

# anarchist fortnightly Freedom

Vol. 62 No. 17

8th September 2001

50p



## Say no to NATO

The British government 'conceded' last week that its troops might remain in Macedonia longer than the initial 30-day time limit. It had become increasingly clear, said foreign secretary Jack Straw, that NATO units were "in danger of being sucked deeper into the troubles of the region".

This is nonsense. There was never any intention to withdraw. The operation is a

continuation of the strategy that began in Bosnia in 1992, and continued in Kosovo – to occupy as much of the old Yugoslavia as possible, and to tame the rest. That's why the Albanian rebels, who NATO are supposed to be disarming, were armed and trained by ... NATO!

The western powers are building themselves a nice little empire. The Albanian rebels think they've been

promised freedom from foreign domination. They haven't. All they've got is a simple exchange, one set of imperialists for another.

Yugoslavia suited the west, even if its Titoist government didn't. All that came unstuck a decade ago, and only now are they setting things straight again. First Bosnia, then Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia. Montenegro next?



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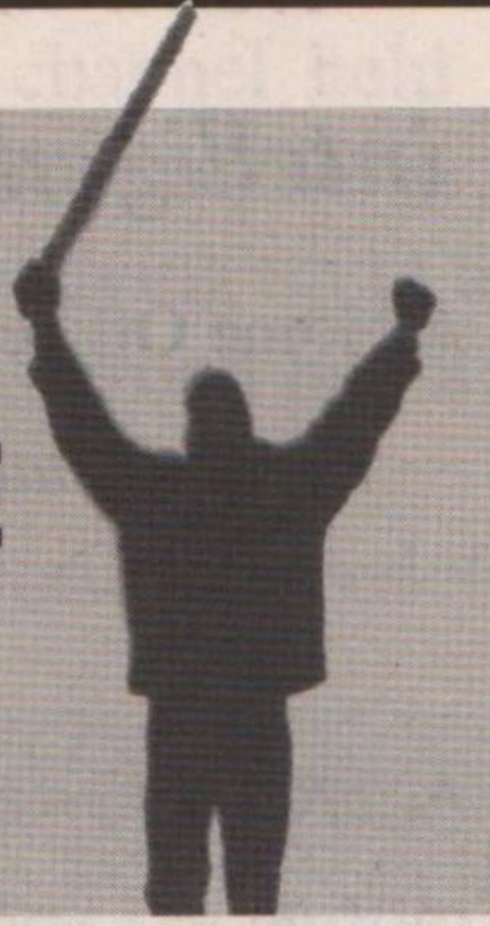


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REFUGEES**  
pages 3, 4 and 7



**CHANGING  
MEXICO**  
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**VIOLENCE:  
FURTHER DEBATE**  
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Activists take on the dealers as arms sales reach new high ...

## Stop this trade in death

Several thousand protesters are expected in London's Docklands next week for the anti-militarist 'fiesta for life against death', as representatives of the multi-billion pound arms industry gather for Europe's largest weapons fair. Up to nine hundred death manufacturers are booked to attend the Defence Systems and Equipment International exhibition (DSEi) at the Excel Centre on Victoria Dock, which begins on Tuesday 11th September. They will try to sell their products to around 20,000 delegates of governments and private armies from all over the world.

The armaments on offer will include tanks, missiles, guns and logistical tools (such as radios). Organisers hope that orders will be placed for items as large as warships. At the last DSEi, which was held on Ministry of Defence land in Surrey in 1999, members of the Campaign against the Arms Trade (CAAT) found two exhibitors openly selling anti-personnel landmines. This was in spite of international bans which had already been put in place after years of campaigning.

This year's exhibition comes just two weeks after it was announced that global arms sales have increased by nearly 9% in two years. A report commissioned by the US Congress revealed last month that sales reached \$36.9bn in 2000, the highest level since 1993. Two thirds of these were made to states in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

Besides long-standing anti-militarist groups like CAAT, this year's DSEi has attracted the attention of loose coalitions which have arisen from the anti-capitalist movement of recent years. Several actions on Tuesday are expected from the Wombles, who grew up during preparations for Mayday.

"The Wombles will make a direct contribution to the intervention against the DSEi", one Womble said last week. "The trade in the commodity of arms and so-called 'defence' equipment underpins the corporations who are ravaging our planet and the governments that can only use violence to support their global economic order".

The meeting points and times for Tuesday 11th September:

- Fiesta for Life against Death, meet 12 noon, Tidal Basin Road, E16
- Critical Mass, meet 10am under Waterloo Bridge for bike ride to Docklands
- see [www.disarm-trade.org](http://www.disarm-trade.org)

Editorial on page 7



Another victim of the arms trade – this woman lives on a British Army firing range in Kenya

## They've lost your Freedom

Nearly a million letters and other items are mislaid by the Royal Mail every week, it was revealed recently. The admission, by state regulator Postwatch, came after it emerged that the entire mailshot of one non-profit research organisation had gone missing. NHA National Stop-Smoking Centres, which carries out research into drug-free methods of helping people give up tobacco-smoking, said last week that referrals to its clinics had virtually dried up during the summer, after leaflets advertising its services to GPs had been lost in the post.

As if to prove the point, many UK-based subscribers to *Freedom* have reported that the last issue, dated 11th August, was never delivered.

Although the subscription copies were collected from our London offices on 9th August, it seems that the mailbags were lost soon afterwards.

By the end of August, it was clear that most – and probably all – of the UK mailing had been mislaid. Copies sent outside the country, which are dispatched under a different contract and in different mailbags, have as far as we know not been affected.

Freedom Press was last week involved in negotiations with the Royal Mail over payment of the costs for reprinting and re-posting the missing copy. Replacements have been sent to those subscribers who contacted the press, but our stocks are now very low.

Ironically, the missing copy contained an article from a Liverpool postal worker which described a recent official report into the workings of the Post Office. This report, written by a Labour lord, heavily criticised the management, blaming them for alienating the workforce.

One of *Freedom's* editors summed up the editorial group's feelings as the current issue went to press: "Royal Mail? Umm, well, they're a load of shit really, aren't they?"

Post Office managers in Whitechapel said, "er, we're obviously very sorry, but we don't really know what's happening at the moment. That's not really our department".

Editorial on page 7



## Freedom

anarchist fortnightly

*"It is not about brawn or a macho culture any more, we need a sophisticated, intelligent police service."*

A Home Office source quoted in London's *Evening Standard*, 21st August 2001

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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anarchist quarterly

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# Italian police boss resigns as Genoa anger still rages

Italian interior minister Claudio Scajola was stepped down last week, as demonstrations continued around the world in the wake of the brutal suppression of anti-capitalist protests in Genoa.

Over a month after the G8 summit in the Italian city, in which at least one demonstrator was killed, the outrage felt by many towards the actions of the Italian state showed little sign of abating. Besides the death of Carlo Giuliani, who was shot dead by a member of the paramilitary carabinieri, at least one other activist is known to have died in suspicious circumstances.

The naked body of Maria José Olivastrì, an organiser in a postal workers' union, was found in a river in Padua on 11th August. She had not been seen since the G8 summit. An autopsy has confirmed that she had been strangled.

Scajola resigned on 28th August, claiming that he was victim of a hate campaign. Still insisting that police had done a good job, he said that there had been no political pressure from prime minister Silvio Berlusconi. Many Italian anarchists disputed this, claiming that he had been sacrificed to keep Berlusconi's extreme rightwing coalition intact.

Solidarity actions have continued around the world for the dead, missing, injured and imprisoned of Genoa. These were particularly focused on 20th August, one month after the killing of Carlo Giuliani. This had been declared a global day of action, and saw protests in 250 cities throughout Europe and north America.



photo © Ludovic Turman

In Genoa itself, around two hundred people gathered outside the Marassi prison where many demonstrators had been held in July, and where seventeen prisoners were still being detained. Another rally took place outside the Alimonda Square carabinieri barracks.

In the UK, actions have happened outside Italian embassies and consulates in London, Liverpool, Manchester and Bristol. In addition, the Bristol consulate was visited overnight on 18th August, when activists broke in and vandalised the building. Files were removed and walls sprayed. On 20th

August, Bristol Central police station was spray-painted with the words, 'Genoa 2001 - police violence knows no borders - Assassini. All cops are killers'.

One Bristol activist who took part explained, "police are a tool of all states across the globe, and the events in Genoa were simply a clear manifestation of the universal function of the police. Our resistance is not just against the Italian police complicit with their government, but against the continual oppression of us all by those who attempt to hold power over us".

## News in Brief

• **Hampshire** Hundreds of pro-cannabis protesters attended the Smokey Bears' picnic in Portsmouth on 12th August, despite both rain and a heavy police presence.

This was the eighth year running the picnic has been held. Organisers said that more police had attended every year. In 1997, a riot nearly occurred when cops snatched one man from the crowd because of his form as a dope smuggler.

In 2000, Jon Neil was arrested after making fun of a cop's ginger wig. He was released without charge, but later successfully sued Hampshire Police after they leaked details of the case to local media. This year, Jon used the money he was awarded to pay for ice-cream to be distributed free.

The picnic was peaceful until police started to arrest tokeners. After one arrest, protesters tried to stop a police van taking prisoners away by sitting cross-legged in front of it.

In another development, the Smokey Bears' website was hacked just hours before the picnic took place. A photograph of two undercover cops, taken at last year's event, was removed. Some activists pointed out that the new Terrorism Act allows police to access websites without a warrant. One, Smokey Webbear, said, "I'm flattered that they're this interested in us".

• **Injustice film** A picket took place outside the offices of solicitors Russell Jones and Walker on 23rd August, in protest at their legal representation of the Police Federation.

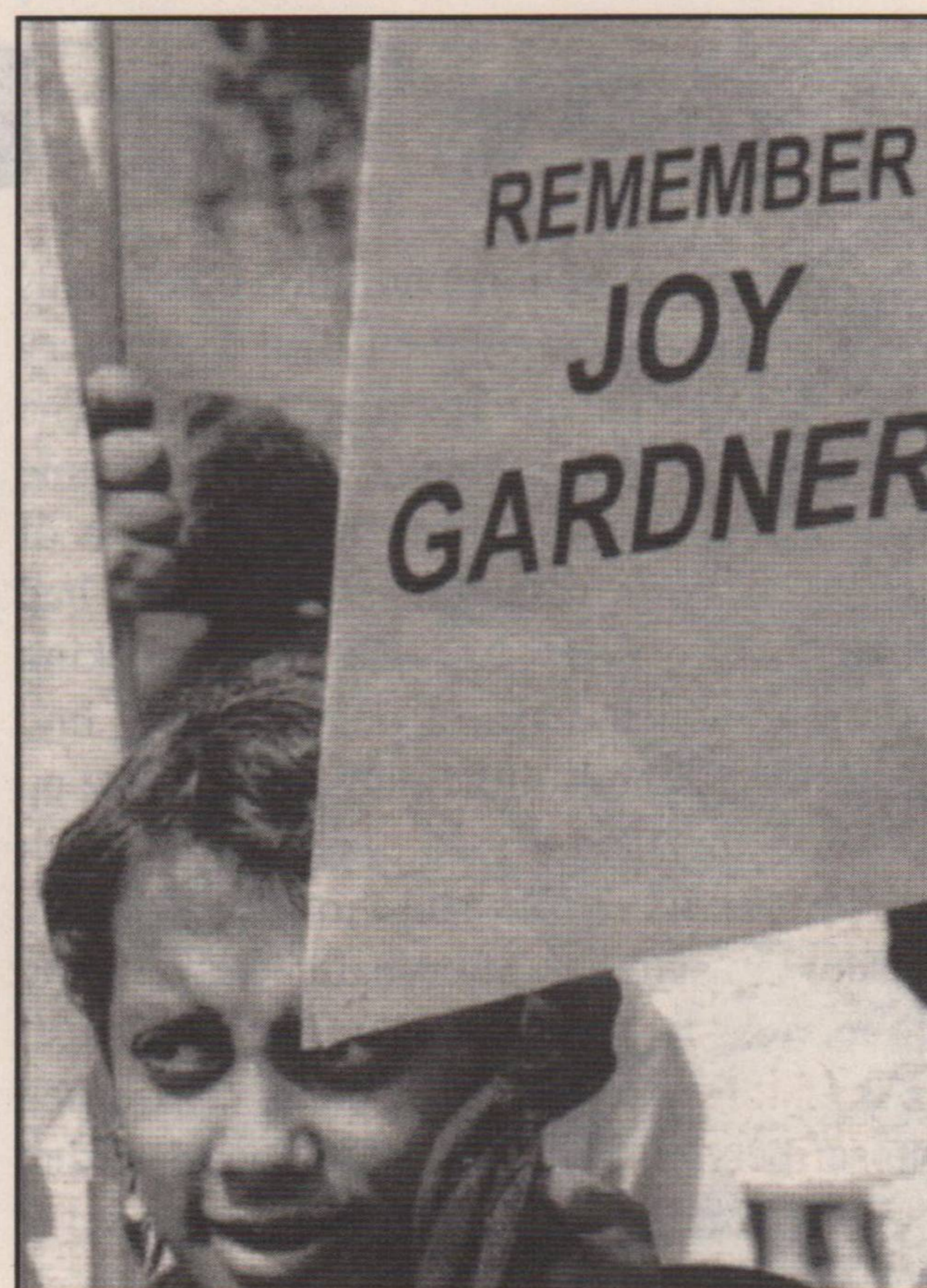
The federation, which acts as a representative body for cops up to the rank of Chief Inspector, has recently been using the firm in its efforts to stop the screening of *Injustice*, a film about killings involving police.

In July, four hundred people barricaded themselves in Holborn's Conway Hall to stop cops from preventing a screening. But a showing in Manchester in August was stopped when RJW threatened the venue with legal action.

The film includes details of several cases, including the police killings of Joy Gardner and Roger Sylvester. None of the officers involved have ever been convicted of any crime, and their identities are protected.

Joy Gardner was killed during a botched deportation. Roger Sylvester was arrested outside his Tottenham home, only to die from multiple injuries a week later. All eight cops involved in the death refused to answer questions on the killing.

Screenings are continuing where and when possible. Visit [www.injusticefilm.co.uk](http://www.injusticefilm.co.uk)



• **North Wales** A new direct action group has been set up in Flintshire. Members of FLAN (Flintshire Action Network) promise to take action for ecological and social justice, with an anti-sweatshop campaign starting this month.

The group's first action took place in August, when the Holywell offices of the local Conservative Party were flanned. The windows were covered in stickers condemning the party's links with fascists and racists. A member of the group said, "these stickers express our desire for Wales to be a Nazi-free zone. We find it disgusting that the Conservative Party has direct links with racists, though it is not surprising that such links exist". Contact [flandoobie@yahoo.com](mailto:flandoobie@yahoo.com)

• **Glasgow** Following the death of asylum-seeker Firsat Dag in Sighthill, tenants of the estate joined refugees and other activists in a march against racism and poverty on 25th August. The demo began in the estate's Huntingdon Square before marching on Glasgow City Council's chambers in the city centre. The marchers demanded changes to official policy, designed to benefit all the tenants.

• **London** Local residents are set to gather outside Hackney Town Hall next Thursday, in a protest against Hackney Council's plans to sell off assets and slash services. The Mare Street demo starts at 6pm on 13th September. It marks the meeting of the council's 'Regeneration Committee', which is responsible for filling the £70m hole in the council's budget. On its hitlist are community centres, playgrounds, green spaces, nurseries and hundreds of houses.



# Detention rules attacked

Cambridgeshire

A decision was expected yesterday in the case of some Kurdish asylum-seekers imprisoned in Oakington 'Reception Centre'.

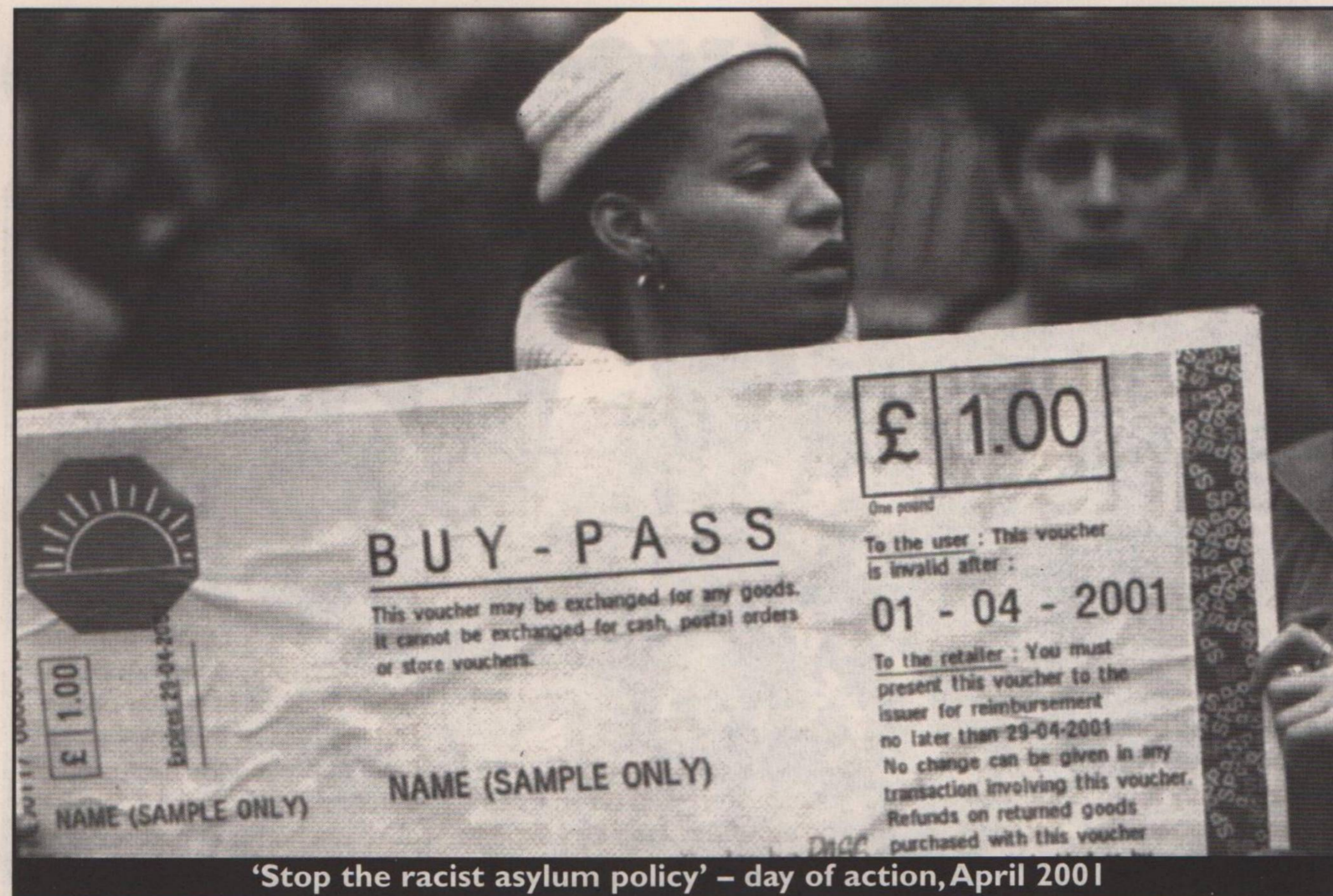
A judicial review was launched on their behalf last month by the Refugee Legal Council. The council argues that the British state's criteria for deciding which refugees to detain are unlawful.

The review was widely expected to grant asylum-seekers a right of appeal against their imprisonment. In that case, judges will rule on whether the government has broken the law in judging asylum-seekers according to the country they have fled from, rather than on the details of each individual case.

Support groups say that the government has breached the European Convention on Human Rights and the Race Relations Act. They insist that a successful appeal would have wide-ranging implications for British policy. At present, people from certain countries are sent automatically to Oakington.

Two recent reports have criticised Britain's treatment of asylum-seekers. At the beginning of August, a press release from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees expressed deep concern after attacks on asylum-seekers who had come to Britain.

Following the murder in Glasgow of Firsat Yildiz, a Kurd, UNHCR criticised both



mainstream media and politicians for their handling of the issue.

"Asylum-seekers make a perfect target for people who want to invoke the age-old prejudice against foreigners", a press release said. "UNHCR urges politicians and some sections of the media to deal responsibly with the issue".

Britain's own Refugee Council followed this with a report of their own, condemning the UK's treatment of child asylum-seekers. The report, *Separated Children in the UK*,

said that 2,735 unaccompanied children applied for asylum last year.

But many of them are placed unsupervised in bed-and-breakfast accommodation, and left to fend for themselves.

Margaret Lally of the Refugee Council said, "we should never forget that any child is a child first and foremost, and a refugee second".

Judy Lister, of charity Save the Children, added her support. "The level of support an unaccompanied refugee child receives from the local authority can be a lottery, and one of the most worrying practices is that of placing young children in unsupported accommodation".

- The opening of a new detention centre at Harmondsworth has now been delayed until October. This centre was due to open at the end of August, but work fell behind schedule. In another headache for Home Office ministers, the security guards employed to keep asylum-seekers locked up in the present centre at Harmondsworth, and who will also run the new one, are locked in dispute over terms and conditions with their new employers, the prisons multinational Sodexo.

Editorial on page 7

## 'A threat to good order'

Report from the  
Justice for Mark Barnsley Campaign

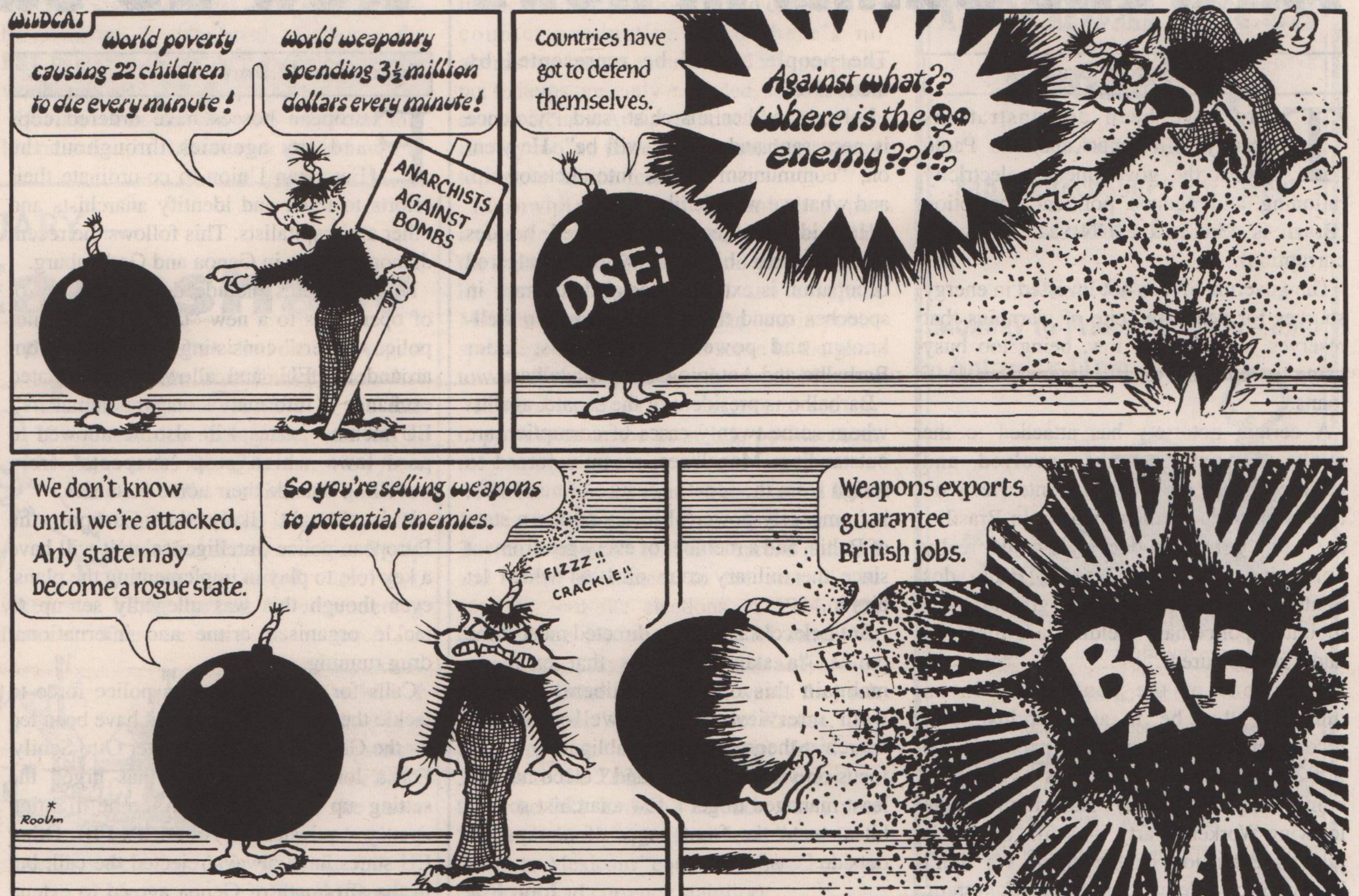
In August, Mark was placed in segregation at HMP Wakefield again, as 'a threat to good order and discipline' under rule 45 of the 1999 prison rules. We're not clear whether this is for refusing to work or because of the Turkish solidarity initiative, reported in *Freedom* on 28th July.

The reason we're not clear is simple enough. Prisoners are supposed to be given written reasons for segregation within 24 hours, but Mark has been given none. He has since been moved to HMP Leeds, where he remains in segregation. Prison Service Order 1701 says that segregation is not to be used as a punishment, and that if a prisoner is transferred from one jail to another, the reasons for segregation in the new jail must arise there. The rules, as always, don't apply to Mark.

Solidarity actions for Mark have continued. A picket of the Home Office was held on 22nd August to protest his segregation, and London supporters organised the first meeting of Revolutionary Solidarity. This is intended as a political prisoner support group that will do more than write letters. We were pleased to be able to provide a platform for supporters of the GRAPO prisoners and the Turkish hunger strikers. Most importantly, supporters of the campaign occupied Hepworth Building Products in Edlington, South Yorkshire. Hepworths make a fortune by getting prisoners at Wakefield Prison to package and assemble their products, for a wage of £8 per week (32p per hour).

Mark commented, "I really hope actions against companies like this carry on. They are so easy to target on the outside, and it is so inspiring to those on the inside. Prisons themselves can stand up to pressure, but the companies that profit from them can't. This is what I call real solidarity".

- You can write to Mark Barnsley (WA2897), HMP Leeds, Armley, West Yorkshire LS12 2TJ. Enclose an sae if you want a reply.
- Justice for Mark Barnsley Campaign, PO Box 381, Huddersfield HD1 3XX (tel: 07944-522 001)
- contact barnsleycampaign@hotmail.com
- see www.freemarkbarnsley.com
- A new pamphlet is now available, containing many of Mark's writings about anarchism and the prison struggle, as well as the writings of other prisoner-activists and campaigners. The cost is £6, including postage and packing. Cheques and postal orders to above address.





# Australia's shame



## Indian Ocean

The fate of 433 asylum-seekers who had been held on the deck of a Norwegian freighter in burning sunshine seemed to have been decided at the end of last week, when they were given permission to land in New Zealand and the tiny Pacific island of Nauru.

This followed a week in which the refugees, who were mainly from Afghanistan, were denied permission to land on Christmas

Island, which is a dependency of Australia.

Whether their troubles were finally over, however, was far from certain. An Australian judge had already granted an injunction against their forced removal from the country's territorial waters, and pressure from international refugee support groups was building on the government of prime minister John Howard to relax its opposition to granting them temporary asylum in Australia.

In an attempt to stop them from setting foot on land, on 29th August Howard ordered units

of the Australian Special Air Service (SAS) on to the MV Tampa. The ship had picked up the refugees from a fishing boat which got into difficulties off western Indonesia.

The skipper of the vessel ignored the refusal of the Australian authorities to grant permission for him to anchor off Christmas Island, when his passengers began a hunger strike and threatened to commit suicide if they did not receive medical attention.

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## 'Blasphemer' sentenced

**Pakistan:** Dr Younis Shaikh, founder of Enlightenment, the country's rationalist organisation, was sentenced to death on 18th August after being convicted of blasphemy. Dr Shaikh was arrested last October, and for most of the time since has had no lawyer. It has been reported that this is because of fear among members of the legal profession that they will become a targets for Islamic fundamentalists themselves. He has also been forced to break off contact with all but a few close relations and human rights activists.

The blasphemy charges followed Dr Shaikh's statement that Mohammed did not become a Muslim until the age of 40, and that his parents must have been non-Muslim because they died before Islam existed.

## Supporters rally for Antti

**Finland:** The anti-militarist action group Muurinmurtajat (Wallbreakers) demonstrated outside Helsinki Prison on 23rd August, to show their solidarity for Antti Rautanen, an anarchist imprisoned for refusing to serve in the army.

This followed Antti's refusal to pay fines imposed for multiple failures to attend military enrolment. He began a 59-day sentence on 17th July, but is expected to serve several sentences over the coming months, as Finnish law allows the state, in some circumstances, to continue sentencing objectors for as long as they refuse the draft.

During the demonstration last month, activists threw a rope over the wall of the prison, and started to dig a tunnel underneath. After half an hour, cops moved to stop the digging, though there were no arrests.

Antti is a member of the editorial collective for A-infos, the anarchist news service.

Please send your protests to the defence minister at these addresses:

• Jan-Erik Enestam, Minister of Defence, PO Box 31, 00131 Helsinki

• jan-erik.enestam@plm.vn.fi

## Anarcho-punks in news

### Report from Brazil

There have been demonstrations recently in Brasília and São Paulo against the government's electricity rationing and against political corruption (Brazil is 43rd in the UN scale of world corruption).

The government has not invested in energy sources for years, in spite of warnings that reserves were far too low, being too busy using its income to pay interest on IMF loans.

A certain notoriety has attached to the punks, or anarcho-punks, involved, and notoriety these days involves interviews on television or in the newspapers. In Brasília, the battle between police and punks really got going when one activist, Fábio dos Santos, was knocked to the ground by a mounted policeman wielding a sword and had a rib fractured.

Artur, one of the punks, said in an interview that he is an anarchist, and recommended spoiling ballot papers in the 2002 presidential elections (voting is compulsory in Brazil). Asked about the leftwing Workers' Party, he said, "the left is just an extension of the right. We don't believe in the democratic electoral system.

The people should be represented by themselves".

Leleco, another anarchist, said, "violence is necessary and always will be". He went on, "communism turned into dictatorship, and what we want is liberty".

He said the objects of his hatred, besides the president himself (whose preferred occupation is extolling social democracy in speeches round the world), were two well-known and powerful politicians, Jader Barbalho and Antonio Carlos Magalhaes.

Barbalho is president of the senate, against whom some twenty cases of corruption are outstanding. Magalhaes, recently forced to resign from the senate because of a swindle, is immensely powerful in the northern state of Bahia, and a member of every government since the military coup of 1964 which let him in.

But Leleco's anger was directed most at the police, "a state apparatus that exists to maintain this odious neo-liberal set-up". Both interviewees were well-versed in anarchist theory. Amid the obligatory media focus on violence, Artur and Leleco have at least managed to get a few anarchist sound-bites on to the front pages of newspapers outside Brasília.

Jonn Roe

## New EU surveillance

### European Union

European bosses have ordered cops and spy agencies throughout the European Union to co-ordinate their efforts to track and identify anarchists and other anti-capitalists. This follows the recent demonstrations in Genoa and Gothenburg.

New measures include delegating control of operations to a new "task force of chief police officers" consisting of top cops from around the EU, and allowing unregulated exchange of information on 'troublemakers'. EU member states will also be allowed to pass laws which stop 'suspects' from travelling outside their home countries.

It is thought likely that Europol, the European police 'intelligence' unit will have a key role to play in implementing the plans, even though this was allegedly set up to tackle organised crime and international drug running.

Calls for a new European police force to tackle the anti-capitalist threat have been led by the German interior minister Otto Schily. For a long time Germany has urged the setting up of a European crime fighting agency, equivalent to America's FBI. Other EU states have always rejected the call, but in the aftermath of Genoa agreed to extend



the measures which can be taken under existing powers.

Activists and civil liberties campaigners last month expressed their dismay at the plan, agreed at a secret meeting of European interior ministers in July. Tony Bunyan, editor of *Statewatch*, said, "the plans by EU governments to counter protests threaten the right of free movement and the right to protest. They were rushed through in secret meetings in just two weeks". Thomas Mathieson, a law professor at the University of Oslo, said, "it's a very dangerous situation from the civil liberties point of view".



# The 'spirit of enterprise' is not enough to help Mexico's poor

The spirit of enterprise is evident amongst the Mexican poor. I first saw it in Los Angeles, where the trolley people rummage through trash, collecting glass, cans and plastic for recycling. Well organised, with a van functioning as a mobile depot (since the cops don't allow any permanence to the homeless) a diligent bagger could make \$10 to \$20 a day.

Some in the US complain that migration from Mexico is a drain on their welfare system, where it should be obvious that migrant workers bolster the economy, pay their taxes and spend most of their money on goods and services. On the margins the migrants are doing the work that is either too hard or too lowly paid for American workers. There are now, for example, over 30,000 small farms run by Latinos in the USA, according to a report in the Los Angeles Times. This represents an increase of over 58% in the last ten years.

Where once the migrants came to the work, now the work (predominantly in the assembly industry) is beginning to migrate back across the border, attracted by the low labour costs. This often leaves the migrants stranded in the US, but the lure is still great enough for 300,000 illegal migrants to cross the border every year. In the first seven months of this year alone, 180 Mexicans died attempting it. Because they have to cross where there are no control points, many try to walk through desert where they lose their way and perish.

On the streets in Mexico City itself, enterprise is everywhere, every single means of extracting a few pesos has been perfected: the street kids mean you don't have to move far for cigarettes and lighters, you get your screen washed just before the lights change, your shoes shined, your laundry delivered, your barrel of water delivered by the corner shop, your car parked, your groceries bagged, you are serenaded on the buses. A waiter will represent no costs to the employer, relying instead entirely on tips. Likewise the uniformed pump attendant flagging you into the pits.

It might seem that the wealthier class is pampered in Mexico. But I have learnt that this kind of class envy gets you nowhere. Possessing only rudimentary Spanish and because of my line of work, I have so far



The spirit of enterprise was not enough to get these Mexicans through the desert

spent most of my time in the country with bankers and accountants, that most ideological section of the business classes. But they seem genuine in their belief that change for the better is coming to Mexico. The election of President Fox a year ago, and the ousting of the old PRI government, was akin here to the fall of the Berlin Wall: it was confidently expected that the corrupt state would slowly be unravelled, small business encouraged, employment stimulated, and that a trickle-down effect would benefit all Mexicans.

If the election of an ex-Coca Cola man like Fox was a rejection of the PRI, it was also effectively a vote for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the trade deal linking Mexico with the US and Canada. Some structural adjustments would be necessary, the free lunch largesse of the PRI would have to end, business criteria would replace the bureaucratic.

Having been an observer of economic liberalisation in Britain over the last twenty

years, I find myself questioning where this is all going to lead in a city where one third of people work in the informal economy (read extreme poverty), in a country where 15% are in intermediate poverty, and goodness knows how many are just scraping by ...

One problem was explained to me by an accountant. Apparently, those who make big profits in the informal economy are not doing their patriotic duty by coming clean and paying taxes. They need more encouragement to do so. Despite efforts to trim the bureaucracy and the corruption in government that so irks small businesses, the Fox government is not succeeding in getting the informal economy to step forward for sanitisation. The uncollected revenues need therefore to be raised elsewhere, but taxing the rich and corporations would of course be counter-productive - so there's no alternative but to extend the 15% purchase tax to items presently excluded, such as food and medicines. And state education must pay its way too, so there will be another attempt to impose tuition fees.

Meanwhile the central bank has just announced that salaries need to be pegged in the fight against inflation, and the downturn in the US economy and the resultant Mexican downturn will mean cuts in public spending. I notice a rueful sense in the glass towers of the capital that the small Mexican will need all his or her patience to see any improvement in the economic position over the coming years.

The historian Enrique Krause in his book *Mexico: Biography of Power* notes how the Zapatista rebellion of 1994 "spread political and social awareness to the rest of the country. And the elections of 1994 were cleaner, the leaders of the PRI somewhat more receptive to the attraction of democracy, due to the shock waves they felt from Chiapas." According to Krause, this contributed to a definite shift from the Salinas to the Zedillo era, the last president from the PRI. Zedillo's election was a vote "most obviously against violence" and for a return to Mexicans' confidence in their own country (read currency stability).

For Krause, the Zapatista rebellion played a bit part in the drama of what the PRI would do next, in its march to develop a properly functioning democracy. It is, he thinks, an unwelcome blast from the past; for "to continue the theatre of history is to be condemned and condemn the country, dramatically or grotesquely, to endless repetitions."

On the subject of criteria for judging what we can know, I believe Wittgenstein said "one human being can be a complete enigma to another". I wonder to what extent the rebellion in the south, and the life of the Mexican poor, is an enigma to the liberal.

Jo L

— OBITUARY —

## Antony Earnshaw



Tony Earnshaw died on 17th August 2001. He contributed surrealist drawings to *Freedom* in the late 1980s, featuring shabby men and rats in his *Aspects des Bas-Quartiers/View from the Back o' Town* series.

I first knew him in 1949, in the West Yorkshire Anarchist Group (I think we called ourselves), when we both worked in engineering factories. Then we were out of touch for about forty years, during which I followed his artistic career with delight. As the most anarchistic of surrealists, he enjoyed his life to the full.

Donald Room

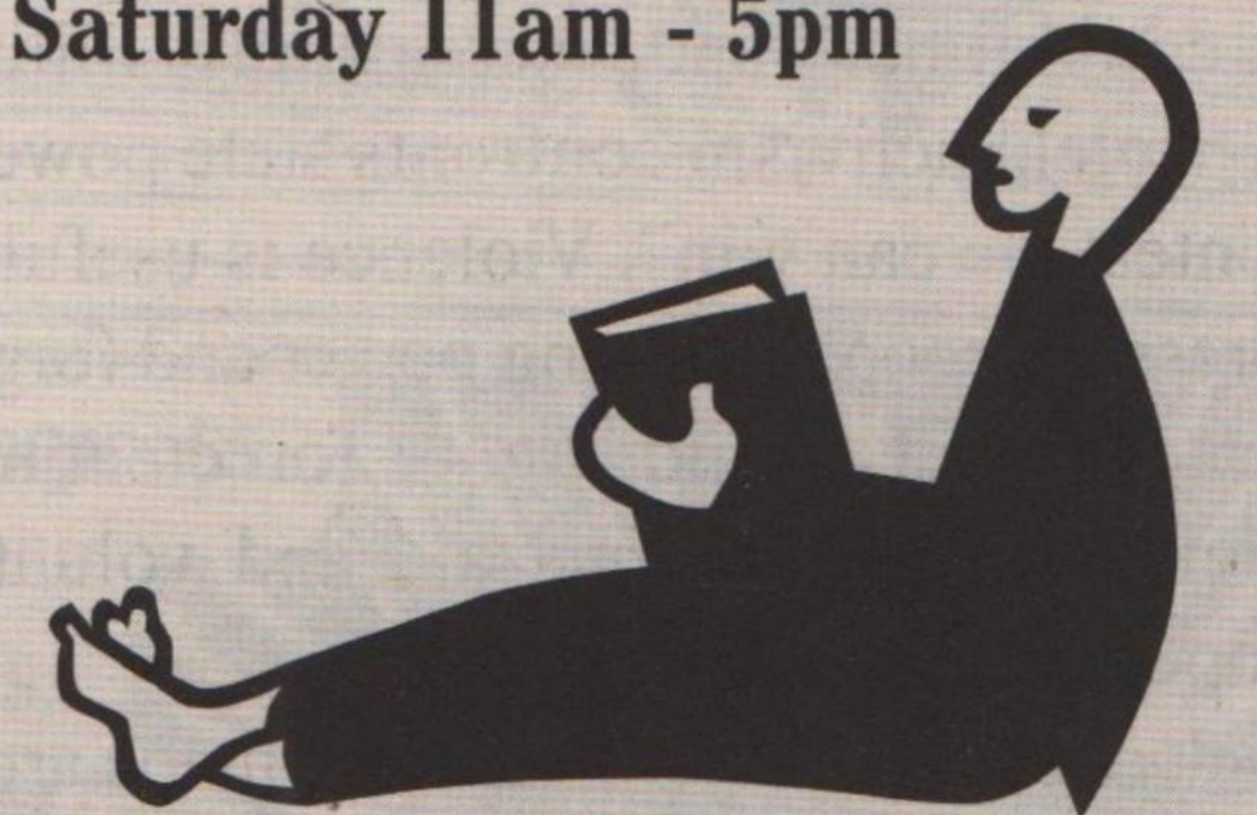
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The violence discussion continues ...

**'Brief and joyless' ... but is it anarchism?**

Kroppie's original article was a well argued piece on the problems surrounding violence. It was only spoiled for me by the end paragraph, "when the time for violence does come ..." Nor was this improved by the qualification that it would be "brief, joyless and productive".

There is a millennial feel about this, which is commonly implied by anarchist violentists – that there will be a final struggle between good and evil, which will usher in the end-time when a perfect anarchist society will emerge from the ruins.

It is nonsense, of course, as it is unlikely that anything but a violent, brutal and degraded society will result from wading through a sea of blood. It is also unlikely to be brief. It is a common delusion of violentists that 'it will be over by Christmas'.

Because of the disparities of strength, an armed struggle with the state would be a guerilla one, protracted and with all the horrors associated with this, including the militarisation of society and an attendant strengthening of all authoritarian structures. In my view, the worst disaster to befall anarchism in the last century was the taking up of arms by the Spanish anarchists, which led to their annihilation and the widespread feeling that anarchism was finished. To everybody's surprise, it revived in the 1960s as a non-violent youth movement. Kroppie's 'final struggle' argument leads immediately to Nick's riposte – if then, why not now?

Nick is right to say that resistance against neoliberal capitalism is largely middle class, non-violent and libertarian in outlook. We have no intention of being cowed by state violence, although the activities of the Black Bloc have helped the police in this, giving them a cover for their own violence and infiltration. Violentist groups always have this problem, because they are secretive. This means that they can not communicate with the wider society, pursue their own agenda regardless and are vulnerable to agents provocateurs. They have also turned large sections of Italian society, including considerable sections of the authoritarian working class, against all the protesters.

As Michael Albert of ZNet writes, "the state has a monopoly of violence. What that means is that there is no way for the public, most particularly in the developed first-world societies, to compete on the field of violence with their governments. That ought to be utterly and blatantly obvious. Our strong suit is information, facts, justice, disobedience and especially numbers. In sum: politics. Their strong suit is lying and, especially, exerting military power. A contest of escalating violence is a contest we are doomed to lose. A contest in which numbers and commitment and, increasingly, militant non-violent activism confronts state power is a contest we can win". Violence is useful for oppressing people, gaining power and forging a state; not, I would argue, for creating a society based on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation.

Nick doesn't think that violence in the armed struggle is dehumanising. He mentions northern Ireland. Does he think that knee-capping or the Omagh bomb are humanitarian? What about recent bombs in Palestine and Israel: is that our idea of enhancing our humanity?

Paul, in his response to Kroppie, highlights

*In our issue of 14th July, we published an article by Kroppie entitled 'Violence and me'. This was followed a fortnight later by four responses to what Kroppie had written, under the title 'Ends and means'. Below we publish three further contributions. The first is avowedly pacifist; in the third, Kroppie replies to his critics.*

another problem with the seductiveness of violence. He uses a statement from Kropotkin to suggest that violence is a good recruiting sergeant for the working class. This was probably an idle boast, and it lost middle class support for anarchism. And by the time he said it, Kropotkin was already calling for conscription! The ultimate slavery – war slavery! During the First World War, he supported the Allies against Germany and its working class, to support imperialist Russia. When there is a fight going on, violentists are often seduced to take sides, even if it means giving up their principles.

For me, the real struggle is the patient stripping away and delegitimising of all forms of authority in our communities, from the right of a parent to beat a child, to the right of the state to wage war – the ultimate crime against humanity. Violence is fool's gold.

Gerald Hatton

Her eyes filled with tears. "He was only doing his job", the grieving mother wailed. "I ask you what sort of scum is it that kills a man in the prime of his life, just because they don't like the job he does?"

She glanced down at the picture in her hands, and lovingly kissed it. "He was a good boy, very helpful to me when we were bombed out back home, and his father and two of our kids killed. He got a job here and found a house for me, his remaining sisters and his younger brother. He always put money on the table, to make certain that we didn't go without. He was about to get married in a month, such a nice girl, worked with him. Now he's been killed by terrorists".

For a few moments, she could not go on, overcome with grief. Then she regained her courage, sat up and continued. "What sort of shit would do a thing like that, when he was only doing his job?"

The tears welled up again, and she collapsed. And as she did so, she turned the picture frame she held to show the photo of the youth in his SS uniform, the guard killed by partisans the evening before on his way to the nightshift at Auschwitz.

Anon

So much for fostering the spirit of comradely debate! 'Useless sanctimony', 'twisted thinking', 'worse than useless', 'specious liberal

bullshit', 'idiocy'? This kind of demagoguery is usually intended to stifle debate, and it's unbecoming in somebody like Nick S, who is quite capable of putting forward a reasoned discussion without resorting to heated rhetoric. I suspect that Nick's misunderstanding arose out of a misunderstanding which I hope to put right.

First of all, it should be stressed that I was referring to the violence employed at the media spectacles arranged by our bosses, not to violence in general. The point I repeatedly tried to make was that I believe violence to be justifiable and inevitable when it's accompanied by political consciousness, and carried out by the masses to effect direct political change. The violence carried out by small numbers of paramilitary-minded individuals at spectacles such as Genoa is not popular violence, nor does it enjoy popular support. Proof of this is the fact that it is easily manipulated by the capitalist press, is unsustainable and can only aspire to damage-limitation reforms from our bosses.

Popular violence can never be equated with the violence employed by our oppressors. But we must also be cautious that the violence of the oppressed does not fall into the trap of mirroring the violence of our oppressors. This can only be avoided by ensuring that the groundwork has been done before action is taken. It is useless to attack the state and then try to justify our action afterwards – the bosses have numerous resources in their hands to drown out our voices. We need to build an awareness among people and then meet the state head-on, together. At present, that awareness is sadly lacking. Didn't the polls show that the majority of Italians felt the Genoa police had been too permissive?

Who says violence is dehumanising? I do, and I'm not the only one. Anarchist writers like Berkman, Goldman and Malatesta all raised concerns about the spectacular and dehumanising nature of what used to be called 'attentats'. It's not a particularly radical claim. If you believe in the rights of all to live as equals, free from external restraints, I don't see how this claim can raise your hackles: violence means denying your own human instincts as well as denying your victims their humanity. This remains true, whether the violence is justifiable or not.

Likewise, it's true to say that violence is addictive and glamorous. That doesn't mean that everyone who uses violence suffers

from addictive pathologies, or is motivated exclusively by glamour. But it does mean that the wise will try to avoid violence whenever possible; and when they are left with no alternative, they'll employ it reluctantly and only to the extent necessary to achieve their aims. Those who ignore the characteristics of violence are going to find some strange comrades fighting alongside them on the barricades.

Nick is right to rebut my generalisation that violence leads to vanguardism. I should have said only that it can, not that it necessarily does. If you want evidence, look at any 'national liberation' struggle. Who dictates the pace? The armed groups. The IRA, ETA, the PLO – they're the ones who are largely responsible for the political agendas being debated in their respective countries. The opposite is also true, that if the majority of people take action, whether it's violent or not, they can't be accused of vanguardism.

It should be perfectly clear that I don't have any ethical or moral problems with violence in itself. The problems start when violence is provoked by a small group responding to the timetable of our bosses, and which can't hope to effect real change. I wrote (at the start of July) about how a death at one of these big demonstrations was only a matter of time; sadly I was proved right within a week of the article's publication.

Carlo Giuliani's death has not resulted in world revolution. He will slowly slip out of the public consciousness, becoming 'that guy in Genoa', the one we refer to only when we want to show how violent the state can be. That's what I mean when I talk about the futility of violence today, and the need to work in creating consciousness among members of our class so that we can build on the violence of tomorrow.

Finally, I want to address a couple of concerns arising from two other responses to my original article. I hope what I've written assures Paul I share his analysis: yes, the working class "must engage physically against their oppressors". It's simply a case of when and under what conditions.

And I would ask KAF to read my article again, especially where I said, "naturally, there are other anarchists who favour violence now and they are as entitled to their views as I am to mine". Or perhaps where I said, "I understand the frustration and anger felt by my comrades against our bosses". In the interests of mutual understanding and effective debate, I will end this reply with a call for comrades to respect the validity of other anarchists' opinions, and to resist the temptation to engage in insults. This is more likely to breed solidarity, mutual aid and warm, tingly feelings.

Kroppie





## What we say ...

### Stop the arms trade

Next week's international arms fair in Docklands is Europe's largest death bazaar. Lots of very respectable people – people with Volvos and Jaguars and privately-educated children and nice houses in the country – will come together to sell arms to each other. And, if they have their way, no deathly reality will intrude on the serious business of making a huge amount of money.

Money is money is money, and it won't matter to them that it's made through death, maiming and injury. They've got the school fees to pay, and the destruction is far enough away that they can put it from their minds.

It matters to us, and we've got the chance to remind them what their business is really about. The arms trade is a grotesque and appalling symptom of capitalism, the economic system based on profit. No scruple, no moral stands in the way of a fast buck, as sentiment means you go under. It's rarely the bosses who feel the pain.

Next Tuesday is an opportunity to change that, a little. Even if the only pain is the embarrassment of being reminded what the arms industry is really about, that's a start. Docklands will be full of awfully fine chaps, pillars of society with their Eton ties and social connections. We can expose them as the murderers, torturers and thugs they really are. Let a little of their own stink waft over them for a change. Let's spoil their party.

### Losing Freedom

Maybe you waited patiently for the post to arrive. Perhaps you hurried to the letterbox, ready to tear it from the envelope and start reading. But (gulp!) it wasn't there. Where oh where did *Freedom* go?

We'd like to think this newspaper's so dangerous the state and its lickspittle servants decided to nobble it. It's a flattering thought, but we reckon they'd find an easier way of doing it. Arson, for example. Or a bomb.

So too for the suggestion that they wanted a look at subscribers' addresses (which we keep confidential). In the past, MI5 always used a combination of break-ins and police raids to gather information. Why would it change now?

Ironically, our guess is that the answer's simpler and more mundane. The Royal Mail are crap. It's ironic because, as most UK readers won't know, the missing issue contained an article by a Liverpool postal worker saying that, er, the Royal Mail are crap.

That they've mislaid an issue of *Freedom* is a pain in the ass. But it's not, lest we forget, the most important thing in the world. Other stories in this number, on arms, surveillance, refugees and prisons all make the point that there's something more substantial to be fought for, defended and won: freedom itself.

### Governments shamed

Australia is a vast country, its landmass far bigger than that of western Europe. So what's the problem with accepting 430 Afghan refugees? Hostility to outsiders is the agenda of rightwing politicians everywhere, Australian conservatives and European social democrats alike.

Howard and Blair are as repressive, unpleasant and downright racist as each other. Neither has a humane bone in his body. Anybody in their respective countries who voted for these bastards should hang their heads in shame. It's not like you weren't warned what you were endorsing. What the hell did you think you were playing at? Aren't Afghans people too?

## Readers' letters

### Esperanto group

Dear *Freedom*,

As the new secretary for the Libertarian Fraction of Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda/World Non-nationalist Association (SAT), I thought I'd establish contact with you to announce our presence, and tell you a little bit about ourselves.

SAT is a global organisation, which held its 74th annual congress in Hungary in July. It enables workers, progressives, anarchists and people broadly on the left to be in direct contact with each other, and on their own terms (i.e. outside state and boss control). There are members on all five continents.

SAT uses the relatively simple artificial international language Esperanto as a communication medium between workers.

The Libertarian Fraction operates within and outside of SAT, and unites people who define themselves as anarchist, libertarian, anarcho-syndicalist, anarcho-communist etc. We aim to point out the practical use of the international language as a tool to unite revolutionaries worldwide, irrespective of national languages (which can often be a major barrier to international intercommunication and collaboration). For us, Esperanto is part of the growing 'culture of resistance' on the international front. We also publish a regular journal, *Liberacana Ligilo*, in Esperanto.

If any Esperanto speakers read this, they may be interested in our website. Otherwise, anybody who wants to learn, please contact me and I will try to put you in contact with comrades who can help with this.

Rob

(SAT-Liberacana Frakcio)  
c/o Anarchist Federation, 84b Whitechapel  
High Street, London E1 7QX  
users.skynet.be/bs939002/L.L.html

### Ego and its own

Dear *Freedom*,

I've set up an online discussion list similar to *Freedom*'s own, for anyone interested in discussing Max Stirner's *The Ego and its Own* in particular, and the relation of egoist views to anarchism in general.

To join, send an empty email to stirner-subscribe@yahoo.com or mail me privately on stirner@hotmail.com

I'd also be happy to send occasional digests by snailmail to anyone who doesn't have email access. Write to me c/o Freedom Press.  
Toby Crowe

### Secret deliberation

Dear *Freedom*,

It is much to the credit of the editors – at a time when there is little else for which to recommend the paper – that they publish a letter as fundamentally critical as Jonn Roe's (letters, 14th July).

For all that, I can not but endorse Jonn's strictures. The decision appears to have been taken (I say 'appears to have been', since *Freedom* has always proceeded by caucus deliberations so secretive that it is not even known outside the magic circle who the members of the caucus are, nor how they came by that elect status) to reduce the purpose of the paper to agitprop.

That's all very well for bolshies (and fascists), intent on enraging 'the masses' to follow their leadership. Anarchists have a much harder row to hoe. For them, 'agitprop' has to be political and social education in the fullest sense; i.e. dialogue generating understanding and fostering autonomous individuals who can resolve to act together

for a mutually determined common good.

Unless the editors are prepared to allocate more space to what, for want of a better term, is generally called 'theory'; and until they are willing to renounce their 'central committee' style control on what they treat as their 'property' rather than as a channel held in trust for the anarchist movement at large, I see little promise of *Freedom* living up to the noble traditions which are its proud heritage from 1888.

Donovan Pedelty

Any readers who are interested in following our 'secretive deliberations' or who want to join the 'magic circle' should subscribe to the FreedomAnarchistFortnightly discussion group (details below), or come to the readers' meeting at London's Anarchist Bookfair next month. All offers welcome.

### Hereford anarchist

Dear *Freedom*,

I have read the last three issues of *Freedom*, which I just noticed they have in my local library. It's an absolutely fab paper.

Are there any anarchists out there in or around Hereford that want to start a local anarchist group?

If so, please could they e-mail me at the address below.

Spaniel

dodgydeals@tesco.net

This letter also appeared in our last 'missing' issue.

Correspondents are asked to keep their letters short. Letters may have to be cut for reasons of space.

## Donations

4th August to 31st August

### Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund

Wolverhampton, JL, £2; Freshwater, HW, £3; Reading, BR, £3; Glasgow, DMcL, £16; Lewes, BM, £8; Liverpool, PH, £5; Vigo, XF, £5.

Total to 31st August = £42.00

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### Freedom Press Overheads Fund

Wolverhampton, JL, £2; Watford, RG, £7; London SE19, JA, £26; Freshwater, HW, £3; Reading, BR, £4; London E11, LR, £5; Lewes, BM, £9; Liverpool, PH, £5. Donations in memory of Jeanne Smythe: Walton-on-Thames, A&JW, £10; London EC1, BR, £100; collected at funeral, £380.

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### Raven Deficit Fund

Lewes, BM, £8; Liverpool, PH, £5.

Total to 31st August = £13.00

Total for 2001 = £596.00

## COPY DEADLINE

The next issue of *Freedom* will be dated 22nd September, and the last day for copy intended for this issue will be Thursday 13th September. Contributions can be sent to us at FreedomCopy@aol.com

## GET INVOLVED WITH FREEDOM

All *Freedom* readers are welcome to join the new FreedomAnarchistFortnightly internet list. This was set up to provide an anarchist forum for discussing the issues we cover in greater depth. It's also designed to provide an opportunity for readers to participate in the editorial process by offering their ideas for improvement. Membership is free. To join, send an empty email to FreedomAnarchistFortnightly-subscribe@yahoo.com

The Anarchist Bookfair next month will also provide a chance for readers and contributors to share their views. Come to the *Freedom* Anarchist Fortnightly meeting – details to follow in our next issue of *Freedom*.

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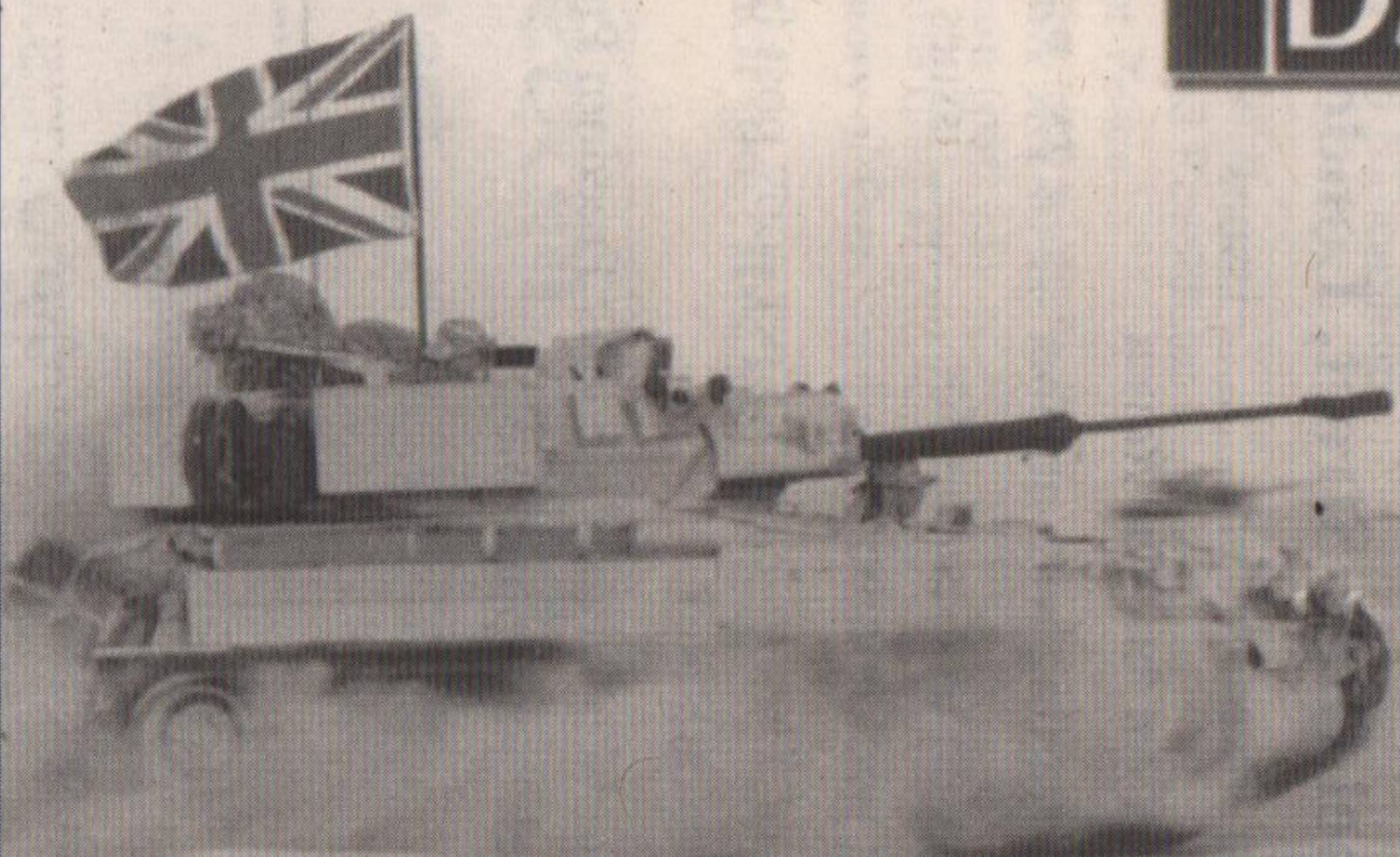
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## London Anarchist Forum

**6th September** Cultural Change: Is it Revolutionary? (debate between Ed McArthur and Steve Ash)

**20th September** Free discussion/Social bring food and drink

This weekly discussion forum is held on Thursdays from 8pm at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn.

For more info see: [www.trak.to/LAF](http://www.trak.to/LAF) or contact [LAF@anarchic.co.uk](mailto:LAF@anarchic.co.uk)

## Reclaim the Streets

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

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

## Hackney 4 Sale

Noisy protest against the selling off of community assets and the cuts in services

**Hackney Town Hall at 6pm on**

**Thursday 13th September**

## No Borders meeting

**Monday 10th September at 7pm**

**Jolene Celeste Pub (upstairs), 256 Kentish Town Road,**

**London NW5 (nearest tube Kentish Town)**

There have been a number of actions and events which have focused on state control over the movement of people across national borders, many of which have taken place under the banner 'No Borders'. This meeting is an opportunity for all those who have been involved, would like to be involved or are interested in finding out more to meet up and discuss what has happened and what might happen in the future. If you have video footage from the border camps or other actions or would like to make some other contribution to the meeting, contact

[Noborderslondon@yahoo.com](mailto:Noborderslondon@yahoo.com)

## Critical Mass @ DSEi

Critical Mass meets for DSEi Fiesta on

**Tuesday 11th September at 10am**

**South Bank outside NFT (under Waterloo Bridge)**

to cycle slowly through London to join the demonstrations against the arms trade in East London. Anything environmentally friendly on wheels is invited: bicycles, tricycles, unicycles, pedicabs, rollerskates, wheelchairs, rollerblades, skateboards ...

## Brighton Car Free Day

For details of car free day event in Brighton

on 20th September

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[www.carbusters.ecn.cz](http://www.carbusters.ecn.cz)

## National Cannabis March

in Central London on 29th September at 12 noon

see [www.schmoo.co.uk/sep29.htm](http://www.schmoo.co.uk/sep29.htm)

## 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 18th November 2001**

Lathkill Dale in autumn, 6 miles. Meet at 11am at Monyash Village Green by the War Memorial. Walk leaders Malcolm & Marion.

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