

What they will (inevitably) say:

"If Leon were alive today he'd shoot them like partridges" - *Socialist Worker*

"Lock them up" - *Michael Howard*

"They're all neo-nazi state assets trying to gain secret information about us, their spies are everywhere...everyone's out to get us...wibble!" - *Green Anarchist*

"Oooh It sounds a bit violent and extreme, all this talk about 'smashing', can't we tickle the state instead?" - *Some sad fluffy*

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c/o Manchester AFA, PO Box 83, SWPDO, Manchester M15 5NJ

SHEFFIN (Sheffield Free Information Network, SAE for newsletter)
201 Crookes Valley Road, Sheffield S1 1BA. 0114-267-1200

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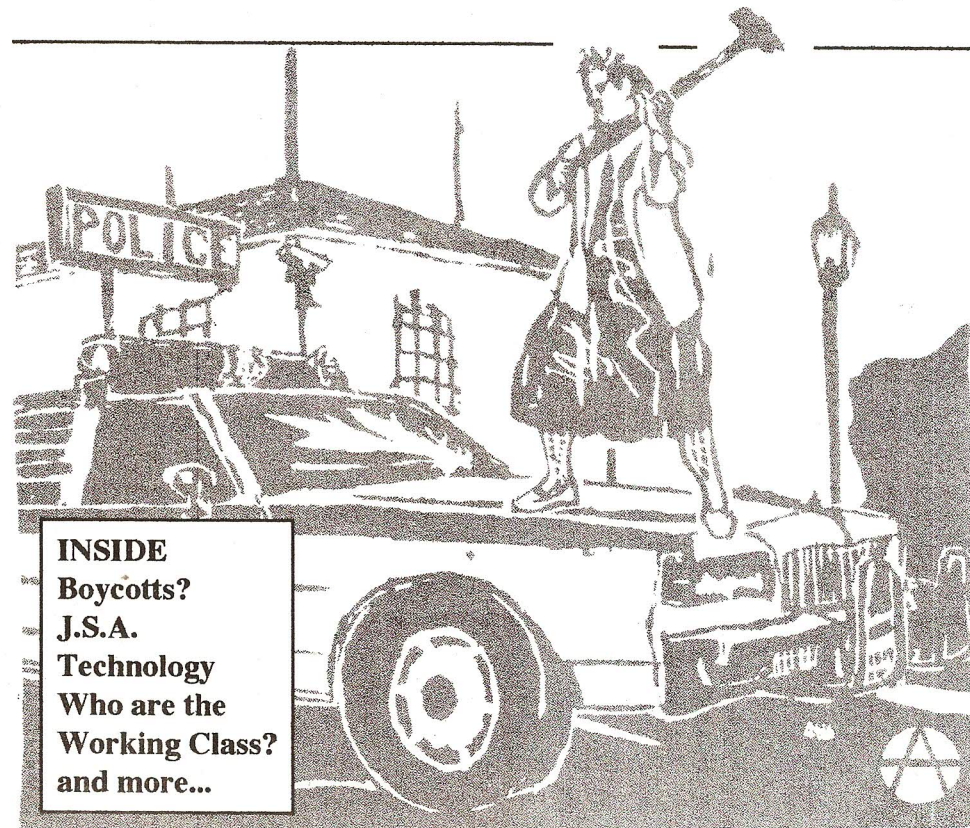
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ISSUE 1
Autumn '96

Free/Donation

For Total Liberation



INSIDE
Boycotts?
J.S.A.
Technology
Who are the
Working Class?
and more...

"One must try to increase as much as possible the theoretical content of all our activities, but without the 'dry and shrivelled doctrinalism' which could destroy in part the great constructive action which our comrades are carrying forward in the relentless fight between the haves and have-nots. Our people stand for action on the march. It is while going forward that we overtake. Don't hold them back, even to teach them 'the most beautiful theories'..."

Francisco Ascaso, from Durutti - *The People Armed*

@fin, Black Star, P.O. Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY

TECHNOLOGY

Within green—oriented struggles whether with a reformist or a libertarian approach, one thing is common - a distinct distaste for technology can be detected. Perhaps this is to be expected as in modern struggles whether against environmental destruction, wageslavery, benefit cuts, intensive farming modern animal research based science and so on it can be seen that the oppression we are fighting against involves the use of some, often much, technology and machinery. At first glance then it may seem that the problem is technology itself and, to achieve true freedom, that technology is the evil which we must eradicate.

"In machine—based societies the machine has incorporated the demands of the civil power or the market and the whole life of society of all classes and grades must adjust to its rhythms. time becomes lineal, secularized, "precious"; it is reduced to an extension in time that must be filled up and sacred time disappears. The secretary must adjust to the speed of her electric typewriter; the stenographer to the stenotype machine; the factory worker to the lathe or the machine; the executive to the schedule of the train or plane and the practically instantaneous transmission of the telephone; the chauffeur to the superhighways; the reader to the endless stream of printed matter from high-speed presses; even the schoolboy to the precise periodization of his day and to the watch on his wrist; the person "at leisure" to the mechanized domestic environment and the flow of efficiently scheduled entertainments. The machines seem to run us crystallizing in their mechanical or electronic pulses the means of our desires. The collapse of time to an extension in space, calibrated by machines has bowdlerized our natural and human rhythms and helped disassociate us from ourselves. even now we hardly love the earth or see with eyes or listen any longer with our ears, and we scarcely feel our hearts beat before they break in protest. even now, so faithful and exact are the machines as servants that they seem an alien force persuading us at every turn to fulfil our intentions which we have built into them and which they represent—in much the same way that the perfect body servant routinizes and, finally trivializes his master."

"IN SEARCH OF THE PRIMITIVE.",
Stanley Diamond, *Green Anarchist* no.42

Whilst it is undoubtedly true that the efficiency of capitalism in keeping us under control, under surveillance and feeding us a limited choice of opinions to take and adopt

as "our own" (which stay always within a strict boundary either slightly left or right of centre) through TV and newspapers has been made possible by technology, we must never forget that this technology is a tool used by our masters. The capitalist system, from the days when the working class DID wear flat caps etc. has ensured that technological advances have only been possible by the funding of research and development by the only ones who could afford it; the ruling class. Thus the final product is tailored to the demands of, owned by and used in the interests of the ruling class.

To see the struggle for liberation as a struggle against technology and machinery, our supposed "inanimate rulers", is to be diverted from the real struggle against the people who use this technology to oppress us in various ways.

In the excerpt above from Stanley Diamond's article the author shows his distinct lack of understanding of the class system by which modern capitalist society is constructed. He fails to understand the key point that it is a boss who sits the secretary at "her" typewriter and forces her to work to the limits possible; a boss who forces the factory worker to slave away on the lathe or the machine; a boss (head teacher) and the capitalist system of preparation of our children for the labour market that masquerades as "education" which forces children into the school timetable regime. The lathe is a symbol of oppression to the factory worker not because it enables a product to be crafted quicker than by hand but because it is owned by the boss who forces the worker to stand at the machine crafting the same product over and over again not to enhance the life of that worker but for the boss to take away at the end of the day. Would a lathe in a community workshop available for people to use to craft something they need still be a tool of oppression? As to the author's suggestion that everyone "of all classes and grades" are oppressed by machinery (the stuff of the best science fiction) and his suggestion that the executive is oppressed by rail and plane timetables and telephones this is where his article gets even more bizarre. I am sure any executive would, if they were honest, agree that the mild inconveniences of scheduled flights and so on are a small price to pay for the benefits to them - the mobile phone allowing harassment of the secretary or for that matter any part of the workforce 24 hours a day. Or is the author suggesting that we team up with the ruling class and Arnold Schwarzenegger in a "Terminator" style war against the machines?

It is not the inanimate machinery that is inherently bad, it is the system which allows a minority to use these machines as an oppressive tool against the majority. There exists much technology which used in the right ways could benefit all and I am sure most sane people would not wish to dispense with it. If, as anarchists, we are to facilitate the empowerment of ordinary people to rise up against those who would keep us down, and take back our lives, asking people to reject this useful technology is surely a step backwards leading to us being further marginalised.

There are most certainly problems with technology. Of these the biggest problem I would suggest is not the technology itself but rather the complexities of modern high—technology which leads to 'specialisms' - that is areas of knowledge which are dominated by the few and are beyond the interest and therefore the understanding of many - myself included, which leads to hierarchies by which those without this understanding have decisions forced upon them by those possessing this knowledge. Just how far or indeed whether we should favour further technological development and what exactly is and isn't useful technology is an important and valid debate. But reactionary, hysterical "machine=bad" rants and slagging off participants in this debate who do not follow the primitivist line as "you sad technophile" (GA 42) does nothing to encourage rational debate.

Finally a suggestion to the editors of *Green Anarchist*—If you could beg, borrow or steal some technology in the form of a word processor with spell—checking facility it would eliminate many typing errors and make your tirades a hell of a lot easier to read!

Want to know more about issues contained in @fin or anything else that affects our lives i.e. campaigns, prisoner support, racism & fascism, animal liberation, squatting, oppressive laws, dealing with the police etc? Drop us a line. @fin has access to a wide range of information and in the unlikely event that we don't have information we can almost certainly put you in touch with someone who can help. Do you know anyone who might like to receive copies of @fin? Would you like to help distribute it in your area? Or do you have any suggestions, letters etc? If you do, please drop us a line at @fin, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY. Please enclose a donation/SAE to cover printing and postage costs as this whole project's being funded on Income Support!

schoolteacher or the recent shooting of 16 children in Dunblane to see how the media cultivates fear and creates hysteria, leaving fertile ground for further legislation which inevitably serves not to protect but to oppress.

We have been promised by all the major political parties in their quest to be the party of law and order, tougher sentences, more prisons, more police, even research into what part of our genetic make-up creates criminal behaviour, in various tirades of the "hang 'em and flog 'em" variety.

Prisons do absolutely nothing to reduce anti-social crime. Kropotkin's phrase "universities of crime" has been repeated many times by radicals and reformists alike. Prison brutalises and labels those who go through the system then spits them out with no prospects. Inevitably, many end up going round and round, dole, court, prison, dole, court, prison... There is no non-authoritarian alternative to prison. The solution to crime can only be a radical change in society, which must be achieved through anarchist revolution. Those that did offend in the new society could be dealt with in the community, not by a "lynch

mob" but in ways which would enable the offender to play a constructive part as a member of society. Much crime would disappear. Without private property, many property-related crimes would not exist and in a more equal and less aggressive, less competitive society violent anti-social crime would naturally decrease.

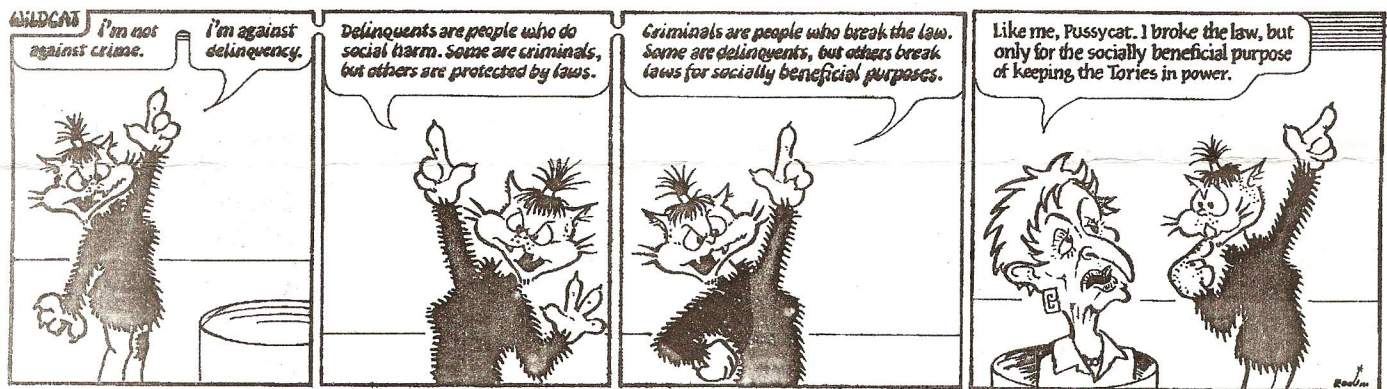
The capitalist system emphasises competition, aggressive individualism and creates and cultivates irrational, motiveless incidents. It encourages relationships based upon power and privilege, and incites hatred towards any convenient group that can be portrayed falsely as the cause of our hardship so that we turn our frustration and anger onto others who are in the same boat as ourselves. We as working class people and communities need to work towards sorting out our own problems, find ways of making our streets safer (and I don't mean Neighbourhood Watch!) and to give practical help not only to victims of crime but also to the victims of that greatest crime of all - Government. In other words, mutual aid and solidarity.

No, crime, by which I mean anti-social acts,

would not disappear overnight. To assume that it would, is to be unrealistic and foolish. But in a society where goods are produced and distributed fairly, where money and all other forms of capital (including LETS stones) and its associated inequalities are no more, where there is no gaping difference in standards of living, and individualist, selfish and egotistical tendencies are not cultivated the way they are today, such crimes would drastically decrease in frequency given a little time. No crime may never disappear completely and it is an important issue which merits a great deal of discussion both now and in the future, but the question one must ask is could crime in an anarchist society really be worse than under the fundamentally criminal system of the present?

Adapted, expanded upon and generally ripped off from a leaflet originally published by London Anarchist Black Cross, 121 Raiton Road, London SE24 0LR

The Anarchist Black Cross exists to support class struggle prisoners whilst working for the abolition of both prisons and the capitalist system. Contact Sheffield ABC, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY



CS GAS

In January, amid media hysteria about knife attacks and violent crime, it was announced that a number of police forces around the country are to be armed with CS gas for a "trial period" - which basically means that in a few months time the Government and Association of Chief Police Officers will approve its use by every force in the country.

The decision to arm the police with an incapacitating spray was made a considerable time ago, the original plan being to use capsicum (pepper spray). In October 1994, it was reported that pepper spray was undergoing police trials. In California, this spray caused 14 deaths within the first year of its use, and during testing in Britain, police officers have been injured, hence the decision to use CS gas instead. Already this has been criticised after a man

died in police custody this March, but whatever the outcome of the enquiry, whether they give the formula a few "tweaks" or not, CS gas is now a reality.

Police officers will carry CS gas canisters as part of their normal kit and, so we are told, "mainly for self defence" we are being sold CS gas as an alternative to firearms, to make the idea of further tooling up the police more easy to swallow. CS gas may or may not be less dangerous than pepper spray - below is a list of guidelines on what you should do if you or anyone else is exposed to it.

*CS gas is potentially fatal to asthmatics. If you suffer from asthma, always carry your inhalers with you on demos. If you don't need them yourself, you may be able to help someone else who has an attack.

*If you are gassed, try to run away. You need to get fresh air as soon as possible.

Once out of danger, stand facing the wind with your eyes open to clear them of gas.

*Wash your face in cold water if you are in discomfort.

*Once home, take a cold bath. Warm or hot water opens skin pores allowing remaining CS gas residue to enter and make irritation worse; cold water closes pores.

*Consider carrying protective measures - cycle masks with activated charcoal filters should help minimise damage to the airways. You could use a gas mask although these are heavy, sweaty, cumbersome and don't exactly blend in with the crowd, but could have uses in certain circumstances such as in underground tunnels at a protest camp etc...

[Adapted from an original article by Proletarian Gob, BM Makhno, London WC1N 3XX]

FREE FISTA!

Simon Sunderland has been sentenced to five years for "criminal damage". He had painted a number of pieces of graffiti in Sheffield and the surrounding area. Most of his work was carried out on derelict, now demolished sites. Sheffield council have claimed that each of these cost over £1000 to clean - even though they were demolished! Other work hasn't been removed: despite the fact that it was done three years before Simon was arrested. None of it was abusive or contained offensive language.

Newspaper reports claimed he had sprayed a member of the public in his face for objecting to his activities. This is a lie - even the prosecution never claimed this happened.

Sheffield council have tried to put the blame for businesses refusing to invest in Sheffield, the poor health of Sheffield people etc. on the shoulders of Simon and other graffiti

artists. Have they forgotten that high unemployment and poor housing have increased with the closure of much of South Yorkshire's steel industry, pits etc. over the past twenty years. The council's holding the World Student games (for which they are still in debt and will be for years to come) and ripping the city apart to build an unwanted and unused Supertram (the work for this, incidentally, caused far more structural damage to buildings than Simon could ever do) are what's putting up our taxes. Simon's graffiti art did no-one any real harm and certainly can't look any worse than the drab grey concrete that features in much of the city: that's what's worth robbing more years of his life than most rapists, muggers and other anti-social criminals get?

Simon was looking to go to art college and due to start a course in September 1995. He pleaded guilty to the charges, having spent over five months on remand. A probation officer's pre-trial report recommended a

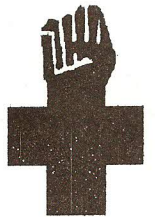
non-custodial sentence and the prosecutor was seeking a 12-18 month sentence (that's bad enough). But Judge Robert Moore gave him five years. For graffiti.

Simon would appreciate support. His appeal will hopefully be heard in the next few months. Drop him a line to:

Simon Sunderland RR1591, E Wing, HM Prison Everthorpe, Brough, North Humberside, HU15

The campaign to free Simon can be contacted at 18 Wentworth Road, Jump, Barnsley S74 0JY or 87 Dylways, Camberwell, London, SE5 8HW

For information and advice on writing to prisoners and providing practical support write to Sheffield Anarchist Black Cross, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY



CRIME - TOGETHER WE'LL CRACK IT?

ID. Cards, Close Circuit TV, CS gas, batons, quick-cuffs, more prisons including children's prisons, DNA database, powers to impose bail conditions and curfews, stop search... All new powers that the forces of 'law order' have been given in the crusade against crime.

We live, so we are told, in violent times where every step alone after dark could be our last. The police are, apparently, frustrated by their oh-so-minimal powers and are unable to protect us from the evil criminal "out there". The media spoon-feed us tales of senseless attacks on the vulnerable, coupled with appeals to "throw away the key".

In reality, many of us are, in legal terms, criminals. A bit of work on the side to help pay the bills, a little shoplifting to make a change from 7p tins of beans, people living together claiming to live separately so their benefits won't be cut, direct action, protest, or simply doing something for "kicks" to escape the monotony of life "Frauds, cheats, thieves, extremists and hooligans in Sun speak. Breaking the law is often a necessity for many people, and those who get caught have their name printed in the local rag's "court report", are frowned upon as "anti-social" and lectured for being "greedy and jealous" by some pompous, over-privileged git who can send them to prison on a whim. The greedy, anti-social element here is not hard to spot. They are the judges, the politicians and the bosses. They are the ones who control our lives and keep us down. They are the ruling class.

The myth is that the bosses "create wealth" which trickles down to benefit us all (provided of course that we are prepared to knuckle down and work hard for it). Thus they can't be held back by taxation and paying a decent wage. In times of economic difficulty it is us, the working class who bear the brunt of recession. It is us who are told to tighten our belts. It is us who, as we get old, die from hypothermia because we can't afford heating bills. It is us who create all the wealth and have it snatched from us, for which we are paid a meagre wage, to keep the bosses in champagne and caviar so they can supposedly get on with creating wealth. People are deliberately kept out of work so that even a low wage seems a better prospect than the dole. Even then, the attacks continue, with the Job Seekers Allowance created to throw people off the dole and force people into even lower paid jobs to avoid this whilst existing wages are cut.

The ruling class are the real criminals. They wreck people's health and lives, local communities and the environment in pursuit of further profit and economic growth. But these crimes are legal, they are "good business practice". When we try to take back a little of what was stolen from us, that is illegal, a crime for which we are locked away as a "danger to society".

ANTI-SOCIAL CRIME

Of course there are anti social crimes committed by working class people. People stealing from their own communities instead of the rich. Violent muggings, rape and assault

are anti social and need to be dealt with. Fighting amongst ourselves gets us nowhere, it serves the interests of our rulers in keeping us divided, looking to outside our communities to deal with the problem - looking to the government to protect us from each other. This is why anti-social crime is cultivated and encouraged by the state.

TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL CRIME.

It is the question of "law and order" which people otherwise sympathetic to anarchist ideals find most difficult to swallow. Whilst agreeing with criticisms of the police, miscarriages of justice and the unfairness of the legal and judicial system, they argue that without the rule of law, murderers and rapists would be free to go about their unsavoury business unhindered, and that the leader of the toughest gang would rule the roost, remaining unconvinced that there could ever be a better system than liberal democracy as the best guarantee of an individual's freedom.

Much of violent crime is violence against women, often by husbands or partners within the family, whilst mugging and burglary are motivated by personal gain. This suggests that the hierarchical and patriarchal organisation of society is a major problem. But by the media's focus on the criminal somewhere out in the dark night waiting to pounce - not unlike childhood monsters - the real social issues are side-tracked and in their place lies fear and knee-jerk reaction. Anyone who doubts the media's role in state control needs only to look at the way they deal with horrific crimes such as the knifing of a

The Working Class - Love on the Dole?

Inside the pages of @fin we make many references to the "working class". So what do we mean when we say "working class"?

The classical and somewhat dated definition of the working class which @fin seeks to re-define is that, since the bosses own the factories, tools and machinery needed for goods production, the working class are those who must sell their labour to a boss for a wage. Moving on from this, because the bosses cannot produce goods without that labour, and the economy needs our labour, the road to the liberation of the working class is to seize the means of production for ourselves. Indeed, in years before the two world wars, in times of fierce imperialist competition and bitter rivalries between the capitalist nations of Europe for domination of less "developed" countries, capitalism was in crisis with industrial disputes, strikes and pitched battles between pickets, scabs and police such as is portrayed in the film "Love on the Dole" [1] and anarchist/syndicalist ideas were rapidly spreading under the banner of "workers' control of production".

Since the second world war however, the nature of capitalism has altered considerably with working-class housing being demolished (by bombing and post-war demolition) and relocated, the creation of the "welfare state", the con of which is explained in another article, the growth of the economy, growing use of automation, dividing work into different levels of "skill" and the growth of non-manual tertiary industries [2]. Thus the standard idea of the working class being the manual labourers, and the strategy of fighting capitalism at the point of production (although this is still favoured by the SWP even for the Poll Tax and Criminal Justice Act! Mind you, Trotsky did predict that capitalism could not survive world war 2! Oh dear!) no longer stand.

The term "working class" then, needs re-definition if it is to be understood. The writer has, in response to a previous article written for another FIN, received a letter claiming that the working class is obsolete, with references to the working class as all flat caps and whippets - taking a caricature image of a working class that has undoubtedly changed.

This is not to say, however that we live in John Major's "classless society". We are still oppressed by a ruling class, aided in this by a middle class (who themselves are oppressed to a much lesser degree) who have their own struggles and concerns - what has changed is some of the methods by which we are oppressed. The fact that many of us own a TV does not mean we are all middle class - the people who tell us this are the ruling class and the only ones who believe it are the middle classes themselves.

So when we talk about "working class" we don't just mean factory workers, manual

that class is not such a clear cut issue as many revolutionaries would like to think and have no wish to "shut out" many genuine class struggle anarchists from this grey area, just as I have no wish to work within middle class ideology with someone in a lower wage bracket than the aforementioned anarchist. It is up to ourselves to use our common sense before throwing people into a labelled box and to discuss further, and develop our understanding of class and this article is simply my contribution and suggestions for this debate.

Notes

[1] Incidentally this film which is well worth a look was banned when it was first made because of its graphic portrayal of the workplace anti-capitalist struggle of the time.

[2] A detailed analysis of these changes can be found in Aufheben 3.

[3] The unemployed are most certainly working class and, if we are to move away from solely work related activities, have a valid part to play in the class struggle. It is unfortunate that many unemployed people feel shut out when we talk about the working class, perhaps due to the leftist groups who dogmatically stick to the 'point of production' strategy and such things as the patronising sub heading of the TUC's Unemployed Journal "United & Fighting for the Unemployed" as if we are incapable of struggle in our own right.

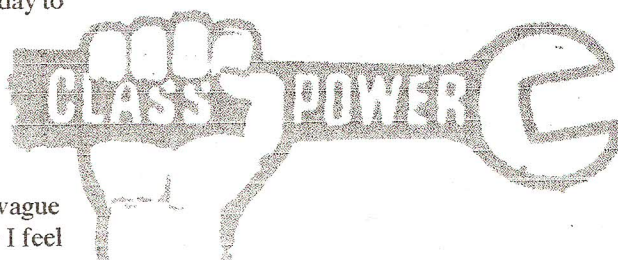
[4] Though middle class workers can be made to work hard they do have the option, unpleasant as it may seem to them, to jack it in, as opposed to a working class person pushed to breaking point who has no way of escape.

[5] Thus a police constable at the lower end of the wage ladder cannot be considered working class (despite some leftists calling them "workers in uniform"). They are perhaps best defined as scabs, although I can think of many more adjectives, as whatever their background, their role is to preserve the internal security of the capitalist state.



labourers etc. We don't exclude the unemployed from the working class [3] except perhaps those with considerable other income than state benefits or savings, such as "between jobs" middle-management. There is, also very much a "grey area" today between the middle class and the working class in which no single determining factor exists. I would suggest that how much a job involves being an "order giver" as opposed to an "order taker" comes into the equation as does the relationship between the wage or salary and the amount of work involved [4], how a job involves ensuring the smooth running of capitalism on a day to day basis [5] and also perhaps in some cases, even attitude and outlook on life.

I apologise, and may be criticised for a somewhat vague analysis of class, however I feel



JOB SEEKERS ALLOWANCE

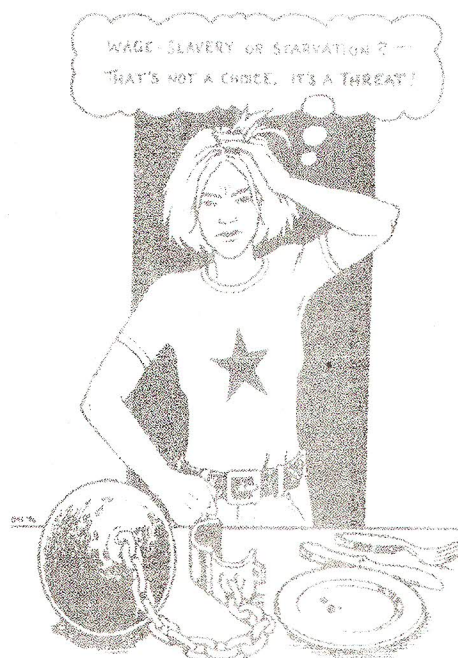
Since this article was written, the claimants and workers struggle against the JSA has gained momentum and left the trots and union hacks standing. Nevertheless we have included it in this issue as we feel the points raised are still valid given the past record of the left (hijacking others hard work, fucking it up and then claiming defeat as some kind of victory) and also the fact that a repeal of the JSA would still leave us back where we started from.

So far in the campaign against the Job Seekers' Allowance, we have been bombarded by calls from Trotskyite groups and the TUC for "Jobs not JSA", "Work not Workfare" and soon, asking the Government not to penalise the unemployed but to provide gainful employment for us all - a "fair days work for a fair days wage". Is this really what we want and should we allow the lefty Labour party apologists to push the campaign this way?

Firstly, the full employment of the past is no longer a possibility - the economy can no longer sustain the idea of jobs for all. Indeed, it can now not afford the welfare state. Set up in 1945, Labour's "greatest moment" the benefits system was set up after world war 2 (and the rise of anarcho-sindicalist ideas previous to the two wars, under the banner of "workers' control of production") to give people the idea that capitalism would benefit all, and to help keep class struggle under control. But there was never any plan to sustain the welfare system. It was funded from taxation of the working class. Now the con becomes more apparent as with unemployment levels at the highest level since the thirties, the welfare system is being gradually dismantled. It will not stop at the JSA. There will be more cuts in the future, but it is safer to cut back gradually rather than in one foul swoop and risk opposition on the same scale as the Poll Tax. The JSA also allows bosses to further exploit those in their employ with the threat of being thrown into a harsh benefits regime.

Secondly, are jobs what we really want? Do we really all want dead end jobs, to toil away to increase bosses' profits? There is NO SUCH THING as a fair wage whilst we are paid less than the profits our work brings in. Surely we should be fighting against wage slavery not pressing for more. This does not mean that we are workshy - road protesters, to the government the ultimate "workshy layabouts", spend their days digging tunnels, building treehouses and so on - illustrating

how people are prepared to work for no pay, just for the benefit of themselves and their communities, who all reap the rewards rather than having them stolen from them at the end of the day. Instead of asking for full employment, why not fight for a world in which we share the work needed to ensure a decent standard of living for all, without hierarchy and wasteful beaurocracy (how



often have you heard said "I could have done this in half the time if it weren't for all this red tape"?), a world in which we dispense with the whole system of employment and unemployment, the monetary system, exchanging buying and selling goods and services for mutual aid, and a world in which we can dispense with the drudgery, stress and work related illness of regimented labour.

It is encouraging then, to see on JSA marches, the red & black flags of anarchy standing apart from the tired slogans of the SWP et al. indeed the sly way the SWP and other sects use such issues as recruiting campaigns for "the party" could be seen on this April's march against Project work (workfare) in Hull, where as the march moved off, Militant and the SWP chose to ignore the proceedings, staying instead in Victoria Square to sell papers! No doubt they will show the same amazing solidarity during occupations

and other direct action against the JSA (remember Militant's Tommy Sheridan and his call to grass up Poll Tax rioters to the police?). A fuller expose of lefty sects, their authoritarian politics and organisational methods, and their sometimes comical antics is planned for the next issue.

So whilst the TUC are off lobbying for more wage slavery and the Trots are busy recruiting and selling papers, what can ordinary claimants (and workers) do to combat the JSA?

-Leaflet jobcentres in your area (NOT your own signing office)

-Leaflet schemes such as Jobclub etc.

-Some scheme providers have links with employers offering extremely crap, low-paid jobs. See what dirt you can dig up!

-Disruption. occupying offices (but be careful not to hinder people getting their benefits, getting in to make new claims etc. as this may lose rather than gain support). Placing fake job ads and other mischief is also a good one.

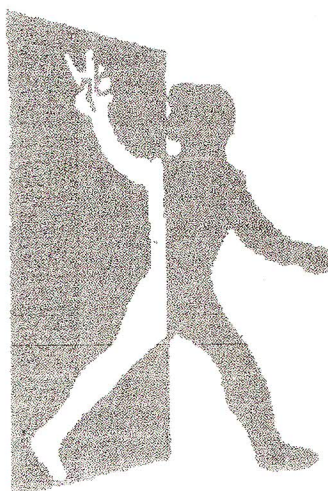
-If any of the DSS staff seem to have forgotten that there's a 'D' before the 'SS', publicise this and warn people, but don't target decent staff (there are some) - they can be our allies!

-If there's a claimants' union in your area, join it. If not, how about starting one. They should prove an invaluable source of solidarity, support, shared experience, ideas and so on.

Leaflets, contacts and information on the JSA are available from Groundswell, the national coalition of groups against the JSA. Contact: Groundswell, c/o Oxford Unemployed Workers' & Claimants' Union, East Oxford Community Centre, Princess Street Oxford OX4 1HU

JOB SEEKERS' ALLOWANCE WARNING!

A claimant has been contacted by his Job Centre saying that they would be 'phoning him on a certain day to check that he was looking for work - and they did! If you are a "new claim" or you change address don't give your telephone number. Source - Haringey Community Action Spring '96



CLASS CONSCIOUS CINEMA?

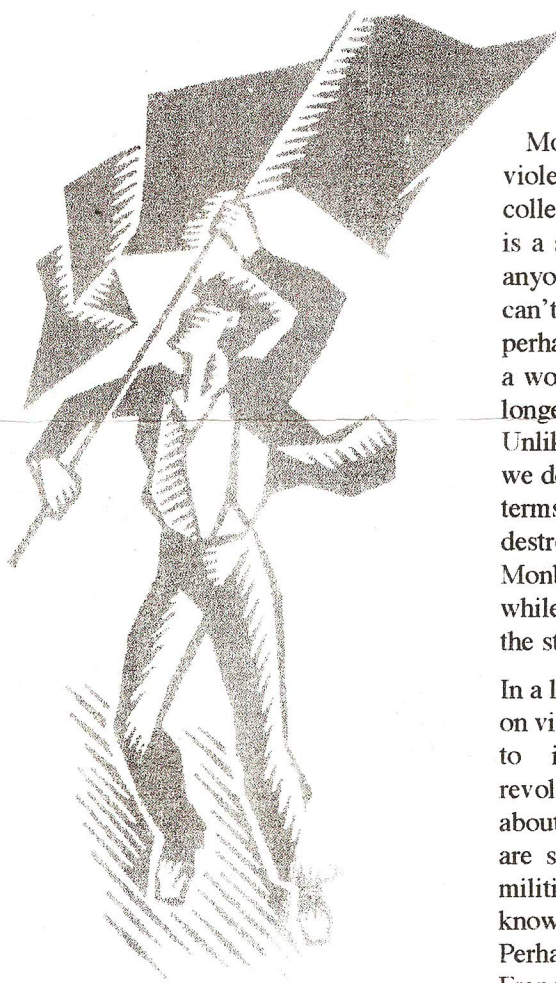
Many people are now carrying cameras and camcorders on demos to film police activity - the argument being that by filming the cops, they can't get away with lying in court or attacking 'innocent' people. This argument is based on the sickeningly liberal idea that riots are caused by 'insensitive policing', state-operated agent provocateurs, or simply by 'bad' policing. It ignores the fact that for a demo to turn into a riot there is no need for provocation. The shit we live in every day is provocation and justification enough for attacking the police, after all the police are our enemies, hired and paid by the rich to maintain their social order, the same social order of those middle class, 'comfortably-off' reformists who hold this notion of a great democracy; a capitalism that is 'nice'. Capitalism is not and can never be 'nice', it is so successful because it is vicious, divisive, and creams off the profits of our labour to give to the bosses. The middle class condemn violence so much because it plays no role in the reform of social democracy, it actually harms such campaigns. But unlike the woolly-minded liberals, we are not interested in reform. A riot is the result of a mass of angry people; it is the result of collective working class anger.

Taking a camera on a demo is dangerous for all present. What happens if you get arrested, lose your camera or have it confiscated, and the cops get to see your snapshots? Or what if the developing lab notices your photos and passes them to the police. Your photo evidence could be the cause of people getting sent down. Of course, those who most strongly advocate filming demos aren't bothered about this - as anti-state violence threatens social reform they are secretly pleased if a few of us are out of the way. These are the same people who advocate spray painting 'troublemakers' and removing people's facemasks. They are, in effect, cops and should be treated as such (another good reason to leave your camera at home!)

I am not suggesting cameras are never used - they can have good effect in smaller actions, for example hunt-sabbing, where people know each other and the camera operator knows when and when not to film. But please, on demos or mass actions, let's return to when you can tell who the journalists and police spies were.

GRASSES!

Certain dangerous criminals with a disgraceful contempt for law and order, grow their own marijuana. But, honest, clean-living citizen, don't worry. Society is not about to collapse thanks to the responsible actions of Sunlight Systems, purveyors of growlights and hemp seeds, who have taken the step of passing on their mailing lists to the police, resulting in the apprehension of numerous drug-crazed hooligans. Unfortunately the criminal mind being increasingly devious and sick these days, police are concerned that people may now start buying mail-order stuff with cash or postal orders under false identities and safe addresses.



@FIN ON...

GEORGE MONBIOT

New darling of Green politics George Monbiot, aka Beaumont is being very successful getting his face plastered all over newspapers and the TV. Unfortunately for George, he is now featured in the pages of @-fin and Class War!

For those who don't know, George's Pater is the head of Trade and Industry in the Conservative party and Mater was leader for 9 years of South Oxford district (Tory) council. George has been known to gushingly praise daddy as a "decent bloke, a moral bloke" and go on to admit that "in some ways we look at the world in similar ways" - sorry to repeat Sally Skull George but, as they say, the truth will out.

Monbiot's moralistic stance on anti-state violence is typical of his class - apparently collective, militant working class struggle is a substitute for when us thickies (i.e. anyone who didn't go to public school) can't think of anything "imaginative" - perhaps we worry him because we imagine a world where Monbiot and his kind no longer hold their position above us all. Unlike George and other such parasites, we don't give a toss about "alter[ing] the terms of a political debate" - our priority is destroying the system that keeps the Monbiots of this world in wine & cheese while people freeze and starve to death on the streets.

In a later article by Monbiot, his position on violence seems to change. In an effort to impress by coming out with revolutionary sentiment, he waffles on about the Spanish civil war. We at @-fin are sure that the anarchist and POUM militias of revolutionary Spain would have known what to do with the Monbiots. Perhaps something similar to what the French had in mind - Monbiot's ancestors fled France during the revolution to escape the guillotine - and that was a bourgeois revolution!

"The Land is Ours" - the campaign headed by Monbiot is aptly named. We know that the land belongs to you and your kind George, but one day we will snatch it back from you, and yes, by any means necessary! Having said that, we do hope you manage to save a few trees - **WE'LL NEED SOMEWHERE TO HANG THE LIKES OF YOU FROM!!!**

CALLING PUNK & SKA BANDS!

@fin is looking to put together a benefit compilation. If you would like to help, please send us a tape to the PO Box. Cheers!

WHAT IS @FIN?

@fin is a class struggle free information newsletter, aiming to highlight the wider class issues behind single issue concerns such as environmental, animal liberation, workplace campaigns and so on. This does not mean that we sit around all day discussing the works of classical anarchist thinkers whilst others get on with the nitty-gritty of everyday struggle. We at @fin do feel however, that many campaigns and actions with an essentially anarchist background of mutual aid, solidarity and fightback against oppression, suffer from a lack of analysis, direction and strategy; sometimes action for the sake of action "because it's there" rather than tackling the roots of the problem, attacking the symptoms rather than the cause, or sometimes actions end when so much more could have been achieved. This lack of analysis has allowed radical movements to be diverted back towards the mainstream by reformist groups with their own agendas such as Liberty and Charter 88 which place their faith in constitutional reform and democracy to bring change from above.

@fin believes that the only solution to the problems of today is change from below - a working class united to destroy capitalism, workers and unemployed fighting the state together in whatever way they can, at work and in the community alike. We do not believe in compromise by asking for more "rights" from our rulers or more accountable government or police, nor do we believe in compromising ourselves by adopting "fluffy" tactics as a principle to be adhered to dogmatically, and other such nonsense and unlike so many others, when we say no compromise we mean it!

"YOU CAN'T REFORM CAPITALISM AND INHUMANITY. JUST KICK IT TILL IT BREAKS"

Angry Brigade - Communique 8



BOYCOTT BOYCOTTS

Almost all issues have groups churning out leaflets containing extensive lists of companies that we have to boycott if we want to be "cruelty free", "green", or "ethical consumers". We can even buy pamphlets with page upon page of "unsound" products and companies, and even worse, pamphlets and magazines showering praise for the growing number of enterprising companies involved in so-called "ethical" capitalism that we are told to support. The writer of this article has witnessed marches against vivisection that, after the obligatory sit-down outside Boots, 100 yards down the road pause to applaud and cheer Anita 'AmEx' Roddick's Body Shop, good old Anita being one of the first bosses to spot the opening for "right-on" products.

These millions of leaflets distributed, propose that we work for change through consumer pressure. Perhaps the greatest championing of this cause is the Animal Rights movement. The whole thing of being "veganer than thou" has become a bizarre power play in which people are derided for buying or doing the wrong thing, i.e. "I can't believe you snogged him, he eats meat, that's disgusting" or "But that soya milk is made by a dairy company" in which the whole thing becomes a means of scoring points off one another i.e. "MY burgers are made with soya bean curd", "Oh, no thanks, I don't eat cash crops". [Although I must stress that not all vegans adopt this attitude and many are committed class struggle activists].

The problem is, all that boycotts can ever hope to achieve is to persuade companies to produce a "green" or "cruelty-free" bleach or whatever, at a hyper-inflated price that no-one except the dedicated "ethical consumer" will buy. These consumers usually come from the middle-classes but not always. Some are conned into buying the "sound" things with their dole money, leaving them even more short of cash. But that doesn't worry them because they're saving the world. Wake up! Save your money because you're not saving the world.

The source of animal cruelty, environmental destruction and "human rights abuses" is capitalism. To increase the profits of the capitalists, anything goes. Thus we get battery farms, veal crates, live exports, open-cast mining, nuclear waste, not to mention low pay and poor working conditions (which contrary to popular belief is not exclusive to McDonalds). Pressure groups asking for "green" capitalism can only ever achieve getting the "green" product marketed so at least they can be one step further to being the perfect ethical consumer and their consciences can be salved, whilst capitalism gets on unhindered with the rest of the dirty work (i.e. Ecoover and their links with Group 4).

I am not suggesting that we start eating meat, going for a Big Mac and indulging in the odd bit of badger-baiting. Of course we should be free to abstain from those things which we find particularly abhorrent. The point is that to right all that is wrong with the world will take more than buying the right things, and moralistic preaching which merely serves to alienate the person "on the street". The struggle against these evils can be contained in a fight against capitalism, attacking the cause of the problems rather than attempting to alleviate the symptoms. Instead of the popular line "Only when we have animal liberation can we achieve human freedom" I would suggest that the opposite is true, where "animal liberation" can be replaced by almost any "right-on" thing you care to mention.