

protests, newspapers and myth-information

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I don't know if it's just me, but every time I've been involved with anything that makes the news I find that the reports always miss the point and often plainly lie. Maybe it's because I can only see it from one perspective, but then again a journalist can only do the same and yet they pretend to know the whole story.

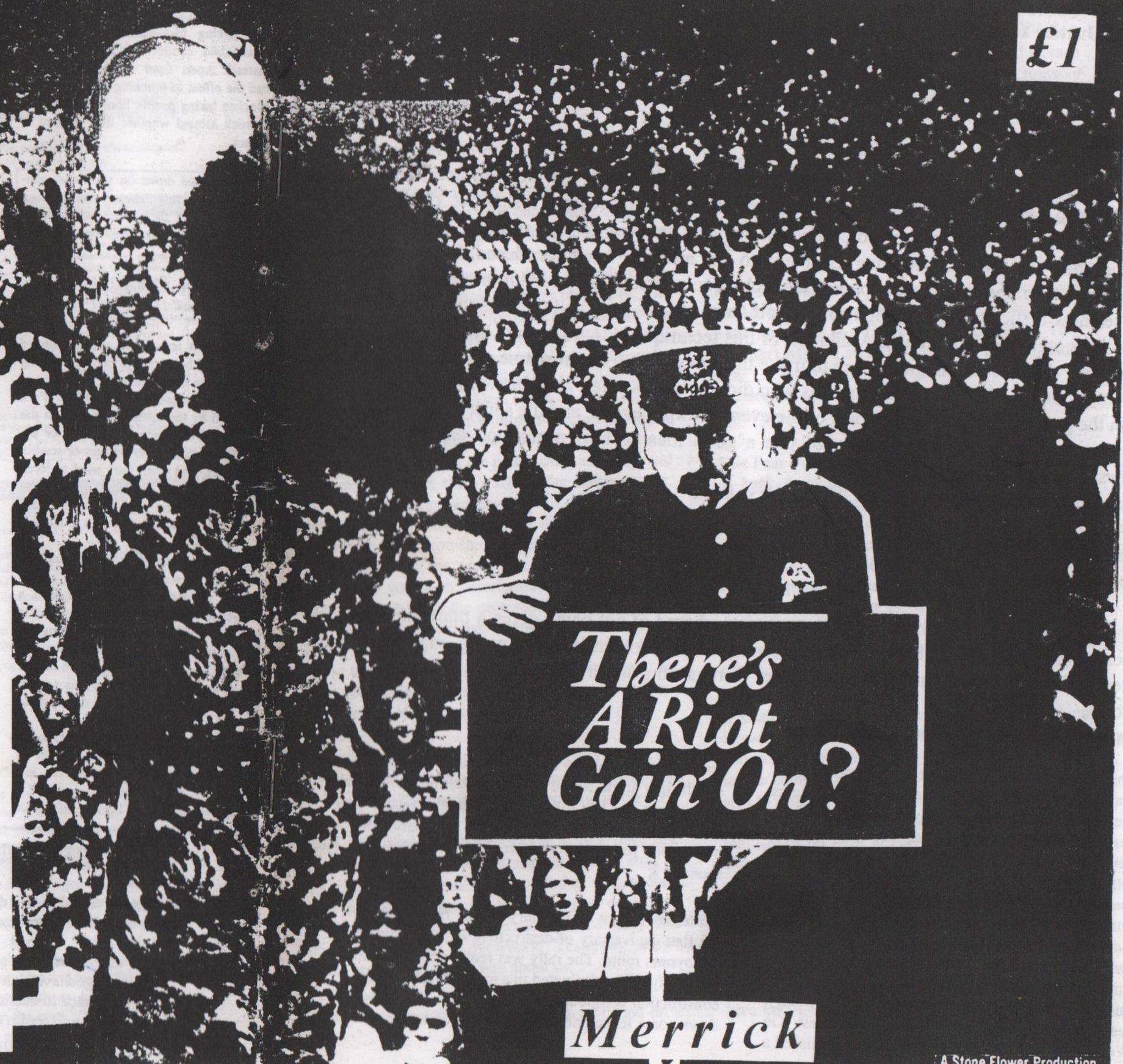
They're under a great deal of pressure to do it that way: who'd read a report that began "This might be all wrong, but..."? To make a report interesting, it must usually focus on issues other than the ones that really matter, and do it in a snazzy appealing way. The truth is often too long-winded, complicated and far too boring.

A report must also seem AUTHORITATIVE. So it is told with a level of conviction that implies it is The Truth. The problem is that it's too long and involved a task to show both sides from both sides, so we're just told who's the Good Guy and who's the Bad Guy.

Given that a biased report is a more interesting report, biased journalism is inevitable. And bias in favour of the police and other authorities is equally inevitable: news relies on these people for stories every day, they're not going to be in a hurry to bite the hand that feeds. Not only does this make it difficult for the rest of us to get a fair hearing, it actually encourages the injustice and corruption of those in authority because they know they can get away with it.

The riot at the demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill in Hyde Park on 9 Oct 94 is the case that this zine goes into. There's the self-published accounts of 5 people who were there, and the newspaper reports with commentary on the bias and the issues raised.

And there's my own accounts of the CJB demo, and of the Newbury Reunion Rally on 11 Jan 97. They are only one person's perspective, but they are true to what I saw, and I don't deliberately exaggerate or omit anything just to make interesting reading or try to influence you. Which gives me one up on the newspapers



Merrick

The probabilities are all against what one reads in the newspapers. If it is a subject you happen to know something about yourself you always find the papers are wrong.

Lord Justice Greer

A newspaper consists of just the same number of words, whether there be any news in it or not.

Henry Fielding

In the case of television, begin by watching documentaries only on those subjects about which you know a lot. Observe to what extent the medium presents a shallow, distorted and often inaccurate or false vision. Then extend your viewing to other subjects, bearing in mind that the level of humbug is likely to be uniform when produced by a large corporation. In the case of newspapers the technique is first to get yourself into the papers, to see how difficult it is to recognise yourself from what is said, and then assume all other accounts are equal balderdash. A dilution of this technique is to be present at some event, such as a 'demonstration' that is sure to make the news, and to see how true a picture of the event is obtained by your acquaintances who did not witness the event, but who read about it in the papers. Comparing the spirit of the event as experienced, and the spirit of the event as transmitted by the press, will give you a good idea of how much you can rely on newspapers as vehicles for truth.

Liz Angerford & Ambrose Lea, "Thundersqueak"

The written word is a lie.

John Lydon

The underground media is produced by activists - bored of not being given a platform, we create our own; bored of being misquoted, we quote each other; bored of going on actions, then rushing home to find the news either disregarding us or distorting our deeds and words.

Jamie, Small World Media

This booklet should have come out in October 1994. Having been in the riot at the demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill in Hyde Park on 9th October, the next day I bought a copy of every national newspaper I could find. Not only did none of them tell the truth, the all told different stories *from one another*. And yet people will just read one newspaper and believe they have been told the truth. Even "our side" papers like The Guardian and The Independent (whose reporter Danny Penman was beaten up by three riot police), only got round to telling the truth later in the week. On the day after the demo, when it really counted, they were as bad as the rest. On Wednesday 12th October, Godhaven Ink published a

leaflet put together by four people who'd been in a coach right at the centre of the riot, telling the truth as they saw it. (The full text of the leaflet is in this zine). We intended to do a booklet comparing the newspaper reports soon after, but we never got round to it.

Yesterday I went to Newbury for the rally marking the first anniversary of destruction work starting on the bypass route. The rally was really good-natured and fluffy, and culminated in a mass invasion of the construction compound at Middle Oak. We ripped down some fence and occupied the area inside, and

a lot of damage was done to contractor's property, but there was no real antagonism towards the police or the security guards. What we did was sabotage the machinery of death and destruction, and it mirrors the action of the Ploughshares women last year who broke into a British Aerospace factory in Lancashire and smashed up a Hawk jet being built for the repressive Indonesian government.

Today I bought all the national newspapers that reported the Newbury action. Again, not only did they not tell the truth (except maybe The Observer), they told different stories from one another. And they all pretend they are telling The Truth. Of course, my account is just one person's perspective. Like the journalists and everyone else there, I couldn't see *everything* that went on, but I don't pretend to. The reporting reminded me of the CJB riot stuff, so I've got my shit together, dug out all the old clippings and done this zine. We all have a fairly solid conviction that the news is full of lies, but we know it in a vague and woolly way. Here are two examples that show specifics, together with non-media eyewitness reports. Not only do the papers make clear measurable errors (like giving the police estimates of crowd sizes as facts), but there's something much subtler, yet far more important in the way the reports are written. It's difficult to pin down, it's in the choice of words used ("protesters", "crowd", "mob" or "thugs"?), it's in the order that the facts are given (how many start with descriptions of police injuries, and how many with the protesters?), it's in the position within the newspaper (front page and the photo in the Daily Mail, 5 inches on page 7 of The Sun). These are all things that you can't quite make an official complaint about, but which give a real perceptible bias to the story.

The Newbury story was not as widely covered as the CJB riot. It involved less people, and it happened on a Saturday; Sunday papers are mostly written by Friday, leaving only a few small gaps for topical bits. Only one tabloid mentioned it (The Mirror, page 20), as Sunday tabloids carry almost no topical stuff at all. If you want press coverage for an action don't have it on a Saturday; the Sunday papers don't have room and it'll be stale and unusable by Monday. But this didn't matter at Newbury. Yesterday wasn't about press coverage, it was about us.

As always, the action at Newbury got blamed on a

shady anonymous troublemaking few. This is bollocks. What happened yesterday was the will of everyone present. There were all kinds of people there, all cheering as the fence was torn down, the generators were trashed and the crane was climbed. Tess from Skyward Camp and a local retired woman were sitting together on the bonnet of a massive tipper truck when it was pointed out that the cab behind them was on fire. The woman next to me had two toddlers with her as we danced a giant hokey-cokey round Middle Oak. It was so beautiful milling around, with people hugging each other in reunion and triumph. It wasn't scary, it was fun. It wasn't volatile, it was purposeful. It wasn't a riot, it was a party.

Anyone brought up in a regimented hierarchical society is conditioned to have respect for the Powers That Be. With a mixture of the idea that They Wouldn't Make Laws For No Good Reason and a Fear Of Punishment, they give us a deference to authority, we are taught to obey the voice that wears a uniform.

This Fear Of Authority is the greatest force holding us back from realising our true power, our *real* capability for making things change. When a crowd realises there's a dozen of us for every one of them and decides to ignore the authority of the uniform, there's NOTHING they can do to stop us. This is what happened yesterday. We went for the fence and they couldn't stop us. We got to touch Middle Oak. Two hundred of us surrounded the tree singing 'Jerusalem', then did a massive celebratory hokey-cokey.

It was the most well focused and clear thinking crowd I've *ever* known. Nobody held back; of the 800 or so people there, only about 30 didn't come in to the compound. We moved almost as one from area to area, unafraid of security guards, unafraid of damaging the machinery, but with respect for people. I have no right to risk anyone's safety but my own. I have no interest in, desire for or tolerance of violence against people, and as far as I could see neither did the crowd. We went and sat on the diggers and tipper trucks. After a while we went for the giant crane. Security guards surrounded it, but there were so many more of us, we just prised them off, explaining that we'd won today and they should give up. A security guard next to me got knocked

over, and protesters immediately helped him to his feet. I saw *nobody* antagonising the police or security. And the police, to their credit, didn't get scared and use truncheons. Although there were two injuries (both of them protesters, one of whom was deliberately run down by a police horse), police and protesters ensured that they got ambulances straight away. It was a magnificent day.

One of the big lessons of the Newbury bypass campaign in 1996 has been to see the person inside the uniform. Security guards were quitting from Day 2, several coming to join the protest. Every security guard and every police officer is a potential protester. Individual police are not The Law, they are just its servants. As Lenny Bruce said back in the 60s, "that's another big problem, the people who can't separate the authority and the people who have the authority vested in them. You see that a lot on the demonstrations, they have the concept that The Law and Law Enforcement are one. They're demonstrating against the Police Department, actually against policemen". We know how ludicrous it is when people generalise about what protesters are like, and it is no less stupid for us to generalise about security guards and police. If we recognise their individuality, it makes it harder for them to deny ours. And so their team spirit, the Us Against Them thing, starts to crumble. They start to hear us.

I know human beings are individual, I know they can all shine and do the right thing given the chance. Antagonising, generalising and especially being violent all stifle that chance. A lot of people joined the police cos they thought it *would* help the community and the country. A lot joined out of the same feelings that makes us go on actions. You needn't have had too different a life for it to have been you in the blue jacket. In a very slightly different world in which we're all as well meaning as we are now, it might not have been Keith Blakelock who died that night in Tottenham. It might have been my father. It might have been you. Shouting insults doesn't make them realise they're being used against the nation's interest. I find it strange how people can be all right-on and anti-war, saying that soldiers are just pitiable tools of a corrupt system and it should be remembered that they're all sons and fathers, but that the pigs are a bunch of bastards who deserve everything they get. Yes, they are used brutally against us, but the whole basis of our outrage is that we know such behaviour is wrong. We believe in better ways, and

we act on our beliefs. We have to rise above. As Martin Luther King said, "the problem with an eye for an eye is that everyone ends up blind". Surely we are the people who see the bigger picture, who see ourselves as part of a bigger web of life.

The magnificence of yesterday's action is twofold: Firstly that we were unafraid, and secondly that we were always focused against the road and the machines, not the people. There was a lot of *destruction of property*, but no *riot*. The BBC TV reporter said "this is not what the anti-roads movement needs". It was *exactly* what the anti-roads movement needs. It was spontaneous, it was decisive, it was effective. It was destructive, but think what it was destructive of. Think of the obscene, permanent damage that is being done by these machines. What we did was open and celebratory sabotage of what are quite literally instruments of death and destruction. Although perhaps on a smaller scale, it was as morally justified as disabling a Hawk jet, an apartheid riot police van or a train to Auschwitz. Standing outside the compound fence complaining makes no real difference. *That's why the fence is there*. Yes we were outside the law, but the law only allows protests that have no real effect. The people who make the laws are the *same people* who build the roads, hunt the foxes, sell the armaments, etc., so *of course* they won't allow effective protest. As soon as you start to affect anything you come up against armed policemen and razor wire. Asking nicely doesn't work. You have to shout loud or shut up. I can only live with myself doing one of these.

So we put sand in the fuel tanks of generators, took spanners to the motor of the crane. As we were leaving the site, a tipper truck on fire to my left and the crane on fire down to my right, there was one man standing straight in front of me, silhouetted against the bright billowing flames rolling up out of the portakabin. He stood in a X shape, his hands in victory V signs, shouting "YES!YES!YES!". It wasn't chaotic, there was a sense of purpose, of collective will, of carnival, celebration, strong magic, triumph of people power, of a small but very real piece of justice being done.

The state gets very nervous if people start getting bothered about things that it hasn't prescribed as bothersome. When we start to set our own agenda instead of reacting to what we're given, when we

start to see choices outside of the ones we're told about, and especially when we start to *do* rather than *say* these things, they get worried. And the more popular support we get, the more worried they get. This is why they've never bothered with the traditional "revolutionary" groups, because there was never going to be any popular support for them. As long as they keep using their 19th century phraseology, idealising manual labourers as True Workers, yet vilifying white-collar workers (who often earn less) as Bourgeois Lackeys they are never going to win any popular support and can be safely left to bicker amongst themselves. But when there's a broad-based movement that is a growing threat to the orthodoxy they get edgy, and hence the police-orchestrated riots at most major demonstrations of recent years.

The pattern is alarmingly similar every time: near the end of a demonstration, the police change the plans (change the route of a march, close a sound system before time, lock the agreed exits), and seal off a portion of the dwindling crowd. Behind the normal uniformed officers, police in full riot gear seal off side streets and other exit routes. The crowd are hemmed in on three sides. Then the uniforms withdraw, leaving the advancing riot police to start a riot. At the march against the British National Party in Welling, they did it by beating a march organiser who was in the middle of a "don't be baited, keep calm" speech. At a Kurdish march in London they did it by shouting racist abuse. But far more disturbing than the violence of the individual officers involved is the marked similarity of the events. These tactics aren't decided by the officers we see, they are the orders from somewhere far higher up. This is the reason why, even ignoring the morality, violence against the police is stupid; they have better weapons, communications and armour, and *they are a hierarchy*, their orders come from people who *never* risk their own injury, and so no matter how many police get injured they'll send in squad after squad until they win.

And yet what kind of threat are we? We don't plant bombs, we don't kill anyone. It is only our ideas and our vision that we're putting forward, and so it must be this that scares them. Yes, there are occasional outbursts of individual violence, but these are very uncommon, and are certainly not a strategy. And yes, there are riots at some large gatherings, but these are invariably police provoked. As it says in the CJB riot

eyewitness leaflet. "If you treated people in any public gathering like that, at a football match or even in a shopping centre, if you locked the doors and rounded them up into a small space with no exit using riot police, some dickhead will throw something at them. If they then charged in and seriously injured the people who just happened to be at the front, the crowd would get outraged, angry and increasingly violent, and there would be a riot. You could do that in any public gathering, any time, anywhere".

But if they're scared enough to round us up and beat us in the middle of London on national TV, if they're scared enough to spend millions on surveillance and infiltration, we must be touching a raw nerve, we must be doing something right. And so we *must* carry on. Their greatest weapon is our Fear Of Authority. Once we lose that, the next greatest is our Paranoia. If we're too scared of infiltrators to talk each other, they've won. Always think, "what's the worst that could happen if They knew this?", and usually you'll find it makes little difference. The depth of tunnels, positions of lock-ons, how many people are on site, it all makes no real difference, and they could find out a lot of that stuff by long-range surveillance anyway. Certain details need to be kept secret, but not many. Secrecy should be the exception rather than the rule. Our openness and trust of one another is one of the key things that sustains our energy and resilience, and is a clear sign of "us" having a better way of living than "them". Think back to not long ago when you first came on site and remember how important acceptance and trust are. We've enough to struggle against without everyone thinking that everyone else is a dodgy MI5 git. I know of one camp where someone new on site had seen a definite infiltrator on their way down, describing them as "a real dressing-up box hippy, no-one would really dress like that". It turned out to be an old friend and lovely fluffy activist.

And it's important to extend that openness to all but the most ridiculous of journalists. The reporters all have their biases, but don't forget that the same is true of the people who watch the TV and read the articles. I remember as a kid seeing the Greenham Common women in unfavourable reports and thinking, "no, I *like* what they're doing". I joined my local CND group, wrote to Greenham women in jail, and the seeds of my direct actioning were sown. Last week I got a call from a friend at the A30 protest

who'd been in the pub all evening with a bloke from Inverness. He'd been a radical theorist for years and had decided *now* was the time to *do* something. He saw an article in the paper about Fairmile and hitched down the next day.

Once we've won the battle to get coverage, the next problem is being taken seriously. We face this problem on many fronts: underestimates of our numbers, trivial "lifestyle" questions, being portrayed as dangerous nutters, and belittling terminology (e.g. calling a tripod a "makeshift wigwam"). Journalists have to go in to a place they know nothing about and get an idea of it very quickly and make an interesting report. So of course they never have time to know what it's *really like*, and of course they'll ask questions based on the first things that occur to someone the first time they come on site. How do you go to the toilet up a tree? Who decides who does the cooking? What does your mum think? It won't help us very much by only having these stupid issues in print, but if we don't get press coverage then the entire direct action movement is going to be just the same couple of thousand people and won't grow into something with mass support. And without the energy that comes from mass support and new people, we will at best be a minor nuisance and at worst locked up with no-one to give a toss.

We must also be aware that a positive piece is not necessarily a good piece. We mustn't be seen as the Green Cavalry, waiting to charge in and save the day when England's need is greatest. It must be clear that direct action is *everyone's* tool. That it's not merely a way of circumventing bureaucracy to get the message directly to those in power. Rather, on that front, it's a way of saying to those in power - those entrusted with our power - that they do not (cannot?) use it properly, so we're taking it back. Our "representatives" don't represent us so we do the job ourselves. The empowerment we've all got from direct action is available to *everyone*. And the end result from it will be far more honest and potent than anything imposed by bureaucracy. As Reclaim The Streets leaflets say, direct action is not a last resort, it is the preferred way of doing things. Leaving it to other people is the last resort. Direct action propagates all the qualities taken from us by authority, the qualities they compensate for by using the names as buzzwords: Community, responsibility, initiative, accountability, co-operation, resourcefulness, teamwork, morality. It is not for when "democracy" fails

us. It asserts our right and our ability to affect the things that affect us. This empowerment enriches not just our politics, but our whole lives and from there out into families, communities, towns, nations. And furthermore, anything that does this is direct action, it is not just about dodging bailiffs in the treetops.

So we don't have to be afraid of "lifestyle" pieces; there is a lot we can prove with them. We have an astonishingly cool lifestyle, we should be proud. We have active, tolerant, enriching, liberating, collectivist community, we are a living example of much that is desirable but supposedly impossible. If we don't get that across, we betray the deeper motivations for our discontent, the stuff we are really up against, the root causes of which a second runway or whatever is just a symptom. Understand that each piece doesn't have to say *everything*. The real points to consider are, 1) Is it true to the campaign?, and 2) Does it bring people in the right direction?

Try to have a few handy phrases or snappy slogans ready that encapsulate the real issues in as concise and complete a way as possible. Never mind that it feels unimaginative saying more or less the same words to reporter after reporter, they don't know that and as far as they're concerned this is them getting a good quote. If you say something to a journalist that'll look great in print, they'll print it. The journalist as an individual may or may not be a dickhead and they will almost certainly have blinkered vision, but they are invariably a microphone by which we can speak to thousands, even millions, of people. So don't let them use us, let us use them. If we're enthusiastic, informed and full of great quotes, they won't feel manipulated, they'll feel good cos they've got an interesting story which will impress their editor.

Don't write any of them off - the BBC TV reporter at Newbury was really anti-protest when the work started, but after a day talking to a load of us she was on our side from Day 2 (although of course she insists that she has no bias and just reports the objective truth). The most honest writing about Newbury was in the sodding Daily Telegraph. Even the Daily fucking Mail did some big positive articles on Newbury and Solsbury Hill once they were given an angle they thought nobody else had got. And yet Sky News, who are almost always really positive

and give us loads of airtime, were turned away from a camp for not giving a donation. Yes, it'd be better if they did give something (and most will - after all, they're going to make money selling the story), but to turn down the chance of talking to millions for the sake of a tenner is just daft.

The place most of us first hear about direct action is the mainstream media. They're going to report us whether we like it or not, so we have to find ways to use them well. We can't afford to ignore the mainstream media, but neither can we afford to just leave it to them. This is why small press is so important. We always feel like the mainstream media are bigger than us, but that's really only true regarding the numbers of people they reach and the authority they appear to have. We must recognise that in most ways they're *smaller* than us, they have a narrower agenda, recognise a smaller range of humanity, and have a far smaller vision of what is possible and what's valid. With zines and SchNEWS and so on, there's no advertisers or editors to please, no shareholders to pander to, no writing something to fill the space, it's *real* free speech. And the fact that there are thousands of small publications protects that freedom - if there were just one big counterculture zine, it could be compromised or crushed by commerce and laws, whereas a thousand little zines constantly springing up out of nowhere is uncensorable and uncontrollable. This stuff isn't written by writers who come to a protest, it's written by protesters who start to write. Even if we don't write in a technically clever-clever way, it's authentic, it's *real*. It's coming from people who won't just tell you what it *means*, they tell you what it's *like*. So this doesn't just win people's *minds*, it wins their *hearts* too. And only by winning hearts as well as minds do we get real commitment. To put yourself on the line, you have to believe rationally *and* emotionally. By writing stuff from the heart about what we know, we *do* involve people both ways, so we do pull them in.

As my friend Guy says, the real reason why so few people get involved in activist stuff is not apathy, but a complete lack of cultural references to even the *possibility* of activism. People get their options for their lives from role models and cultural symbols that they see every day, in both real life and depiction. The activist role models they see (Ghandi, Mandela, Martin Luther King, etc.) may be praised, but they're all "saints", impossible to emulate and so ultimately disempowering. By writing our own stuff, we show

the link from being a person tutting at the TV to being Mighty Tarzan Eco-Warrior, and so we make it *possible* for people to come and join in.

The big corporate media do a job that we can't, but zine culture does a job that the mainstreamers can't. We have to use both to get fullest effect. We have to use them, and we have to make our own press to keep inspiring people and keep it growing. Think how much bigger this whole thing is compared with two years ago, and with two years before that. We're strong and we're getting stronger. The future is ours. We won't let it be anything else.

Merrick

Leeds 6

12 Jan 97 (slightly expanded, 15 Oct 97)

In history books there's a couple of leaders, George Washington or Martin Luther King or whatever. I don't want to say that those people are not important, Martin Luther King was certainly important, but he was not the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King can appear in the history books cos lots of people whose names you will never know and whose names are all forgotten were working down in the South. When you have active activists, and people concerned, and people devoting themselves and dedicating themselves to social change then people like me can appear, and we can appear to be prominent but that's only because somebody else is doing the work. My work, whether it's giving hundreds of talks a year or spending twenty hours a week writing letters or writing books is not directed to intellectuals and politicians. It's directed to what are called ordinary people. And what I expect from them is in fact exactly what they are; that they should try to understand the world and act in accordance with their decent impulses, and that they should try to improve the world. And many people are willing to do that.

Noam Chomsky, 1991

If you feel as though something is fundamentally wrong and you don't feel as though the change is occurring, get out there and change it. That's the only way it will occur.

Balin, 1996

I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into jail once on this account, for one night; and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have considered at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through, before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was a blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand on the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and they were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

Henry David Thoreau, 1849

This is the complete text of a leaflet put together by four people who'd been at the riot as a response to what they'd seen and the press coverage. It was published on 12 Oct 94.

The Criminal Justice Bill Riot: Eyewitness Reactions

We are four people who oppose the Criminal Justice Bill, and attended the Hyde Park demonstration on 9th October to make a peaceful stand against this unjust legislation. On returning to our coach at the end of the rally, we found ourselves in a warzone. For nearly two hours, we were both privileged and tormented - privileged to view the reality of the violence that occurred from a unique vantage point, the immobilised coach becoming a raised, protected platform in the midst of the riot; tormented because we were utterly impotent in the face of this. The shock we all felt during, and long after this horrific spectacle has made it difficult for us to stand back and report it 'objectively'. But a report of our experiences would be incomplete without acknowledging our revulsion and indignation at witnessing such violence. We primarily wish to raise some vital questions that arose from our experiences on that Sunday, questions that *must* be asked.

The first point that needs to be raised is, how did it all start? The rally in the Hyde Park had a positive, celebratory atmosphere. People sat in the sun, listened to speeches and danced around a pedal-powered sound system. There were two sound systems that ended up on Park Lane, surrounded by thousands of demonstrators, dancing and whistling. Apparently, there was an agreement between organisers and the police that these sound systems would not enter the park. However, Ben, a graduate of Leeds University, saw a policeman announce over a megaphone: "This is a police announcement. Please follow the sound system into the park." He reasoned, "There was obviously an ad-hoc agreement between the stewards and the uniformed police regarding the sound system's entry into the park. It seems to me that the riot police must have been given orders over the heads of the ordinary police."

What is the purpose of riot police? Presumably, to protect civilians, uniformed police, and property from a violent crowd. Erihk (a bank clerk and Freedom Network campaigner) remarked, "The thing is with the Poll Tax riots was that they were protecting property, the South African Embassy and so on. This time it was a park!" So here,

there was *no property to protect*. The vandalism in Oxford Street happened later in the evening, after the violence had escalated for at least two hours. *The Daily Star* reported that railings were used as spears and park benches were thrown. Firstly, the railings were embedded in concrete, and were impossible to remove without industrial machinery. Secondly, park benches were also fixed to the ground, and even if someone *had* managed to remove one, how would they carry it through the crowd, and get to a distance where it could be thrown at the police without the police first singling them out and arresting them?

And what about the 'violent crowd' that would justify riot police presence? The earliest report of things being thrown at the police was at about 4.00pm. And yet Ben and Laura (a student at Leeds University) saw fully armoured riot police in the park and in Park Lane at 3.00pm. Ben: "In the middle of the afternoon, I didn't perceive even a bit of a riot situation. And there were lines of riot police just stretching all around. I saw an old woman, just standing there, amazed & quite disturbed at the fact that riot police were there. The fact was that their presence wasn't explained or needed and, as far as she was concerned,

they hadn't any authority to be there. They were just ignoring her when she tried to talk to them." Riot police blockaded the road exit at Speakers' Corner by 3 o'clock. They didn't let the coaches waiting for out of town protesters park along the side of the park (ours was one of the few that got through). Erihk: "At the end of the day, people were going anyway, but the gates were locked, and riot police were sent round the back, in the park, to herd the remaining people to the fence to face even more riot police. If you treated people in any public gathering like that, at a football match or even in a shopping centre, if you locked the doors and rounded them up into a small space with no exit using riot police, some dickhead will throw something at them. If they then charged in and seriously injured the people who just happened to be at the front, the crowd would get outraged, angry and increasingly violent, and there would be a riot. You could do that in any public gathering, any time, anywhere."

When we reached our coach, by moving around the crowd on Park Lane just before the main riot started, Steve (a graduate and adult trainee) saw mounted police charge into the park, and people running, panicking, away from Speakers' Corner. "Lines of riot police charged at

the crowd behind the fence, and the conflict escalated very quickly, rapidly moving to converge on our coach at about 6 o'clock."

Echoing their response to nearly all riots at demonstrations before, police chiefs and certain daily papers blamed a hard-core of 'anarchists' for the violence. *The Daily Mail* ran a cover story two days after the event about Class War's 'Keep it Spikey' leaflet, urging members to provoke violence. *The Daily Mail* and the police laid the blame for the riot on Class War (membership: 150) and others lumped under the label 'anarchists'. Steve, while on the coach, witnessed someone who was certainly there to cause violence. "I saw a man with a scarf around his face take a dustbin out of its holder, walk casually around the back of the coach and throw it straight at a police van. He walked off calmly, and was out of the way when the police charged at the crowd. I saw him walking near the police vans later. Why wasn't he arrested?" Indeed, *not one person* that we saw throw things at the police was cornered or arrested. The only people we saw hit by the riot police were people who were just there and couldn't get away, we saw none of *these* people actually throw anything.

One of *The Daily Mail's* sub-headings was 'Brick Throwers To The Front' (*The Daily Mail*, 11.10.94.), quoting the 'Keep it Spikey' leaflet as saying, "It takes a bit of guts, but if you have your hands on some ammo, move up front. Don't stand so far back that you are unable to reach your target." And yet Chief Superintendent Richard Cullen, who led the Hyde Park operation, is quoted as saying, "They [the 'anarchists'] are very cowardly and quite shrewd. They hide themselves in the crowd." This is presumably the police's justification for not being able to weed out the agents provocateurs and diffuse the violence. Yet from all of our observations, those who were there purely to provoke violence, consciously or not, adhered to Class War's tactics of "move up front" - the only people in front of the railings, behind which most of the crowd stayed, were agents provocateurs and innocent people trying to get out of the way or reach their coaches. Steve: "The police had a low-flying helicopter, radio communication, 2000 uniformed officers and 400 fully trained and armed riot police. People in the crowd are just individuals, panicking. The police were in the best position of anyone to see the full situation. How come, with all of that, they couldn't weed out the small number of people who were causing the most violence? How come they let people in

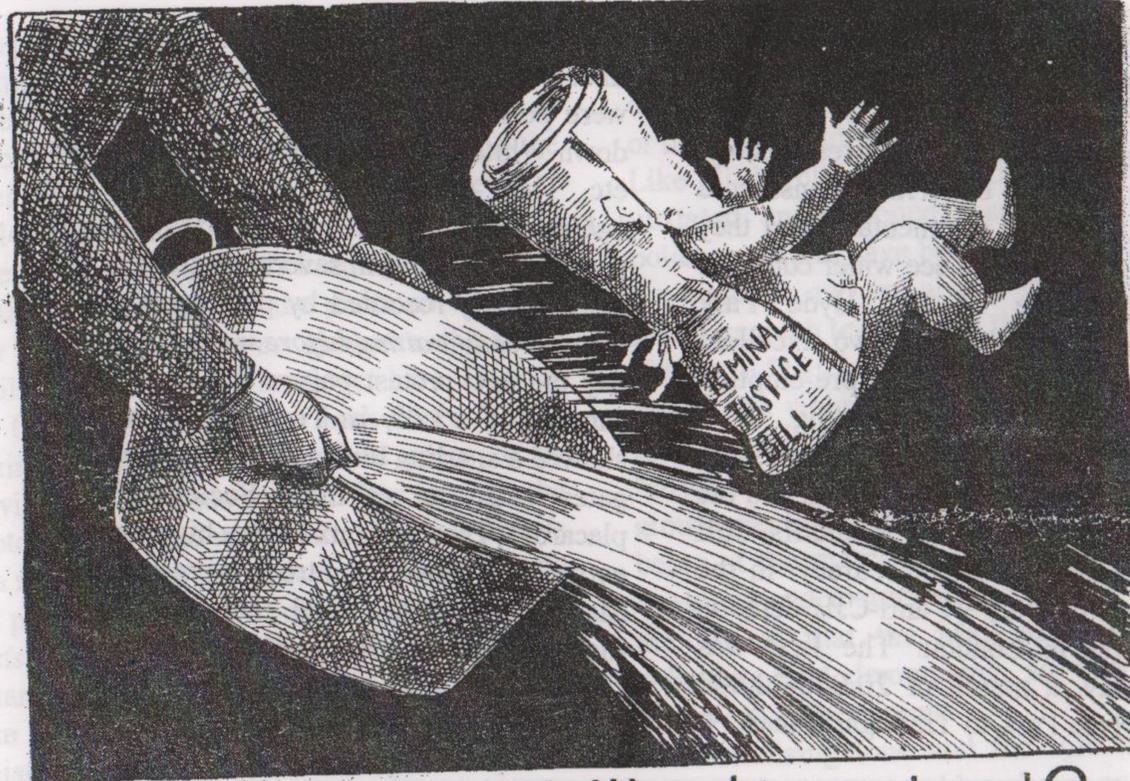
front of the fence, including a guy who threw a dustbin and a guy who threw a brick and hit a policeman in the back, how come they let these people go unhindered, and yet charged at and attacked innocent people? They saw the guy who threw the brick, he was about 25 feet away from them, but they just watched him go off." Ben: "The police were charging repeatedly at the pavement of Park Lane & yet someone went up to this police van, looked around, & stamped on the exhaust pipe. He went back and the police didn't do anything. A second guy comes up, looks around, smacks at the side of the van, goes away. Another comes and twists the mirror around. This all took at least half a minute. The police were in the van & did nothing. They only acted when a few blokes tried to topple the van. This contrasts sharply with them dragging off a young girl in a violent way for just standing by the railings." Erikk: "They just went charging in and got whoever was nearest, which was, by and large, innocent people. We saw innocent people get beaten over the head with truncheons." Steve: "In one charge, a man who was on the pavement, shouting at the riot police to go away, with his arms outstretched, was hit in the face with a truncheon, which split his forehead & nose open, blood everywhere. After they retreated, he stayed there with his arms out, imploring them to just stop it. The crowd and everyone at the back of the coach were infuriated by this. At another point, I saw a man pinned against the side of the coach by about 4 riot police. They dragged him away to a van, wrestled him to the floor and tied his hands behind his back with rope. He was on the ground, his face in horse dung, and a Liberty legal observer same in and talked to him, which was good. But then that guy came on the pavement and threw the brick at the police around the guy on the floor, and it hit a policeman on the back. They turned and looked, obviously riled, but they didn't go for him, he just ran off." Ben: "There was that girl, younger than us, a teenager. She'd already been injured once, on her leg, so she wasn't walking properly. She was clinging onto the fence in absolute panic because she was so scared of the riot police. One riot cop was trying to talk her round, but she was so scared she wasn't receptive to reason. You could see it in her face. But then, three other riot police just pushed past him & snatched her away, carrying her between them. She was hysterical. These were three big men, literally twice her size. Not in a way like "we're going to take you to hospital", but "we've got you

now". Erikk: "There was a man on the pavement holding his kid, a toddler. He couldn't get away 'cause there were police at both ends. In one charge, the riot police had him against the fence, pushing him along with fast, violent jabs of his shield. He was trying to protect the kid, who was clearly distressed. Everyone on the bus who saw this was absolutely horrified."

At around 7.30pm, our bus was able to move out, and we left. On returning to Leeds several hours later, radio reports informed us that the violence was still going on. It was after we had left that police forced the remaining people up out of Park Lane, into Oxford Street, where the only real damage to property occurred.

We have tried in this leaflet to present the key points about what we saw, how these relate to the media coverage, and what the questions are that demand answers in an inquiry into the handling of the Park Lane riot by the police. At the very least, our experiences and observations point to incompetent and unnecessarily intimidatory & heavy-handed policing. It should be stressed that, in our experience, the uniformed officers were fine throughout the march, as they were at Trafalgar Square on the July anti-CJB demo, where the riot police were kept out of sight. Unarmed, uniformed officers asked the crowd to stay on Trafalgar Square or disperse, and although there was resentment and mild abuse, there was no actual intimidation or violence from the crowd or the police. On leaving near the end of the rally, riot police could be seen in the adjacent streets removing their reinforced vests and helmets.

We have produced a chronology of our observations for the inspection of MPs and civil liberties groups, which is available on request for an SAE. We also hope to produce an in depth analysis of the immediate media coverage of the riot, using our personal experience to pinpoint inaccuracies and misinformation. We are not attempting to gain any political capital from this event, we are just highly concerned as individuals that the truth of the events at Hyde Park is, through the mass media, being distorted beyond recognition to those of us who were actually there.



Has posture killed protest?

Tomorrow is a national day of action against the Criminal Justice Bill.

ALAN TRAVIS explains why, for some, Labour has become the guilty party. Illustration by PETER TILL

TOMORROW'S second national demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill is expected to unite "DIY culture eco-warriors" with those the police have dubbed "the law-abiding representatives of Middle England" in protest at one of the most coercive law-and-order packages for decades.

The Bill, which aims to implement 19 out of the 27 points of Michael Howard's law-and-order crackdown, will reach the statute book in three weeks' time after being held up for three months by a series of revolts in the House of Lords. The first London demonstration in July attracted more than 40,000 mainly peaceful

protestors. But what attracted the newspaper headlines was the handful who launched an assault on the Downing Street security gates and prompted a series of mounted police charges to clear Whitehall of demonstrators. This time the route has been reversed and the marchers will go from the Embankment to Hyde Park. The police are expected to seal off half of Whitehall to avoid a repeat of the scenes outside Number 10. "There were some problems on the last demonstration," a Metropolitan Police spokesman said yesterday. "These were down to a very small minority of those who attended. The vast majority were well behaved and the stewards behaved in an

exemplary fashion." Monday's papers will be quick to tell us if this time the tension is higher. The other potential flash-points lie in the fact that the organisers, the Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill, have been refused a music licence for Hyde Park, and they are expected to vacate the park by 4.30pm on Sunday. It is possible that the musicians and sound-system operators present may want to demonstrate exactly what consequences an unlicensed rave will face under the legislation. Similarly there may be an attempt to "squat Hyde Park" to illustrate the draconian nature of the new laws against New Age travellers, squatters and others who take part in what the legislation calls "collective trespass or nuisance on land". The diversity of the speakers expected at tomorrow's rally reflects the wide range of groups who are concerned about the Bill. The list includes Tony Benn, Arthur Scargill, Jeremy Corbyn, Billy Power of the Birmingham Six, lawyer Michael Mansfield, Bruce Kent,

Andrew Puddephatt of Liberty, Debbie Staunton of United Sound Systems, anti-roads campaigners, the National Association of Probation Officers, the Society of Black Lawyers, the Socialist Workers Party, and a gay teenager. But although the range of speakers indicates the diverse interests of the groups involved, there has been a shift in emphasis in some of the publicity surrounding the demonstration. Whereas the placards in July declared that the "Tories Are The Real Criminals", some of the advance publicity for this march, particularly the Socialist Workers Party posters, has claimed: "Tony Blair supports the Criminal Justice Bill". The focus of the argument first publicly shifted from the Home Secretary to the Labour leader when Michael Mansfield, a leading civil-rights defence barrister, claimed that the Opposition's decision to abstain on the Commons second reading of the Bill has "allowed a fascist piece of legislation almost certainly to become law".

Tony Benn and Jeremy Corbyn were among the 40-odd Labour MPs to vote against the Bill at its third reading in the Commons. Rahul Patel of the Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill articulated their basic position yesterday: "The Labour leadership abstained on the vote and in effect supported the Bill. They have lined up with Michael Howard's most pernicious piece of legislation. What were the circumstances surrounding this decision? Tony Blair says that Michael Howard's jaw "dropped about six inches" when he announced during the Commons second reading debate that Labour would not oppose the Bill. It robbed the Conservatives of the chance of spending the last 10 months accusing Labour of being "soft on crime". Labour's "reasoned amendment" said it would support the Bill only if Michael Howard accepted the party's anti-crime package, which includes a new programme of drugs education in schools, new laws on racial violence and harassment, an independent review authority for

Protest that goes beyond the fringe

AS A prologue to the demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill, due to take place in London tomorrow, I would like to re-emphasise a few points before the tabloids and the Government get their "anarchist" soundbite and their picture of a mohawked youth giving the V-sign. Liberty, the civil rights group, has said that the bill would be the biggest increase in state powers since the second world war. Although Michael Howard has focused his attention on the fringe elements of society, the bill hits hard at one of our last democratic rights: the right of protest and free assembly. It will criminalise local protests against cuts in services, peaceful trade union activity and non-violent direct action: the latter of which was described by Lord Justice Hoffmann, in his summing up of

the Twyford Down case, as an "honourable tradition in this country". There was wide spread sympathy and respect for the conscientious objections to the government's controversial road-building scheme. Under a Criminal Justice Act, the protesters would face prison. I hope that, between the class-war nonsense of the Socialist Worker's Party and the knee-jerk reactionism of the mainstream press, people understand this bill is not about class or alternative lifestyles or public order. It is a step back into a darker age. B.J. Whitehorse, Burley, Leeds. THE Criminal Justice Bill is designed to criminalise protest and remove the historic right of silence in Britain. Its passage through Parliament has been a sordid attempt

to make criminals of those who attend rallies, oppose motorway building or resist eviction even for rent arrears. "The right to silence has been a precious right for hundreds of years in Britain and it has been an important defence of the innocent. With this gone, how many more miscarriages of justice will there be in Britain in the future?" On October 9, there will be a demonstration in London called by the Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill, which will show that opposition is huge. The peace movement, environmental groups, party-goers, trade unionists and libertarians will be there. As MPs who voted against the bill at its third reading in April, we fully support the demonstration and its demands. The bill will, under the microscope of opposing crime,

create criminals of those who wish to protest. Liberties were won by protest against injustice. By the same token, liberties have to be defended by protest and opposition. Jeremy Corbyn MP, Bernie Grant MP, Lynne Jones MP, Alice Mahon MP, Diane Abbott MP, Ken Livingstone MP, Jean Corstan MP, Alan Simpson MP, Neil Gerrard MP, Tony Benn MP, Harry Cohen MP, Malcolm Chisholm MP, Colin Pickthall MP, William Etherington MP, Jimmy Hood MP, Bill Michie MP, Helen Jackson MP, Mildred Gordon MP, Dennis Canavan MP, Dennis Skinner MP. Letters to the Editor may be faxed on 071 238 9935 or sent by post to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, or by email to letters@guardian.co.uk

Although The Guardian are like all other newspapers in assuming that it is nigh-impossible for the police to act irresponsibly, they do have a knack of writing considered responses and the best commentary, and they do generally seem to try to see wider contexts. A day in advance of the Hyde Park demonstration they published two excellent letters and one sizeable article pre-empting both the riot and the distorted reporting. Even this article, away from the time pressure of having to report news-as-it-happens and the lack of established facts that it entails, still includes a notable factual inaccuracy. In the third paragraph the July 94 anti-CJB demo is called the first in London. The first was actually in May, a march of 20,000-30,000 people from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square. It

should also be known that the minor violence in July that is talked about was a set-up. There were police shoulder to shoulder all the way down Whitehall in front of all buildings, gates, etc. Then at Downing Street, police were *behind* the gates. Unsurprisingly, this prompted taunts from several protesters, which were eagerly recorded by photographers who were *already waiting before we got there*. Next day the anti-protest papers did not show the carnival of a rally in Trafalgar Square, they showed a snarling bloke on the Downing Street gates with one of those Socialist Worker placards. (The gates, six metres high across the entrance to Downing Street, were erected by Margaret Thatcher, and they are arguably illegal as they obstruct a public highway.)

The Daily Mail can usually be relied on to give the most inaccurate reporting. The Sun and The Mirror seem to kind of know that they're trash, whereas the Mail poses as a serious newspaper.

The first things you see in any report are the headline and the picture. These combine to give an instant impression of the story. In the CJB riot reporting, the truth has been turned around by the use of headlines that *don't describe the picture*. It's easily done. Imagine the photo of somebody's face after being told of a loved one's death. Now imagine captioning it "moment of orgasm". Or "the effects of LSD". Or "the effects of a mushroom vindaloo". This is what is being done here, and in the Telegraph.

It is difficult to use photographs for action pictures because they don't show the direction or speed of movement. I took a picture at Hyde Park of a guy trying to stop himself

Return of Rent-a-Mob



Flashpoint: Chanting protesters clash with riot police at Hyde Park yesterday

A VICIOUS explosion of hatred left police nursing their wounds last night.

At least 11 officers were injured in clashes with a ragtag army of demonstrators in Hyde Park.

At one point, police, who had struggled all day to contain a 20,000-strong march in protest against the Criminal Justice

Bill, faced being overwhelmed by attacks from a combination of groups including squatters, New Age travellers and motorway protesters.

Police said many had been seen defying police in incidents across the country in recent months and were the very groups whose activities would be curtailed by the Bill.

Near Speakers' Corner, police were

forced to form a protective square as a mob inside the railings, and a breakaway group spilling out of the park, pelted them with bottles, cans and wooden placards.

When a firecracker exploded on the shield of one riot policeman, and a teargas canister was let off, the 200

Turn to Page 2, Col. 6

Riot in the park

Continued from Page One

police regrouped and charged at the crowd, wielding batons and shields. Scores of people were injured, including officers, as they were knocked over and trampled in the crush. St John Ambulance workers were beginning to carry out the injured on stretchers when a

second riot appeared to erupt inside the park.

Three dozen police on horseback charged into the baying crowds, pressing their tormentors against the railings. Three times riot police ran at the crowd, but each time they were beaten back.

The violence ended in an anxious stand-off, with angry crowds refusing to disperse. At least 20 arrests were made. Unions, civil liberties organisations, environment groups, and

every political party except the Tories were represented at the rally. There was also a grouping of organisations from Lesbian Avengers to cloaked members of the Druid Clan of Dana. One protester said: "I don't know how nobody has been killed."

being knocked over by a riot policeman pushing him with jabs of his shield (make no mistake, the shields are used as weapons of attack). The guy has his arms extended and the shield is just hitting his hands. However, I could caption it "policeman uses shield to defend himself against charging rioter thug bastard", and you'd see the photo *as evidence that the caption was true*. However, the Daily Mail hasn't been quite so clever here. Look at the front policeman. Now look at the shield behind him. The police would seem to be moving in a direction more or less towards the photographer. And yet the woman bent over is at a right angle to the policeman, she is clearly not pushing him back. From the position of her arms it would appear she's trying to keep her balance to stop herself falling. The way the man in the hooded top is reaching around her waist suggests that he is trying to stop her falling, and the man behind him is either steadying the hooded chap or is reaching to steady the woman. In colour, the woman is blonde and has a clear patch of red on her scalp, suggesting that she is bleeding. I find it difficult to see much by way of ambiguity in this picture, it seems to be a policeman pushing an injured woman over and two blokes trying to help her. But give it a headline with the word "mob" in, a caption using "chanting protesters" and "clash", and a first line saying that police got injured, and we have demonised protesters.

In the Daily Mail's writing, let's start with the headline. "Return" means it's persistent people, the usual shady troublemakers who are just there for the trouble. It also implies that these people are not saying anything new, that if it wasn't the CJB they'd find some other excuse. So these people don't have a valid point, and the CJB is nothing to worry about. The phrase "Rent-a-Mob" is arguably the most inaccurate they could have used. The campaign against the CJB included all kinds of people from Liberal Democrats to Socialist Workers, from Druids to the Ramblers Association, civil liberties groups, priests, professors, anarchists, MPs, trade unions, and on and on. The thing that unified everyone was a feeling that this

law is *wrong*. It was a moral stand. All these people were prepared to take a day to come to one place out of *principle*. We were *not* for sale or hire, we could not be rented.

Like all the other reports, this article has the unstated unquestioned assumption that the police could not have been to blame for any of the violence, and are always in the right. The first paragraph tells us that the police were the victims of "a vicious explosion of hatred". They reflect the violence onto the peaceful march and rally by describing the police as having "struggled all day to contain" it. The only groups mentioned before the final paragraph as being at the march are "squatters, New Age travellers and motorway protesters", all three are groups that the Mail has spent *years* ridiculing and demonising, so they kind of *deserve* to be beaten up.

The criticising tone and the inference of it being the same troublemakers every time continues as we're told that these "are the very groups whose activities would be curtailed by the Bill". But *of course* it was! When a law threatens your personal lifestyle, you have an active interest in protesting against it. At the recent demo against legislation banning handguns, the Daily Mail didn't say "many were from the very gun clubs who'd be affected by the law", *cos obviously* it is! Or are we only allowed to protest against one thing? In which case surely "the MPs against the European single currency are the very politicians who were against the Maastricht treaty".

The people leaving the rally at the end of the afternoon are "a breakaway group spilling out of the park". Apparently the demonstrators that the police rounded up were "tormentors", and the police's tactic of charge in, beat up, retreat was them "being beaten back". Just *how* do people in casual clothes "beat back" men in clothes reinforced with metal plates wearing visored crash helmets, carrying shields and brandishing big sticks? In the final line, "one protester said 'I don't know how nobody has been killed'"; were they talking about the behaviour of the "ragtag army", or of the guys in armour with weapons?

Note how the point of the first two paragraphs

is to tell us that police got injured. This automatically aligns with those officers, and therefore against the demonstrators. Even The Independent, whose own reporter was beaten by three riot policemen, spend the first three paragraphs talking about police injuries (which included twisted ankles, hardly the result of a brickbat), and only in the final paragraph (by which time many people have stopped reading) do they make an oblique reference to the demonstration that had gone on peacefully all afternoon. Now, I unreservedly condemn any wilful injuring of police officers that day, but I find the wilful injuring of demonstrators equally deplorable. And yet despite the fact that the number and extent of injuries being far greater amongst the demonstrators, they are degraded, if not ignored entirely. Why is it less outrageous, more acceptable, for someone to be beaten up by a policeman than by a civilian? Again, we come back to the unspoken unquestioned assumption that the police are always in the right. Quotes from the police about the riot far outweighed quotes from protesters. The police version is frequently given as fact, and the protesters version is often preceded by a discrediting statement. How different would a report be that started with a description of protesters injuries at the hands of the police, and only later, if at all, made a passing reference to police getting injured too? The news rarely has the time (or the ability to credit its audience with enough intelligence) that it would take to present a dispute fully or fairly. So it gives a clear message of who is the Good Guy and who's the Bad Guy. To portray the police as ever being the Bad Guy or even as partly to blame for any wrong-doing, would require a major upheaval of their accepted beliefs and values, and more news time that they just aren't take up. So it's easier to always portray those in authority as the Good Guy, *whether it's true or not*. Also remember that they have to deal with the police *every day* for stories, they depend on them, they can't afford to jeopardise their livelihoods by criticising the police. Whereas even if they *do* have to deal with the protesters that they've lied about, the

protesters are usually so glad of the publicity that they won't really mind.

8 police gassed as Bill demo sparks riot

By DAMIAN LAZARUS
EIGHT police were overcome by CS gas yesterday as a protest against the Criminal Justice Bill erupted in a riot. Canisters were hurled at officers as they watched demonstrators pouring into Hyde Park after an hour-long march through London. Pitched battles between a 2,000-strong mob and riot police later flared opposite the exclusive Dorchester Hotel in Park Lane. Officers with batons and shields faced a hail of bottles, cans and bricks as they charged into the crowd three times. Mounted officers pursued rioters through the park. Doormen at the Dorchester - double room £220 plus VAT - anxiously guided in guests. The trouble came after 20,000 people marched from the Embankment, many waving "Kill The Bill" banners. Police said last night 11 people had been arrested. Eight officers and a civilian were treated for effects of the gas and three other officers were hurt.

THE SUN

Relegated to a trivial five column inches on page 7, they too tell you of injured police in the opening paragraph, but don't mention any demonstrators getting hurt, except for one gassed mentioned in the final paragraph. The big thing with the tabloids is their fixation with material wealth, most obvious in their use of the adjective "exclusive". Even in this, the smallest report in any of the papers, The Sun manages to tell us that the Dorchester Hotel has doormen and give us the VAT-excluded price of a double room for the night.

ay, October 10, 1994

YORK

WAR ON JUSTICE

RIOTERS fought running battles with police last night as a Hyde Park rally ended in bloody violence.

Gangs of thugs protesting at the proposed new Justice Bill ran amok through London's West End after launching tear gas attacks. Exclusive Park Lane was sealed off as an angry crowd hemmed in behind park fences, looting police. Sightseers fled in terror as railings were used as spears. Late last night, as skirmishes continued, Scotland Yard said that eleven officers had been injured. One had been knocked senseless. Seventeen demonstrators were also hurt, none seriously, and 26 were arrested. Trouble began in the afternoon as more than

PHILIP BRAUNING and BARRY GARDNER

20,000 marchers gathered at Hyde Park, watched by 2,000 police. Demonstrators - who later topped 100,000 - were peaceful until a group were stopped from taking a huge mobile sound system

Demo turns into running battle

into the park. Suddenly US gas canisters were lobbed at groups of police, forcing many to flee from the choking fumes. Fighting broke out and police with riot shields were brought in, backed up by mounted officers. Mobs charged police vehi-



Looting

Police, who blame the trouble on anarchists, moved in to stop looting. Veteran Labour MP Tony Benn had addressed the crowds, who object to Government plans to scrap the defendant's right to silence in criminal trials.

BATTLE ZONE: Riot police arrest a protestor.

DAILY STAR

The Star's report is perhaps the most bizarre of all. From the headline onwards, it is clearly anti-protest (how could anyone agree with a "war on justice" - not even on the legal system, but on *justice itself*?); yet it is the only paper that gives the organisers crowd estimate of 100,000 as fact (most others gave the police estimate of 20,000 as fact). And instead of preying on anti-rave or traveller stuff, they mention what is possibly the most alarming part of the Bill, the erosion of the right to silence. And yet the headline describes it as a "War On Justice", the people rounded up by police are "hard-core" and when they're finally chased out of the park by police they are "gangs of thugs running amok through London's West End".

They describe the police as coming "under a hail of missiles which included lighted dustbins and park benches". Apart from the fact that the benches in Hyde Park are set into concrete, just *how* do you throw things as big as park benches? And in the kind of quantity and force that would contribute to "a hail"? And the idea that "railings were used as spears"; the railings in Hyde Park are in welded sections about four metres long and are set in concrete. They are not spear material. If such a horrific thing had occurred, there would surely have

been corresponding horrific injuries which would have been prominently reported. But no, it didn't happen, but it sounds like a plausible thing to happen in a park, and a bit of lying to demonise makes a better story. Have a look at the chart at the end of the zine that compares reports, note how most reports include missiles not mentioned by any other paper.

The notable thing that the Star's report has in common with the Independent's is the changing of the sequence of events. "Exclusive Park Lane was sealed off" in actual fact *before* the crowd was rounded up to that side of the park, they are two parts of the same strategy. And the crowd "topped 100,000" *before* the violence started.

It's also noteworthy that the Star shares the tabloids strong money-orientated materialist slant that is largely absent from the broadsheets. The Star refers to "exclusive" Park Lane, complementing The Sun's reference to the exact price of a room at the Dorchester Hotel. London's Evening Standard, in a report that took up half of pages 1 and 2, and the whole of page 3, wrote of almost nothing apart from the damage to shops as a few dozen of the people who'd been hemmed in against the park fence for 4½ hours were dispersed up Oxford Street.

As usual, police injuries are mentioned before the protesters, whose injuries are only mentioned after the arrest total. Implicit message: They kind of *deserved* it. The fence of the park is described as "barricades". There is no mention of the size of the demonstration (the largest in Britain for years). There is no mention of what the Bill is about, and no quotes from anyone outside of the police.

Riot police in battle with Bill protesters

By CATHERINE MILTON AND ELAINE FOGG

RIOT police were involved in running battles with protesters for several hours last night as violence broke out at the end of a London demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill. Officers with batons and riot shields charged repeatedly into a crowd in Hyde Park and surrounding streets after being pelted with missiles including bottles and CS gas canisters.

Scotland Yard said 13 officers were injured, including eight who were treated for the effects of gas along with two members of the crowd. At least 26 arrests were made and 17 demonstrators were treated in hospital.

Police moved into the park

at about 9pm in an attempt to move up to 600 demonstrators still believed to be behind barricades. Some police reports suggested that they were equipped with petrol bombs. A police helicopter circled, warning the protesters to clear the park or be removed by force.

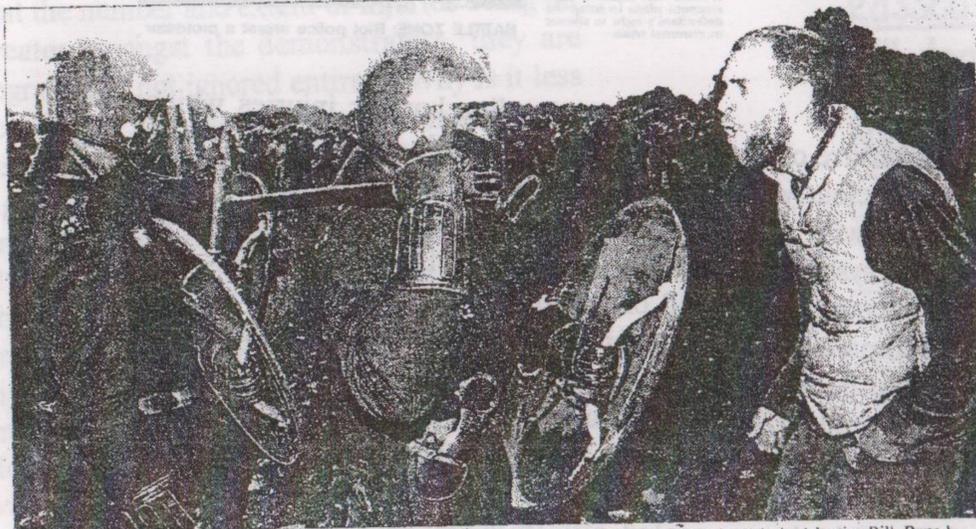
Police continued to charge groups of demonstrators during the evening as clashes spread from Cumberland Gate into the surrounding streets. One erupted close to the Dorchester Hotel, where the doorman put a protective arm around guests as they entered.

The trouble began while most of the demonstrators were attending a rally in the park. Several hundred had gathered round two lorries carrying music systems near Cumberland Gate, where they were dancing and whistling. One lorry moved off peacefully, but fighting broke out when the police tried to move the other.

At one point the police were outnumbered by the protesters, but within minutes they were surrounded by officers in riot gear supported by mounted police. A stand-off developed for some time before police charged into the crowd to make arrests.

Stephen Park, a police spokesman, said "We attempted to isolate the sound system from the people, basically so that the sound system could move off and the people could go into the park. Because of the gas and the missiles being thrown, we had to deploy officers in protective clothing."

Photograph page 22



ADRIAN BROOKS

Riot police confronted by a demonstrator in Hyde Park yesterday during the protest over the Criminal Justice Bill. Page 1

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

The juxtaposition of the picture and headline here is second only to the Daily Mail for its misrepresentation. The main picture was actually taken in the afternoon, long before there was any violence. The truck behind the vans has a massive sound system in it and a lot of the people here are dancing. Some people got up on to stationary police vans and danced. The police asked them not to stamp or jump so they wouldn't damage the van roofs. The dancers complied and were left to dance. It was a carnival, and the police were fine with it. The difference between the attitudes of the uniformed police and the ones in riot gear could hardly have been greater. The picture is

not of a "war dance", but of a party. But caption it as being of "rioters", and we get a sinister image of these two police vans and the outnumbered police being surrounded by a threatening bunch of scary gits. Our sympathy is unfairly against these people even before we begin to read the article. The Telegraph is unique in being the only national newspaper whose main article is responsible enough to put both crowd size estimates and say that they are estimates. But coming, as they do, late in an article that has discredited the demonstrators, the implication is that their estimate is not to be trusted. Once again, the demonstrators are a "mob", and only the police version of events is quoted.

The most curious feature here is in the bit about the CS gas. The gas had never before been used on a demonstration in this country, except by the police. The campaign against the CJB did not include support from any terrorist or paramilitary groups, so the issue of where the hell anyone would get it from is raised. How would someone get hold of it, unless they were in the police? Then we have the Telegraph report of "eleven policemen were taken to hospital, and nine, including one civilian police worker, were treated for gas

inhalation". Why were police seen with gas masks at Speakers Corner *before* the gas went off? Why would they be expecting it? What precisely is a "civilian police worker", and what was he or she doing with a bunch of police kitted out for a gas attack? The possibility of it being a planted trigger for the violence cannot and should not be denied. We *know* this kind of stuff has gone on, the police *have* used illegal acts to discredit and frame innocent people. Why would they have abandoned the use of such things when it is a strategy with such a good track record?



War dance: demonstrators clambered on to a police van which was surrounded during a rally in Hyde Park yesterday to protest against the Criminal Justice Bill

Rioters hurl CS gas in Bill protest

By Dan Conaghan and Kathy Marks

DEMONSTRATORS threw CS gas at riot police outside the Dorchester Hotel in London last night and smashed more than 30 shop windows in Oxford Street at the end of a march by the Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill.

Police were pelted with wooden poles, wastepaper bins and masonry by about 2,000 chanting protesters gathered behind railings during a three-hour confrontation in Hyde Park. When the police forced them out of the park, one mob rampaged along Oxford Street, hurling paving stones at shop windows and stealing goods.

Police vans and motor-cycles patrolled the street, but most shopfronts were left unguarded. "We haven't got enough people down here to protect the shops," one policeman said. "I think it was a mistake to send them down Oxford Street."

Twenty-six people were arrested and 19 injured, two from inhaling CS gas from canisters thrown at police. Eleven policemen were taken to hospital and

nine, including one civilian police worker, were treated for gas inhalation. Scotland Yard said the violence began at the end of the march from the Embankment to Hyde Park when police tried to move on three mobile sound systems, which organisers had agreed would not be allowed into the park.

A breakaway mob tried to overturn a police van and battles broke out, with police and mounted officers repeatedly charging the mob. The rioters lit bonfires in Park Lane, halting traffic.

Demonstrators had earlier danced on the roof of a police van and bus shelters. One group used crowd barriers to set up a barricade in front of a line of mounted police. Chief Supt Richard Cullen, in charge of the operation, blamed "anarchists" for the violence, which he claimed was "fully orchestrated". He denied that the police had been heavy handed, adding: "It's the same people

who provoke violence every time. Organisers of the march, attended by trade unionists, New Age travellers and civil rights campaigners, said that more than 100,000 had taken part. Scotland Yard's estimate was 20,000.

Mr Tony Benn, the Left-wing Labour MP, addressing the rally in Hyde Park, condemned the Criminal Justice Bill, which receives its third reading this month, as "vicious".

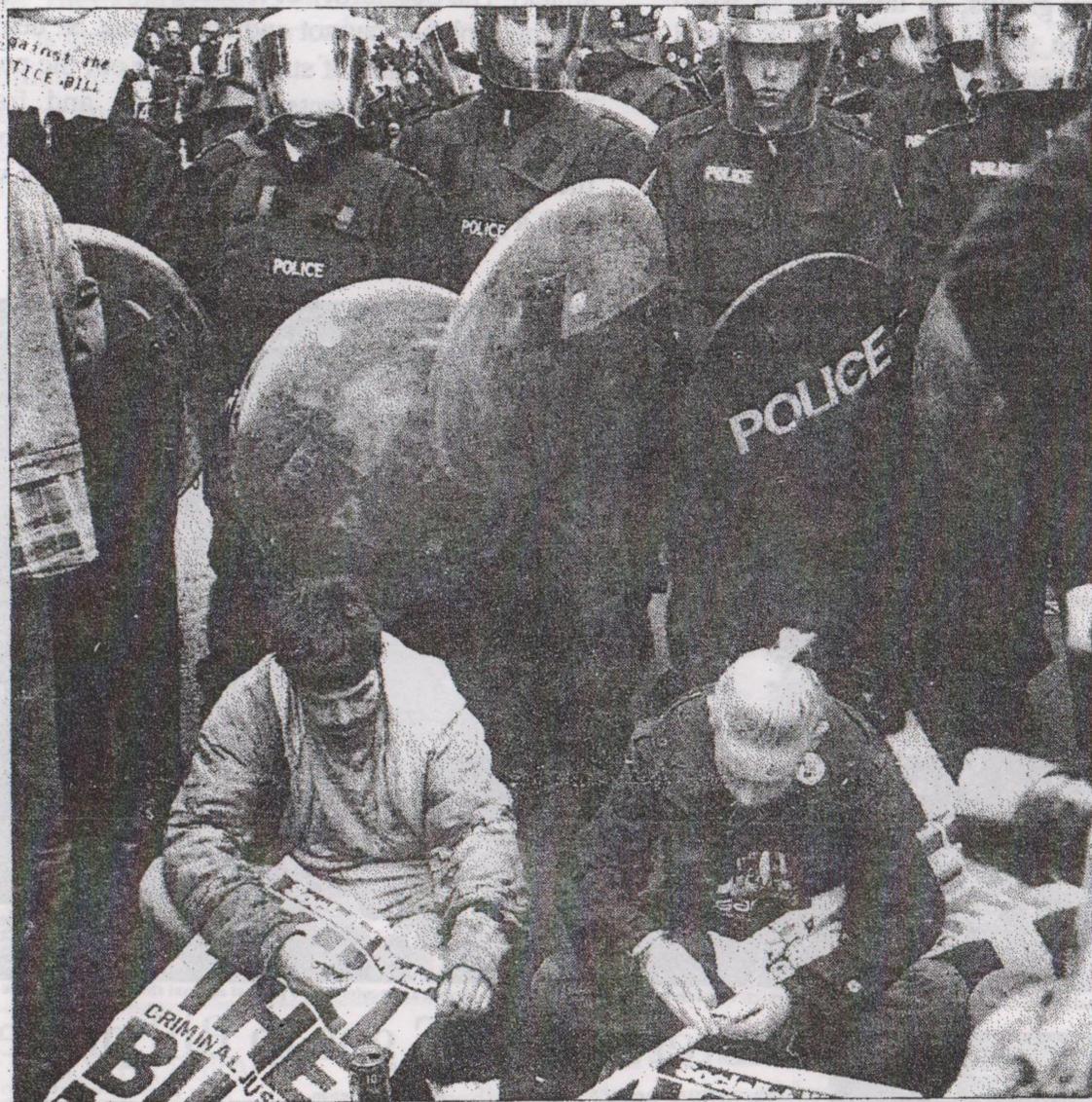
He said: "It is an attack on the young, the peace movement, on those who like music and who want to enjoy themselves. It is an attempt to criminalise humanity. If the Bill goes through there may be a legal obligation to obey it, but no moral obligation."

Other speakers included the miners' leader Mr Arthur Scargill and Ms Helena Kennedy, QC, a long-standing campaigner against the Bill, which includes measures to restrict criminal suspects' right to silence and make it easier for police to remove travellers from illegal camp sites and break up rave parties.



Battle stations: riot police arrest a protester

Protest against justice bill leads to violence



Back to front... Demonstrators make a point to police before violence broke out during the rally in Hyde Park, London

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

HUNDREDS of riot police and demonstrators fought running battles at the end of a rally in Hyde Park, London, yesterday in protest against the Criminal Justice Bill, which reaches the statute book later this month, write Alan Travis and Duncan Campbell.

A police helicopter circled overhead telling the demonstrators: "Disperse or force will be used", but violent clashes continued.

Police blamed a small number of anarchic demonstrators for deliberately causing the violence. The march stewards accused the police of corraling the demonstra-

tors as they were trying to leave.

Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour MP who chaired the rally, said the police officer in charge should be disciplined for his actions.

Some demonstrators filtered into Oxford Street, smashing windows in 53 shops.

Scotland Yard said 39 arrests were made and it estimated the number of civilians taken to hospital at 19, although none was thought to be seriously injured.

Eleven police were taken to hospital and eight treated at the scene for effects of CS gas.

The rally, which followed a march by some 50,000 people through central London had heard veteran Labour MP Tony Benn say: "There may be a legal obligation to obey but there will be no moral obligation to obey. When it comes to history, it will be the people who broke the law for freedom who will be remembered and honoured."

Andrew Puddephatt, general secretary of Liberty, said the legislation would give police new powers to clamp down on raves, unlicensed parties, protests and new age travellers.

Police under scrutiny, page 7



Riot police and demonstrators clash after yesterday's march against the Criminal Justice Bill in Hyde Park, London

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN STELLWELL

Blame disputed after demo violence

Review of police action likely after 28 are injured at justice bill protest, Duncan Campbell reports

POLICE public order procedures are likely to come under scrutiny following violent running battles in central London last night. For more than three hours hundreds of riot police and demonstrators were involved in confrontations that led to injury, arrests and the trashing of dozens of stores in Oxford Street.

A total of 39 arrests were made. 11 police and 17 demonstrators were treated in hospital, and 53 shops had windows smashed. Two were looted.

Police were pelted with missiles which included beer cans filled with sand, CS canisters, blazing lumps of wood and bottles. They responded with a series of charges, some mounted, on demonstrators. Traffic came to a standstill in

the area and the streets were covered in broken glass and smashed placards as demonstrators ran up the Edgware Road and into the side streets.

At one stage demonstrators fled, some screaming, into McDonald's restaurant at Marble Arch as police advanced. Scaffolding and road building equipment was thrown through the windows of Oxford Street shops including Selfridges, Littlewoods and Benetton.

Clashes continued until around 9.30pm.

Police and march stewards are both likely to hold post-mortems on what went wrong for a demonstration that had attracted tens of thousands to protest against the Criminal Justice Bill. Police estimated that 20,000 to 30,000 attended and that the vast majority were

"peaceful and well-behaved". Organisers put the figure at more than 100,000.

The first confrontations came in mid-afternoon. Chief Superintendent Richard Cullen, who was in charge of the operation, blamed sound systems organisers for failing to honour an agreement not to take their equipment into the park. Demonstrators drawn to the music and away from the speeches were faced with riot police and missiles were thrown.

This led to the first series of charges by riot police. Shortly afterwards, mounted police charged demonstrators in Hyde Park, some of whom responded with missiles.

A pattern developed whereby a group of young men, many wearing balaclavas, scarves or handkerchiefs to cover their faces, lobbed missiles at the police on the west carriageway of Park Lane from within Hyde Park. The police would then charge, which would attract more demonstrators. The police would retire, there would be a

period of calm and then the pattern would repeat itself.

Some demonstrators remonstrated with the missile throwers, saying that they would damage the message of the march. There were calls of "Chill out! This is a peaceful demonstration," from one of the sound systems.

At times the atmosphere was almost surreal: a fire-eater and a unicyclist entertained the crowds in the middle of one of Britain's most prestigious avenues while riot police stood at one side and rave music blared out from the park on the other. Lord Soper, the Labour peer, continued unruffled with his regular Sunday spot at Speaker's Corner answering such questions as "How can we believe the scriptures?" and "Should Tony Adams be captaining England?" while in the background flaming litterbins were hurled across the road.

Mr Cullen defended his tactics and said only a small number of people had caused the problems.

"The stewards worked really hard and a number of people have apologised to us for what has happened."

He defended the decision to maintain lines of riot police and said that he could not have dispersed his officers while people were smashing bus shelters in Park Lane and collecting missiles in the park.

Weyman Bennett, chief steward of the march, blamed the police for the confrontation. "The agreement we had with the police was broken," he said. "They had agreed that buses taking people away from the demonstration could assemble at Park Lane but they then blocked that off. People were trapped and when they wanted to leave the march they were unable to. Many of them were ready to go home but they were provoked."

Jeremy Corbyn, Labour MP for Islington North, criticised the police for their treatment of demonstrators and called for the officer in charge to be disciplined.

THE GUARDIAN

The Guardian, seemingly wanting to appear "balanced", picked a figure between the two estimates of the crowd size, and said that 50,000 people were there. No "estimate", just supposed fact. They put points from both sides, even daring to mention, albeit in an "alleged" way, that the police had stopped people from leaving. But this is still so far from the experience of those of us who saw gates closed, and saw people come to get their coaches home only to find that their coaches weren't at the arrange place and instead there were hundreds of riot police waiting for them. Not allowing people to leave and rounding them up to face

riot police is the very basis of the violence at Hyde Park. That was the orchestrated action of the police. The truth is not necessarily the mid-point between two sides.

Their second article on page 7 had the subheading "Review of police action likely after 28 injured at justice bill protest". After a five-paragraph flurry of facts and images with no proper sequence of events (and so no real point made) that's common to many newspapers, the article settles in to a fairly honest, leave-room-for-interpretation version of events. As a piece of writing, this (safely tucked away on page 7 where less people will read it), and oddly enough the Yorkshire Post are about as fair as the writing got. Nobody really grasped the horror of people

being beaten by heavily armoured men simply for being there. *The people who did throw things at the police were not the ones that the police attacked.* Nowhere in the press was there any outrage, or even much accusation against the police except "heavy handedness" (which would be an understandable, if not strictly reasonable, reaction if you were being "taunted" by professional Rent-A-Mob rioters). Nowhere did they question a policing hierarchy that sends its subordinates to beat people for the wrong thoughts, and does this knowing that some of its own men will be hospitalised. Despite The Guardian calling it "likely", there was no inquiry. As ever, no policeman was disciplined for their actions that day. And the people who ordered it saw a job well done. They will continue to use this strategy because it works so well. Does anyone else find this as scary as I do? They get away with anything. No policeman was ever convicted of the blatant falsification and ruthless violence that convicted the Guildford Four, and let the real bombers get away with it. No less a body than the United Nations has expressed concern at the large amount of non-white people who die in UK police custody without anyone being charged. When there are investigations, they're done by other police officers. Of course they won't crap on their own! And yet we still have this prevailing feeling that they wouldn't do anything unfair, that anybody who suffers at their hands kind of had it coming. That if a demonstrator is in a crowd that includes a few people being violent to police, it is fair if they get truncheoned in the face, but if a police officer is in a team that includes colleagues who are beating innocent people, it is still an outrage if they get a brick on the head. It's double standards, it's self-deceit, it's bollocks, and I refuse to see someone as worth less because they don't wear a uniform. How much can they be allowed to do before people would believe they're in the wrong?

'Anarchists' blamed by riot police

Violence flares after protest demo over Bill

HUNDREDS of protesters clashed with police last night after a mass demonstration against the Criminal Justice Order Bill spilled into violence.

Tempers frayed after a march through central London ended in a Hyde Park rally, where speakers condemned the Bill, which is due to become law when Parliament reconvenes later this month.

Missiles were thrown as police using batons and riot shields confronted hundreds of angry protesters.

The Metropolitan Police blamed the disturbances in Park Lane on a minority of "anarchists" who hijacked a peaceful demonstration.

Chief Superintendent Richard Cullen, in charge of the police operation, said 11 officers suffered head, knee and ankle injuries as well as the effects of a CS-type gas in incidents during the day.

Twenty-six people were later said to have been arrested. Mr Cullen blamed "anarchists" for the violence which he claimed was "fully orchestrated".

But organisers condemned the police operation after the Hyde Park rally as "heavy-handed and provocative".

The Coalition against the Criminal Justice Bill, which organised the march and rally, said more than 100,000 had been involved. Scotland Yard estimated numbers on the march — from the Embankment, through Whitehall and on to Hyde Park — at about 20,000.

Organisers said the crowds marching from the Embankment in central London to Hyde Park, gave a clear indication to the Government that the Bill is deeply unpopular.

The legislation will allow courts the opportunity to interpret a defendant's use of the right to silence, tighten the law to prevent squatting and disperse unofficial "rave" parties, festivals and gatherings of New Age travellers.

The Bill allows the police to disperse groups of nine or more people if they "reasonably believe" that they are preparing such a gathering or attempting to attend one.

The police will also be able to turn anyone away from a festival within a five-mile radius of the site.

Unions, civil liberties organisations, environment groups and all the political parties with the exception of the Conservatives were represented.

Around 2,000 police were on duty, placed strategically along the route of the march, which took in part of Whitehall although the Downing Street area was sealed off.

At Hyde Park, a series of speakers attacked the Bill and several also criticised the opposition for not opposing it more effectively.

Veteran Labour left-wing MP, Tony Benn, said: "This Bill is designed to prevent people from leading full and happy lives and from enjoying themselves."

He added: "This Govern-

ment is always trying to find others to blame for its own mistakes."

But he criticised Labour's leaders and said the Bill should have been fought more strenuously. "They should be here with me on the platform," he said.

Arthur Scargill, president of the National Union of Mineworkers, told the cheering crowd: "There is only one way you can deal with this unfair and unjust Bill and that is to defy them."

Park Lane remained a riot zone last night as an angry crowd, hemmed in behind park railings, taunted police.

A concrete bus stand was toppled over, rubbish fires were burning in the street and bottles and cans were lobbed into a line of police on the central reservation.

A mobile sound system blared out rock music from within the park and missiles were periodically thrown as a police helicopter hovered overhead.

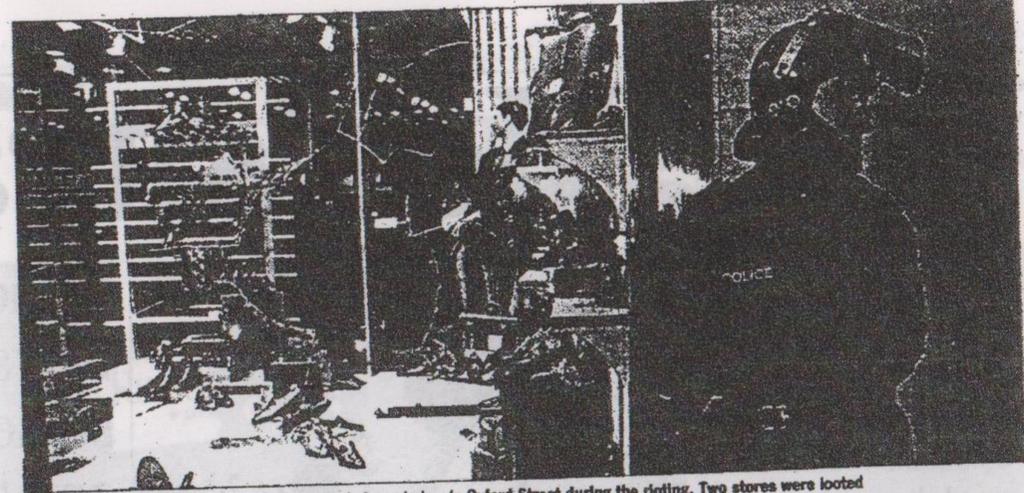
Mr Cullen said: "A hard core of six or seven hundred people have spoiled a legitimate protest."

"It seems as if it was fully orchestrated. They had CS gas and bricks, and these are not things they found on the route."

But Rahul Patel, of the Coalition against the Criminal Justice Bill, said it had been agreed that the rally would disperse by 6pm but "the Metropolitan Police sealed off all entrances" and "stopped people from taking their coaches".



Forceful arrest: Police take away a demonstrator at a march against the Criminal Justice Bill. Twenty-six protesters were arrested after clashes.



A riot policeman stands guard over a smashed shop window in Oxford Street during the rioting. Two stores were looted

How riot gangs wrecked Oxford Street

by GERVASE WEBB and JUDITH KEELING

THE SENIOR officer in charge of policing the riot which paralysed Park Lane and brought looting to Oxford Street blamed today a hard core of anarchists who came equipped with CS gas, bricks and scaffolding.

Rioters broke away to smash windows and loot shops but while the West End was spared much of the orgy of destruction that marked the Poll Tax riot, the violence directed at police was worse — and for the first time CS gas was used against unprotected officers. At the heart of the violence were 600 or 700 well prepared rioters, with

2,000 in all ready to fight, said Chief Superintendent Richard Cullen.

He told how officers — mostly in ordinary uniforms and without the protection of riot shields and crash helmets — came under a barrage of missiles from a hard core of anarchists who had come prepared for riot and pillage.

"There were people with brand new house bricks in bags, and others who arrived with scaffold poles — where do you

get those in Hyde Park?" he said. "They were there with the clear intention of starting a riot, and they would stop at nothing to provoke a confrontation."

The hard core, he said, was the same loose-knit army of anarchists who sparked the violence at Trafalgar Square, at the anti-Nazi rally at Wellington Square, and the previous Criminal Justice Bill march past Downing Street. "They have no interest in legitimate protest; their sole aim is to attack the police, and they do it in a cowardly way."

Continued on Page 2 Col 6

THE EVENING STANDARD (LONDON REGIONAL NEWSPAPER)

Once again the police version is fact. The headline promises we'll be told "How riot gangs wrecked Oxford Street". Not that it will be a police version, no use of quote marks in the headline, just fact. Then it is all based on the words of Chief Superintendent Richard Cullen, the officer supposedly in charge of police operations at the Hyde Park demonstration. Although he is actually described as in charge of "policing the riot which paralysed Park Lane and brought looting to Oxford Street" [my italics].

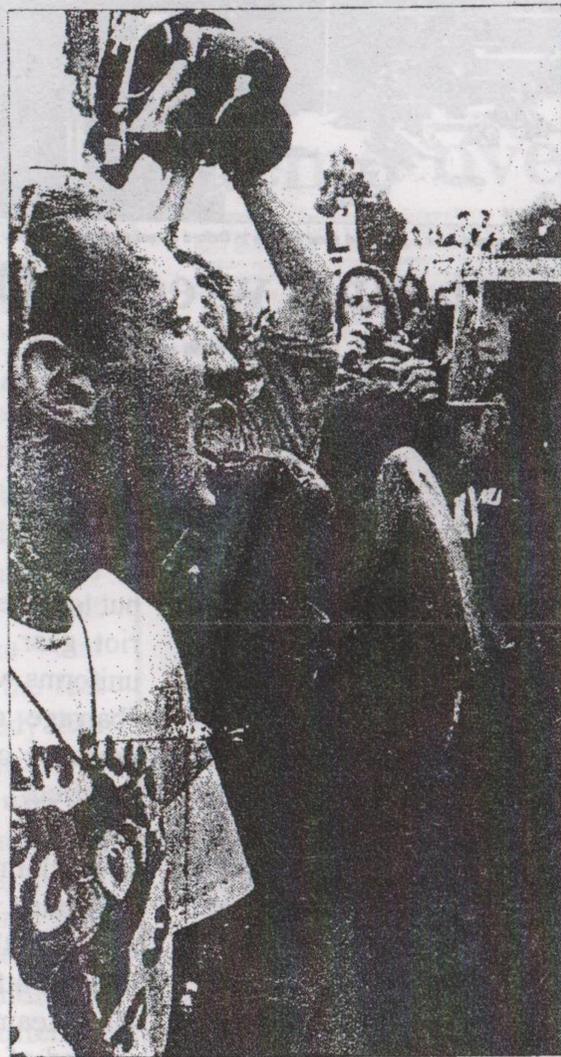
The structure of the second paragraph should be noted - it's here that we feel we're getting into the real issue. There's no quote marks or "Chief Superintendent Cullen claimed" at the start, so we feel like we're being given fact. And in fact CS Cullen doesn't "claim" or "allege" anywhere in the article, he only ever "says" or "tells", so he is seen as unbiased and factual. The police "mostly in ordinary uniforms and without the protection of riot shields and crash helmets - came under a barrage of missiles". The two parts of this sentence, separated at the hyphen, are true, but

put together they are untrue. Most police weren't in riot gear, but the violence occurred when the uniforms withdrew and the riot guys took over. The "barrage of missiles" was a response to the presence of riot police. I don't say that makes it justified, it doesn't. But it is what actually happened, as opposed to what CS Cullen says. If, as he claims, it's always the same few people, then they must recognise them so why don't they arrest them? If these people really do have their "sole aim" of attacking the police, why do they pick on large teams of impregnable riot cops instead of picking easier targets? Or is he talking bollocks? Further evidence for this last suggestion comes later in the Evening Standard article as he explains that "they do it in a cowardly way, using other people as cover", yet on the same page we're told that the violence was inspired by a Class War leaflet which "urged protesters to get close before throwing missiles at police". How do you go to the front of a crowd when you're busy hiding in it? CS Cullen made hefty use of the word "anarchist" when he really means "rioter". Lots of anarchists are really peaceful and would not commit an act of violence against another person. Certainly CS Cullen, or indeed anyone else, is in no position to know the detailed political persuasion and moral

outlook of people there. Anarchy is not another word for chaos or riot. There is a long history of authorities labelling any anti-social behaviour as the work of people whose opinions they don't like. The police are worried by the *idea* of anarchy, so they label disagreeable behaviour "anarchist". In the same way, during the Cold War many Americans would use the word "communist" as a catch-all bogeyman word. It is as ludicrous as me, because I don't like milk, labelling all behaviour I dislike as the work of the Milk Marketing Board. I would be right occasionally, but not very often. Similarly, the Evening Standard give us a bogeyman by pointing out that copies of the dreaded Socialist Worker "spill out of the bin" thrown through Benetton's window. This is not evidence of it being the work of Socialist Workers, any more than finding a Big Mac wrapper in the bin would make it the work of Ronald McDonald. I think the fact that the copies of Socialist Worker were *in the bin to start with* tells us a lot more. Anarchists aren't bogeymen. Even the people that produced leaflets inciting violence like Socialist Workers and Class War aren't really scary. No matter how many Keep It Spikey leaflets they might want to give me, I'm still not going to what they tell me. I can think for myself a bit. Which is a far greater threat to authority.

The Standard had a massive interest in damage to property, far more so than any national paper. The front page photo is of a smashed shop window, and the opening paragraph talks of looting. Whilst I deplore this pointless smashing of the shops, let's be clear on what actually happened. Although the tabloids love to concentrate on material acquisition, this was *not* a looting spree. Of the

Mob's trail



'Police faced barrage of stones, sticks and bricks'

Continued from Page 1

using other people as cover for throwing stones, sharpened sticks and anything they can get their hands on," he said.

The protesters blamed "provocative behaviour" by the police for the violence which left 86 injured — half police officers. Nineteen protesters and 11 police officers were taken to hospital and 48 arrests were made. Hundreds of demonstrators fought running battles with police squads in Hyde Park, Park Lane and Oxford Street.

And yet Mr Cullen said he was confident that the rally — to protest against the Criminal Justice Bill — had been successfully policed.

"We managed to contain the greater part of the march to Hyde Park and Park Lane and prevent a repetition of the Poll Tax clashes in Trafalgar Square," he said. Those who rampaged in Oxford Street were a tiny minority, "and it would be impossible to contain them totally", he said.

"When we pushed the demonstrators out of the park a small group — and I emphasise on — a small group of about 50 — got through Marble Arch and got into Oxford Street. We did foresee it, but we had a limited number of officers."

At one stage 3,000 officers were on duty, but he sent 1,000 of them home early — a decision which "with hindsight I regret", Mr Cullen said.

He conceded that officers had used their truncheons — "but solely because they were defending themselves against bricks, sharpened staves and paving stones."

A leaflet by the anarchist group Class War, entitled "Keep It Spikey", urged protesters to get close before throwing missiles at police. It stated: "Don't stand so far back that you are unable to reach your target so your brick ends up cracking the back of someone's head."

Among the injured were a policewoman hit by a lump of concrete and a police inspector knocked unconscious by a brick.

Today at Speaker's Corner ripped posters and soggy refuse lay everywhere. Fern Jones, 54, of Connaught Square, said: "I was walking the dogs here about two o'clock in the afternoon and these people were already building up for a fight."

"I've seen a lot of demonstrations in this park but the crowd that were here were total scum. Many of them didn't even seem to know what the Criminal Justice Bill was. There was booze and there were drugs."

Defending the police, she added: "They were very gentlemanly. They certainly never put a foot wrong."

Diners at fast food restaurants in Oxford Street stared in disbelief or covered in horror as rioters ran down the road pursued by police wielding shields and batons.

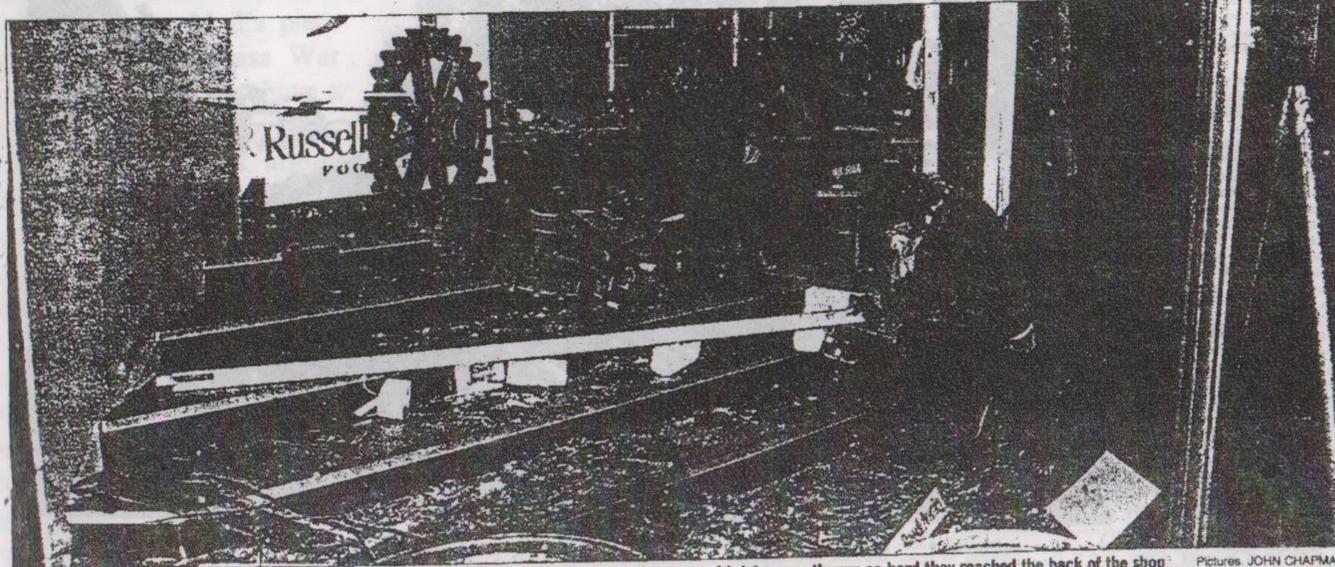
Senior officers were worried about the new use of CS gas on police. "Officers are disorientated and blinded and are effectively out of the game for some time," said Mr Cullen.

Today 41 people had been charged with public order offences and assault.

Face-to-face:
Protesters and police confront each other

53 shops that were attacked, the only theft was clothing from Jeans Wise, and three mannequins from Next. Even the Standard reports this, though they dress it up (no pun intended) to imply it was far greater. The people running up Oxford Street were one section of a crowd of people who had been forcibly kept in a riot zone for 4½ hours, and had finally been chased out of the park by the newly reopened Speakers Corner. They were trying to get the fuck out of there, they didn't have time to be looting even if they'd wanted to. Many fled into McDonalds at Marble Arch, figuring it to be a sanctuary from pursuing riot

of broken glass



Huge shards of glass and debris lie in the window at Russell and Bromley, where roadwork lights and bricks were thrown so hard they reached the back of the shop

Pictures JOHN CHAPMAN

Shocked traders count cost of violent rampage

by JUDITH KEELING

SHOPKEEPERS in Oxford Street were today counting the cost of the violence which wrecked the heart of Britain's busiest shopping street.

The rioters left a trail of destruction between Marble Arch and Oxford Circus, with few major high street names emerging without damage.

Large shards of glass still littered the pavements today as store managers and workers tried to assess how much stock had been looted by protesters or damaged in the violence.

At Russell and Bromley at Marble Arch, manager Lee Stevens stood in his shop surrounded by chunks of paving stone and shattered panes of glass. He said: "They were just after destruction and they succeeded all right."

Mr Stevens said his shop would not be re-opening until late this afternoon at the earliest. He said large bricks and lights from the nearby roadworks had been hurled through the shop window — some thrown hard enough to reach the back of the shop.

The rioters had also vented their anger on nearby Bally, Saxone and Selfridges, where window displays were today just visible behind cracked glass.

A Selfridges spokeswoman said the store had six windows damaged along both its Oxford Street frontage and those facing side streets but the rioters had been unable to breach the store's security perimeter and loot the displays.

"With our windows being armoured because of terrorist activity, they shattered but did not break," she said.

At the House of Scotland, opposite Marks and Spencer, staff were staring sadly at hundreds of pounds' worth of ruined clothes in the window.

Two large pieces of paving slab and tiny splinters of



Copies of the Socialist Worker spill out from the bin used to attack Benetton

grass lay among cashmere and lambswool knitwear behind the boarded-up window. Manager Nouri Barokh said: "We could never clean these clothes satisfactorily. They're ruined."

Further down Oxford Street, near Bond Street Tube station, an entire window at Faith shoes had shattered into a massive web of cracks. Boots was entirely boarded up. So too was Gap and Jeans Wise.

Jeans Wise assistant manager Curtis Kenah said more than £3,000 worth of clothing had been looted.

"I think this is the most extensively damaged window in Oxford Street," he

said. "They have chucked big chunks of paving and bricks right through into the shop. It's a complete mess."

At Gap, manager Andy Norris said: "The mood here among shopkeepers is one of shock today. I was very surprised that there is this much damage and that a peaceful demonstration could get so out of hand."

On the opposite side of the street, Woodhouse had boarded windows, and Burtons and Dorothy Perkins in the West One shopping mall had piles of splintered glass outside the entrance.

Pizzaland, which had two large panes of glass boarded up, was temporarily closed

police. And in direct proportion to its interest in property, the Standard has the least interest in the principles. After an ambiguous passing reference in the fifth paragraph, it's only when we're eight paragraphs in, on page 2, is it briefly mentioned mid-sentence that the demo was against the Criminal Justice Bill. There are no quotes from protesters or mention of what the Bill is, but we do get a quote from someone describing the entire crowd at the rally in the afternoon, (100,000 or so people remember), as "total scum", and saying that the police "never put a foot wrong".

for business. At the Midland Bank a shattered window had put one of the cashpoint machines out of action, and further down the street Etam, Jean Jeanie, Oakland and Littlewoods all had shattered windows, some boarded up.

Windows were boarded up at D H Evans, a large window cracked at Olympus Sport and even the Abbey National in Harewood Place, off Oxford Street had a shattered shop front.

At Next rioters smashed six windows and stole three mannequins complete with men's clothes.

Justice Bill protesters in West End battle with police

DANNY PENMAN
and LESLEY GERARD

A POLICE WOMAN suffered chest wounds and another officer was unconscious with head injuries last night after hundreds of protesters opposing the Criminal Justice Bill clashed with riot police, turning Park Lane in the West End of London into a battlefield.

Demonstrators lined pavements, hurling blazing rubbish bins, bottles and cans at officers. They ripped apart bus shelters and threw paving stones and bricks.

A police spokeswoman said the woman officer had been injured by a flying concrete block. An inspector suffered head injuries. Both were in hospital. The spokeswoman said their condition was serious. Six officers were detained in St Thomas's Hospital, London, with a variety of injuries from broken ribs to twisted ankles. Another eight and two civilians were treated after inhaling tear gas. A total of 39 people were arrested.

At the height of the battle up to 800 protesters were pitched against police in Park Lane. Others ran down Oxford Street, smashing store windows, after a series of clashes which began at around 5pm in Hyde Park when several thousand protesters tried to stage a rave party at Speakers' Corner. They tried to bring sound systems into the park and began to dance and beat drums.

As the crowd began hurling missiles and chanting "kill the Bill", police charged near an area known as Lovers' Walk. Revellers and members of the press were caught in the ensuing clashes. Several hundred riot police on foot followed up with baton charges.



Protesters confronting police yesterday in Park Lane, near Marble Arch

Photograph: Edward Sykes

The crowd scattered across the park and into Park Lane, where the clashes continued, watched by tourists and business people inside London's most expensive hotels.

An *Independent* reporter, Danny Penman, was hit by a policeman across the forehead with a truncheon. Two other policemen came from behind and wiped him across the

legs and then the stomach with batons.

The final battle of the night started at 9pm when a line of several hundred police in body armour marched across Hyde Park driving the demonstrators into two other lines of police as a helicopter flew low overhead. The mar boots, many bleeding from head wounds, fled across

nearby roads. Last night rally organisers condemned the police operation as heavy-handed and "provocative".

Police said it was one of the worst riots they had seen since the poll tax demonstrations of the 1980s. They believed the demonstration been infiltrated by an element determined to see violence at the end of what had started

out as a peaceful march.

Chief Superintendent Dick Cullen said: "People came here looking for a fight. People do not suddenly find bricks and paving stones on a route, because we have checked it before they start."

The Metropolitan Police said 2,000 officers were on duty yesterday, 400 of whom were specially equipped with

protective gear. They estimated that a total of 20,000 people had turned out against the Criminal Justice Bill, which provides for anti-terrorist measures and new police powers against trespass to prevent illicit rave parties and music festivals and to move gypsies and travellers on.

Leading article, page 15

Voices of dissent denied a fair hearing

MICHAEL HOWARD has succeeded in uniting the diverse strands of latter-day British non-conformism. Yesterday's huge demonstration against his Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill shows the sympathy that alternative lifestyles and peaceful dissent enjoy in Britain, even if the message was marred by violence. More than 20,000 people gathered in London to show their anger with a Bill that would in effect criminalise travellers, squatters, ravers, hunt saboteurs and anti-road protesters. The Home Secretary will, no doubt, win applause when he preaches the Bill's virtues to the party faithful in Bournemouth on Thursday. But this legislation offends many ancient liberal principles — not least the "right to silence" — that are evidently still widely cherished.

A rainbow coalition has been created that none of the main parties can call its own. Once united, it is likely to have a political impact that outlasts controversy over this particular Bill. Yesterday's march marks the discontent of an increasingly vocal and well-organised grouping of minorities that challenges the social conservatism now endemic across British politics. It is a liberal force of predominantly young people that the authoritarian streak in Toryism attacks partly to help it to define its own agenda. Tony Blair's new Labour Party, fearful of straying from the centre

of British politics, is at best ambivalent, at worst openly hostile, to this social phenomenon.

Nowhere is non-conformism more evident than among New Age travellers. They consider settled people to be living miserable, narrow, confined lives, hemmed in by conformity and obsessed with ownership. Many are disillusioned with stressful inner cities, where housing is distasteful, jobs non-existent or poorly paid and families fractured. They opt for small communities that are safe and supportive for their children. The way the Bill makes their lifestyle virtually impossible to enjoy within the law suggests a Government that cannot tolerate an implied criticism of conventional culture.

The Bill is also a crude attempt to use the police and judiciary to deal with issues that should rightly be covered by other parts of government. The increasing incidence of squatting and travelling has more to do with the shortcomings of city life than with a breakdown in law and order. New Ager, hunt saboteurs and anti-road protesters are involved in conflict with established interests about how the countryside should be used.

Criminalisation will drive these social dissidents into the arms of the police and the courts. A better response would be to give them a fair hearing, proper representation and a measure of tolerance.

THE INDEPENDENT

The Independent showed two radically different sides to the issue. Their front page news story spent the first three paragraphs exclusively telling us about injuries suffered by the police. They too play with the order of events, saying that as the riot was occurring in Park Lane "others ran down Oxford Street smashing windows". The first two-thirds of the article is made up of selected accurate facts put together in a seemingly random order, with the effect being that we get no accurate picture of the sequence, and so the causes, of events. Then they give one sentence and a single-word quote from the organisers condemning the police behaviour, and two paragraphs of the police denying it and alleging it was the mysterious organised infiltrators. They only give the police estimate of the rally size, and describe the Bill in terms that are impossible to entirely condemn, saying it "provides for anti-terrorist measures and new police powers against trespass to prevent illicit rave parties and music festivals, and to move gypsies and travellers on". Bizarrely by comparison, their leader article, "Voices of dissent denied a fair hearing", sees with a far broader vision and actually talks about what the Bill would mean for any dissenters in this country.

DAILY MAIL, 11 OCT 94

Three of the papers carried their coverage over to Tuesday 11th October, The Guardian, The Independent and the Daily Mail. The thrust of the Mail's piece was that because Class War (who even the Mail say have a national membership of only 150) printed a leaflet urging violence against the police, people were therefore violent. The fact that to even be there meant that you don't just accept what you're told, that the common thread of all anti-CJB stuff was a questioning, libertarian attitude, is overlooked.

Personally, I find Class War laughable. They say they're "against the class system and all who maintain it", yet vilify anyone who's not "working class" (whatever that means anymore). They play the same violent and dogmatic game as the Establishment, but on the other side. It all sucks, I don't want to play their games, I can think of better ones. And I don't call getting a lot of people in one place to throw bricks a revolution.

In its subheading, the Daily Mail says it has found the "truth about anarchists" who organised the violence. Copies of the Class War leaflet Keep It Spikey were found on several arrestees, and this is given as proof of its responsibility for the riot. Anyone who's ever been on a demonstration can tell you how many leaflets you get given by all kinds of mainstream and far-out folks. I've been given dozens of Jehovah's Witnesses leaflets over the years, but I'm still no nearer to obeying them. Clearly there were people throwing things at police at Hyde Park, and clearly some were enjoying it. Clearly some

As Left blame police, truth about anarchists who planned the violence weeks before.

BLUEPRINT FOR A RIOT

By PETER ROSE and PETER BURDEN

A CHILLING 'battle plan' was printed and circulated weeks in advance of the Hyde Park riot.

The leaflet, with advice on brick-throwing techniques and how to resist arrest, emerged yesterday as damning evidence that Sunday's violence was the work of professional troublemakers.

Its contents gave a distinctly hollow ring to the anti-police rhetoric of Labour Left-winger Jeremy

Corbyn, who accused them of provoking the trouble. The handout, entitled 'Keep It Spikey', was seized from members of the anarchist group Class War. It talks of starting 'our own battle' and perhaps most revealingly, dismisses the thousands of peaceful demonstrators as 'scum' and advocates attacking them as well because 'you know they won't hit you back'. It instructs recruits that police might be anticipating trouble around Downing Street and suggests rioters might pick an alternative flashpoint. It concludes: "Finally, and most important, enjoy yourself." had come ready for it (although much was made of people coming prepared with bricks, I only know one person who saw a single brick thrown. Mostly it was cans and wooden poles from those Socialist Worker placards. Not that that makes it any more acceptable). The point is, there were thousands of police, they way outnumbered the violent demonstrators. The police were in riot gear, the demonstrators were undefended. Why not single out the violent ones and arrest them? They could see who they were. And yet they left them alone to carry on, and just beat up whoever happened to be near.

Even if everyone was totally gullible and had all been given a copy of Keep It Spikey and had immediately gone to thump a police officer, there was still no need for the riot. They're THE POLICE. Don't tell me it's never occurred to them that they might have to deal with violence, and don't tell me they haven't had chance to figure out the best way to deal with it. They could have arrested the few spikeys and dispersed the rest of the crowd (not that the crowd would have needed it anyway, most were just trying to get their coach home). I don't know much about policing strategy, but I'm sure if I ran the operation I wouldn't find

LAWS - THEY MAKE 'EM, WE BREAK 'EM.

WHEN THROWING - THROW WELL. It takes a bit of guts, but if you have your hands on some ammo, move up front. Don't stand so far back that you are unable to reach your target and your brick ends up cracking the back of someone's head.

The evidence: Extract from the leaflet 'Keep It Spikey', which was seized from agitators in Sunday's riot

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A second Class War leaflet features a skull and bones insignia and the slogan: 'Laws - They make 'em, we break 'em.' It wanders off on a foul-mouthed diatribe against every aspect of the establishment, proclaiming: "The real troublemaking elements are the rich scum who have engineered this Bill to secure their own comfort."

Class War circulated the leaflets in the weeks before the march, intended as a peaceful demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill, and also on the day. Copies were found on several of the 48 arrested.

The mob had clearly come prepared for battle, with bricks and CS gas in their formidable arsenal. Eight police officers needed hospital treatment and a further eight were treated on the spot after some of the ugliest scenes since the poll tax riots of 1990. Nineteen civilians were hurt. Police were furious with Left-wingers who are demanding an independent inquiry into the disturbances. Mr Corbyn, MP for Islington North, blamed police incompetence. He said they inflated the situation by sealing off park exits just as thousands of marchers were about to leave to catch buses home.

"The policing tactics at the end of this demonstration exacerbated the situation, set it all off, and from then it went from bad to worse," Mr Corbyn told a news conference in Westminster.

It was incompetent policing at that point. A lower-key policing approach

Turn to Page 7, Col. 1

[second part of front page article lost. sorry.]

myself trying to disperse a crowd by closing exits and not letting them near the bus home. I'm sure people disperse quicker if you move your officers in from one side in a fan formation, rather than pushing them in from three sides to a fence. I'm sure I wouldn't do that, unless I was looking for trouble.

BEHIND A FRONT OF LEGITIMATE PROTEST, THE UNDERGROUND PARTY

The ravers who

Music that became a rallying cry for violence

By TONY GALLAGHER and DAVID CONNETT

AS THEY sought to shift the blame over Sunday's riot havoc, organisers of the march were at pains yesterday to stress the broad and liberal base of their support.

Weyman Bennett, secretary of the grandly-titled Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill, said they had the support of 200 groups, including trade unions and civil rights campaigners, and 25 MPs.

They were united in supporting peaceful protest, he said, although he failed to express regret over injuries to police officers.

But behind what might be seen as the legitimate voices of dissent are groups with more disturbing reasons for opposing the Bill — the organisers of the underground rave parties which have spread throughout the country, bringing misery to countless residents.

Such parties are now a lucrative source of income and provide a potent rationale for trying to stop the Bill, which will have the power to ban impromptu gatherings.

Those responsible for the parties, with their booming sound systems, were heavily represented at the march on Sunday. Indeed, they were also among the official organisers in the shape of a collective known as the Advance Party.

With its co-ordinator Deborah Staunton, the Advance Party is a loose nationwide grouping of those who run sound systems.

When the march set off for Hyde Park from Victoria Embankment at 12.55pm, they were accompanied by three hi-tech sound systems on the back of articulated lorries.

Although their presence was agreed in advance with Scotland Yard, police could not have foreseen how they would become the trigger for the riot which followed. At 3.40pm, as the protesters rallied in Hyde Park, sound systems with a large number of demonstrators around



Harris: 'The Bill is taking away human rights'

Rebel in a tent on his father's acres

HE HAD the best start in life his parents could provide — a coveted place at Rugby.

But yesterday, Ban Harris's privileged education counted for little as he stood head bowed before a magistrate charged with a public order offence in the Hyde Park riot.

He was one of many protesters who are accused of clashing with police after the demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill turned into a full-scale battle.

The 28-year-old former public schoolboy turned New Age traveller was at Rugby — fees £12,000 a year — from 1979-84, passing seven O-levels and A-levels in geography, history and economics.

He won a place at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, to study farming but dropped out and joined the ranks of the New Age travellers.

'I knew it wasn't for me after just a couple of weeks,' said Harris, after his brief court appearance. 'It was just like being back at Rugby, I didn't want to mix with people like that any more.'

Harris, who was bailed until next month by Highbury Corner magistrates, went on: 'My parents find the fact that I am a New Age traveller rather bizarre. I suppose that's not too surprising when you compare our lifestyles.'

Harris's home is a tent, which he shares with his 23-year-old girlfriend Kendra Collier. A far cry from the plush detached family home.

The couple lives on four acres of land in Bramerton, Norfolk, which Harris is trying to turn into a smallholding. The dole — £72 a fortnight — is his only income. He grows his own vegetables and tries to be self-sufficient.

The land is owned by his father Jolyon Harris who is a senior partner with Irlands of Norwich, a firm of surveyors and auctioneers.

His mother, Joan, gives tennis lessons on the family's personal court in Norwich and in local schools.

Harris said: 'I told my parents last night that I was arrested and explained the circumstances. They didn't seem too angry. They know that I'm not a violent person.'

Harris is a veteran of several anti-Government demos and came to London on coaches organised by the Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill. He said: 'The Bill is taking away basic human rights and I'm prepared to make a stand against that.'

Nineteen others, ranging in age from 18 to 34, and from various parts of the country, appeared before the court.

them at Stanhope Gate refused to turn off the music.

Twenty minutes later, when officers tried to separate the sound systems from the crowd — as agreed in advance with organisers — they were greeted with a hail of missiles.

One sound system was diverted away from the march, but marchers refused to be parted from two others, according to detectives.

With police still being pelted with placards, horse dung, house bricks and even scaffolding poles, senior officers allowed the two remaining sound systems into the park, again contrary to prior agreement with march organisers.

As some crazed protesters armed themselves with sharpened staves, officers regrouped to carry out a controlled clearance of the 1,000 or so people still in the park.

The sound systems, meanwhile, were free to go, leaving a trail of chaos in their wake.

Named by march organisers as Snokescreeen from Sheffield, the Glasgow-based Desert Storm Posse and Megatripolis from London, there is no suggestion that these sound systems were responsible for any of the running battles which ended with 50

demonstrators rampaging down Oxford Street, attacking shop windows.

But there is no doubt the music they were playing acted as a rallying cry for thousands of young protesters, many of them bent on violence.

The sound systems and those who attend their parties are among the principal targets of the new Bill.

It will contain the power to ban gatherings of more than 20, with police able to turn back anyone within a five-mile area. If music is being played and causing 'serious distress' to residents, police also have the power to order revellers to leave.

Inevitably, the parties themselves are a target for drug dealers, peddling Ecstasy, amphetamines and heroin to impressionable youngsters.

Realising the threat posed to their future, the owners of the sound systems have been pleading with partygoers in recent weeks to oppose the Bill by turning up at the march. 'The people behind this Bill just don't like the music we play,' said Miss Staunton. 'But people are still going to put on parties. The Bill is not going to stop them.' It should be said there were a small group of people

determined to cause trouble with the police. I can only say they had nothing to do with the Advance Party. None of our sound systems were involved.'

From her home in Burnt Oak, North London, 38-year-old Miss Staunton, a mother of two who receives income support of £90 a week, acts as a one-woman information service for would-be partygoers, passing on information about forthcoming raves to people who phone her from all over Britain.

She is also a member of the Spiral Tribe sound system, which became infamous when some of its members took a £1million Surrey mansion for a party. It cost £50,000 to repair the house, though Spiral Tribe members insisted the damage was caused by vandals after they left.

She said: 'If people went to a free festival or party and left at the door the notion that they don't like people with bizarre hairstyles or muddy boots, they would find we are a jolly decent bunch of people communicating with each other.'

As they recovered from the riot yesterday, injured police officers and shopkeepers repairing storefronts might have begged to differ.



Deborah Staunton: 'We're a jolly decent bunch'

DAILY MAIL PAGE 6

This is half of a two page spread of anti-protester articles. I've lost the other bit. Sorry. The interesting bit is the main article, "Music that became a rallying cry for violence". Anyone who's ever been to a proper rave will tell you it is the wrong place to look for violence. If that's what you want, try mainstream city-centre pubs and clubs with their alcohol and early curfews. Raves would seem to be far healthier, despite the Daily Mail's statement that "Inevitably, the parties themselves are a target for drug dealers, peddling Ecstasy, amphetamines and heroin to impressionable youngsters". Heroin? Dancing on a major sedative? I think not. But then anyone who refers to "peddling" drugs tends to not have a fucking clue.

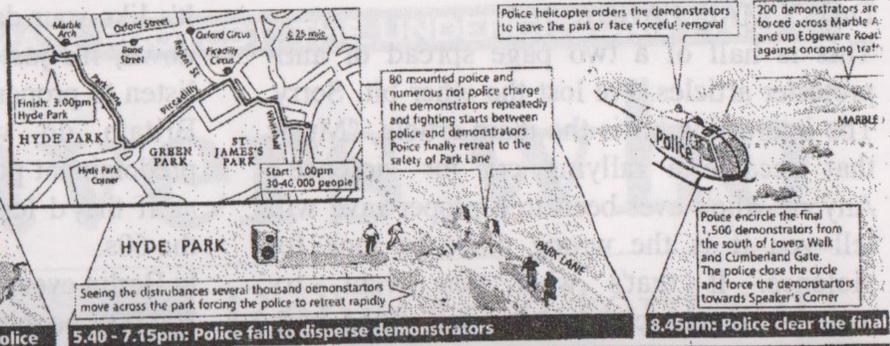
But it is not so much the parties they're attacking, they go for the music *itself*. It's the "music that became a rallying cry for violence", not the party or anyone organising, the music itself. This bears a striking similarity to American exhortations of the 1950s not to listen to the emerging rock 'n' roll, that it ruins otherwise happy young lives, that "rock 'n' roll will bring the white man down to the level of the negro". Not its proponents, the actual music in and of itself. The CJB actually tried to define dance music with its legendary "wholly or predominantly characterised by a succession of repetitive beats". It's fitting that it should be Hyde Park that this demonstration was in, because it was Hyde Park where Luciano Pavarotti did a free concert a few years ago, and 250,000 people went. There was traffic chaos, incredible litter, and all the logistical problems associated with such a massive event. But it's OK cos it's *real* culture. Opera is *real* music, dance music is not. If exactly the same people had been in the same place on the same day listening to music at the same volume, but it was dance music, that'd be an illegal free party, banned because of all the logistical problems and disturbance it would cause. It's a fear of the new, otherwise why don't these rules apply to football matches or Notting Hill Carnival? And a lot of it is just snobbery and an If I Don't Like It Then I Won't Allow It attitude.

It's like your dad shouting to "turn your music down, it's just a lot of noise, why can't you listen to proper music like I used to?" Only in Britain do we make laws against the predominant popular youth culture. It's as mad as if they'd legislated against Beatles gigs in the 60s.

In Berlin every year they have the Love Parade, 300,000 people in the biggest dance party in the world. The German Culture minister approves it because it *is* contemporary culture. As Pete Townshend pointed out, it's not necessarily the job of the older generation to like dance music, or even to understand it, but simply to recognise it and make way for it. We don't have a Culture Minister in Britain, our equivalent is a Heritage Minister. Culture is something that comes from the past, through the present and into the future. We're all shaped by it, we all shape it. Heritage is stuff from the past that you might go and look at, but you mustn't alter it, you're not really *part of it*. No wonder there's no English word for zeitgeist.

The Daily Mail feature, like all the other writing here, is as interesting for what it *doesn't* say as for what it *does*. By saying that it's all just middle-class drop-outs, extremist psychos and unrealistic hedonists, (all of them sponging off our taxes), they ignore the scarier threats to our liberties in the Bill, like the abolition of using your right to silence proving nothing, and the new offence of Aggravated Trespass. These fundamental changes to long-held legal freedoms are a serious erosion of our rights. And, like the trees that are killed for a road, once they're gone we won't get them back. And, again like roadbuilding, don't think that they'll stop taking these things until we stand in their way. Finding themselves arrested and convicted for protesting against the closure of their local school or hospital might make Daily Mail readers, and indeed the readers of all other newspapers, wish their paper had told them a bit more about this law when there was still time to stop it.

Criminal Justice Bill Riot



Police at Cumberland Gate allow two sound systems into the park. One of which is set up at Speaker's Corner.

500 demonstrators move south to coaches waiting on Park Lane.

Riot police scale fences driving demonstrators further into the park.

About 500 demonstrators with a sound system join the 10,000 people already in the park.

30 mounted police charge up Lovers Walk trying to force the demonstrators back to Speaker's Corner, trapping them against the railings along the park edge. Fighting breaks out.

80 mounted police and numerous riot police charge the demonstrators repeatedly and fighting starts between police and demonstrators. Police finally retreat to the safety of Park Lane.

200 demonstrators are forced across Marble Arch and up Edgware Road against oncoming traffic.

Police helicopter orders the demonstrators to leave the park or face forcible removal.

Police encircle the final 1,500 demonstrators from the south of Lovers Walk and Cumberland Gate. The police close the circle and force the demonstrators towards Speaker's Corner.



How Park Lane was turned into a battlefield

AS SHOPKEEPERS in Oxford Street swept away the debris from Sunday's rioting following the demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill, the Metropolitan Police ruled out an investigation of tactics used during the march.

Chief Superintendent Richard Cullen, who was in charge of policing during the demonstration, also rejected criticism of his handling of the situation. He blamed anarchist groups for starting the rioting after a peaceful demonstration and rally in Hyde Park, which attracted more than 35,000 people.

Assistant Commissioner Tony Speed said the disorder was "in no way provoked" by police, who responded to the "despicable behaviour of the minority". He added: "I am proud of the way my officers reacted in the face of extreme violence."

Their assertions were given weight by flyers distributed to marchers by Class War urging them to "Keep It Spiky" and gave some tips for riot etiquette, including resisting arrest and wearing a mask. It gave hints on throwing missiles: "When throwing — throw well. It takes a bit of guts. But if you have your hands on some ammo move up to the front. Don't stand so far back that you are unable to reach your target..."

Mary-An Stephenson, a

DANNY PENMAN

and demonstrators escalated until about 30 mounted riot police charged the crowd.

Members of the crowd began chanting: "Kill the Bill, kill the Bill" — the slogan used in reference to the Criminal Justice Bill — and began hurling stones and bottles.

Mr Corbyn said police deliberately charged demonstrators when everyone was leaving, and a number of people, including children, were seriously hurt. "Police tactics were monumentally ill-conceived," he said.

But Ch Supt Cullen accused Mr Corbyn of getting his facts wrong and "relying on the political rhetoric of the moment". He said: "My officers acted with admirable restraint. I dare say some officers retaliated. You can't expect police officers to come under such violent attacks and not retaliate." Weapons used against officers included sharpened staves, scaffolding, bricks, bottles, cans, gravel and "almost anything you can think of", he said.

5:35pm Police reinforcements began to enter the park from the south. Several thousand demonstrators, who had previously been dancing near another sound system further into the park, began to run towards the police, who launched a series of baton charges against them.

5:49pm Riot police turned and charged again, trampling at least two underfoot. The Independent's reporter, Danny Penman, was attacked by three officers, who hit him across the head, legs and stomach with their truncheons. Clashes continued for another 15 minutes before police once again retreated.

Most of the demonstrators drifted away, leaving a hard core of about 1,500 people.

8:45pm The final battles of the evening began when two lines of about 500 officers in body armour marched across Hyde Park from the north and south. Police had previously been forcing the marchers off Park Lane and into the park, apparently to keep them out of the West End. Panic broke out as people were trapped by two advancing police lines and the steel fence on the edge of the park. They tried to clamber over the fences only to meet a police line advancing along Park Lane. Sporadic battles broke out as the police lines mingled with the demonstrators.

Fifteen people appeared before magistrates in London yesterday accused of charges ranging from violent disorder to assault after rioting at the end of Sunday's demonstration and rally in Hyde Park against the Criminal Justice Bill. One man was remanded in custody. The rest of the defendants were granted bail.

Having a riot, page 21

THE INDEPENDENT

The Independent, true to its patchwork of biases, gave space on Tuesday 11th to an article on the Freedom Network. Whilst not particularly informative, it did redress the balance a little against the image of brick-throwing dickheads that we'd got from every paper.

They also did a full-page write up by Danny Penman, their journalist who'd been beaten by police, featuring a pictorial graphic to show the different stages of the riot, in sharp contrast to the non-chronological mess of Monday's front page.

THE GUARDIAN, 11 OCT 94

On Tuesday, The Guardian printed the four best follow-up articles on the whole thing. The bulk of page two was a more or less fair report with quotes from both sides, complete with a 3-stage graphic to show the development of the riot, similar to the one in The Independent.

They published a letter from a man who was there who opened by saying that the papers missed the point, and that the police cannot have been blameless. Then a leader article which says that, contrary to the implication in other papers, the Bill will not make events like the riot less likely in future. If anything it'll encourage them. "Wise legislators try to incorporate, not alienate disaffected groups... ministers have failed to realise the idealism driving such activists. People risking serious physical injury for their cause will not be deterred by a disputed criminal law". Damn right.

What's bad in the Bill

WAS it a gift to the Government? Inevitably, the confrontation between police and demonstrators against the Government's Criminal Justice Bill will be projected as convincing evidence of the need for tougher public order controls. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. There are already ample powers — as the police demonstrated on Sunday night — to control militant hardcore groups intent on turning peaceful demonstrations into disorder. Undoubtedly a small group wanted confrontation — peaceful demonstrators do not arm themselves with CS gas canisters to use against the police. Undoubtedly there was over-reaction by the police, with peaceful demonstrators — and at least one reporter — attacked by riot-police. Unfortunately the main lesson which ministers should draw will be ignored: far from reducing such ugly incidents, the Bill will only increase them. Its insidious effects will be eroding civil rights long after Sunday night is forgotten.

The mistake ministers are making is giving the police less discretion in an age when they need more. The police themselves have questioned the inappropriate way in which the Government is trying to solve social problems through the criminal law. Take the new anti-squatting provisions of the bill. You do not solve homelessness or housing shortages by passing criminal laws. Or consider the pressures which will be placed on police forces by local hunts under the proposed hunt-saboteur provisions. Ministers have failed to recognise the idealism driving such activists. People risking serious physical injury for their cause will not be deterred by a disputed criminal law.

There is a wider issue which more thoughtful policy-makers would have addressed. Here's a growing coalition of alienated groups who feel their lifestyles are being marginalised and now, under the bill, their behaviour criminalised: new age travellers, rave party-goers, hunt saboteurs. Even militant ramblers who step out of line face a criminal label. Wise legislators try to incorporate, not alienate, disaffected groups. No-one supposes this will be easy. Calls from a Charter 88 leader to Sunday's mass rally to register and vote were derided by the crowd. Yet even more serious than widespread alienation with the parliamentary process is disaffection with the criminal justice system. Passing more restrictive laws is not an answer. It only makes the police task more difficult — and feeds dissent. Shutting off a safety valve guarantees just one result: a damaging explosion.

Police protest

WHAT has not been mentioned in the reports which I have seen about the violence at Sunday's demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill, is that it was the police who made the situation a confrontation in the first place.

It was the police who stated that no music would be allowed in Hyde Park (on a demonstration which was in part about defending the right to party!). It was the police who harrowed the top end of Park Lane by filling it with vans and riot police, so that only the music float could get through, leaving up to 10,000 demonstrators (including myself) with nowhere to go.

The police could have left everyone to move easily into Hyde Park and dance until their coach came to take them home. But they must have known that there were sufficient numbers of people there quite prepared for a violent confrontation with the police. Given this, their strategy couldn't have been better designed to produce such a confrontation.

It is not adequate for police to blame "a small minority" of protesters for the violence, even though, in a narrow sense, those people are to blame. A sane police strategy would have left 27 people not injured on Sunday night, and they must take some responsibility and reassess this strategy. And what is of course criminal, is that this lets the Government off the hook for bringing in such a draconian attack on civil liberties.

(Dr) Matthew Paterson, Keele University

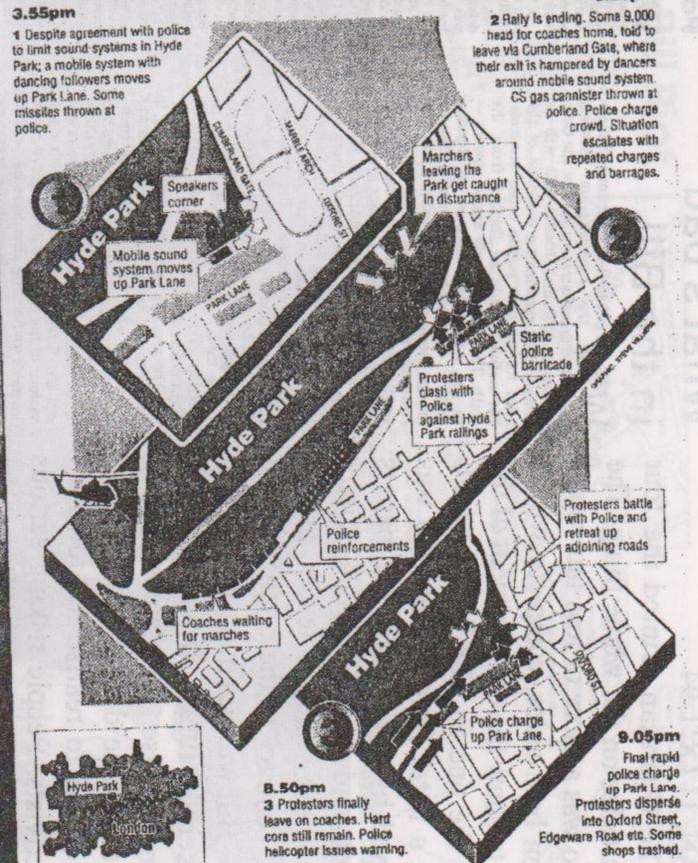
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2 HOME NEWS

Mutual recriminations follow a night of violence sparked by minority after London demonstration against the criminal justice bill

Anatomy of a riot



Confrontation... a protestor showers the police lines during Sunday night's march

PHOTOGRAPH: ALEX MACALUIGHTON

Police blame anarchists as marchers call for inquiry

Police blame anarchists as marchers call for inquiry

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

ORGANISERS of Sunday's march against the Criminal Justice Bill yesterday called for a public inquiry into the pointing of the operation after police blamed violent scenes in central London on a small group of anarchists causing injury and destruction.

Of the 41 people arrested 41 were charged with offences including riot, affray, criminal damage, possession of offensive weapons, and one remained in custody. Thirty people required hospital treatment for a variety of injuries caused in the clashes.

Tony Speed, Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, said his officers had shown "remarkable restraint and discipline in what were some of the most horrific acts of violence I have witnessed".

Mr Speed said a hard core of about 1,000 had remained after the majority of demonstrators had left and had armed themselves with railings, scaffold poles and paving slabs.

"It was necessary for the safety of people in the West End to act swiftly and firmly to disperse the riotous scenes," he said. He said if the demonstrators had abided by the agreed arrangements, the fighting need not have happened.

"We had concerns in advance of the demonstration that the sound systems would become a focal point for those intent on causing disorder," he added.

But organisers of the march disputed the police version of events and, while condemning the attacks on officers, laid the blame on police tactics.

At a press conference in the Commons, Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North, said: "The demonstration was peaceful, large and determined. We believe the problems were exacerbated by police tactics... Any injuries to anyone are totally regrettable."

Mr Corbyn said that there should be a judicial inquiry into the event. He suggested that Michael Howard would use the clashes as an argument for the bill.

Weyman Bennett, the chief steward of the march, said: "What I regret most of all is

that the police attacked the demonstrators."

He said that the police had attacked people for demonstrating, attempting to leave and that this had heightened tensions.

Paul May, another march spokesman, who has worked for the Jubilee Ward and Birmingham Six campaigns, said: "There may have been a small core who were more interested in violence than in protesting against the bill but when trouble started the police stopped co-operating with the stewards."

Some members of the Coalition, such as the Freedom Network, had urged a non-confrontational carnival style — hence the presence of jugglers, fire-eaters and unicyclists. Messages on the placards ranged from No Cultural Cleansing Here to Kill the Bill.

By the time Paddy Hill of the

record player." He appealed to the crowd: "Don't go yet because we might be having a bit of a party." How a peaceful protest turned sour after police banned music from park in earlier agreement with organisers.

As the rally ended there was a tussle on stage as some people started shouting for music, which was played briefly before the march organisers, who had been denied a park music licence, cut it off.

At the back of the march a mobile sound system on a lorry, swaying with dancers, was blasting out rave music and was followed by hundreds of people. The agreement between organisers and the police had been that the system would not enter the park. But the system organisers wanted to take the sounds into the park and the police blocked the top of Park Lane to prevent them.

Shortly afterwards, at around 3.55pm, what appeared to be a CS gas canister was thrown from the crowd, causing people to flee. The riot police were de-

ployed and heavier missiles — bricks, bottles, lager cans filled with sand — were hurled at police. The riot police were to continue for five hours.

Around 5pm, mounted police entered the park because, according to police, then officers were coming under attack. Some demonstrators pelted the mounted police and there was a series of mounted charges — including one which should have started to collect out-of-town demonstrators were not at their agreed pick-up point as a police line had been thrown across the park.

Many, seeking refuge, were stranded and the confusion increased with those seeking buses caught in a cross-fire between police and missile-throwers. The police said yesterday that coaches were unable to reach demonstrators because of the missiles.

At 8.55pm the police announced that they were going

to clear the park and vans with headlights on moved in. Many white riot police started mixing quickly with the crowd on Park Lane, pushing people in front of them.

There were ugly clashes outside McDonald's and near panic as demonstrators fled into the restaurant. Around 50 people set off down Oxford Street, smashing more than 100 shop windows as they went. The police pursued demonstrators, felling some with train chevron blowers.

Class War were in attendance and distributed leaflets with tips on how to attack the police. "When throwing — throw well. It takes a bit of guts but if you have your hands on some ammo, move up front." They also urged their supporters to "ruffle the fluffies" and disregard the "scum" amongst the organisers who wanted a peaceful protest. "If they get in the way, riot them."



Operation RIP comes to a rest at the gates to Downing Street

Non-violent direct action is the way to fight the Criminal Justice Bill, says Freedom Network. E Jane Dickson reports

Don't forget your chains

"CERTAIN far-left groups attract extremists, who can only explain their anger through violent confrontation," says Camilla Berens, founder member of Freedom Network, a national apolitical organisation mobilised against the Criminal Justice Bill.

"On last Sunday's march, the vast majority of people had come to make their point peacefully, and it has to be said that the police over-reacted in a disgraceful manner. But there will always be a minority of hard-boiled idiots who spend their time trying to make as much trouble as possible; perhaps these people have never been shown an alternative to violent action. We're trying to show that non-violent direct action is a positive response to a government that has finally lost the plot."

The Network now has 50 offices in cities from Plymouth to Aberdeen. It was set up in January to address the effects on the individual and travellers' rights to warriors in "the fight for the right to party" festivals and unlicensed raves stand to be criminalised under the Bill with a maximum penalty of three months' imprisonment or a £2,500 fine for disobeying police orders.

"We're not just about alternative culture," says Ms Berens. "The Bill will affect everyone. Everyone has the right to free speech and free movement."

The Network has attracted the support of celebrities, including ex-squatters Sting, Bob Geldof and Mark Knopfler — although Richard Branson, Britain's most famous ex-squatter has yet to pledge solidarity — and legal notables, including the Queen's Counsel Michael Mansfield and Helena Kennedy. It could do, however, with the services of a good sloganiser. Somehow "There's no justice. Just us" is less than inspirational.

Freedom Network 071 718 6321



Camilla Berens in 'mourning' Photograph: Alan...

Blame the anarchists or blame the police, the consequences of violent protest affect us all

Fair game for direct action

Sheila Rowbotham

SOME headlines are familiar: "Serious riots in London. Police overwhelmed. Heavy fighting." This one is history: November 13, 1887, a demonstration to protest against repression in Ireland and for free speech. It became known as Bloody Sunday and sharpened the divide between left wingers and the Liberal Party.

Quite apart from the politico who wanted to propagandise on street corners and in parks, the authorities had been moving on costermongers and organ players. William Morris, founder of the Socialist League, observed that the ruling class seemed to want people to use the streets only to go back and forth to work, making profits for them. The Times, however, saw the protest differently: "The active parties of yesterday's mob was composed of all that is weakest, and most vicious of the slums of the great city." These "howling rioters" were motivated by "the revolt of dull brutality against the rule of law".

Conflict between demonstrators and the police is certainly not new. The unemployed demonstrators in the thirties, opponents of the Vietnam war in the sixties and miners' pickets in the eighties all clashed violently. There is however from the demonstrators' point of view a perennial snag which William Morris noted in 1887. The police are trained, armed and organised, the demonstrators are not. Not surprisingly,

the demonstrators usually get the worst of the violence. Viewed optimistically and fair-mindedly, we can assume that only a minority of police in any given demonstration personally want a physical fight with demonstrators. Allowing for the minority of combative police likely to spoil things for the other peaceful police, we have to assume that large scale and uncontained violence on the demonstration is a matter of policy. For the police attend demonstrations with generalised instructions as well as tactics. In the late sixties, for example, the Labour government gave instructions for restraint as violence escalated on Vietnam demonstrations. The mood of the police at the grass-roots was for confrontation.

Media reports of the anti Criminal Justice Bill protest in London quote the police as pinning the violence on anarchists. But anarchists have been a minority on demonstrations since the early 1890s. They abounded on the CND demonstrations of the late fifties and early sixties. Peggy Duff says in her biography *Left, Left*, "Left that the police learned how to deal flexibly with marchers who were more amiable inclined to the organisers than anarchists chanted *Stuff Stuff*. The police used no such strategic caution on Sunday. It is important to note that anarchists vary. One strand have certainly advocated pushing the state to reveal its true colours. "Propaganda by deed" dates from the late 19th century — its aim was to make the

masses conscious by taking violent direct action. Historically it has been both daft and heroic, but by and large, the rebels suffered much more than the state, which used the opportunity to plant agents provocateurs in their midst. Now, there may have been demonstrators as the police claimed, who took bricks, and who could be seen in this tradition of anarchism. But no one has suggested that there is a strong movement advocating propaganda by deed in Britain today. So why were police so heavy handed?

One explanation could be that in these bland and exhausted times the police lack experience in handling young demonstrators who have a pent up anger and nothing much left to lose. But demonstrators are agreed that it was more than the police panic reaction. It looks suspiciously as if the police authority wanted the confrontation with those they could marginalise as "squatters, New Age travellers and motorway protesters". These, according to the *Daily Mail*, "had been seen defying police in incidents across the country in recent months." How can they see individuals among a crowd of thousands unless they know where to look already?

Nobody mentions left-liberal middle England — many of whom went on the march in protest against a frightening extension of state power and in defence of civil liberty. No one seems to hear them either any more until the young get violent. Violence on a demonstration has several consequences. It makes the front pages when the media is not transmitting the discontent of the marginalised. It means that young people who have no other way of expressing a just anger towards a society that offers them a squat or the street, feel a brief sense of power. It also means, of course, that honest citizens who read the *Daily Mail* tremble and thank their lucky stars there are still Tories who will strengthen the powers of the state with criminal justice legislation. It does make those at the centre of power look as if they cannot keep order without coercion. This can reveal their weakness as unacceptable government, and this Government is extremely unpopular. But it can also play into the hands of the extreme right, inside and outside the Tory party, who have been able to redefine the centre of British politics in their terms since 1979. The left can do without further isolation and middle England is likely to think twice about demonstrating again.

On balance, then, supporters of the Criminal Justice Bill have more to gain from a violent demonstration than those who are opposed and most demonstrators know this. One man in a green anorak in his fifties carrying a banner "Liberal Justice for All" was kicked by a policeman and fell in the midst of the crowd. Children, the elderly and the disabled are implicitly barred if demonstrations are to become violent. Meanwhile a lot of young people have experienced very directly that the law can be brutal and the media don't report their points of view. Once learned, these are lessons you don't forget. If I was a Tory minister, I would feel ashamed that I was responsible for a corrupt society that denies many young people housing, education, a livelihood and now pleasure. As a socialist I find it sad that William Morris's dream of a socialism with the imagination to support roamers and ravers is still so remote.



Sheila Rowbotham is the author of *Women in Movement — Feminism and Social Action*.

I believe that direct action and participatory democracy could strengthen rather than substitute for representative democracy. That was, after all, what community action and radical local governments were about in the seventies and early eighties. And fortunately the chances of developing such a combination seems slim.

Another anarchist syndicalist strand of non-violent direct action would be more apposite. It was used effectively in the march to the Regional Seat of Government near Reading in 1963 and was revived in the peace movement of the 1980s. It was more than moral protest and has been developed by its proponents like Michael Randle into a carefully thought out strategy. It involves considerable back-up and organisation to explain actions and protect people who defy the law. We are far from such a level of organisation on the left at present.

And this. If anyone who was allowed to write for the grown-ups papers understood what happened and what it means, it was Shiela Rowbotham. Pointing out that it *must* have been actual police strategy, and that the papers, (especially the *Daily Mail*), are worthless as vehicles of truth. She goes through the implications, and ends up advocating direct action. Oh yes indeed.

“ I FEEL THAT IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET A VOICE THESE DAYS. I MEAN, IF I WROTE A LETTER TO MY MP WOULD I HAVE ACHIEVED ALL THIS? WOULD YOU LOT BE HERE NOW? I THINK NOT. ”
SWAMPY, TALKING TO JOURNALISTS AT FAIRMILE AFTER A WEEK IN THE TUNNELS AND A £500,000 EVICTION, 30 JAN 97



Westminster demo: a defeat for democracy

Victim of a false charge

MY SON, a student aged 20, was one of those arrested during last Wednesday's demonstration at Westminster against the Criminal Justice Bill. He is not a member of any political group and went along with a few friends to register his protest against a law he considers undemocratic.

He had no intention of using violence and carried no weapons of any kind. His only "crime" was to go behind a bush to relieve himself. There he was set upon by the police, thrown to the ground and bitten several times by an alsatian, with no attempt on the part of the handler to restrain the dog.

He was handcuffed behind his back for three hours with the excuse that the key could not be found. When he asked to see a solicitor he was jeered at. They refused to put his coat around his shoulders. Even a glass of water was refused. He wasn't told what he was charged with until several hours after his arrest and was astonished to hear eventually that he was accused of assaulting a policeman — a completely trumped-up charge. If this is how the police behave under the present law, God help us when they are given more powers under the new Bill.

(Name and address supplied.)

The masses still more or less assume that 'against the law' is a synonym for 'wrong'. It is known that the criminal law is harsh and full of anomalies and that litigation is so expensive as always to favour the rich against the poor: but there is a general feeling that the law, such as it is, will be scrupulously administered, that a judge or magistrate cannot be bribed, that no-one will be punished without trial. An Englishman does not believe in his bones, as a Spanish or Italian peasant does, that the law is simply a racket.
George Orwell, 1943

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and do better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?
Henry David Thoreau, 1849

We don't have to compromise to be understood and win support and so ultimately win our struggles. History is full of people who were mavericks, idiots or criminals in their day, but who are now vindicated: The Suffragettes, Nelson Mandela and the movement against apartheid, Oskar Schindler, Mahatma Ghandi and the ending of British rule in India, Martin Luther King and the black civil rights movement in the United States, vegetarians and vegans. None of them compromised, and they are now being seen as bringers of a new and better orthodoxy.
Lewis Allways, 1997

Your life is in your hands. Everyone around you: the powers that be; the media... everyone will tell you, one way or another, that it isn't. But they lie. You can only be controlled if you grant someone power over you. The first step towards getting *out* of control is to become aware that you are *IN* control, and we all most certainly *are*. Look for and find out *WHY* you continue to do whatever it is that you do; why you believe what you believe; why you *THINK* the way you do. Find out the hidden agendas. Consider who have reasons for wanting you to carry on as you are. As soon as you become aware of the puppeteers, you can start looking for ways of cutting the strings. As Burroughs will tell you, the bottom line is 'cui bono?' - *who profits?* You know you really shouldn't believe anything from anyone with a vested interest in you believing them. Apply this to everything - there are some easy examples we could give right now, but by focusing in on one we distract attention from others. Apply this in all areas of your life and start right away.
Harper, 1995

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, talented and fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of god. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of god that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others.
Nelson Mandela, 1994

Don't dream it, be it.
Dr Frank N Furter, 1973

NEWSPAPER	Headline	people on march	people in riot	arrests	police injured	protesters injured	words from police	words from protesters	weapons used	what is the criminal justice bill?
The Times	Riot police in battle with Bill protesters		up to 600	26	13	17	44	0	bottles and CS gas canisters	Government plans to scrap the defendants right to silence in criminal trials
Daily Star	WAR ON JUSTICE Demo turns into running battle	20,000 'later' over 100,000		26	11	17	0	0	rallings used as spears, CS gas canisters, lighted dustbins and park benches	measures to restrict criminal suspects right to silence and make it easier for police to remove travellers from illegal camp sites and break up rave parties. (plus 47-word quote from Tony Benn)
Daily Telegraph	Rioters hurl CS gas in Bill protest	Set yd est: 20,000 org. est: 100,000	2000	26	11	19 (2 gassed)	35	0	CS gas, wooden poles, wastepaper bins and masonry	give police new powers to clamp down on raves, unlicensed parties, protests and new age travellers (plus 39-word quote from Tony Benn)
The Sun	8 police gassed as Bill demo sparks riot	20,000	2000	11	8 gassed 3 other	1 gassed	0	0	CS gas canisters, bottles, cans and bricks	Provides for anti-terrorist measures and new police powers against trespass to prevent illicit rave parties and music festivals and to move gypsies and travellers on
The Guardian p1	Protest against justice bill leads to violence	50,000	hundreds	39	11	17	18	58	beer cans filled with sand, CS canisters, blazing lumps of wood and bottles	curtail the activities of squatters, New Age travellers and motorway protesters
The Guardian p7	Blame disputed after demo violence	pol est: 20,000 - 30,000 org. est: 100,000	hundreds	39	11	2 gassed	27	0	Blazing rubbish bins, bottles, cans, paving stones, bricks and tear-gas	allow courts the opportunity to interpret a defendants use of the right to silence, tighten the law to prevent squatting and disperse unofficial 'rave' parties, festivals and gatherings of New Age travellers
The Independent	Justice Bill protesters in West End battle with police	pol est: 20,000	up to 800	39	14 - 16	2 gassed	0	0	bottles, cans, wooden placards, a firecracker and a teargas canister	Bill allows police to disperse groups of 9 or more people if they reasonably believe that they are preparing such a gathering or attempting to attend one. The police will also be able to turn anyone away from a festival within a 5 mile radius of the site. (plus a 40-word quote from Tony Benn and a 20-word quote from Arthur Scargill)
Daily Mail	Return of Rent-a-Mob	20000		at least 26	at least 11		0	2	CS gas, bricks, scaffolding, stones, sharpened sticks and anything they can get their hands on	
Evening Standard	How riot gangs wrecked Oxford Street		600 or 700 'organised' in crowd of 2,000	48	17	19	200		CS-type gas, bottles and cans	
Yorkshire Post	Violence flares after protest demo over Bill	org. est: 100,000 pol est: 20,000	hundreds	26	17		38	13		

Compare the 'facts' given by the different papers. Compare the descriptions of what the protest is actually about, the Criminal Justice Bill. See how the differing lists of weapons used gives different impressions. Compare how the headlines alone tell different stories. And remember that people just buy one newspaper, and assume that they are being told the truth.

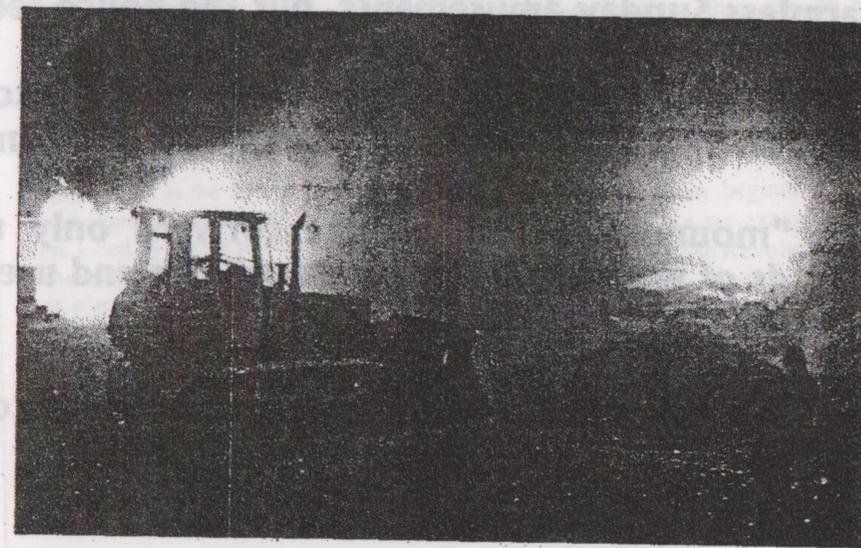
In the reporting on the Newbury reunion rally in 11th January, again compare how the headlines all tell different stories. And how many people were there? My favourite bit on this question is the Sunday Times' telling us that 300 people had got into the compound, after the police tell us that "the majority" of 500 had left! Giving the times a run for its money is John Vidal, whose report in The Observer said that "more than 1,000" people went into the compound, out of a crowd that his article in next day's Guardian numbered at 750!

NEWSPAPER	Headline	page number	people at rally	people in compound	police attacked?
The Sunday Times	Police stoned at Newbury	22	500	300	stoned with metal bolts
Sunday Mirror	Riot erupts at Newbury bypass demo	20	500	hundreds	-
Sunday Telegraph	Seven held as Newbury bypass demo boils over	2	more than 2000	several hundred	missiles hurled
The Observer	Newbury protesters mark year of dispute	6	-	more than 1000	-
The Independent on Sunday	One year on, violence re-ignites the battle	2	-	estimated 300	bolts hurled
13 January The Guardian	Unhappy birthday ends in fire and tears	3	750	-	-

THE SUNDAY TIMES · 12 JANUARY 1997

Police stoned at Newbury

What *can* they mean?



The next 8 pages are the complete text of a leaflet published by Practical History in Oct 94.

THE BATTLE FOR HYDE PARK:

ruffians, radicals and ravers, 1855-1994

Police helicopter orders the demonstrators to leave the park or face forceful removal



1855: "it looked as if the demonstration was going to simmer down to harmless Sunday amusements, but the police reckoned differently"

1866: "The police brought their truncheons into active use, and a number of the roughs were somewhat severely handled"

1932: "mounted police charged forward only to be repulsed by thousands of workers who tore up railings and used them as weapons and barricades"

1994: "the flashpoint came when thugs opposed to legislation against raves tried to turn the park into a giant party"

Free

Introduction

On the huge anti-Criminal Justice Bill march on October 9th 1994, I had a sense of being in another time zone. Sometimes, like when the police helicopter swept low broadcasting the order to disperse, it felt like I'd been transported to some future techno-totalitarian state, a science fiction landscape out of 2000AD or Robocop. But when people with sticks and stones stood their ground under the trees against charging police armed with stronger sticks and shields and horses it could have been any time in the last couple of thousand years, a basic technology of power and resistance that hasn't changed much since Roman times or probably even longer.

Hyde Park itself has seen such scenes before in the 1850s and 1860s, in the 1930s, and doubtless at other times besides. Some of these are described here as well as reflections on the most recent events. Events of 140 years ago might not seem very relevant today, but in some ways they still have a bearing on the present even at this distance.

Some opponents of the CJB seem to believe that it represents a departure from traditional British liberties (e.g. "Britain has a long tradition of tolerance which the CJB drastically contravenes", David Bennun, *Melody Maker* Oct 22 1994). A quick look at history scotches the myth of the tolerance of the British state. There was no "right of assembly" at Peterloo, Manchester in 1819 when 11 demonstrators were killed by troops. Nor for Indian people at Amritsar, where British troops opened fire on a peaceful crowd in 1919 killing 379 people, or in Derry in 1972, when 14 unarmed people were shot dead by paratroopers after defying a ban on demonstrations.

Whatever "liberties" we have today have not been given to us willingly. If today we can within certain limits demonstrate, form our own organisations, and publish our own papers and magazines, it is because in the past so many people defied the laws that banned them from doing these sorts of things. Today many people take it for granted that thousands of people can demonstrate in Hyde Park but in the past demonstrations were often banned there. In the 1850s and 1860s people repeatedly ignored bans en masse until the state was forced to back down; the Royal Parks and Gardens Act 1872 allowed public meetings in the park, albeit with some restrictions.

The state likes to present itself as invincible with laws that can't be broken enforced by police that can't be beaten. The long battle for Hyde Park shows that with determination and ingenuity we can successfully resist their laws. The Criminal Justice Bill is now law but it doesn't have to stay that way.

Setting the scene

Hyde Park became royal property when Henry VIII confiscated it off the Church in the 16th century. It has stayed that way ever since, except for a period in the 1650s when the King was executed and the Park sold off. In 1637 Hyde Park became the first royal park to be opened to the public, and it was to become a favourite playground for the wealthy who came there to parade in their coaches. The royals hunted deer in the park until 1769.

But if the park was a place of leisure for the rich and powerful, it was not always a safe one. In 1799 an attempt was made to assassinate King George III while he was watching a military review in the Park. The bullet missed him and injured a spectator (that evening another shot was fired at the King as he entered his box at Drury Lane theatre, while outside the crowd hissed him). The Park was also famous for robberies, such as those carried out by the highwayman Maclean who robbed Horace Walpole there in 1749 (and was hanged for his troubles in 1750).

The area was also a place of terror for the poor. The Tyburn gallows stood at Marble Arch from 1571 to 1783, where in the eighteenth century more than a thousand people were publicly hanged to teach the poor obedience and respect for the property of the rich.

During the suppression of the Gordon Riots in 1780, Hyde Park was turned into a military camp, and its importance for the state was recognised in 1848 when fear of revolution again gripped the ruling class. Elaborate military precautions were taken against planned radical Chartist demonstrations in April and June, and the Duke of Wellington (Commander-in-Chief) argued that "it is in my Opinion absolutely necessary to keep the Parks, that is Hyde Park, the Green Park, St James' Park, clear from Mobs" by having detachments of soldiers guarding the park gates.

By the 1850s, Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square were the only two major open spaces in central London, and both were the scenes of conflict as the state tried to stop people meeting in them. A serious of confrontations in the Square culminated in Bloody Sunday 1887, when several people were killed by police during a mass illegal demonstration. In Hyde Park, the key battles took place in the 1850s and 1860s.

For the story of Tyburn and the Gordon riots read *The London Hanged*, by Peter Linebaugh, Penguin, 1991; for Trafalgar Square see *Trafalgar Square: emblem of empire*, by Rodney Mace, Lawrence & Wishart, 1976)

1855

In June 1855, Hyde Park was the scene of mass defiance of the authorities. The spark was Lord Grosvenor's Sunday Trading Bill, which sought to stop shopping and other activities on the Sabbath, and would have mainly affected the poor. There was also resentment at the Crimean war and at the hypocrisy of the aristocracy who wanted to parade up and down Hyde Park on Sundays while stopping others from enjoying themselves. It was not surprising therefore that the Park became the centre of opposition to the Bill. The first protest took place on Sunday June 25th, and among those present was Karl Marx, then in London, who wrote a report of the events for the German newspaper Neue Oder Zeitung.

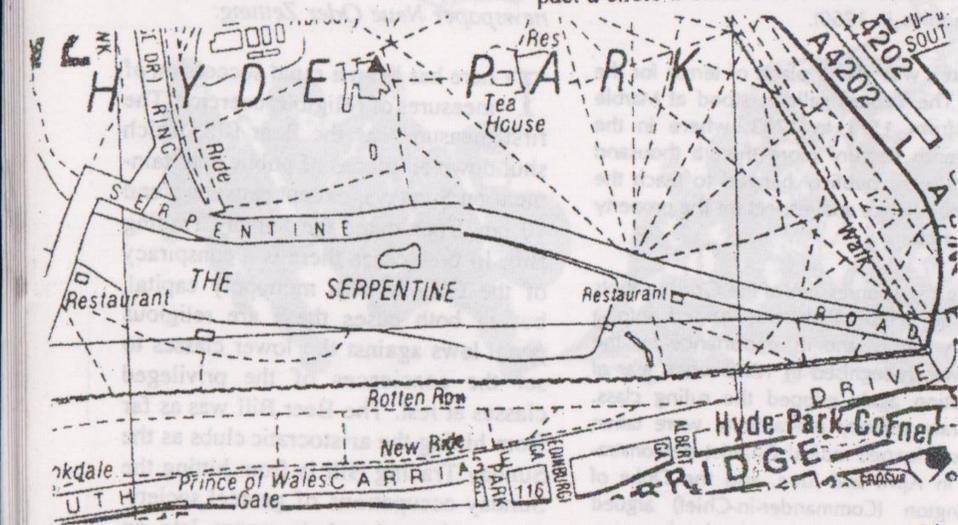
There has been a rapid succession of measures of religious coercion. The first measure was the Beer Bill, which shut down all places of public entertainment on Sundays, except between 6 and 10 pm. Then came the Sunday Trading Bill. In both cases there is a conspiracy of the Church with monopoly capital, but in both cases these are religious penal laws against the lower classes to set the consciences of the privileged classes at rest. The Beer Bill was as far from hitting the aristocratic clubs as the Sunday Trading Bill is from hitting the Sunday occupations of genteel society. The workers get their wages late on Saturday; they are the only ones for whom shops open on Sundays. They are the only ones compelled to make their purchases, small as they are, on Sundays. The new bill is therefore directed against them alone.

This was the occasion yesterday of a mass demonstration in Hyde Park. We were spectators from beginning to end and do not think we are exaggerating in saying that the English Revolution began Yesterday in Hyde Park (sorry Karl, we're still trying!).

Lord Robert Grosvenor, who fathered the Sunday Trading Bill, when reproached on the score of this measure being directed solely against the poor and not against the rich classes, retorted that "the aristocracy was largely refraining from employing its servants and

uses on Sundays." The last few days past week the following poster, put by the Chartists and affixed to all the walls of London, announced in huge letters:

new Sunday Bill prohibiting newspapers, shaving, smoking, eating and drinking and all kinds of recreation and amusement, both corporal and spiritual. Which the poor people still enjoy at the present time. An open-air meeting of artisans, workers and 'the lower orders' generally of the capital will take place in Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon to see how religiously the aristocracy is observing the Sabbath and how anxious it is not to employ its servants and horses on that day, as Lord Robert Grosvenor said in his speech. The meeting is called for three o'clock on the right bank of the Serpentine, on the side towards Kensington Gardens."



It should be borne in mind, of course that what Longchamps means to the Parisians, the road along the Serpentine in Hyde Park means to English high society - the place where of an afternoon, particularly on Sunday, they parade their magnificent horses and carriages with all their trappings, followed by swarms of lackeys. It will be realised from the above placard that the struggle against clericalism assumes the same character in England as every other serious struggle there - the character of a class struggle waged by the poor against the rich, the people against the aristocracy, the "lower orders" against the "betters".

time in Hyde Park's immense meadows. Gradually the assembled multitude swelled to a total of at least 200,000 due to additions from the other bank. Milling groups of people could be seen shoved about from place to place. The police, who were present in force, were obviously endeavouring to deprive the organisers of the meeting a place to stand upon. Finally a rather large crowd made a firm stand and Bligh the Chartist constituted himself chairman on a small eminence in the midst of the throng. No sooner had he begun his harangue than Police inspector Banks at the head of forty truncheon swinging constables explained to him that the Park was the private property of the Crown and that no meeting might be held in it... meanwhile Finlen, a member of the Chartist executive, rushed to a tree some distance away followed by a crowd who in a twinkling formed so close and compact a circle around him that the police

abandoned their attempt to get at him. "Six days a week," he said, "we are treated like slaves and now Parliament wants to rob us of the bit of freedom we still have on the seventh".

Suddenly shouts could be heard on all sides: "Let's go to the road, to the carriages!" The heaping of insults upon horse riders and occupants of carriages had meanwhile already begun. The constables, who constantly received reinforcements from the city, drove the promenading pedestrians off the carriage road. They thus helped to bring it about that either side of it was lined deep with people.

"A music that could drive one mad"

The spectators consisted of about two-thirds workers and one-third members of the middle class, all with women and

children. The procession of elegant ladies and gentlemen in their high coaches-and-four with liveried lackeys in front and behind, did not this time pass by in review - but played the role of involuntary actors who were made to run the gauntlet. A Babel of jeering, taunting, discordant ejaculations, in which no language is as rich as English, soon bore down upon them from both sides. As it was an improvised concert, instruments were lacking. The chorus therefore had only its own organs at its disposal and was compelled to confine itself to vocal music. And what a devil's concert it was: a cacophony of grunting, hissing, whistling, squeaking, snarling, growling, croaking, shrieking, groaning, rattling, howling, gnashing sounds! A music that could drive one mad and move a stone.

Meanwhile the metropolitan electric telegraph had informed all police stations that a riot was about to break out in Hyde Park and the police were ordered to the theatre of military operations. Soon one detachment of them after another marched at short intervals through the double file of people, each received with the popular ditty: "Where are the geese? Ask the police!". This was a hint at a notorious theft of geese recently committed by a constable in Clerkenwell.

The spectacle lasted three hours. Only English lungs could perform such a feat. During the performance opinions such as "this is only the beginning!" "That is the first step!" "We hate them!" and the like were voiced by the various groups. Shortly before the end the demonstration increased in violence. Canes were raised in menace at the carriages and through the welter of discordant noises could be heard the cry of "you rascals!".

Most of the London papers carry today only a brief account of the events in Hyde Park. No leading articles as yet, except in Lord Palmerston's Morning Post - it claims that "a spectacle, both disgraceful and dangerous in the extreme has taken place in Hyde Park, an open violation of law and decency - an illegal interference by physical force in the free action of the legislature." It urges that "this scene must not be allowed to be repeated the following Sunday, as was threatened."

1855

A week later another protest took place in the Park, in defiance of a ban on meetings there. Faced with such protests, Lord Grosvenor eventually withdrew his proposals. Marx describes what happened on July 1st.

Even according to the account given in the police bulletin at half past two already 150,000 people of every age and social estate surged up and down the park and gradually the throng swelled to such dimensions as were gigantic and enormous even for London... once again the crowd lined both sides of the drive along the Serpentine, only this time the lines were denser and deeper than the previous Sunday. However, high society did not put in an appearance. High society had given wide berth to the place of combat and by its absence had acknowledged vox populi to be sovereign.

It got to be four o'clock and it looked as if the demonstration for lack of nutrition was going to simmer down to harmless Sunday amusements, but the police reckoned differently. Were they going to withdraw amidst general laughter, casting melancholy farewell glances at their own big-lettered placards - posted up on the portals of the park? Eight-hundred constables had been strategically distributed. Big squads were stationed in neighbouring localities to serve as reinforcements. In brief, the police had drawn up a plan of campaign which was "of a far more vigorous description," according to the Times "than any of which we have yet had notice in the Crimea." The police were in need of bloody heads and arrests in order not to fall from the sublime to the ridiculous without some intermediate link.

[Orders were issued] allegedly for the protection of passing carriages and riders. But as both carriages and riders stayed away and there was therefore nothing to protect, they began to single some individuals out of the crowd and have them arrested on false pretences, on the pretext that they were pickpockets. When this experiment was repeated more and more often and the pretext no longer sounded plausible, the crowd raised one big cry. At once the constabulary rushed from ambush, whipped their truncheons out of their pockets, began to beat up people's heads until the blood ran profusely, yanked individuals here and there out of the vast multitude (a total of 104 were thus arrested) and dragged them to the improvised blockhouses.

Only a small strip of land separates the left side of the drive from the Serpentine. Here an officer of the police and his detail manoeuvred the spectators to the very brink of the lake, threatening to give them a cold water bath. To escape the clubbing one of the crowd swam across the Serpentine to the

opposite shore, but a policeman followed him in a boat, caught him in a boat and brought him back triumphantly.

During the demonstration several attempts were made again to hold separate meetings in various places. At one of them an anonymous speaker harangued his audience about as follows: "Men of Old England! Awake! Rise from your slumbers, or be forever fallen! Oppose it every succeeding Sunday, as you have done today... Don't fear to demand your rights and privileges, but throw off the shackles of oligarchical oppression and misrule. His lordship wants to drive us to church and make us religious by act of Parliament; but it won't do. Who are we and who are they? Look at the present war; is it not carried on at the expense and the sacrifice of blood of the producing classes? And what do the non-producing classes do? they bungle it". The speaker as well as the meeting were stopped, of course by the police.



The following extracts are from the report of the parliamentary enquiry "into the alleged disturbance of the public peace in Hyde Park on Sunday, July 1st, 1855; and the conduct of the Metropolitan Police in connexion with the same".

It was observed that many of the most disorderly characters were collected in front of the rails on the south side of the Drive near the Receiving House... to clear the crowd back to some distance from the railings [orders were given] to the police to clear the road and the rails, and to use their staves... the police advanced with their truncheons drawn along the carriage road of the Drive, clearing it of people. Some of whom, not readily yielding or quitting the road, were pushed, struck, and roughly handled. The policemen also passed along the Drive, striking on the rails, and brandishing their staves over the heads of the crowd there, and in some instances striking at them, in order to compel them to fall back. These proceedings produced or increased irritation and ill feeling on the part of the people assembled; offensive expressions were used to annoy the police, some stones were thrown at them, and frequent collisions took place.

About six o'clock in the evening a large mass of people set out from Hyde Park towards Grosvenor Gate and Pink Street, with cries of "Now to Lord Robert Grosvenor's." Soon afterwards a crowd was collected before Lord Robert Grosvenor's house in Park Street. No actual violence, beyond throwing a stone at Lord Robert Grosvenor's messenger, was committed by them; but their number and clamour were alarming. The crowd yelled and groaned, calling "Chuck him out," and using other expressions of hostility to Lord Robert Grosvenor, and their aspect and proceedings were sufficiently menacing to excite the fears of the inmates of the house, though some of the cries were of a jocular character.

The police rushed forward with their staves drawn. Though there was no serious resistance, some of them, whilst dispersing and pursuing the crowd, used their staves, and otherwise acted with violence, inflicting severe injuries on several persons who were not shown to have been guilty of any violence, but who refused to move off when requested so to do, or who, being inoffensively there, ran or stood still when the police came up the street.



1866/7

The focus of the 1866 demonstration was the agitation of the Reform League for universal male suffrage, but it quickly spread beyond the demand for working men to have the vote to the question of the "right to assembly" when Home Secretary Spencer Walpole and chief-of-police Sir Richard Mayne took the decision to ban the meeting in the Park.

The thinking of the ruling class was summed up in the Times the day after the protest: "It is against all reason and all justice that motley crowds from all parts of the metropolis should take possession of Hyde Park, and interfere with the enjoyments of those to whom the Park more particularly belongs". Indeed there were some who thought that the Park was no place for the lower orders at all, let alone for their meetings. A letter in the paper on July 23 called for the authorities to do "their duty of protecting our blessed pleasure ground from its present degradation", complaining that "Every night the park is made the sleeping-place of a horde of the lowest and filthiest of street Arabs, who perform there everything except their ablutions, and leave it in the morning in a state of abomination indescribable by a decent pen in a decent paper".

In the afternoon of July 23 "vast crowds had collected in the neighbourhood of Hyde Park. A force of foot and mounted police, numbering 1,600 or 1,800, was here assembled and at 5 o'clock the gates were closed. Shortly after 7 o'clock Mr Beales and his friends [leaders of the Reform League] went up to the police, who were drawn up in line, staves in hand, some of them being mounted. The crowd immediately closed in, and endeavoured by an "ugly rush" to effect admission. The police used their staves freely to defeat this attempt."

The leaders then proceeded to Trafalgar Square to hold their meeting, but many people had other ideas and were determined to get into the Park if necessary by going through the fences: "a large portion of the masses were not disposed to follow implicitly the instructions of their leaders. The gates, it is true, were strongly fortified, but to throw down the railings seemed a feasible undertaking, and this was promptly attempted. The police, indeed, hastened to every point that was attacked, and for a short time kept the multitude at bay; but their numbers were utterly insufficient to guard so long a line of frontier, and breach after breach was made, the stonework, together with the railings, yielding easily to the pressure of the crowd."

A good deal of scuffling attended these incursions. The police brought their truncheons into active use, and a number of the roughs were somewhat severely handled. The police on the other hand, did not come off unscathed. One of them received a thrust in the side from an iron bar; another was knocked off his horse by sticks and stones and several others sustained slight injuries. Stones were thrown at Sir Richard Mayne, who, as well as his men, was much hooted. Between 40 and 50 persons were taken into custody in the vicinity of the Marble Arch, and about as many more at the other approaches".

The historic victory over the government and the police was celebrated in the radical Reynolds' Newspaper, July 29, 1866:

The people have triumphed, in so far as they have vindicated their right to meet, speak, resolve, and exhort in Hyde-park. True, the gates were closed and guarded against them. They were not allowed to enter by the customary, the legal, and the constitutional way. But, then, they found out there were other ways than the legal, the constitutional and the customary way of effecting an entrance.

Yes, the gates of Hyde-park were closed against them, and, lol in twenty minutes after, Hyde-park all round was one vast, wide, gaping gate... By a long pull, a strong pull and a push all together, down went the iron railings and the stones in which they were fixed in hundreds of yards, so that in less time than it takes to tell the story, the iron barriers which excluded the people from Hyde-park were levelled to the ground, or inclined against the trees, for miles. Then the people poured in hundreds of thousands into the park and there, under the nose of Sir Richard Mayne and before the masses of the bludgeon-brigade, and though scarlet lines of Foot Guards and Life Guards, with bayonets fixed and sabres drawn were flanking the police, and ready to charge, a meeting was held.

According to one eye witness "in the corner of the Park inside the Marble Arch... mounted policemen charged now and then with great impetuosity, but not, as it seemed to us, with much practical result, except that the crowd ran helter skelter in all directions". By eight o'clock "The numbers in the Park were very large, and although of course there were a considerable number of "roughs" who look on the police as their natural enemies, many of the persons present appeared to be quiet and respectably dressed people".

The night finished with "a series of wanton outrages on private property" in the wealthy West End. "After leaving the Park, gangs of ruffians broke the windows in Great Cumberland Street. Others of the rioters went southward, and the Lord Chancellor's windows shared the fate of those on the other side of the Park".

(source: *the Times* 24 and 25 July 1866).

In May 1867 the Reform League announced plans to hold another meeting in Hyde Park, and once again the government refused permission. On May 4 it was reported that "Nearly all the proclamations issued by Mr Walpole and posted all over London, have been either torn down or defaced. In some cases they have been completely covered by what is called "the yellow placard" [which] calls on the people to disregard Mr Walpole's proclamation, and to attend in thousands and vindicate their right to hold their meeting in the Park". On the day of the demonstration the Times announced that the "Government has abandoned its opposition to the meeting in Hyde Park, which is to be surrendered this evening to King Mob" (6 May). The following day it reported:

This great meeting, the threat of holding which in defiance of the Government, and still more the Government preparations to prevent its being held, have kept the metropolis in a state of chronic alarm and agitation for the last month passed off with the quietness and good order of a temperance meeting [although] more than 10,000 men, police and military, were kept ready to move and close in upon the Park yesterday within half an hour.

It was a vast assemblage of people, certainly not less than 40,000 to 50,000 people being in the Park. A fair proportion of these belonged to the class popularly known as "roughs". These lay about in great groups all over the grass, either fast asleep, playing pitch and toss, or laughing and singing. There were acrobats, cardsharps, ballad singers without number...

1914

By 1914 the campaign for votes for women had become increasingly bitter with women being jailed and forcibly fed, and widespread arson and sabotage by militant suffragettes. According to Sylvia Pankhurst, "Railway stations, piers, sports pavilions, haystacks were set on fire... A bomb exploded in Westminster Abbey... one hundred and forty-one acts of destruction were chronicled in the Press during the first seven months of 1914". The Women's Social and Political Union was banned from holding meetings in Hyde Park.

On April 4th, the Ulster Unionist Militants organized a demonstration with processions to Hyde Park. Such a challenge to the Suffragettes (still, Sunday by Sunday, battling to regain the old meeting place, which the Government had forbidden them) could scarcely be allowed to pass. The WSPU immediately demanded the raising of the ban against its meetings, but met the old refusal. A procession to the park was accordingly announced, and members of the local WSPUs marched in with sticks decorated in the purple, white and green, escorting Mrs Drummond in a dog-cart. Lively scenes ensued. The police led the vehicle out of the park. Flora Drummond descended and was hoisted to speak on the shoulders of her supporters, but was immediately arrested. Women rushed for the Ulster platforms and were repelled by the police. Ulster speakers strove for a hearing against Suffragettes bobbing up to make unauthorized speeches and police rushes to suppress them.

On another occasion "A water carnival was announced for the Serpentine" in Hyde Park by the WSPU.

Women paraded with decorated sunshades. Others appeared in dominoes, each carrying a letter of the word Suffragette on her chest. One girl in Japanese dress turned up in a rickshaw drawn by a girl companion in knee-breeches. The Office of Works, shocked by the prospect of such merry advertising by persons who had banded themselves together for the commission of serious crime, had prohibited the Serpentine to all comers that day, the boats being lashed together in midwater to prevent their use. Nothing daunted, the Suffragettes (lung off their wraps, revealing themselves in bathing costumes, swam out to the craft and cut them free. The police sprang into boats and followed them, captured the offending navigators, brought them to the banks, and took them dripping in their bathing dress to the police station.

(source: *The Suffragette Movement*, Sylvia Pankhurst, 1931).

1932

In 1931, the benefit rate for the unemployed was cut by 10% and a means test was introduced. Over a million claimants were cut off from automatic benefit and had to declare the income and savings of all family members so that for instance many young people were denied benefits and had to live off their parents' earnings. In September 1932 the first of what were to become 1500 marchers set off from Scotland on the National Unemployed Workers Movement fourth hunger march, which was to finish in Hyde Park.

By mid-day approximately one hundred thousand London workers were moving towards Hyde Park from all parts of London, to give the greatest welcome to the hunger marchers that had ever been seen in Hyde Park. It is estimated that five thousand police and special constables were gathered round the park, with many thousands more mobilised in the neighbourhood in readiness for action.

As the last contingent of marchers entered the park gates, trouble broke out with the police. It started with the special constables; not being used to their task, they lost their heads, and, as the crowds swept forward on to the space where the meetings were to be held, the specials drew their truncheons in an effort to control the sea of surging humanity. The workers turned on the special constables and put them to flight, but the fighting which they had been responsible for starting continued throughout the whole afternoon.

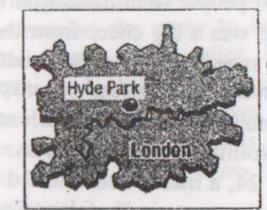
"professional organizers have decided to exploit a cheap form of discrediting the Government... small crowds indulged in stone throwing... some shop windows were broken... such trouble as occurred was attributed to the rowdy persons who are always ready to create disturbances on the slightest pretext. A feature of the most ugly incidents was the number of women who took part" (*the Times*, 28 October 1932)

The workers kept the police back from the meetings; several times mounted police charged forward, only to be repulsed by thousands of workers who tore up railings and used them as weapons and barricades for the protection of their meetings. Many mounted men were dragged from their horses. From the streets the fighting extended into the park and back again into the streets, where repeated mounted police charges at full speed failed to dislodge the workers. The foot police were on several occasions surrounded by strong forces of workers, and terrific fights ensued. Many workers and police were injured. Inside the park one could hear the roar of the crowd as they fought tenaciously around the Marble Arch and along Oxford Street.

As dusk came on fighting was still proceeding, more severe than ever. The police chiefs had established a post on the top of one of the high buildings in Oxford Street, and were directing the operation of their forces by a system of signals and telephones. Hundreds of police would move in formation against the workers down the main drive of the park, or up Edgware Road or along Oxford Street, but still the workers fought back and repeatedly broke through the police charges. As the great meetings came to an end many of the marchers had become involved in the fighting, along with the London workers, but as the bugles sounded the termination of the meetings, the marchers who were scattered around the area of Marble Arch began to make their way back to the centre to join their contingents.

The workers also pressed forward in order to reach the marchers and give them protection against the police as they marched out. The surge forward on the part of the workers broke through all police resistance, and tens of thousands who had been fighting all the afternoon poured into the park to line up again under their banners and march out with the hunger marchers.

(source: *Unemployed struggles 1919-1936* by Wal Hannington)



The march against the Criminal Justice Bill on October 9th was a huge sprawling noisy affair of perhaps 100,000 people. There was a wide diversity of people on the streets opposing the law, festival and party goers, squatters, travellers, hunt saboteurs, anti-road protestors, Outrage, Billy Power of the Birmingham 6 and what the Daily Mail described as "a grouping of organisations from Lesbian Avengers to cloaked members of the Druid Clan of Dana". After all this is the Bill with something for everyone: new police powers, the abolition of the "right of silence", new prisons for children...

Police tactics had been provocative from the start, when they seemed intent on making it as difficult as possible for people to join the march by closing down tube stations and blocking roads. The old tactics of having lines of police marching alongside the demonstration were replaced with having large concentrations of cops at particular points on the route, riot gear at the ready. The mood of the marchers was also a bit more defiant than previously as the reality of the Bill loomed ever closer. Despite this the march was good fun with lots of percussion, rhythms being banged out on drums, tins, and lamposts, and various wannabe vanguard parties of the proletariat struggling to keep up as people weaved in and out of their fading banners.

By around 3 o'clock in the afternoon, I was lying on the grass in Hyde Park chatting to some friends. In the distance the march was still going along Park Lane. Behind me a crowd were dancing round the cycle powered Rinky Dink sound system. A Sinclair C5 with sounds mounted on the back emerged from the crowd and a load of people went dancing off after it. Every so often a there was a big cheer from the main part of the crowd as a speech finished. A handful of cops in flat caps wandered past, seemingly to inspect the state of the toilets, but nobody paid them much attention and people carried on rolling spliffs regardless. On another sunny day on July 24, a march had finished with a big dancing in the fountains party in Trafalgar Square, and it looked like we were heading for more of the same.

When I walked over towards the Marble Arch end of the park however, it was obvious that partying was not going to be so easy. Two lorries with sound systems on the back were blocked in by police vans which were refusing them entry into the park (I think the sound systems on the march were from Megatropolis, Desert Storm and Smokescreen). A big crowd was gathered around dancing in the streets and refusing to be intimidated. There were people on top of a bus stop and at one point a couple of people even climbed on top of a police van and started dancing. The police put on riot gear, a few missiles were thrown, and somebody left off some gas, but after a stand off it was the cops that backed down and let the trucks carry on. The lorries headed off into the park with the crowd partying on and around them. People pulled police barriers across the road behind the crowd to prevent the police horses who were following from charging into us.

Powers in relation to raves

53.—(1) This section applies to a gathering on land in the open air of 100 or more persons (whether or not trespassers) at which amplified music is played during the night (with or without intermissions) and is such as, by reason of its loudness and duration and the time at which it is played, is likely to cause serious distress to the inhabitants of the locality; and for this purpose—

- (a) such a gathering continues during intermissions in the music and, where the gathering extends over several days, throughout the period during which amplified music is played at night (with or without intermissions); and
- (b) "music" includes sounds wholly or predominantly characterised by the emission of a succession of repetitive beats.

5.40 - 7.15pm: Police fail to disperse demonstrators



80 mounted police and numerous riot police charge the demonstrators repeatedly and fighting starts between police and demonstrators. Police finally retreat to the safety of Park Lane

Police encircle the final 1,500 demonstrators from the south of Lovers Walk and Cumberland Gate. The police close the circle and force the demonstrators towards Speaker's Corner

The remaining demonstrators are forced up Oxford Street where they continue to clash with the police as far as Bond Street tube station. Along Oxford Street shop windows are smashed

8.45pm: Police clear the final 1500 demonstrators from the park

Disruptive trespassers

58.—(1) A person commits the offence of aggravated trespass if he trespasses on land in the open air and, in relation to any lawful activity which persons are engaging in or are about to engage in on that or adjoining land in the open air, does there anything which is intended by him to have the effect—

- (a) of intimidating those persons or any of them so as to deter them or any of them from engaging in that activity,
- (b) of obstructing that activity, or
- (c) of disrupting that activity.

The lorries pulled up by the main stage and loads of us climbed up on the stage and started dancing. Again I thought it was all over and I sat down in the park to chill out. The next thing we heard a load of noise from the Park Lane side of the park and we looked round to see the police horses. They had charged and were now being chased themselves by a crowd of people running after them. The police regrouped and charged into the main body of the crowd most of whom had been unaware that anything much was going on. After the initial panic people turned around and faced the horses. The pattern was repeated several times- horses charging, then the crowd closing in on the cops, till eventually the horses were withdrawn to a big cheer. Next a line of cops in riot gear came in and the same happened- charge and counter-charge - with the same result of the police pulling out.

At this point the fighting would probably have died down if the police had gone quietly, and left everybody to get on with partying. But of course they couldn't be seen to back down, so instead loads of white police vans moved up Park Lane from the Marble Arch end and having lost control of the Park established control of a bit of road instead. Apart from anything else this had the effect of blocking in many of the coaches taking people home so they had to stick around whether they wanted to or not.

I was pushed down on the floor, punched, hit across the back with a truncheon, and then three police were just kicking me and hitting me with truncheons"

Vincent Seabrook, Liberty legal observer, New Statesman, 14 Oct 1994

For the next few hours nobody moved very far. Although some people faced up to the police in Park Lane itself, most of the crowd ended up inside the Park separated by the metal railings from the riot cops. This made it difficult for the police to launch baton charges or send in the horses, and when they tried to force their way through the small gates in the railings they were repelled with sticks, bottles and whatever else was to hand.

There were some very surreal touches while all this was going on: people dancing not far from the police lines, a unicyclist weaving his way through the riot cops, a man firebreathing. Alongside the fighting this kind of behaviour was probably harder for the police to handle than a straightforward riot; this sort of unpredictability just isn't in the manual!

This was not the blood-crazed anti-social mob portrayed by the media, a lot of people were enjoying themselves and looking out for others. At one point a line of people blocked Park Lane outside

the Grosvenor Hotel, but when somebody noticed that an ambulance was stuck in the traffic they quickly got out of the way.

By about nine o'clock a lot of people had gone home, and the Park in the dark didn't seem such a safe place. A police helicopter swooped down with a spotlight trained on the crowd and its own sound system broadcasting the message "Disperse now or force will be used", and police were moving in on people. But dispersing wasn't easy even for those who wanted to go home. Lines of riot cops blocked most of the roads out of the area, and Marble Arch tube stations was closed (followed shortly by Bond Street and Oxford Circus). When a gap appeared in police lines part of the crowd took the opportunity to pour up Oxford Street with horses charging up behind and police motorbikes alongside. Some people smashed shop windows as a last two fingers up to the cops before dispersing.

"Revolt of the Ravers"

The flashpoint came when thugs opposed to legislation against raves tried to turn the park into a giant party

The ravers who call the tune- behind a front of legitimate protest, the underground party organisers who have spread misery throughout the country - music that became a rallying cry for violence.

Daily Mail, 10 and 11 October 1994

Some people have argued that the police deliberately provoked a riot to make sure the CJB was passed, but this ignores the fact that there was never any danger of the CJB not being passed, as there had never been any serious opposition to it within Parliament. Others have blamed "anarchist troublemakers", but if people were that easy to manipulate why

weren't there riots on the other marches?

"Exposed: secret plot to take over Hyde Park"

"senior officers were aware that agitators planned to start a 'rave' in the park using the sound systems which accompanied the march... The business of allowing large, mobile sound systems in a political demonstration is a serious new problem that we will have to deal with"

The Job, Metropolitan Police paper, October 14 1994.

The fact was that a resistable police force met the immovable object of an increasingly angry crowd. The police, no doubt thinking of the months ahead, wanted to show that they would always have the upper hand. Tired of being pushed around and facing the threat of having important parts of our lives shut down by the CJB many people decided that enough was enough. Some people physically fought with the police, others showed their defiance by refusing to budge. As the reports from the Job and the Daily Mail make clear, for the police the people who just wanted to party were as much part of the "extremist plot" as those who who wanted to fight as well as dance.

The costs were high. Many were injured, and 48 arrests were made. The police have laughed "Operation Greystoke" to arrest more of those involved, and the courts have ordered the press to hand over film and photos to the police. But the police did not have it all their own way; and people showed that when the police come to close down festivals and parties after the CJB becomes law they won't find it easy.

All songs written, arranged and produced by Sylvester Stewart and Sly Stone

'There's A Riot Goin' On?'

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