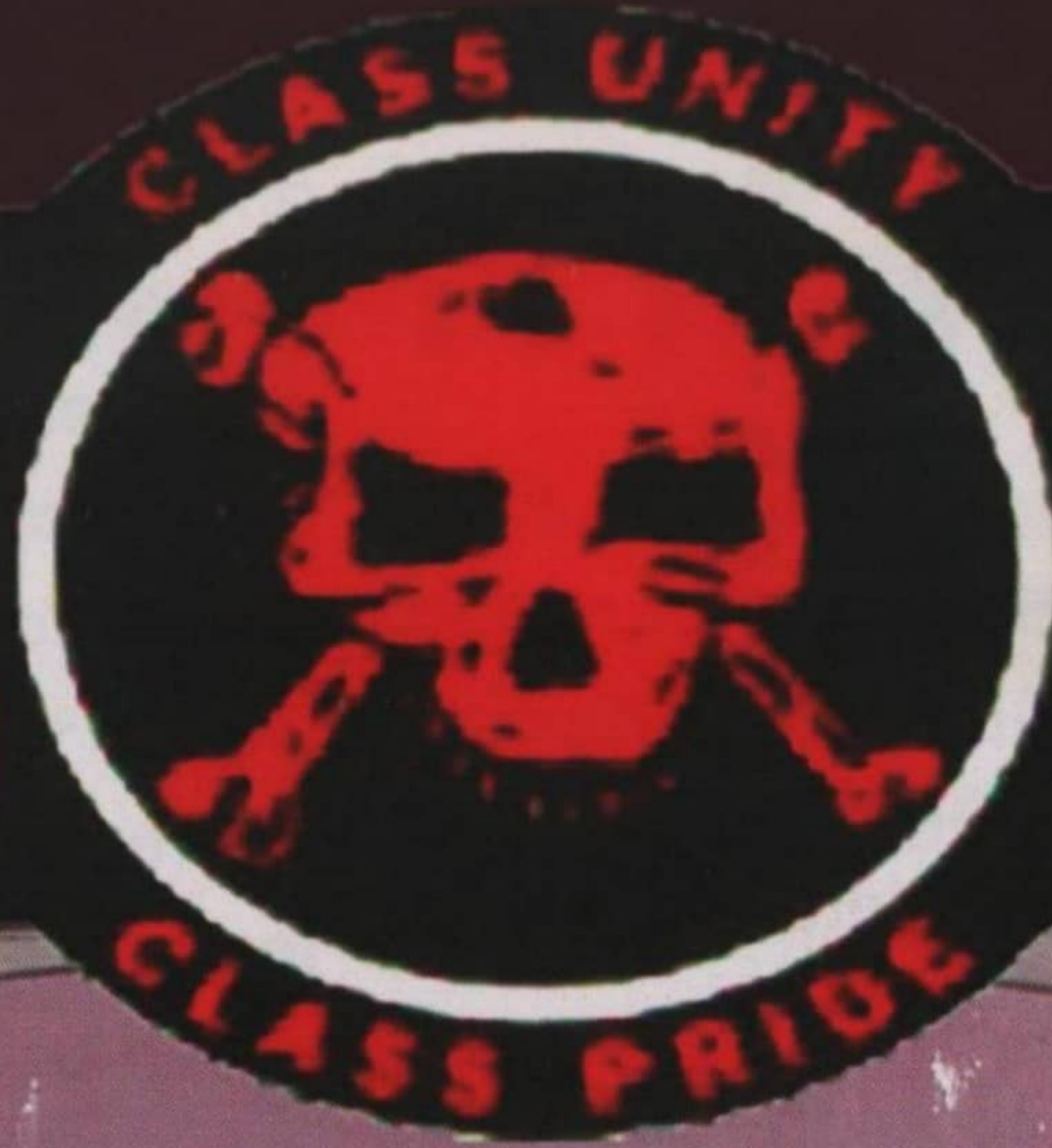# CLASS ⊗ WAR

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WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT?

So, you have in your hands a new magazine, A Touch of Class, published by the Class War Federation. Having parted with your hard earned cash, you probably want to know what it is all about, and also what it is we are aiming to do with this magazine.

Firstly, we are publishing it because we feel we have something different to say. If you want stale old leftist positions, identity politics masquerading as socialism or anarchism reproduced as a fixed ideology bordering on the religious, there are (sadly) plenty of vehicles for that already in the UK. There is none of that drivel here.

The second reason for producing this magazine is a recognition that working class communities, both here and abroad are changing rapidly, indeed faster than ever before. The last time Class War produced a magazine, some thirteen years ago, New Labour was barely off the drawing board, ASBOs were unheard of, council estates were run by the council, bombs that exploded in London were marked "made in Belfast" rather than "made in Leeds", Oldham Athletic were in the Premiership, and the number of Polish builders in the UK could be counted on one hand.

We want somewhere to discuss these changes - the good, the bad and the ugly. We need to debate how they affect the working class, how they affect this society and how they affect the world. And most importantly we want to not only respond to those changes, but to set our own agenda.

Importantly for us, this magazine is also an attempt, tentatively at first, to reposition Class War. Doing

anything else, given the changes mentioned above, would be silly. Many of Class War's current membership cut their political teeth in some of the overt class struggles of the 1980s and early 1990s - times that have, if we are all honest, long gone. Whilst we will all be there dancing on Margaret Thatcher's grave when she dies, we are conscious also of the teenager London CW met at an event in Hackney who asked us, in all seriousness, who Margaret Thatcher was. We need to fight the next battle, not the last.

Can a magazine play a role in setting a political group's development? The simple answer is yes. This is something the British National Party did very successfully with Tony Lecomber's Patriot magazine in the late 90s – indeed if you re-read it now you can see them planning for much of their recent political activity. From stealing the Front National's political clothes, understanding the Internet and new technology, seeing a threat from Islam rather than trying to flog old anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, right down to them predicting they would win significant numbers of seats in a "old northern mill town abandoned by the Labour party", it was all there. They were thinking strategically, whilst the left/ anarchist movement was simply bumbling along from one paper sale or demonstration to the next. Unpleasant as the BNP are, there is method in their madness.

Class War itself has not always done strategic thinking well. One example is the strategy discussion at our October 2005 conference, where discussion rapidly moved onto commemorating the 1926 general strike and the 1916 Easter Rising. Fine ideas if we had 100,000 members and an active history society, of less use to an organisation with a fraction of those numbers attempting to work politically in the present day.

We need to forge new directions, and work around the here and now, not the ever decreasing circles of the past. We hope you will join us, either as a Federation, or perhaps by committing some of your thoughts to this magazine, and any similar publications that emerge.

Onwards and upwards!

Paul Stott, September 2006

CONTENTS

THEMES

In this magazine we address a number of contemporary issues. The first article, by Ben Franks, the author of *Rebel Alliances: The Means and Ends of Contemporary British Anarchisms,* covers ethics and the competing moralities of our movement and our government. This is not an area frequently discussed within the anarchist movement, and is thus a valuable contribution.

Few anarchists or Marxists have ever looked more than cursorily at public order policing, despite the frequency with which we encounter it. It's past time that someone provided an introduction to the subject, something remedied here by Andrew Todd and Edward Lynch. They analyse the changes in the policing of demonstrations over the last two decades and provide some hints of what the future may hold.

Ever since September 11, this country has been at war. The majority of the public opposition to this conflict has been organised by the Stop the War Coalition and the Muslim Association of Britain. Darren Redstar and Richard McKenna show that the pisspoor nature of the current British anti-war movement leaves a lot to be desired and make a call for anarchists to play a full part in opposing the state's assault on the working classes of Iraq, and Afghanistan.

CCTV's on pretty much every high street in the country. Despite surveillance being part of everyday life up and down the land, anarchists have been conspicuous by their silence in considering the topic. Tommy Corrigan has written a detailed treatment of the subject, looking at the problem and the future nature of CCTV surveillance.

In this, the inaugural issue of *A Touch of Class*, we at Class War believe we're dealing with issues which, if not completely ignored by the rest of the anarchist movement, certainly deserve more than the poor treatment they have thus far received. Disregarding the areas we raise here is possible; but we feel it is not desirable and we hope you find the contents useful and thought-provoking.

MORTAL COMBAT

The struggle in our world today therefore is not just about security it is a struggle about values,' Tony Blair declared in his speech in Adelaide, Australia.[1] The venue is no coincidence – Australia is run by far-right-wing Prime Minister John Howard, who won an unlikely third term in 2002 by whipping up anti-immigrant feeling (even lying to the electorate about would-be asylum-seekers throwing their children into the sea in order to avoid the Australian navy turning them back).[2] Howard favours ever extended privatisation, and is committed to George W. Bush's policy of imposing such economic freedoms at the point of a gun (or daisy-cutter ordnance). Howard is, thus, a worthy ally of Blair, and the two of them, as the speech implied, share the same values.

The problem is, and always has been, identifying Blair's ideals. This was, after all a man, who was once committed to Michael Foot's 1983 Labour Party Election Manifesto, with its promises of extended welfare provision, unilateral nuclear disarmament and greater workplace democracy (or at least a strengthening of the power of organised labour's bureaucracy). At some stages Blair argues like a good liberal, and defends his policies on the basis of protecting fundamental individual rights. For instance, he justified the then imminent war on Iraq because the tyrant was a threat to our individual liberties. Saddam could, claimed Blair, attack and kill us using 'chemical and biological weapons [... which] the Iraqi military are able to deploy within 45 minutes. Iraq continues to work on deploying nuclear weapons'.[3] Donald Rumsfeld and Bush used similar moral rhetorical appeals for support for their foreign and domestic policies.[4]

Such threats were false, and they were known by Blair to be at least highly exaggerated. However, even if they were true, the argument is inconsistent – as Dr Post, a psychologist who worked for the CIA, explained, Saddam was only likely to use such weapons against the UK or allied state if he was first attacked.[5] So Blair cannot claim first to be protecting our rights, and then purposely create a situation, which place them at risk. This use of a rights-based moral, whilst attractive to an electorate immersed in a culture of consumer rights, is particularly inconvenient for

Blair. He and his allies have consistently ignored the very basic human rights he was claiming to support, through supporting civilian massacres in Palestine and Lebanon, abandoning habeas corpus, permitting torture and even encouraging primary school children to provide biometric information for hi-tech security businesses.[6]

On other occasions Blair and Bush have adopted the language of utilitarianism – creating the happiest outcomes for the greatest number, even if it means ignoring individual rights. Thus the security of the many justifies torture, imprisonment without trial, bombings of Arab civilians and even restrictions on protest: this is evinced in Blair's claim that, 'I have no doubt Iraq is better off without Saddam, but no doubt either, that as a result of his removal, the dangers of the threat we face will be diminished'[7] and 'Removing Saddam Hussein and his regime, will provide the Iraqi people with greater freedoms and prosperity [...] And greater security from terrorism'.[8] But as the situation for UK subjects, citizens in occupied Iraq and the wider global population has worsened, Blair has begun to drop this utilitarian defence.

Now, people who are subversive enough to seek out a magazine like this one and wade through the first three paragraphs of a rather dense argument, are already sufficiently analytically-sophisticated and socially critical to be aware that politicians are lying, manipulative bastards, whose words are not to be trusted. Nonetheless, there are significant issues which can be drawn out from this brief survey of Blair and Bush's justifications for their policies. The first implication we can draw is that totemic political figures use the terminology of ethics in order to sway public opinion; that is to say, there is a wider public which is interested in, and can be persuaded by, compelling moral argument. Second, Blair (and Bush's) application of ethics, even with highly educated (and extravagantly paid) advisors and speech-writers, is incoherent and inconsistent. Yet this incoherence is not accidental.

The first inference is that Blair and Bush and the dominant powers they represent and support, believe that the use of ethical terminology is persuasive to the general population. The political elite have rightly identified that a great number of people like to be reassured that the individual lifestyle choices they make are indicative that they are 'good' people. Many people, whether overtly or unconsciously, use concepts derived from moral theory to choose between

competing options. This is hardly surprising: from Aristotle onwards, ethical analysis has been about what makes a good society, and how we treat others in progressing towards it.

Of course, as Marx and others have pointed out, ethical discourse can be used as a cover for class interest. The concentration on 'rights' by liberal commentators is often simply a cover for expanding and legitimising free market relationships and the protection of the property interests of the capitalist class, and Marx was equally critical of James Mill's utilitarianism and the theories of bourgeois exchange-values that underpin it. Theocrats (priests, rabbis, imams) extend this further claiming that the whole notion of ethics has to derive from a spiritual source of which only they, the select few, have true knowledge. Nonetheless, what Marx shares with anarchists, such as Peter Kropotkin, Emma Goldman and contemporary activists, is an overt moral vision – a view of a good society allowing humans to flourish with dignity and to satisfy their desires without recourse to hierarchical coercion. It is only the most extreme Leninist who views the economically oppressed (the working class) as having no agency, no ability to choose if and how to resist, and instead as being wholly determined by the development of the economy (but for one article written for the Prussian censor this was never Marx's view, but oddly it is this one essay that Leninists always cite).

When we are immersed in capitalism, uncritically accepting its values, we lose our sovereignty. Our actions are dictated by the only value that matters to capitalism – how much profit can be extracted from our efforts. So instead of the multitude of values that correspond to the vast, irreducible, ever-changing range of our wants, needs and dreams (both individual and collective): the desire to party, to see a beautiful sunset, to create a nice place to live, to breathe clean air, to watch Birmingham City thrash

Villa (or vice versa), and so on – capitalism attempts to subsume all of these under only one measure: that of exchange value. Capitalism, thus, has a limited vocabulary, and wants us to have a similarly restricted range of concepts so that we cannot think beyond securing profit and property-rights.

Part of the colonisation of our consciousnesses is a marginalisation, omission and/or misrepresentation of alternative ways of living based on values other than those of capitalism. Class struggle anarchism has suffered perhaps more than many political viewpoints in the construction of falsifying myth. Dominant powers seek to define 'anarchism' unfavourably (mis-)associating it with every popular bogey-man such as conservative, theocratic terrorism,[9] free-market liberalism[10] and authoritarian-statism, and even Maoism.[11]

Whilst there is no single, 'correct' form of anarchism, there are substantial common elements, or family resemblances, which indicate the strength of the anarchic nature of that movement. A recognised political (or anti-political) current bearing the title 'anarchism' arrived at the sane time as the industrial capitalism it seeks to destroy. Several authors have traced 'anarchic' currents and precursors all the way back through the Enlightenment,[12] through the early modern peasant rebellions,[13] to suggested precursors in Biblical and pre-Biblical times.[14] 'Anarchism' has taken on myriad forms, partly as a result of facing and challenging different forms of oppression, but that does not mean every act – claiming to be one of resistance against dominant powers – can be classed as anarchism.

From the early twentieth century to the present day, the most consistent anarchist groups have prioritised four main principles:

• **A rejection of capitalism and market relationships viewing them as a form of oppressive hierarchy.** 'Anarcho-capitalists' like Robert Nozick and the 'thinkers' from the Libertarian Alliance breach this principle and are therefore not recognised as consistent anarchists.

• **An egalitarian interest in the freedoms of others,** a recognition that each person operates within a wider social context, such that extensive individual freedom and self-fulfilment cannot be attained in repressive social contexts. Egoists who follow the likes of Benjamin Tucker or Max Stirner and hold that the self can be liberated whilst everyone else

is still unenlightened and/or oppressed would contravene this principle.

- **A complete rejection of state power and other quasi-state forces**, a tenet which distinguishes anarchism from other revolutionary socialist traditions such as Leninism.

- **A prioritisation of prefigurative methods**, where the means used have to embody the principles striven for.

Whilst there are groupings that have called themselves or been referred to by others as 'anarchists' which reject some of these principles, these characteristics can largely be found in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century movements described by John Quail and equally can also be identified in the overt 'aims' of many contemporary groups. Even where avowedly 'libertarian' groups have explicitly deviated from such principles they often make a conscious justification to explain why such a principle has been ignored or breached. The alternative of having, as some have argued,[15] a completely fluid definition of anarchism, allows for anyone and anything to be described as such, no matter how authoritarian and anti-social; this is one of the propaganda strategies of the corporate-sponsored media.

The four principles outlined above, have a clear ethic, a view of what constitutes a good society (a theory of the good) and an account of appropriate actions of how to reach it (a theory of the right). The theory of the good concerns goals based on the elimination of, as far as possible, disparities in power, while the theory of the right suggests that the methods used must, as far as possible, reflect those values. This prefigurative anarchist principle, that methods must embody aims, can be traced back to James Guillaume, the colleague

of Bakunin. Guillaume criticised orthodox Marxism for believing a free, egalitarian society could come about using authoritarian political organisation (such as the centralised revolutionary party).[16]

Moral language, as the examples from Blair (and Bush) above illustrate, has frequently been used by the oppressors to excuse their actions; as a result, some radicals appear to disavow moral language. Lydia Molyneaux's fine article in the perceptive and diverse collection of essays of the 2005 anti-G8 protests, Shut Them Down nonetheless denounces 'finger-wagging moralism'.[17] Class War's renunciation of 'middle class moralism'[18] also could be interpreted as proposing that ethical analysis is a bourgeois preoccupation, in which those who are in elite positions condemn those who resist domination. But in both these cases a more likely and consistent reading is that they reject middle class morality, the moral discourse that originates and normalises the dominance of capitalism, not that all ethical discourse is inappropriately bourgeois. In addition, most ethical assertions are made by those in power against those who are oppressed – so tabloid journalists (the contemporary equivalent of the oft-corrupt priesthood) denounce the rest of us for our supposed moral faults, yet oddly seem reluctant to highlight similar weakness in their colleagues or their proprietors (until said bosses die or are otherwise stripped of their power).

There is a significant difference between on the one hand tabloid columnists and politicians, distanced from privation, who use (and misuse) ethical principles to cast critical judgement on working class resistance and on the other the oppressed themselves using such concepts to create inventive, satisfying non-hierarchical forms of resistance. Thus, even authors who denounce patronising 'moralism', like Class War and Molyneaux, themselves use the terminology of values in their political analysis. For instance Molyneaux stresses how resisting capitalism is about satisfying desires and resisting coercive and unequal power,[19] whilst Class War's long running propaganda contains many critical analyses on modes of struggle, identifying those which are and are not consistent with libertarian, egalitarian principles.[20]

In rejecting 'moralism' anarchists are not denying the tactical importance of evaluating choices of action which affect themselves and others, but only the legitimacy of others, especially more powerful others, to prescribe appropriate action for those in subjugated circumstances. Those who speak from privileged

positions such as legislators, theologians, newspaper columnists, academics and advertisers invariably use their elite position to support the hierarchies, which provide them with a platform (confronting dominant powers would risk restricting their opportunities to speak). The frequent misuse of ethics, such as that of Blair and Bush, assists the project of restricting all meaningful discourse to that supports the dominance of capital, making it hard for alternatives to be coherently expressed. The utilising, developing (and indeed subverting) of moral discourses, assists in the production of alternatives to the singular oppressive values of capitalism.

Benjamin Franks, September 2006.

Footnotes:

[1] 'Blair to 'tough it out' on Iraq', BBC online, 27 March 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4848278.stm>, accessed 19 September 2006.

[2] Australian Defence adviser Mike Scrafton, supported by senior military officers, produced evidence that 'John Howard, lied and knew that there was no evidence to back his claims during the last election campaign that asylum seekers threw their children into the sea', Tom Allard 'Inquiry sliced as ALP abandons ship' in Sydney Morning Herald, 24 August 2004. The description of Australia by the comedian, Marcus Brigstocke seems apt: 'South Africa but where the Whites won'.

[3] Iraq's Weapons Of Mass Destruction The Assessment Of The British Government (foreword by Tony Blair): 4, available on-line at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/middle_east/02/uk_dossier_on_iraq/pdf/iraqdossier.pdf>, accessed 19 September 2006.

[4] Bush, 'Bush calls for new Nato capabilities', 20 November 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2494557.stm>, accessed 19 September 2006, and Donald Rumsfeld interview, BBC, 4 March 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/2819931.stm>, accessed 19 September 2006.

[5] 'Inside the mind of Saddam Hussein', BBC online, 15 November 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2480591.stm>, accessed 19 September 2006.

[6] Martyn Mclaughlin, 'Civil rights row over school fingerprints Pupils asked for thumb image to check out library books', The Herald (Glasgow), 12 September 2006, see too the BBC Radio Scotland reports the same day.

[7] Tony Blair 'Blair terror speech in full', BBC online, 5 March 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3536131.stm>, accessed 19 September 2006.

[8] Bush, 'State of the Union Speech', Wednesday, 21 January, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/3415361.stm>, accessed 19 September 2006.

[9] T. Ali, 'Why They Happened: The London bombings', CounterPunch, <http://www.counterpunch.org/tariq07082005.html>, accessed 21 March, 2006

[10] See for instance Chris Cooper of the 'Libertarian Alliance' or Robert Nozick's Anarchy, State and Utopia.

[11] See for instance C. Malone (1999), 'The howling mob just bite the hands them', Sunday Mirror, 20 June, 1999: 31 and also E. Heathcoat Amory, 'Can you Imagine a more hypocritical song than this?', Daily Mail, 6 March 2002: 12.

[12] Peter Marshall (1992), Demanding the Impossible: A history of anarchism, London: HarperCollins; George Woodcock (1975), Anarchism, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

[13] Norman Cohn (1993), The Pursuit of the Millennia, London: Pimlico and Griel Marcus (1989), Lipstick Traces: A secret history of the twentieth century, London: Secker and Warburg.

[14] John Zerzan (1994), Future Primitive: And other essays, Columbia, USA: Autonomedia and Freddy Perlman (1983), Against His-story Against Leviathan, Detroit, USA, Red and Black.

[15] David Miller (1984), Anarchism, London: Dent: 3.

[16] James Guillaume, Q. in the introduction to Bakunin (1984) Marxism, Freedom and the State, London, Freedom Press: 7.

[17] See for instance Lydia Molyneaux (2005), 'The Carnival Continues' in David Harvie, Keir Milburn, Ben Trott and David Watts, eds., Shut Them Down: The G8, Gleneagles and the movement of movements Leeds and New York, USA: Dissent! And Autonomedia: 117 and 115.

[18] See too Class War's (1999) comments that they have 'no time for middle class morality', Twenty-First Century Class War, London: Class War Federation: 3.

[19] Molyneaux, op cit. 2005: 115-16

[20] Class War, op. cit, 1999: 10-13

PUBLIC ORDER POLICING

The last twenty years have seen considerable changes in police tactics for dealing with public order and riot situations. In the 1980s and early 1990s the police were far more likely to intervene with baton charges and police horses; since the late 1990s a change in police practice has taken place – and some changes for the future have become apparent, as will be detailed below.

This article examines public order policing around political demonstrations and is London-centric as the Met has the dominant role in British cop strategy and even attempts, on occasion, to take over other forces events – witness the G8 in Scotland.

THE POLICE PUBLIC ORDER MANUAL

'Keeping the Peace', the Association of Chief Police Officers' public order manual, is available for all via the ACPO website. It details the policing for all manner of public disorder situations, from the use of riot-kitted officers to using plastic bullets. It also sets out the command structure – the famous Gold, Silver, Bronze hierarchy – within which the police operate during disorder events. This manual has undergone considerable revision over the last fifteen years, and it is instructive to look at some of the changes they have made.

NEW TACTICS

Public order training has been standardised across the UK. All cops are categorised by the amount of public order training they get. Level 3 is the basic

which is given in Police College, around 10% of cops get Level 2, which is 2 days every 6 months with the requirements to run 500 metres in 2 minutes 45 seconds – with full riot gear and long shield.

Only the Police Service of Northern Ireland (the renamed RUC) and the Met have Level 1 units. They spend a day every five weeks to play at rioting and need to run 1000 metres in 6 minutes. The Territorial Support Group in London is around 800 strong. In an effort to gain tactical flexibility the standard public order unit the 'Serial,' or Police Support Unit (PSU), has been restructured to an Inspector, three Sergeants and 18 Constables who fit neatly in three vans, each with an extra driver to stay with the van. The happy days of Birmingham Reclaim the Streets in 1998 where one unknown hero let down the tires on 5 vans have sadly gone forever. With new training have come new weapons, the ASP extendable metal baton is less cumbersome for van-borne cops and with less weight allows heads to be whacked without nasty "how was his skull fracture" Blair Peach type inquiries.

NEW STRATEGY

Following the political violence of the early 1990s the police revised their tactics for dealing with riotous crowds. The Poll Tax Riot and Hyde Park Riot of 1994 were, in retrospect, the last set-piece engagements, where large numbers of police attempted to use the traditional methods of baton and horse charges. As the decade progressed it became clear that some new minds were re-examining public order policing, coming at it with a very different approach. Though the first inklings of the new thinking were visible at Waterloo in September 1992, it was not until the end of the decade that they became standard tactics. We refer of course to penning people in.

THE BUBBLE

The cops call this strategy 'Contain, Control and Disperse' and refer it as the 'bubble.' Any mention of the word bubble by the cops should have you looking for escape roots. Bubbles are usually easy for the vigilant to spot but other subtle signs are cops or cop vans with numbers starting with U - these are the TSG and cops with brightly coloured shoulder flashes: orange for Inspectors, lime green for Chief Inspectors and above. These are worn on the flame-retardant boiler suits so the plod can tell who their bosses are in a ruck. Sometimes the top cops are just dressing up for fun but it's usually because they mean business.

The trajectory has been, then, from a quasi-military approach, where the riot was treated as a battle, towards a preventative model, though one most certainly backed up by a military machine in police uniform. Two legal rulings which have helped underpin the new policing have been the results of the cases brought by those effectively kidnapped at Fairford in 2003 (Laporte v Chief Constable of Gloucestershire), and those penned in at Oxford Circus in May 2001 (Austin v the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis). These verdicts, though irrelevant in some ways, have made it far more likely that corralling demonstrators will be the typical police response to a public order situation likely to ascend into violence.

WATCH THE MUPPETS GET TRAPPED

By penning people in, police do exacerbate the anger of the crowd, yet leave it impotent to vent that anger and frustration. Yet the majority of people seem to ignore the main question, which is why they allow themselves to be penned. It is possible to see a pen coming. There are also ways to prevent a pen being formed, and simple ways at that. Vigilance and mobility are the tools people can use to stay free. An example: during President Bush's visit to London in 2004 a demonstration assembled outside Victoria Station. A loose line of police formed outside the massed ranks of demonstrators. People were free to


pass through the line – until the organisers called on people to move off. At this point the police closed ranks and despite some pushing and shoving only those who had observed the police's likely actions and stood outside the lines remained at liberty. Had people moved in twos and threes outside the police lines in preparation of moving off the day could have been saved. And similar situations have been commonplace in recent years. Without the panoply of support which the police have, without their communications network or training or equipment, the only two advantages we retain are our mobility and unpredictability. Surrendering these, through halting, can lead to all manner of unpleasant consequences, from penning in to battering to arrest and possible conviction.

THE FIT

Penning in, though, is not the only hazard public order policing throws up. The emergence of Forward Intelligence Teams is another irritation to surface in recent years. Traditionally Intelligence had been provided by Special Branch (SO12, Specialist Operations) but since the mid 1990's the public order operational command unit CO11 (Central Operations, formerly Commissioner's Office) have been running their own overt intelligence gathering. Each FIT consists of 2 cops working outside the Gold, Silver, Bronze chain of command, reporting directly to the control room at Scotland Yard. They carry cards with photographs of known activists and spend all day following them around, officially to stop them doing anything naughty but actually to intimidate. It sounds harmless enough but is incredibly annoying. Both authors of this article are followed regularly; once into the Royal Courts of Justice during a case where we were suing the cops for false imprisonment. Psychologically it's a very effective form of putting pressure on people and some activists develop a mini-Stockholm syndrome which combined with the strong tendency among certain people to try to run canaries out of the singing business gives the cops an early Christmas.

THE FUTURE?

The unfortunate combination of FIT, corralling and surveillance means that at the moment the police have the upper hand in London when it comes to public order. This has not always been so – and in the future it will change again. The Met rely heavily upon a small coterie of officers centred on Commander Michael Messinger (head of Public Order in the Met since 1997
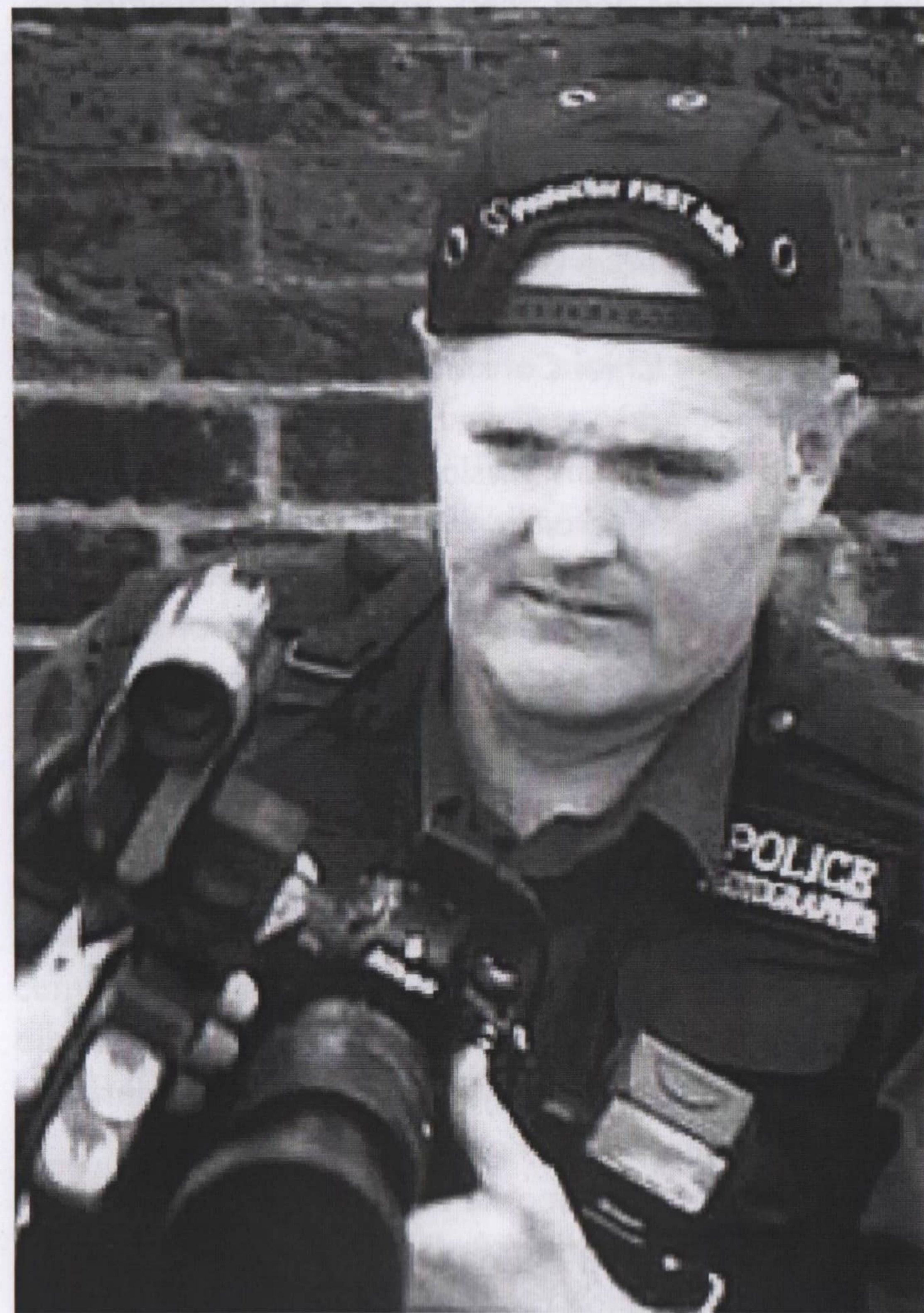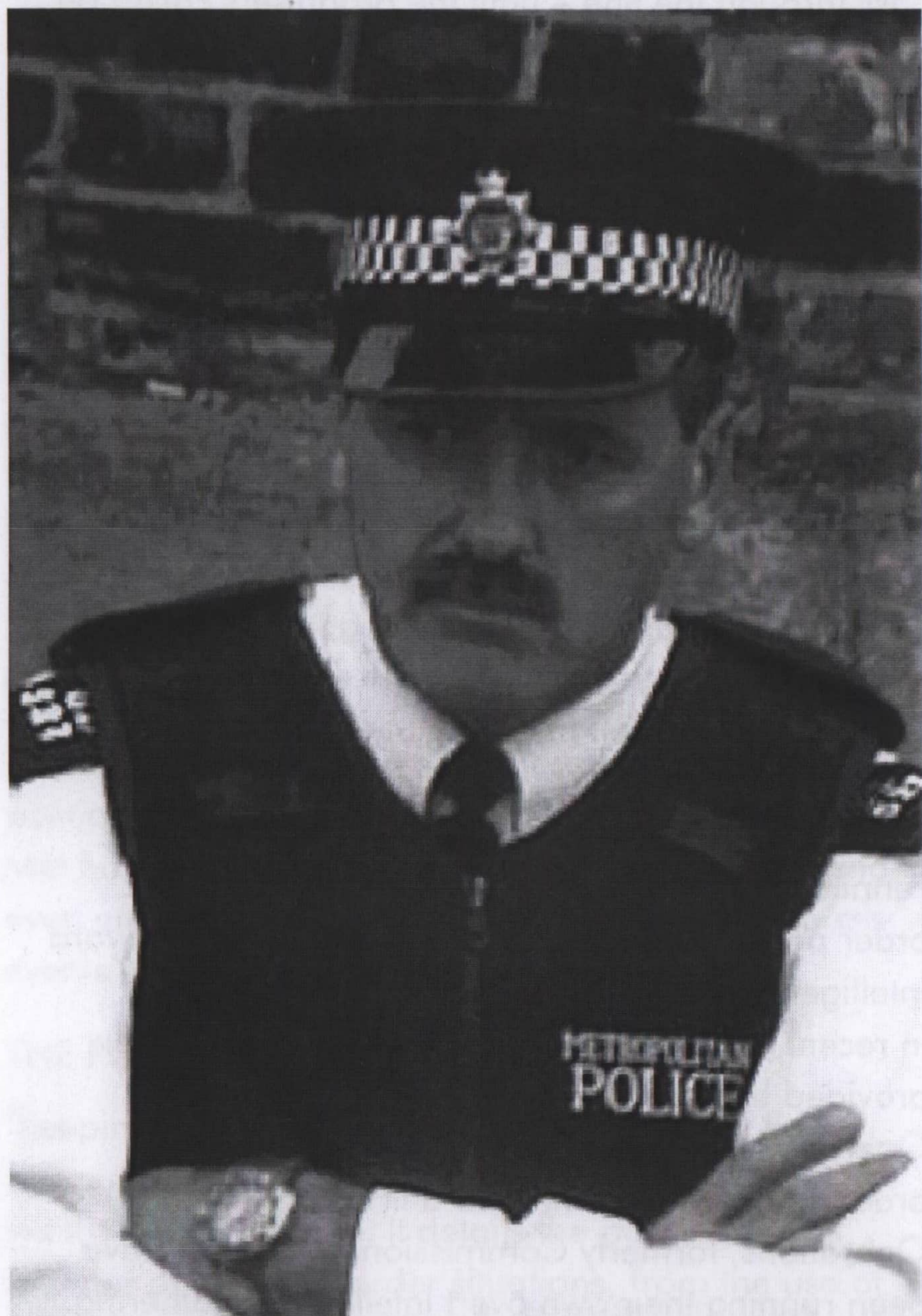
FIT team members, DSEI 2005

and 'Gold' at all major rucks since with the notable exception of J18 which the City of London Police thought they could handle themselves) to deal with public order situations, the more so as 'Sir' Ian Blair has the anti-Midas touch. This coterie will not always exist – they can be compared to the circles around reforming Army officers in the nineteenth century, which exerted but a temporary influence. And there are signs of changes already taking place. Last year it was announced that the Met would be getting water cannon. This would mark a sea-change in public order policing in this country, a move back towards the model of the late 1980s and early 1990s with water cannon taking the place of the short horse charge and maintaining a zone of about 50 metres between the police line and demonstrators.

Andrew Todd & Edward Lynch, September 2006

Suggested further reading:

ACPO. Keeping the Peace (www.acpo.police.uk)

Anonymous. Poll Tax Riot: Ten Hours That Shook Trafalgar Square (London: ACAB Press, 1990)

Richard Bessel and Clive Emsley (eds.). Patterns of Provocation: Police and Public Disorder (Oxford: Bergbahn Books, 2000)

Court Judgements. (www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk)

Metropolitan Police met.police.uk

Gerry Northam. Shooting in the Dark: Riot Police in Britain (London: Faber and Faber, 1988)

P A J Waddington. The Strong Arm of the Law (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)

P A J Waddington. Liberty and Order: Public Order Policing in a Capital City (London: UCL Press, 1994)

THE STATE, WAR AND RESISTANCE

At the core of the state is violence.

From the warrior circle of the meanest barbarian chieftain to the Oval Office of the White House, the state has sought to concentrate all violence into its hands - sanitising and legitimising it into 'law and order' and 'national security' whilst simultaneously demonising, isolating and criminalising any resistance.

War is the highest expression of the violence at the heart of the state. To imagine a state without a war machine is an impossibility. Class society cannot give up war just as a limpet cannot give up its rock.

Before the advent of capitalism War was a limited affair. The aim of kings and emperors was defend 'their' property against the depredations of their 'brother' princes whilst seeking to steal as much of their weaker neighbours as they could get away with. The aim was theft - land, cities, slaves. The destruction that accompanied war was an unwanted but necessary waste: it was in the interests of the rulers that warfare

should be as limited as possible so as to increase their spoils.

Capitalism however with its capacity to reduce everything to the 'cash nexus' has made even the destruction caused by war into a profit-making opportunity. Whether it is in the reopening of markets previously supplied by industries blown to pieces by aerial bombardment to using war as giant shop window for the arms industry (Lockheed-Martin and Carlyle group executives were embedded in US military units during Desert Storm in 1991) capitalism ensures that every bang is worth its buck!

It is not surprising that the working class- those who are expected to die and to kill in these wars have been at the front of the fight against the state war machine. At the very birth of Capitalism, during the Napoleonic wars, in 18th century Portsmouth (and in dozens of other port towns) working class crowds fought the

press gang and drove them out of the dockside, and, in many towns inland, as soon as the recruiting sergeant arrived crowds of women would start haranguing the troopers and attempted to snatch back any youths stupid enough to have taken the 'King's shilling'.

Within the war machine itself the resistance of the working class continued. The most concentrated (and most wretched) were the sailors aboard the wooden death traps that made up 'Nelson's Navy'. They mutinied in 1797 whilst at anchor at Spithead and the Nore.

When the vast human abbatoir that was the First World War opened in 1914, it was working class militants on all sides who picketed recruitment halls, formed anti-conscription leagues agitated against jingoism and nationalist fervour even in the face of murderous patriotic mobs and abandonment by the leaderships of the 'socialist' parties and trades unions who busied themselves in supporting their own ruling classes in their respective 'wars for civilization'.

It was the workers dragooned into uniform and herded off to die who finally put a stop to the slaughter by refusing to fight any more, revolts mutinies and rebellions that caused the fall of half the crowned heads of Europe and brought the fear of revolution into the salons and corridors of power of the ruling classes of the world

If historically the working class has been at the forefront of struggles against war, why then are modern anti-war movements so dominated by the middle classes? Why is that a struggle which to be successful must result in the overthrow of both capitalism and the destruction of the state has become consumed by politics committed to maintaining 'a nicer, peaceful, capitalism' and where any attempt to class solutions are condemned as 'divisive'?

Much of the problem was caused, not surprisingly, by the domination, throughout so much of the last century, of the Leninists; their cynical use of anti-war movements throughout the 1920s and '30s, first supporting and then, without warning, opposing peace movements as dictated by the whims of Russian foreign policy, disorientated many working class people, as did the mass of propaganda which one moment called for a popular front with 'progressive' tories against the threat of fascism and the next condemned these same tories as imperialists for declaring war on the self same fascists! (Stalin had signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler). As the Leninists swapped and changed their tactics on receipt of orders from Moscow they finally ended up with the 'Popular Front', in which these erstwhile 'revolutionaries' finally gave up any pretence that they were actually interested in the transforming of society and instead opted for an alliance with anybody or anything that promised a mite more influence within the corridors of power, and having sunk so low that there was no going back; official communism never did, and thus peddled the popular front for the remainder of its inglorious existence.

In post-war Britain, there have been two major anti-war movements, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the Stop The War Coalition (STWC). For most of CND's existence it has been dominated by the communist party and its popular frontism.*

The STWC was formed to fight the build up toward war, first in Afghanistan after 9/11, and then - most famously - in opposing the war against Iraq (with Britain's largest demonstration, 2 million claimed on the streets of London). Unlike CND, the STWC was created long after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the implosion of the world's communist parties. Instead the driving force behind its formation was the trotskyist group the SWP, who had been trenchant critics of the accommodationist policies of the CP and CND, but, who now they found themselves thrust into the position of leadership, switched wholesale over to the exact same popular frontism which had been the hallmark of CND and the CP and reached its nadir in the formation of the Respect – the Unity Coalition (RUC) with the Muslim Association of Britain and 'pussy' George Galloway. This foul cabal have lied and lied and lied about the war, to the same extent as, though less blatantly than, Tony Blair. They have dressed the struggle up as a war against Islam – which anyone can see Tony Blair, if not George Bush, desperately wants to avoid. To spell it out in a word even the SWP and STWC can understand, the war is about OIL. After all, radical Islam was far weaker with Saddam Hussein in charge of Iraq than it is now. Whimpering that the war's a clash of civilizations echoes the neo-con arguments of Samuel Huntingdon and shows the SWP's utter abdication of any pretence to be described as a revolutionary party. Rather, they are now a group of apologists for a vicious, anti-working class ideology, Islamism, which any socialist worth their salt would revile with every atom of their being.

Militant working class anti-militarism must be reclaimed. This means no more of the sterile 'A to B' marches in order to be preached at 3 times a year by the great and the good and constant repetition that every march 'is the best ever'... 'one more push!'...'Tony Bliar are you listening?' etc. etc. The ineffectual liberal parading has achieved absolutely nothing positive, leaving many thousands of people instead wholly disillusioned with the inept movement the STWC have led to embarrassing defeat. Instead of carrying out effective action to build on the immense turnout in February 2003, the STWC rather concentrated on the same tired party-building antics we saw from Militant in the poll tax – attempts to enlarge the 'mother' organization in a parasitical drive to capitalise on people's anger. And more than three years after the toppling of Saddam Hussein, the STWC have learned nothing, choosing

Blike in die Vergangenheit und Zukunft
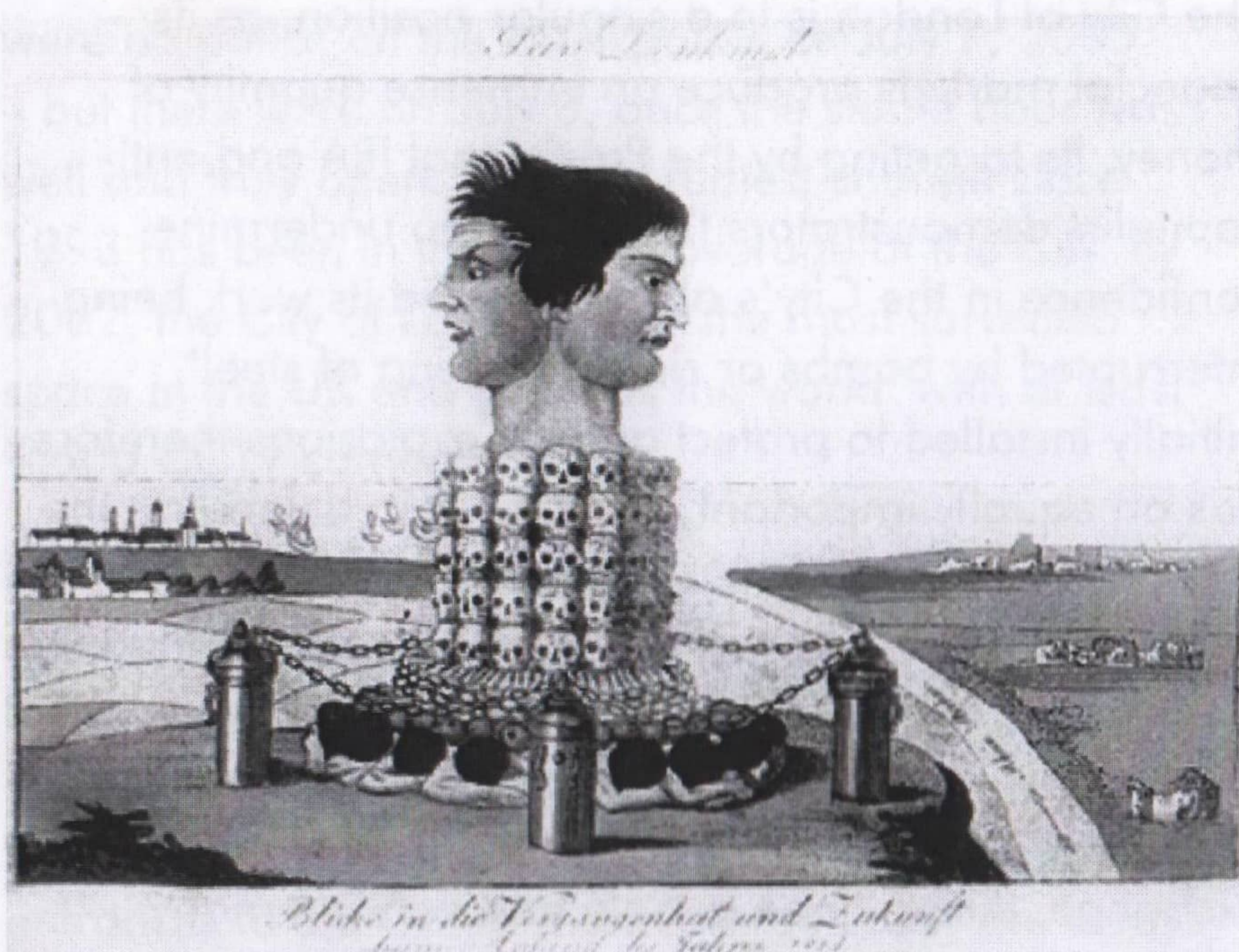
to hold another pointless march in Manchester when larger forces to unseat Tony Blair are at work. When he goes, whatever the STWC might say, they will have had nothing to do with his departure. The way forwards for the anti-war movement is to ditch the deadweight lefties and replace their failed politics with hardnosed class politics, and it means direct action explicitly linked to the day to day lives of those affected by the war. Working alongside the families of service men and women in the war zones and those who have died or been maimed, providing support for the growing numbers of those deciding to 'vote with their feet' and go awol. It means that when we organise actions against arms fairs and recruitment shows we do so alongside agitation to fight for alternative employment and housing for those young people who might be otherwise persuaded to join up. It means that recognising that opposition to the imperialistic adventures of our ruling class does not mean automatic support for those fighting against them. My enemy's enemy is not my friend; our friends are the working classes of the world. Gaining vicarious pleasure at the sight of working class children being shipped home in body bags does not make one a revolutionary - it makes one a ghoul! The sorry state of the British anti-war movement after five years of 'leadership' from the STWC and MAB now sees the grieving parents of dead soldiers called upon to speak from the same platform as apologists for the very people who killed them. As many of the insurgent groups in Iraq are explicitly anti-working class, and these are often the groups killing US and UK soldiers, why are they so strongly supported by the SWP/STWC? We at Class War believe that the trot left has taken leave of its senses, beguiled by their new 'friends' in the Islamist movement who are doubtless overjoyed by the utter idiocy of their new allies. The SWP often

say that you learn from other people as you struggle alongside them. The Islamists must have learnt just how gullible and credulous the sections of the white middle class in the STWC are. The Islamists must recall the alliance their Iranian brethren forged with the Iranian left in the late 1970s, which ended in the complete destruction of the left-wingers by 1981. Doubtless the Islamists here will dispense with the lefties' services when they are no longer useful. The best the SWP/SWTC can hope for is that it will be less bloody.

By personalising the anti-war campaign against Bush and Blair, the STWC are missing a major point: the state, not just Blair, is at war with Iraq and Afghanistan. No credible alternative leader exists who opposes the war. The most a change of Prime Minister would do would be to change the way the war is waged. And any change of leadership will take place over different issues, not solely over the legality of the war or the conduct of the war. Like it or not, the world has moved on since 2003 and the sooner the anti-war movement in this country realises that, so much the better. This leaves the non-trot anti-war movement in this country with a mountain to climb and a bunch of trot and superstitious to overcome. If we, the working class, are to reclaim the agenda from the lefties and Islamists who've monopolised the movement for so long, and if we're then to stand any chance of success, we must link the war into the other issues which follow from it. Anarchists often say that war is the health of the state, so often that it is a cliché. Instead of hiding behind that slogan and using it to avoid any deeper political analysis, we as a movement, an anarchist movement, need to reclaim the initiative from the boring lefties – which shouldn't be hard – and by a mixture of street activities and polemical propaganda push our politics.

The struggle against the state here is the struggle against war everywhere.

No war but the class war!

***Darren Redstar & Richard McKenna**,*
September 2006

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* At the birth of CND the CPGB was committed to supporting Russia's bomb which meant condemning CND's unilateralism, when the 'comrades' saw however how large the potential audience was, and the inroads that trots and anarchists were making the line was hastily altered.

SURVEILLANCE IN THE CITY

In the film The Truman Show a man spends his entire life on television without realising it. In real life in London today millions of people unwittingly lead their lives on camera. As people flood into the City of London or wander the streets of Hackney each morning, few of them will think that each day they are filmed more than 300 times. Cameras are everywhere: in shops, on streets, buses, tube and train stations, offices, pubs – their ubiquity leads to most people seeing them as part of the landscape, if they notice the cameras at all. There were reported, in 2003, to be 150,000 cameras in London. The number has undoubtedly increased since then.

This article will examine CCTV and surveillance in London, with special attention given to the City and Hackney. I hope to explode some myths and to provide some food for thought about the ways in which we can be spied on. In recent years much attention has been devoted to the threat of ID cards and biometrics. These are both serious issues, but concentration on them to the detriment of examining the extent to which we are already surveilled and observed seems to me to be daft. Yet for all the verbiage I've seen about the potential dangers of ID cards, I've seen very little about the very real and existing CCTV surveillance published in the anarchist press in recent years. This is an attempt to go some way to redressing the balance.

The City of London was one of the first places in London to be carpeted in CCTV cameras, prompted by large bombs at St Mary Axe in April 1992 and at Bishopsgate a year later. At the end of 1993, as part of the new 'ring of steel', cameras were installed at every entrance to the City to automatically read the licence plate of each entering vehicle – and to film the occupants. The waning of the threat from the IRA after their ceasefires of 1994 and 1997 did not, however, result in the dismantlement of the security cordon around the City. Rather, it has now become an integral feature of the cityscape. Subsequent events have provided reasons for its continued existence, among them the Carnival Against Global Capitalism of June 18, 1999, and the terrorist attacks of September 11 and July 7.

The City of London is in a singular position, as its financial markets produce an immense quantity of money. Its targeting by the Provisional IRA and anti-capitalist demonstrators threatened to undermine confidence in the City's ability to avoid its work being interrupted by bombs or riots. The 'ring of steel' initially installed to protect against explosions therefore has an equally important role to play in defending the City from anarchists and other malcontents.

THE 'RING OF STEEL': ORIGINS, DEVELOPMENT, EXTENT

In April 1992 a large IRA bomb devastated the Baltic Exchange, killing three people and causing many millions of pounds worth of damage. A year later, another IRA bomb, in Bishopsgate, killed a News of the World photographer and caused damage estimated at up to a billion pounds. Though some security measures were introduced after the first bomb, the second caused 'leading City figures' to look at the possibility of turning the City into a 'medieval-style walled enclave' to forestall further attacks.

Though this knee-jerk reaction was not put into effect, a number of new anti-terrorist initiatives were brought in – armed police checkpoints were established at entrances to the City, CCTV was introduced in an anti-terrorist role, and new traffic measures set up to make the City a harder nut to crack. Confidence in the City's security, low after the Bishopsgate attack, needed raising. In November 1993, the Commissioner of the City Police defended himself against claims that the new measures were merely a 'public relations exercise' by insisting that 'another massive bomb could make the City untenable as an international financial market place. Foreign investments and business would flee, perhaps never to return' – the 'ring of steel' was, in his view, a real deterrent to terrorists. When another huge bomb did explode in London, at South Quay Plaza in the Docklands in 1996, it was outside the City's boundaries; perhaps the Commissioner was right.

In July 1997 the Provisional IRA announced its second ceasefire of the 1990s, after which they planted no further bombs in London. The next threat to the City to arise was from anti-capitalist demonstrators, for which see below.

Since 1997, the 'ring of steel' has been expanded somewhat. Although the checkpoints established in 1993 and relocated later are no longer permanently manned, the City Police claim to monitor the threat level and station officers at them as needed. There

were no police on the checkpoints on July 7, 2005 – but there were on July 8, once the stable door was well and truly open. But the greatest change since 1993 has been in the CCTV coverage of the City. By 2002, the City of London was 'the most surveilled space in the UK and perhaps the world' with at least 1,500 CCTV cameras in it.

These 1,500 cameras are in more than 376 independent camera systems. The vast majority of them are privately operated by members of the City Police's CameraWatch scheme, rather than run by the City Police. However, at entrances to the City, as at entrances to the Congestion Charge zone, are arrays of CCTV cameras equipped with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology. This technology allows cameras to recognise up to 3,500 number plates an hour, a capability increased by the creation of the Congestion Charge zone. Every vehicle – and pedestrian – entering the Congestion Charge area

is caught on CCTV. These cameras, the black ones at every entrance to the zone, are officially just there to ensure collection of the Charge. They are supplemented by a number of CCTV vans monitoring apparently random streets. Where, previously, the IRA had few concrete obstacles placed in their way when delivering bombs to their targets, suspect vehicles are now far easier for the authorities to identify. The sign accompanying the array of cameras on Ludgate Hill indicates the importance of the scheme to the state. This says recordings are made, in part, for purposes of national security – few other CCTV schemes monitor specifically for that reason.

JUNE 18

The anti-capitalist protests of the 1990s reached the City of London on June 18 1999, when thousands of anti-capitalists ran riot in the City. Violence was sparked by the police running over a woman. The protest caused damage conservatively estimated at £2M, though chances are it was five or ten times that amount. The demonstrators undermined the effectiveness of many CCTV cameras through the simple expedient of painting on the camera lenses or putting plastic bags over them. Although the working cameras were able to show the inept police commanders the areas of best violence, the extensive area of the protests meant that the cameras were reduced to recording evidence for future trials rather than fulfilling their preventive or deterrent functions. The events of June 18 was the one serious incursion of protest into the City of the 1990s.
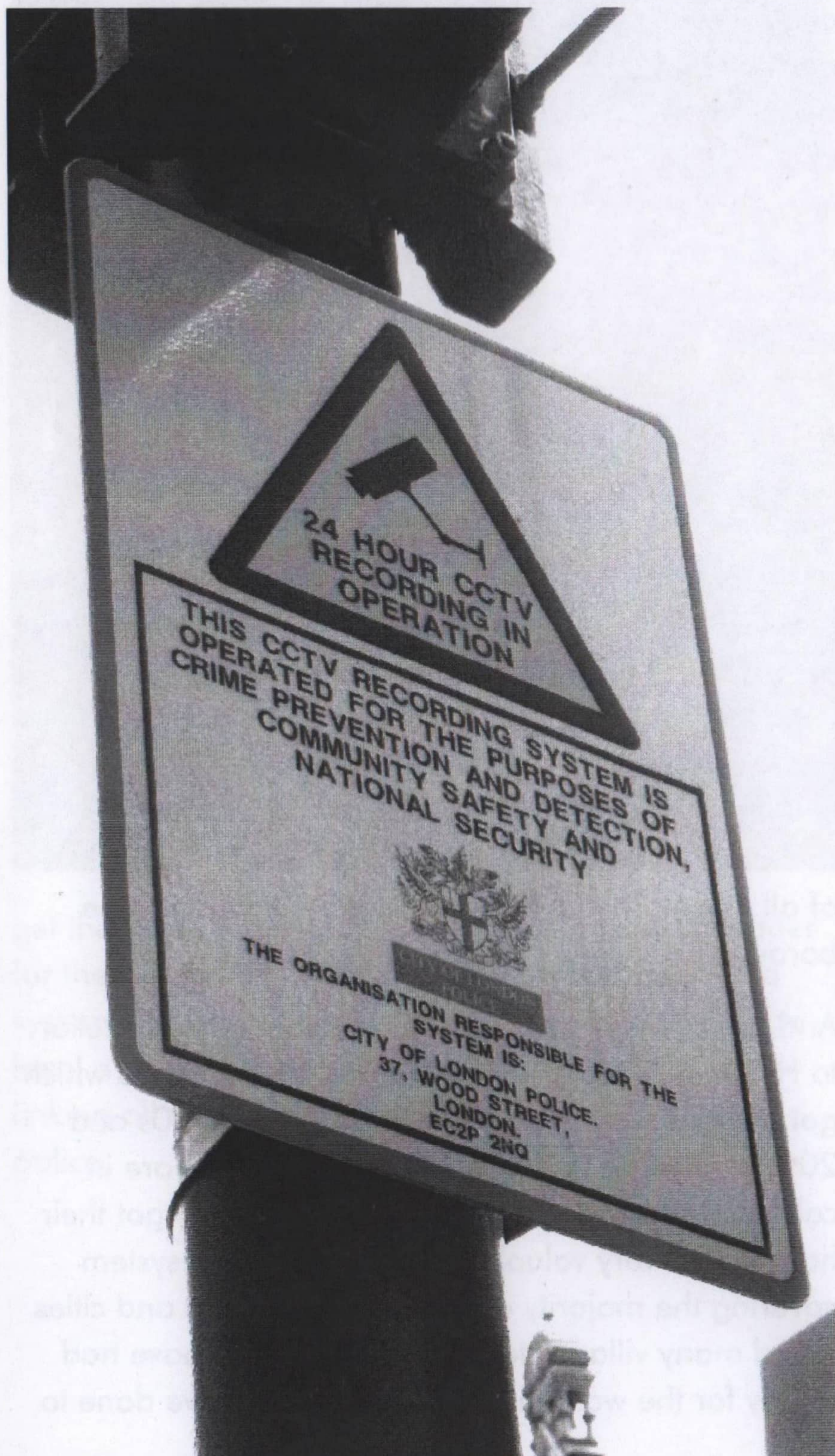
PRIVACY

There is no private space in the City – and precious little in Hackney. All outdoor spaces in the City are monitored – the ubiquitous network of CCTV cameras, which record everything, captures every action or movement. Both the couple in the bottom right hand corner of the picture above have their presence recorded, if not for posterity then for the next several years. City workplaces are also routinely monitored. There is no escape in the City from the pervasive all-seeing camera.

CCTV impacts on behaviour in a number of ways. Self-monitoring becomes a habit, a habit one maintains even when one is no longer under surveillance. Though surveillance may not in practice be as all encompassing as it is thought, the belief it is inhibits people's behavioural range. The couple in the picture above might elsewhere have hugged or kissed, but the minatory eye of the CCTV cameras surrounding them may deter them from any potentially unseemly, subversive, public displays of affection.

HACKNEY

Hackney's CCTV system is by no means as extensive as those in the City. However, as elsewhere in London, the main arteries passing through the borough are surveilled by cameras. The Council also heavily monitors many of its own estates. To do all this, the Council operates 150 cameras from their £1.5M CCTV and Emergency Planning Centre located in Stoke Newington – almost certainly in the old Stoke Newington Town Hall.

Unlike many of Hackney's other projects, their CCTV operation is some distance ahead of the game. Andy Wells, the man in charge, previously worked as an engineer designing CCTV systems, and before that

spent more than 20 years with Marconi, the defence firm. As industry magazine CCTV Image noted, 'Andy is a security technology expert'. He has certainly kept the borough's surveillance scheme above the standard of many neighbouring councils'. It is thanks to his work that Shoreditch residents will be able to watch CCTV – although that's somewhat undermined as a crime-busting measure by the CCTV shifting camera every 30 seconds.

A central aspect of Hackney's CCTV operation, and one echoed up and down the country, is the involvement of police within the borough's control room. The relationship between the police and the Council's CCTV operators is more than a little close. As part of Operation Emerald, the police's programme to 'improve' London's criminal justice system, every borough is given a full-time police liaison officer. Gary McKie, the liaison officer in Hackney, says that no local authority CCTV scheme can afford to be without someone like him. 'A local authority CCTV control room needs someone from the police in there permanently', he said in an interview last year. This ought to give some idea of the relationship between councils and the police – residents' interests come a very poor second to the interests of the police. The police are in a position to order, or at least suggest very strongly, that Hackney's CCTV operators cover what the police would like to see filmed. As an example, on the day McKie gave his interview, the police told Wells and his operators they wanted a protest outside the Hackney Empire filmed. And, after the July 7 bombs, the Met asked for 22,000 hours of video footage from Hackney's cameras. This phenomenal quantity covered film taken for two weeks before the attacks. Whilst it is interesting to speculate what they were looking for, it is more concerning to note that following the bombings, in Wells' words, 'all camera operators were allocated areas to monitor and briefed to concentrate on recording the identities of all those arriving at bus and train stations in the borough'.
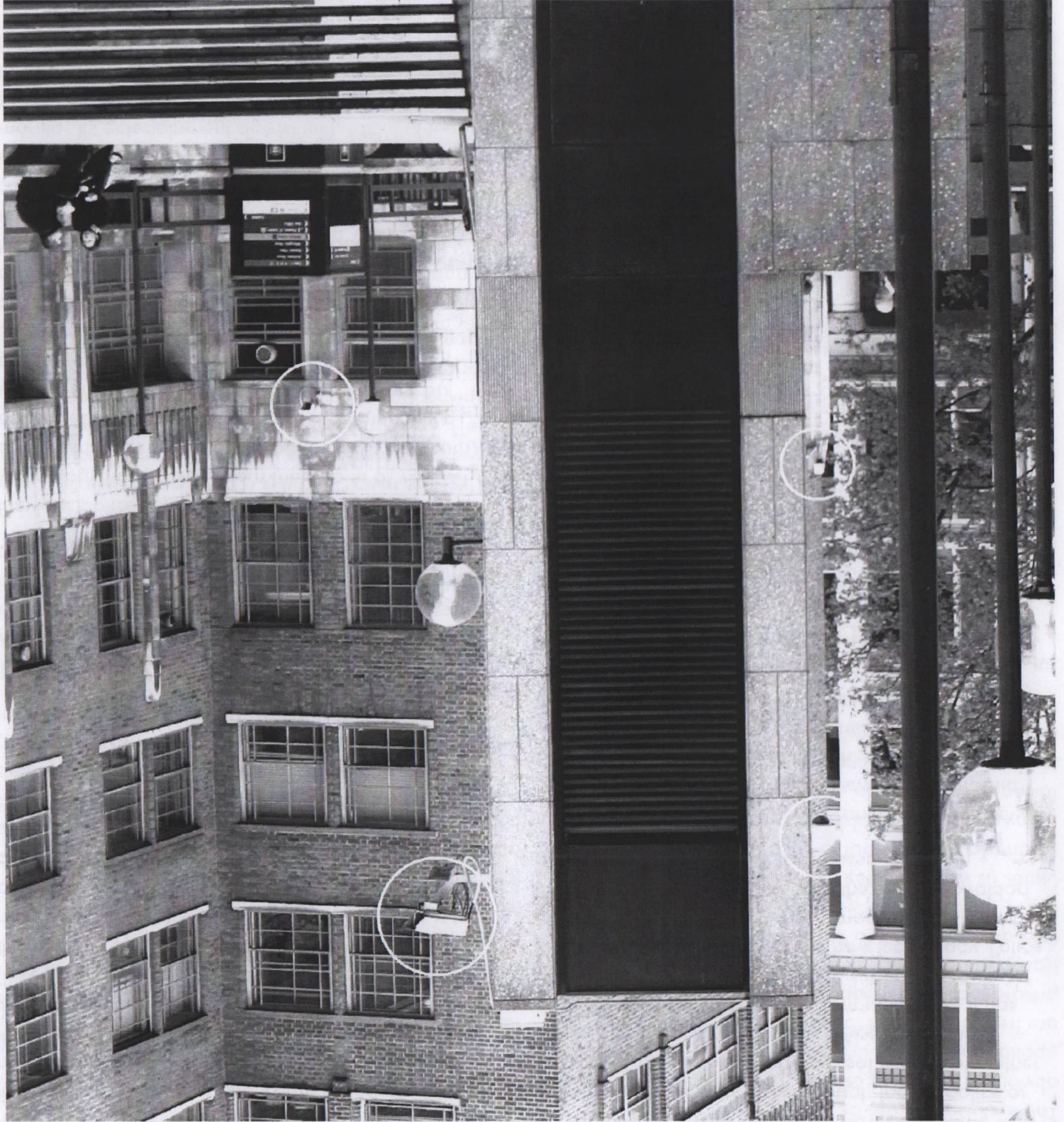
And, to reiterate, this is not something that is peculiar to Hackney. Up and down the country boroughs which got millions from the government in the 1990s and 2000s to create and develop CCTV systems are in cahoots with the police, who have effectively got their hands on a very valuable and cheap CCTV system covering the majority of the country's towns and cities – and many villages too. Whilst the police have had to pay for the work the staff at Hackney have done to

get them the footage, it's still a huge amount cheaper for the cops to do that than to set up and operate a system which has the coverage of that established by local authorities throughout Britain. The only body linking all these individual schemes together is the police.

FACIAL RECOGNITION

Of all the subjects associated with CCTV, none has been the subject of so much misinformation as facial recognition. Depending who you ask, facial recognition has been a reality for many years, or it will never work. As so often, the truth lies somewhere between these two extremes.

A successful facial recognition software package is the Holy Grail of surveillance. Its law enforcement benefits are obvious – as are the civil liberties and privacy dangers. And moves are afoot to create a Facial

Images National Database (FIND), to sit alongside the DNA database and fingerprint collection. Little-noticed reports in January 2006 revealed that the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) gave the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) a mandate to sort out 'a business case for the deployment of face recognition technology on a national basis for the police service'. The plan is to collect pictures taken in custody suites, which would be of an agreed standard in terms of lighting and so on, and compile from them a database. Geoff Whitaker, Head of Biometrics at PITO, disclosed that 'with the deployment of FIND in the near future it is inevitable that the use of facial biometrics will take on greater importance in policing'.

The government has, on file, the pictures of everyone who has applied for a passport. These pictures are taken under stringent conditions. It would be strange if at some point in the future the government did not decide to add them to the new police database.

Previous police experience with facial recognition technology has proved, from their point of view, disappointing. The famous experiment in Newham, east London, in the late 1990s failed to identify a single person. This was a small trial, with just 60 pictures in the database to identify, and only 13 cameras attached to the database. This may well be par for the course, as despite more than thirty years of research into the creation of a viable facial recognition technology, a group of academics concluded, in 2003, that current systems are still far away from the human capability to recognise faces. It is so far away, in fact, that Tampa Bay, in Florida, terminated a scheme to monitor its entertainment district with facial recognition because it had not resulted in a single arrest – and further examples of facial recognition rejection are not hard to find.

There are a number of difficulties that the scientists face in trying to solve the conundrum of CCTV facial recognition. The most obvious is that faces change. What we look like at 10 or 12 is often very different to how we look at 20 or 22 – which again differs from how we look later in life. Medication can change people's appearances, especially those for mental illnesses. Look, for example, at the growing differences between the Kray twins, as Ron Kray's features changed as his schizophrenia worsened. The situations under which we are surveilled do not always lend themselves to easy identification. Differences in lighting undermine the ability of computers to identify

us. Although the technology has advanced some way, it is still nowhere near good enough for the police or corporations to deploy with any real chance of neither public acceptance nor accuracy. Also, the danger of 'false positives', where the computer thinks it has identified someone but has got it wrong, could easily lead to popular rejection of the new technology. Police actions based purely on what a machine says could, if wrong, be reminiscent of both the Stephen Waldorf and Jean Charles de Menezes cases.

A June 2006 article in the San Francisco Chronicle detailed how students at the University of California San Diego were testing a soft drinks machine that uses fingerprint and facial recognition technology. Whilst it remains a game for postgraduates I don't think there needs to be too much concern about a feasible CCTV facial recognition system in the immediate future. What should cause some unease, though, is commercial face recognition. There is at least one photo upload website which can be trained to recognise your friends' faces and then label pictures containing them with their name. If people you know add their photo to the website's database, then – with more photos to recognise people from – the database will recognise more and more people and from an increasing number of angles. Similar technology could allow the UK police to make a go of their facial recognition database – but given the unrivalled ability of the government to cock up IT systems its success is by no means guaranteed. Remember, if you will, that a report in 2000 indicated that 86% of information on the Police National Computer was wrong. Things are unlikely to have changed significantly since then. A computer system is only as good as the information it contains – which could indicate why the police are so determined to push the solution of decades-old crimes with DNA instead of being able to solve many of today's crimes.

EXCLUSIONARY USE OF CCTV

Last year many shopping centres announced that they would no longer admit people wearing hooded tops. This was done explicitly to capture everyone entering the malls on CCTV – which hoodies prevent. In fact, the rise of the hoodie in recent years can be clearly seen as a response to the pervasiveness of CCTV. Yet an objection to being filmed, a demand for privacy, is now seen by shopping centre administrators as threatening; and such threatening people must be excluded! And, if they're not to be excluded, they must be filmed.

The exclusionary use of CCTV is perhaps most obvious in shopping centres, where people who appear unwilling or unable to conspicuously consume are frequently asked to leave or moved on by their private security. Similar tactics are often used at public transport hubs, such as mainline train stations, and they are not limited to the UK – the experience of CCTV in France, Norway, Germany and the United States as well indicates that it is being used universally as an exclusionary tool to keep 'undesirables' out of many publicly accessible spaces. This is often done for no obvious reason – in some parts of Oslo, for instance, 34% of all camera surveillance is devoted to excluding the 'scruffies', who are targeted purely for their appearance.

When this is combined with the ANPR discussed earlier, it becomes clear that CCTV will reorder people's ability to use spaces previously taken for granted. Many commentators have voiced their concern that CCTV creates new power relationships within the city. Though these concerns are often hidden in jargon about disciplinary practices and the like, it is clear that where it counts, on the ground, CCTV is not just used to observe but also to prevent access, to remove those deemed unwanted, and to record their identities for future reference.

Experiences abroad suggest that this will only become worse over time, as the alienated are prevented from accessing increasing numbers of areas previously taken for granted. The continuing gentrification of many areas in London, for example, will see more and more CCTV'd malls springing up. In London's King's Cross, for example, clear efforts are being made to exclude the working class in new developments, both through the sort of businesses opening up, which are obviously aimed at the more affluent, and through the corresponding increase in CCTV surrounding these new shops.

Another area in which the exclusionary use of CCTV can be seen is Canary Wharf and the surrounding new financial district. There are many hundreds of cameras around this City colony together with checkpoints to keep out the proles. The colonial feeling of the place, surrounded as it is with working class areas, makes it feel almost like somewhere under siege with the suited yuppies in their own little filthy rich fortress. A recent article, in CCTV Image, described Canary Wharf as a 'private town', and it is a private town where everywhere – everywhere – within it is surveilled by one of the 1,750 cameras there to deter and capture any unexpected irruption of the unwanted. CCTV can, as at Canary Wharf, reinforce a sense of territory, and instil a strong sense of being an outsider in the visitor.

LIMITATIONS

It's very easy to become awed by the surveillance potential of CCTV. But, just because there's a camera,

This CCTV wasn't working. The terrorist still is.

If you are responsible for CCTV cameras you must follow these guidelines:

- Change tapes daily • Use them no more than 12 times • Keep tapes for at least 31 days
- Use good quality tape and check it by playing it on a different machine
- Ensure the picture is clear and that people and vehicles are clearly identifiable
- Check that the time and date display is correct
- Check that the picture is covering the right area with enough light for a clear picture

Your CCTV provider, security officer or local crime prevention officer can help you improve your CCTV system.

Call the free confidential hotline.

METROPOLITAN POLICE   **0800 789 321**   terrorism HELP US DEFEAT IT

it doesn't follow that it is being watched, or even that the pictures that camera can take will be any good. After the 2005 Anarchist Bookfair in London the cops turned up and, in the course of their attendance, seven people were arrested. Five were charged, and it has been claimed in court that they were responsible for organising violence that day. Yet, despite the area being covered by several Islington CCTV cameras, as well as a number of shop and pub cameras, no CCTV is being offered as part of the prosecution evidence. There are a number of possible reasons why CCTV is not entered as evidence. Apart from the possibility that it shows what actually happened instead of what the police may claim, it may well be that the camera was not working, that it was too dark for the camera pictures to be worth watching – or the camera may be broken, out of focus, or simply dirty.

With cameras feeding to a control room a number of alternative problems may arise. Many schemes' control rooms are responsible for watching an enormous number of cameras, which may exceed 1,000. Within control rooms staff numbers are generally kept to a minimum. Clearly not everything can be watched! And, with so many cameras to keep an eye on, many incidents do not receive the attention one might suppose. Competing demands on control room staff, such as phone calls or reporting faults, also detract from the operators' attention to the screens.

A CLASS ISSUE

The attempts by City planners to use CCTV as a central plank of their anti-terrorism defences was derided by some as a mere public relations exercise, little better than a paper tiger. However, the 'ring of steel' has proved remarkably successful for such a creature. Its introduction has forced bombers to seek alternative means of delivering explosives, most recently using the tube; there has not been another surface bomb in the City since the Bishopsgate explosion of 1993.

SECURE BENEATH THE **WATCHFUL EYES**

CCTV & METROPOLITAN POLICE
ON BUSES ARE JUST TWO WAYS WE'RE MAKING YOUR JOURNEY MORE SECURE

MAYOR OF LONDON

Buses are getting better

CCTV is certainly part now of our lives, and will remain so. However, the scare stories about it are not reflected in reality. Yes, people in London may be captured on film 300 times a day, probably on scores of separate systems with no links to each other. It is easy enough to put together a video of someone's day in retrospect, if something's happened to them – think of the pictures of Jamie Bulger or Damilola Taylor. Under those circumstances everyone's prepared to co-operate. But in normal conditions few people have the time, energy or incentive to look through their CCTV archive – and many CCTV tapes are wiped after a few days or weeks and recorded over.

Despite this, it would be unwise to treat CCTV as a paper tiger as it is developing considerably. New generation devices are intended to minimise the reliance on human operators to spot deviance. However, CCTV is very much a work in progress and today's certainties will become outmoded in several years time. We at Class War will keep a watching brief on the situation. Until then – keep 'em peeled!

Tommy Corrigan, *September 2006*

And, although the City has played unwilling host to one riot in the last thirteen years, there have been several more in other parts of London, most notably Westminster, which has seen several in the same period. Since J18 the security situation in the City has changed, with an increase in the number of CCTV cameras and in other security measures, as well as in the police plans for response to such a situation. Despite the attraction of revisiting the City, no anarchists or other anti-capitalists seriously propose another onslaught on the City – their beefed-up defences would make such an attempt foolhardy at best. Perhaps the 'ring of steel' has had more of an effect than its critics would have us believe.

The CCTV networks in the City of London and Hackney have, ostensibly, differing aims. In the City's case, the stated aim is to deter and prevent terrorist attacks, and riots, and to gather evidence should one occur. In Hackney, the objective is to counter crime. Yet, as I have shown, the true targets is the working class. Not only are the working class to be filmed at work and play, a very large number are also to be filmed at home, through the imposition of cameras in the very streets where they live, thus keeping a firm track on who visits whom. Take a trip to where the middle and ruling classes live and you'll see private CCTV on houses: but not state surveillance of the wealthy.

WE ARE NOT IN THE LEAST AFRAID OF RUINS. WE ARE GOING TO INHERIT THE EARTH - BUENAVENTURA DURRUTI

CLASS WAR, PO BOX 467, LONDON E8 3QX
WWW.CLASSWAR.ORG