individualist society, it is based on 'group issues', namely those of the tribe/clan as well as the family. It is a society based on collective ownership of land.

Ironically, for a political theory so in love with property, 'anarcho'-capitalists do not really analyse it in any depth. They do not realise that different societies have different definitions of property and that different societies generate different social relationships based on these different forms of property. Somali tribal society is based on common (tribal) ownership of land, with individuals given use rights over specific parts of it.

The Somali people are at a turning point, it is true. Either they strengthen their communal assemblies and ownership or they will break down to be replaced by rule by the rich. This process has constantly been at work in

history (see Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* for details). Somalia may be stateless, but it is so because it is not capitalist. Once capitalist property dominates, the state will develop. It may be private bosses hiring their own police or it may be a public state, but a state will appear to enforce the power of property owners over their property (land) and those who use it. Put simply, anarchism and capitalism are incompatible.

Iain McKay

I think Richard Garner is mistaken about what anarchism means. It is said that a dictionary is an anarchist's first weapon. Dictionaries record that the words 'government' and 'anarchy' are used with entirely different meanings, which may be confused.

Anarchists want a society without government, by which most anarchists mean without any of the social institutions by which people can force other people to their will. Richard wants a society without government, by restricts the meaning of 'government' to 'standing administration', which if it were abolished would leave private property, business and all the coercive institutions of capitalism to run unregulated. Most anarchists want a fair society, where goods are produced for use, not for profit, and wealth is distributed according to need. I think it would be correct to describe Richard's views as quasi-anarchism.

One of the dictionary definitions of 'anarchy' is "lack of settled government", which is currently what goes on in Chechnya and Somalia; a population oppressed by two or more competing governments at the same time. This is not the 'anarchy' desired by anarchists. Anarchism aims for anarchy in the sense of a different dictionary definition, "harmonious society without government".

Anarchism means striving towards the objective of anarchy, a striving which is currently happening. Most anarchists hope the objective can be reached eventually, but in any case the striving itself is socially useful, if it makes contemporary society freer of coercion than it might have been.

DR

## Industrial commentary

### A sorry tale

They gave Labour millions of pounds to fight the election. Full-time officers were given time off to canvass. Adverts were placed in the national press. The day before the election, the T&G rep where I work stuck posters up on every door reminding members to vote (and vote Labour). Lots of union member's money, and time.

Labour were elected, of course, and what happened the day after the election? The very same unions started to complain about what Labour will do to the public sector, following leaks that Blair is planning to increase the role of the private sector in the running of health, transport, postal services and local government.

"There is a real sense of anxiety about the Government's proposals," said John Edmonds, GMB General Secretary. T&G boss Bill Morris, writing in the *Observer*, said, "I, for one, reject the notion that efficient public services can only be provided in partnership with the private sector. It is a belief that is fast becoming an ideology - one that does immense damage to the morale of hard-working, dedicated public sector workers".

Unions have seen membership in the private sector fall as companies such as Ford shed workers to boost profits, or (as in the case of Motorola) simply up sticks and leave the UK. Only 40% of workers are now covered by union-negotiated agreements.

Blair is obsessed with the private sector. You want a well-run school? Bring in the private sector. Hospital waiting lists going up? Hand your local General Hospital over to the private sector. Posties getting stropky? Privatise them.

As public sector union Unison has pointed out, there is no evidence that the private sector is any more efficient than the public. Quite the opposite in fact - Britain's dirtiest hospitals are 'cleaned' by private sector companies, the post office is one of the most profitable organisations in Britain. But this will not stop Blair. Hence the bleating of Morris and the others. Unions are not only worried about falling standards, they are also fearful of falling membership - the private sector companies moving in to make a fast

buck from privatised services do not encourage union membership. No wonder Unison's annual conference last week decided to launch a review of its links with Labour.

There are two things anarchists should do in response to all this. Firstly, as this column has argued in the past, push for your union to disaffiliate from the Labour Party. Secondly, if you work in a school, the post office or a hospital, get ready for a big fight ahead. Blair is ready to push privatisation further than Thatcher ever dared. He wants to beat a big union, like Thatcher did with the miners. He sees public sector unions as barriers to change and wants to take them on.

The postal workers' union at their conference a couple of weeks ago showed the way ahead when they passed a motion calling for industrial action to be taken in response to any attempt to privatise postal services. But divisions are already appearing in the labour movement, with AEEU general secretary Sir Ken Jackson publicly backing Blair. This will be one fight the unions really cannot afford to lose.

And all that money the GMB, Unison and T&G handed over to Labour to get them elected? A complete and utter waste!

### Pension scandal

It used to be that your company gave you a pension that was guaranteed. You worked so many years, earned so much pay and got a fixed pension. Workers fought hard for these rights. Thatcher gave bosses a way out by introducing personal pensions - pensions that were not guaranteed but depended on the performance of the stock exchange (with City firms, of course, creaming off their profits). In recent years, bosses have been scrapping guaranteed pensions for their workers, claiming that they are too expensive. But hey, guess what? While workers have to make do gambling their pensions on the stock exchange, it's a different story for bosses. While only about a third of workers have guaranteed pensions, two thirds of directors and chief executives do. Another case of one rule for them but another for us.

R

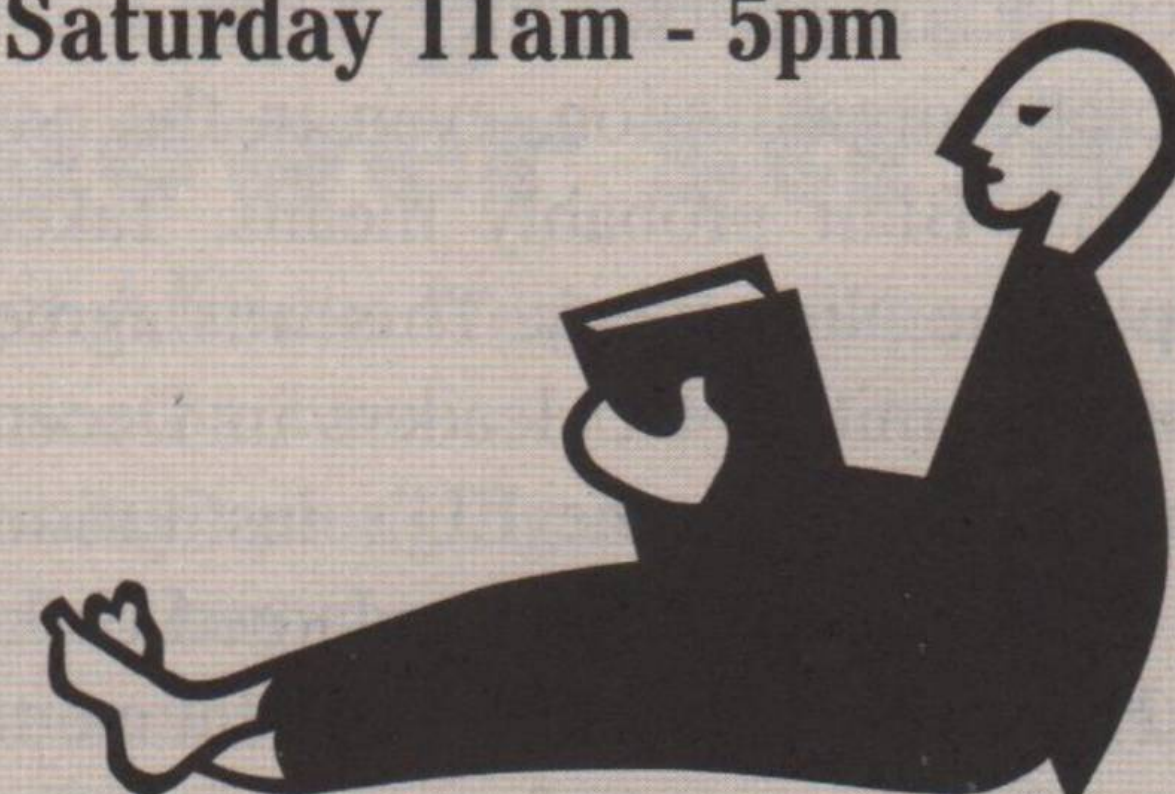
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## What we say ...

### Deadly development

There's been a terrible inevitability to the current wave of anti-capitalist actions, ever since they began, in the late 1990s. We knew they'd end in somebody getting shot, the only uncertainty was when. Tragically, that speculation ended at the European Union summit in Gothenburg a fortnight ago, when Swedish police shot and wounded three demonstrators.

Should anarchists condone violence? Can violent resistance be justified? The most common anarchist position has always been that violence in resistance is justified. So how far were the activists acting in self-defence?

In Gothenburg (as elsewhere) cops were responsible for gross and unpleasant provocation of people who were exercising what we used to be told was a 'democratic right'. The police reaction to those it doesn't suit their bosses to like has often been harsh and distasteful, and if violence is ever justified, Gothenburg would be such an occasion.

But the act of self-defence is not, by itself, enough. The state is our enemy and, despite the impression its cloddish servants often give, it's too clever for our resistance to be left to chance.

We have to ask what's next. People have been shot, but none of the politicians seem inclined to take the pressure off. Nor would we expect them to, as the anti-capitalism movement has shown up what chumps they are.

The inevitable result of the anti-protest rhetoric from Blair and his cronies is that next time, or the time after, or some time soon, somebody's going to get killed.

It's no good playing the game, as the liberals tell us to do. Be fair to the cops, they tell us, and the cops will be fair to us in return. But as we keep finding out, over and over again, it doesn't work like that. What is it, after all, that we are trying to do? We're fighting against capitalism – not just this or that effect of the alienated way we are forced to live, but against the system itself.

The state exists to keep the bosses in their palaces and the serfs at the gates. This is what the police are for, and this is what they're trying, with increasing desperation, to do.

The violent resistance of some protesters on the streets is a handy pretext for an official crack-down. But it's a crack-down that's going to happen, come what may and whatever we do. The mainstream media, owned and controlled by the same bosses the police are paid to protect, goes out of its way to paint a picture of dangerous anarchists raining destruction. This is because, when there's no factual basis for renewed repression, it's necessary to invent it.

The media manipulate the truth to create the desired effect. Sometimes they just invent it. Read the spluttering editorials, then look at the photographs their papers print. You'll notice that they tell different stories. In Gothenburg, as usual, and whatever the words of the newspaper articles say, almost all the pictures show police violence against unarmed, non-violent demonstrators.

If every single protester was as good as gold and did everything they were told, capitalism would still be under attack. That's why the bosses would still want the protests stopped. All the old guff about democracy and human rights is irrelevant.

We've got to be stopped, we're dangerous. Our enemies can invent violence, they can invent worse, and they will. There'll be a lot more lies, there'll be a lot more repression, but it has to be faced. Things have gone too far to turn back now. Be prepared for the bosses to play very dirty indeed.

## Readers' letters

### Oldham riot

Dear Freedom,

I expected you to carry an article on Oldham in the last issue (16th June); what I didn't expect was the emphasis on "Freedom contributor arrested in protest against local MP". As distressed as I was to hear of Brian's arrest, and as worthy as the protest no doubt was, I couldn't help but wonder why there was no comment on the riot there at the end of May, and the social and economic reasons behind it.

There was also no comment on coverage in the national press, that by and large was confined to alarmist reports on escalating 'race-war', and claims that "whites enter at their own risk". Just like the national press, Freedom ignored the underlying causal factors of a cycle of discrimination and deprivation that lay behind the disturbances. Disappointing to say the least.

According to police reports, 60% of racist crimes reported in the town were against whites (of course, minority communities are less likely to report racist crimes, so this is probably an unbalanced view). No comment in the anarchist fortnightly.

After years of discrimination and abuse at the hands of a system that largely ignores them, Muslim youth are fighting back. Again, no comment from Freedom. Oh well, nice pants on the front.

LW

### AF support Mark

Dear Freedom,

It was stated in Freedom (16th June) that prisoner Mark Barnsley has been 'completely ignored' by, among others, the Anarchist

Federation, with regard to his incarceration by the British state. We aren't in a position to speak on behalf of anyone else, but where the AF are concerned, a look at the facts reveals something quite different. Mark Barnsley's case has been highlighted through the AF's publications *Organise* and *Resistance* on a total of seven occasions no less, over the last twelve months. Hardly a situation of being 'completely ignored'.

Frankie Dee

AF National Secretary

### No excuses

Dear Freedom,

I must agree with Jim Huggon (letters, 5th May) when he voices disapproval at your decision to publish Jim Delaney's pro-Socialist Alliance/electoral agenda.

At the risk of sounding petulant, Freedom is first and foremost an anarchist newspaper, and as such one which should, as you say, 'generate discussion and reflection'. However, this discussion and reflection should focus solely on anarchist issues. I agree with you that 'anarchism is not a monolithic slab of knowledge to be consumed whole'. If it were, papers like yours would be superfluous. But this should not be peddled as an excuse for printing Delaney's letter. It is precisely because there is a plethora of debate that needs to be held throughout the anarchist movement (e.g. class struggle, anarcho-communism/syndicalism/individualism/lifestyle anarchism, etc.) that space needs to be provided for in a newspaper like yours.

Additionally, I don't believe the Socialist Alliance or any other group merit our 'consideration'. For the most part, anarchists have *already* considered that alternative and

declined it (or if they haven't, they can read about it somewhere else). That is why they are anarchists in the first place, and choose to buy your paper every fortnight.

Finally, it is not enough to say two weeks after the fact that you do not 'endorse' Jim Delaney's politics. Your stance may be obvious enough for you, and possibly for regular readers of Freedom, but new readers may not have been so sure. It would have been wiser to offer a substantial critique on Delaney's views in the same issue those views were made.

Alcxjo

### Plymouth appeal

Dear Freedom,

In the donations column of a recent issue, I noticed a contribution from SN of Plymouth. If s/he (or any other reader in that area) is interested in setting up a local anarchist group, I can be contacted c/o the Freedom address.

Dean

Plymouth

### Popular culture

Dear Freedom,

Having read Freedom on and off for the last twelve years, I think the new format is encouraging. Personally, I feel 'popular culture' has become such an invasive part of everyday life that we must be prepared to engage, use and subvert it. The time when it will be overthrown, along with every other sickening aspect of capitalism, will come. But for now, we shouldn't be afraid to get stuck in and get our hands a bit dirty.

Paul Hughes

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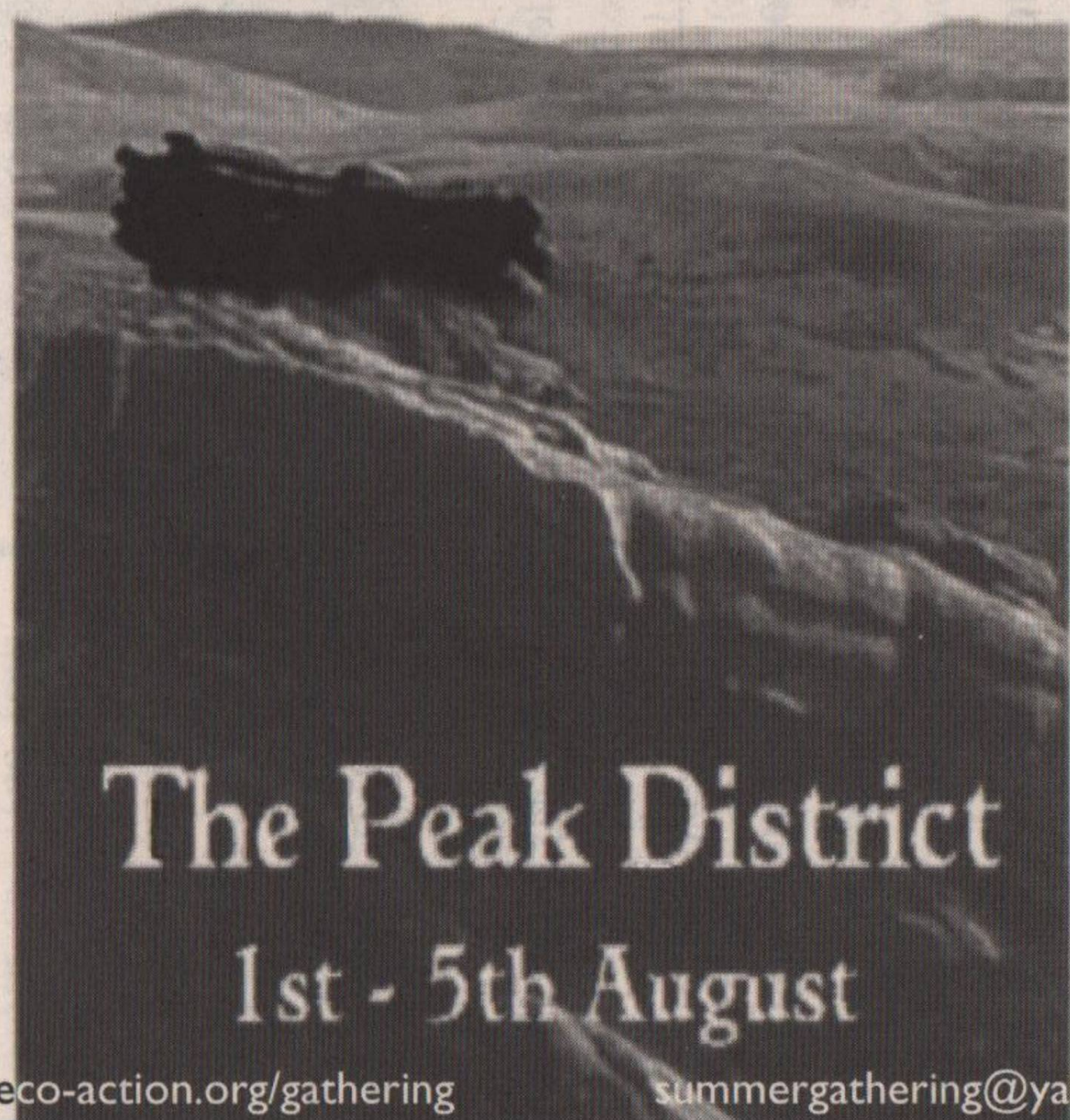
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Further info from Glenn, 020 8351 6736

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performers and musicians

Exhibition to be held in central London from end July to beginning August

for more info call 07930 212575 or [salmonsharp@hotmail.com](mailto:salmonsharp@hotmail.com)

**FREEDOM** fortnightly

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### London Anarchist Forum

29th June Should Anarchists Ever Obey the Law (speaker Steve Ash)

6th July Open debate and social (free food and drink)

The weekly discussion forum of the London anarchist movement now in  
its eighteenth year. Fridays from 8pm at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,  
Holborn. Following the above sessions the day will shift from Friday to a  
weekday as yet to be confirmed (probably Thursdays). For more info see:  
[www.trak.to/LAF](http://www.trak.to/LAF) or [LAF@anarchic.co.uk](mailto:LAF@anarchic.co.uk)

### Reclaim the Streets

General information on RTS: 020 7281 4621 or [rts@gn.apc.org](mailto:rts@gn.apc.org)

For info on RTS subscribe to [allsorts@gn.apc.org](mailto:allsorts@gn.apc.org)

specifying 'subscribe RTS only'

Reclaim the Streets, PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY

[www.reclaimthestreets.net](http://www.reclaimthestreets.net)

### Statewatching the new Europe 2001

international conference on the state, civil liberties  
and secrecy at University of London Students Union,

Malet Street, London WC1

Saturday 30th June 2001

Statewatch, PO Box 1516, London N16 0EW

[www.statewatch.org](http://www.statewatch.org)

### Close Campsfield – Saturday 30th June

assemble at 12 noon at main gates, Langford lane, Kidlington  
(Oxford bus 2b/c/d or lifts from outside Debenhams at 11.30am)

### Close Harmondsworth demo on Saturday 30th June

The Close Down Harmondsworth Campaign and several other organisations are  
calling for a mass protest from 12 noon to 2pm at the Harmondsworth  
Detention Centre, Colnbrook by-pass (on A4 north of Heathrow)

Car cavalcade meeting 10.30am, M4 westbound Heston Services (contact Elane 08958 508492)

Public transport: U3 bus from Heathrow or 81 bus from opposite Hounslow West tube station

contact [oliver.new@btinternet.com](mailto:oliver.new@btinternet.com) or [raybarkley@tesco.net](mailto:raybarkley@tesco.net)

### Northern Anarchist Network

Summer conference in Hebden Bridge

Saturday 7th July

from 10.30am to 5.30pm

for details contact Martin on 0161 707 9652 or visit

<http://perso.libertysurf.co.uk/northernanarchistnet/index.html>

### INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

London Branch meeting on Monday 16th July, starting at 7.30pm

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1

All welcome

IWW, PO Box 4414, Poole, Dorset BH15 3YL

[www.iww.org.uk](http://www.iww.org.uk) [info@iww.org.uk](mailto:info@iww.org.uk)

### Red Rambles 2001

Red Rambles walks and rambles for Radicals, Libertarians, Anarchists,  
Greens, Socialists, Syndicalists, et al. Walkers are reminded to wear  
walking boots, appropriate clothing and to bring waterproofs, food  
and drink. See <http://members.tripod.co.uk/ainema/index-2.html>

Sunday 2nd July 2001

Cromford Canal to Scarthin Promenade for lunch and return, 6 miles. Meet  
at 11am at Whatstandwell railway station car park on the A6 north of  
Amblegate. Also on route of R1 Manchester to Nottingham Trans-Peak bus.  
Walk leader Mike.

Telephone 07939 440548 / 01773 827513 or e-mail [ain@ziplip.com](mailto:ain@ziplip.com)