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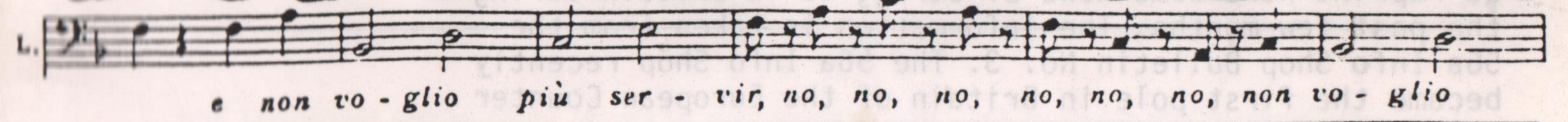
Notice Board

European Counter Network News-from Britain



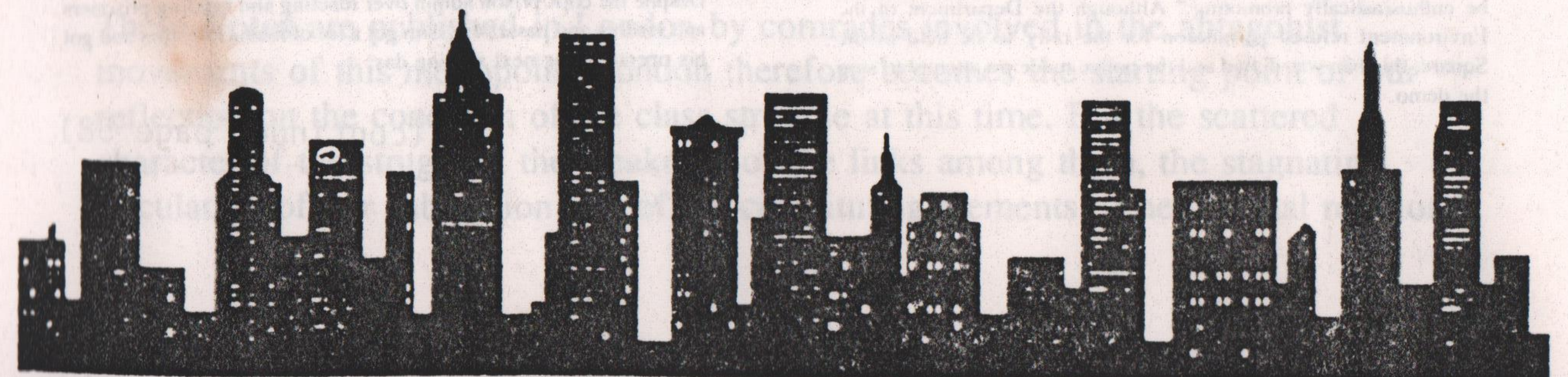
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We reprint here some news of struggles in Britain during the past few months. The information is taken from the 56a Info Shop Bulletin No. 3. The 56a Info Shop recently became the first pole in Britain of the European Counter Network (ECN).

News from the UK

ELECTION NEWS

A general election was held in Britain on April 9th. Although it was won by the Conservative Party, this does not mean that they have majority support. Only 32% of registered electors voted Conservative, 46% voted for someone else or spoilt their ballot papers, 22% didn't vote. Many other people didn't even register to vote, often to avoid paying the poll tax (the list of registered electors is used by the poll tax authorities). The Tories lost in Scotland and Wales and in most English urban areas.

Politicians often faced angry protests on the streets during the election campaign. On March 19th prime minister John Major was forced to abandon his first walkabout of the election campaign by an angry crowd in Bolton, Lancashire. Missiles were thrown and police helmets sent flying as Major sneaked back on to his campaign bus. In Luton (March 28th) Major's words were drowned out as he was surrounded by demonstrators. Major's face was cut by an egg thrown at him in Portsmouth. Senior Tory Norman Tebbit was hit by eggs in Colchester.

There were also attacks on party offices and workers. A Conservative canvasser was put in hospital in Luton after being hit in the eye by an egg, and a man was arrested in Streatham (South London) for causing damage and attacking a worker at the Tory office. There were several attacks in Wrexham (Wales), where the Tory candidate was beaten up and his car damaged.

On March 20th 'Camden Stop the Poll Tax' turned up with their banner to protest when ex-prime minister Margaret Thatcher was campaigning for the Conservative Party in North London. They were violently attacked by the police without warning and four people were arrested.

In Norwich, ACT-UP (the AIDS direct action group) put up posters condemning political silence on HIV. The posters pictured the main party leaders with the logo "Silence = Death". The group described the election campaign as "another example of a consistent failure to listen to the demands and needs of those people politicians are supposed to represent. Voting alone changes nothing".

Three members of the lesbian and gay group OutRage were arrested for trying to stage a protest with "Glad to be gay" banners when John Major gave his victory speech in Downing Street on the day after the election.

• The Anti-Election Alliance, including Class War and other libertarian groups, held an anti-election rally (with about 1000 people) in Trafalgar Square in Central London on April 4th. They stated that: "We know from experience that parliament is part of the ruling establishment which controls and uses the working class majority everyday- where we work and live. However, where there is oppression there is resistance. Strikes, demonstrations and protests, non payment of taxes and bills, defiance of authorities, self education and self organisation. This is the real politics we will be enthusiastically promoting." Although the Department of the Environment refused permission for the rally to be held in the Square, this ban was defied and the police made no attempt to stop the demo.

PRISON NEWS

• At the end of January, there were 46,770 prisoners in England and Wales, 1253 of being held in police stations because there was no room in the jails. The government is considering using prison ships to hold remand prisoners. They are also experimenting with the privatisation of the prisons. A private company, Group 4 Security, is to manage the Wolds prison on Humberside. The Home Secretary has also called for bids for the contract to manage some other prisons.

STRANGWAYS SHOWTRIAL

On 1st April 1990, hundreds of prisoners in Strangeways Prison in Manchester took over the prison and drove out the prison officers. They went on to pretty much demolish Strangeways, notorious for its squalid and brutal conditions and to stage a rooftop protest that lasted for 25 days. This action inspired a wave of riots, sit-downs, strikes and other protests across Britain's prisons in April '90. For its own survival, these uprisings forced the prison system to review conditions and suggest changes although whether anything will come out of it is doubtful.

In January '92, the trial of 9 of the Strangeways "rioters" began with charges of murder (of another prisoner) and riot. This attempt to punish "ringleaders" ended with all the murder charges being dropped but four men being found guilty of riot and receiving sentences of up to 10 years (four more were found not guilty on all charges). The men are Paul Taylor, Sidney Doran, John Spence and James Miller. It is vital that we support these prisoners who dared to take on the prison system.

Contact LONDON A.B.C (address below) to find out addresses of Strangeways prisoners.

WHITEMOOR PRISON STRIKE

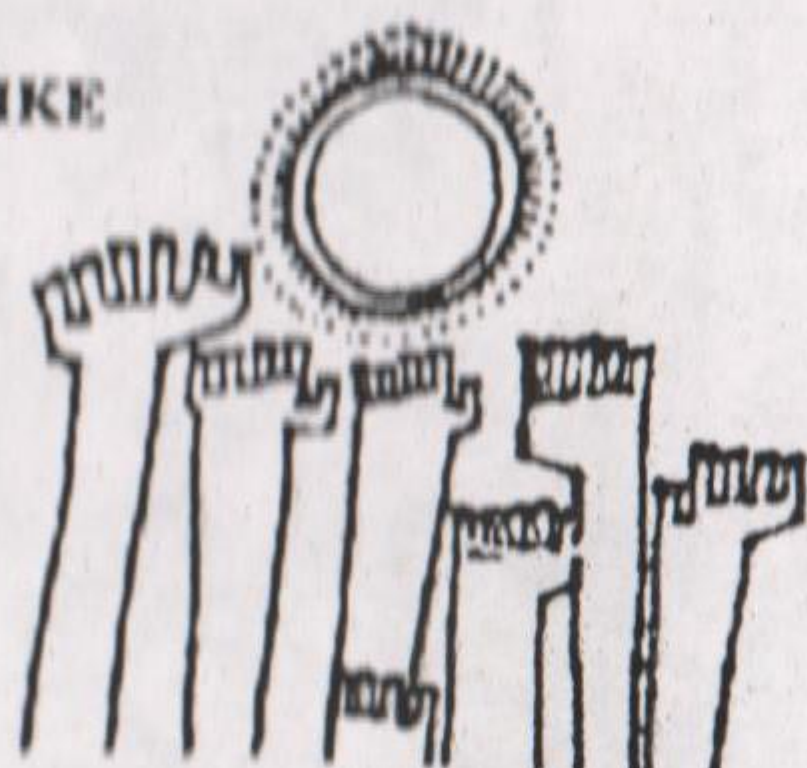
Whitemoor Prison is a new jail in Cambridgeshire which is being used as an experiment in total control of prisoners varying from psychological techniques and pastel-coloured walls to lockdowns. On March 2nd and 3rd 1992, prisoners at Whitemoor staged a work strike over the strict regime and oppressive conditions having got nowhere with peaceful negotiations. After a dispute between kitchen workers and the administration, 2 wings came out in solidarity. On March 3rd, Prisoners Strike Committee met an official to negotiate but later that day the prison was totally locked down and 30 "ringleaders" were moved out of the prison by riot squads to Lincoln and Pentonville jails. Whitemoor stayed locked down.

Whitemoor is now the new "end of the line hate factory" for long term prisoners who resist the prison system but the prisoners there have learned that peaceful negotiation gets nowhere.

One of the 30 "ghosted" prisoners was John Bowden, a long term fighter and prison organiser. You can write to him: John Bowden, B41173, HMP Pentonville, Caledonian Rd. London N7 (he may be moved soon)

On 25th March, various prison support groups picketed the Home Office in London in solidarity with the Whitemoor strikers, the 30 who were moved and John Bowden.

Postscript: On 3rd April, Tim Sullivan, one of the Whitemoor 30 at Pentonville, went up onto roof to demand dental treatment. Despite the cops/prison admin over reacting and hassling prisoners and visitors and passersby, Tim got a lot of media attention and got his operation the next waking day.



(continues page 58)

LONDON NOTES is about...

London... metropolis, isolated subjectivities, police, repression, Docklands, enclosure of spaces, enclosure of life, the annoying lights of the West End, Bank, the City, a financial knot of global exploitation. London... demonstrations, riots, scattered moments of proletarian appropriation, squats, occupations, anti-fascism, anti-racism, widespread "fare dodging" on the tube. London... the territorial diffusion of proletarian antagonism, and at the same time the need to accelerate and catalyse the circulation of this antagonism through the diversities of the proletariat's experience.

Notes... fragments, bits and pieces, scattered leaps of subversive thought, drive toward coordination and organisation, in thought, in practice, in the material condition of our antagonism, of our organization. Notes... notes rooted in the certainty of our subversion and in the need for its socialisation. Notes... attempt to grasp the material conditions of our power; conditions now different from before. Notes... musical notes, carnevalesque dimension of the class struggle.

London Notes comes out essentially for two reasons. First, as the need of a group of comrades in the autonomist area, who come from different experiences, to make sense of the conditions of the class struggle at this time. Second, as a contribution to the acceleration and circulation of these struggles through the diffusion of international autonomist material.

We put emphasis on *the condition* of the class struggle as opposed to meaningless voluntaristic calls for "class struggle", so much heard in many radical circles in Britain. We emphasise the condition of the class struggle *at this time* because we recognise the importance of the economic, social, and cultural transformations following capital's reaction to the waves of worldwide struggles of the 1960's and 1970's.

This editorial is not the place to interpret these transformations in an analytical sense. Too little space, which could result in a simplistic and dogmatic list of phenomena. Different interpretations, which we draw from the international arena of antagonist publications, will be offered in the pages of this magazine, in this number and - hopefully - in the numbers which will follow. For those who wish to debate, the debate is open.

These **Notes** are published in London by comrades involved in the antagonist movements of this metropolis. London therefore becomes the starting point of our reflection on the condition of the class struggle at this time. But the scattered character of the struggles, the weakness of the links among them, the stagnating circulation of our subversion and of the constituting elements of new social relations

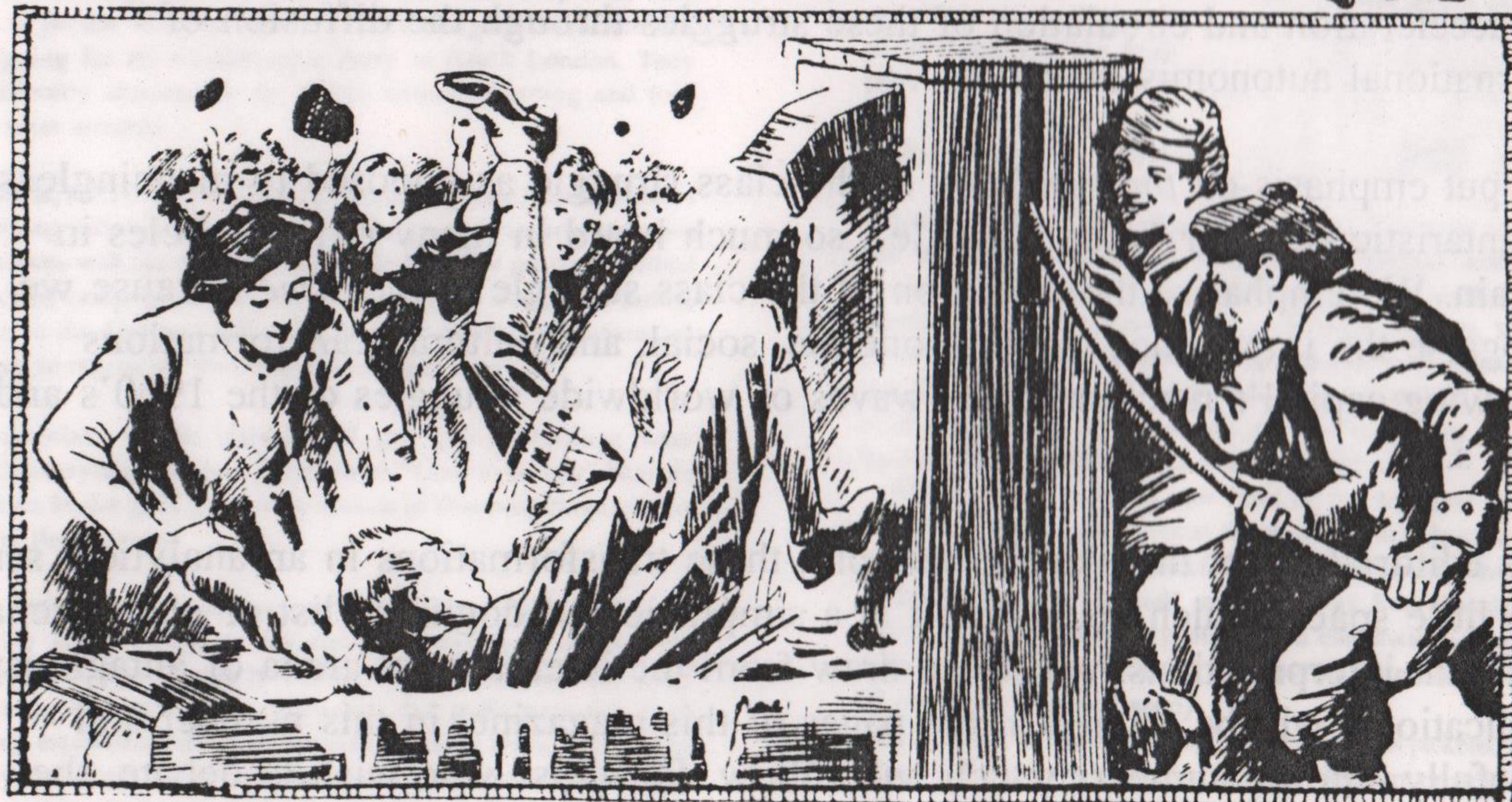
is a problem which touches the class antagonism at every level of the territorial and geographical organisation of capital's despotism. **London Notes** therefore is obviously not only about the class struggle in London.

A final note to be read as a disclaimer. **London Notes** is obviously not a party, nor an organisation with an official line. **London Notes** is just a magazine with a political soul. If we can define a common agreement among us it is this: we put emphasis on the *autonomous* grass-roots nature of the class struggle, and on the autonomous grass-roots struggles of each section of the working class (waged and unwaged), against any top-down imposition of a program in the name of the working class, and against any subordination of the needs of the marginalised sections of the working class.

We hope you may find this interesting. Grazie e buonanotte.

London May-June 1992

ENGLISH TRADITIONS



WELCOMING THE POLLTAX INSPECTOR

"NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!"

By Harry Cleaver

Austin, Texas, May 1, 1992

We haven't had a May 1st like this in years. The massive upheavals shaking the United States, from Los Angeles to San Francisco, from Atlanta to New York, are more than protests against the "not guilty" verdict in the trial of the policemen who brutally beat Rodney King. The verdict touched off a rebellion whose energies spring from many sources. As rebellion spread, first flaming across Los Angeles and then exploding across the United States, the angry cry that has accompanied it "NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!" refers not only to the verdict but to life in America, especially life in the central cities during these last years of the Reagan-Bush administrations. "NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!" is an outcry of fed-up rebellion against systematically unjust state policies of slashing wages, welfare programmes and decent paying jobs. It is also an outcry against the flagrant racism of this last decade of economic repression and especially that of the Bush presidency born wrapped in the racist iconography of Willie Horton. The American "years of lead" have weighed most heavily on the people now in revolt. Their fires, it seems, are melting the lead, those years are over.

As in the Watts Rebellion of 1965, the anger boiling out into the streets has been expressed primarily in massive direct appropriation and the burning of almost two thousand buildings in Los Angeles. While mass media reports have tended to emphasise scattered incidents of brutality -such as a truck driver being dragged from his vehicle and beaten- the vast majority of actions have been directed against business property. Based on past experience, it is highly likely that the actual number of crimes against individuals has actually decreased during the rebellion.

As in the rebellions of the 1960's, reports and interviews have portrayed, mixed in with the anger, a carnevalesque atmosphere of community appropriation as thousands of citizens have collectively smashed down the glass and steel separating them from the things they need. This appropriation was systematic and spread well beyond South-Central L.A.,

Special to the European Counter Network.



where the rebellion began, into high-priced shopping malls and boutiques such as those of wealthy Beverley Hills.

All these "Riots", denounced by President Bush as an impermissible breakdown in law and order, have actually been creating new laws of distribution and a new kind of money-less order in which vast quantities of wealth are being, very quickly, transferred from the businesses which have, to those who do not. Beyond such direct appropriation, however, we must also see the political statement of the burnings: the demand for an end to the institutions of exploitation themselves. Sociologists may well label these rebellions, as they did those of the 1960's, "commodity riots" but we must also recognise that the rupture of the merchantile circuits of capitalist society is a political blow to its lifeblood.

Remarkable in the dynamics of the rebellions has been the failure of the forces of mediation. When the verdict came in on the night of Wednesday the 29th, every respectable "community leader" in Los Angeles, from black Mayor Bradley on down, strove to avert rebellion by channeling anger into manageable channels. Meetings in churches were organised, passionate gospel music was mixed with equally impassioned speeches of outrage - all designed to permit a powerless, cathartic venting of emotion. At the biggest meeting, covered by Network Television, the desperate Mayor went so far as to make an explicit plea for no action. Just as good business trade unions see their primary job as imposing contracts and maintaining labour peace, so did the good community leaders see theirs as the maintenance of "order". They failed.

Over and over again, such local leaders, city officials (including the notorious Chief of Police Gates) and the White House have tried to draw a line between a "lawless" few young thugs (the Willie Horton icon again) and the "law-abiding" majority of the community. But reports have made it clear that all kinds of people have been participating in the rebellion. Nor has this been a "black" rebellion, even though it began in a predominantly black neighborhood. Even the elite *New York Times* (1, May, 1992) has reported both of these

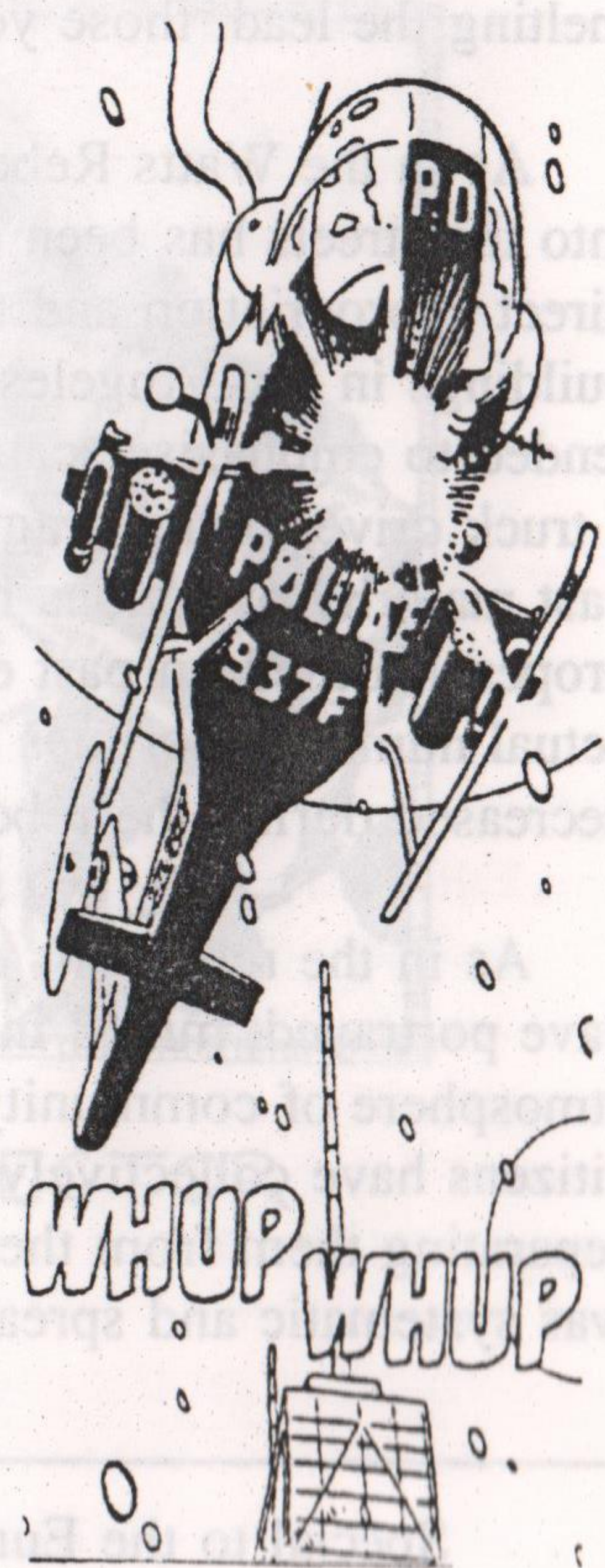
THE LANGUAGE OF CLASS:

Riot = business, governmental and media derogatory term for "popular rebellion"

Looting = business, governmental and media derogatory term for "direct appropriation" or "proletarian shopping"

Vandalism = business, governmental and media derogatory term for "wiping out the institutions of exploitation"

Law = euphemism for the rules of capitalist exploitation



phenomena, signalling to the ruling class the seriousness of the explosion:

"Some areas took on the atmosphere of a street party as black, white, Hispanic and Asian residents mingled to share in a carnival of looting. As the greatly outnumbered police looked on, people of all ages [and genders], some carrying small children, wandered in and out of stores and supermarkets with shopping bags and armloads of shoes, liquor, radios, groceries, wigs, auto parts, gumball machines and guns. Some stood patiently in line to take their turn."

Like the Brixton "Riots" in the early 1980's, this has been a multiracial community uprising. What some have called the "impossible class" and others "the tribe of moles" has coalesced and surfaced once again - against a police and against an economic system which have done their best to make their lives miserable.

Across the country, these scenes have been repeated on a smaller scale and have been supported by dozens of other kinds of demonstrations protesting against the injustice of the Rodney King verdict and articulating at least some of the outcries of the rebels. Here in Austin, capitol of the state of Texas and home to the University of Texas, high-tech electronic firms and a sizeable population of blacks and Mexican Americans, news of the uprising in Los Angeles also brought people spontaneously out of their homes and jobs and into the streets. Within hours, first at the downtown, central police station and then at the state capitol building, a cross-section of the city - of all colours and ethnic backgrounds - was speaking out angrily about the developing events. In both gatherings, chants of "NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!" echoed those of Los Angeles.

Everywhere people are meeting, discussing, arguing, debating and taking action as the struggle circulates across the nation. In school classrooms and in open areas to which they have marched, in elementary schools and universities, students are participating in this discussion and organizing for action. A week ago the nation watched as two natural earthquakes shook Northern California and wondered if "the big one" would be next ["The Big One" is the long-predicted large-scale earthquake which will cause massive destruction along the San Andreas fault in California]. Today a social earthquake in Southern California has sent shockwaves rippling across the continent, making us all wonder if the revolutionary "big one" is far off.

*A Riot in a Community
is Like
a Wildcat Strike in a
Factory*



The LA Riots and the Politics of Autonomy

Los Angeles. May 1992: \$700 million of damage to property and businesses destroyed. 2,000 buildings under attack. A bill in excess of \$12 million for police and fire fighters' overtime pay. 14,000 troops and national guard. 4,000 Marines. \$780 million for insurance coverage. The main characteristic of the LA riots, as it was the case in the Watts riots in 1965, was proletarian shopping - direct appropriation of wealth in defiance of bourgeois law and police repression. **This is only an impressionist picture of the politics of autonomy.**

The recent wave of struggles in several American metropolises gives us the opportunity to think about "autonomy" and its meaning. Here a few "notes" on the subject.

First. The LA riots of 1992, as the Watts riots in 1965, as any example of mass as well as molecular (i.e. fare-dodging, squatting, etc.) forms of direct appropriation of wealth, constitute a rupture in the life-blood cycle of capital

work-wage-consumption-work

Hundreds of people practising proletarian shopping and appropriating directly the means to satisfy their needs: from toilet paper to hi-fi sets. This represents a form of **refusal of work**, because it attacks directly the monopoly which capital holds over the means and which it uses in order to force us to work. In other words, proletarian shopping is the working class response to capital's **enclosures**, that is capital's confinement of our needs within the limits defined by capitalist work. In this sense, **autonomy is autonomy of the working class with respect to capital.**

Second. The outburst of class anger could not be preventively confined, subsumed, controlled by any organization. Church leaders attempted it, they failed. In this sense, autonomy has been expressed in relation to these organizations. The working class of the American metropolises has imposed its own programme on the street. In this sense, **autonomy is autonomy of the working class with respect to the organizations which claim to represent it.**

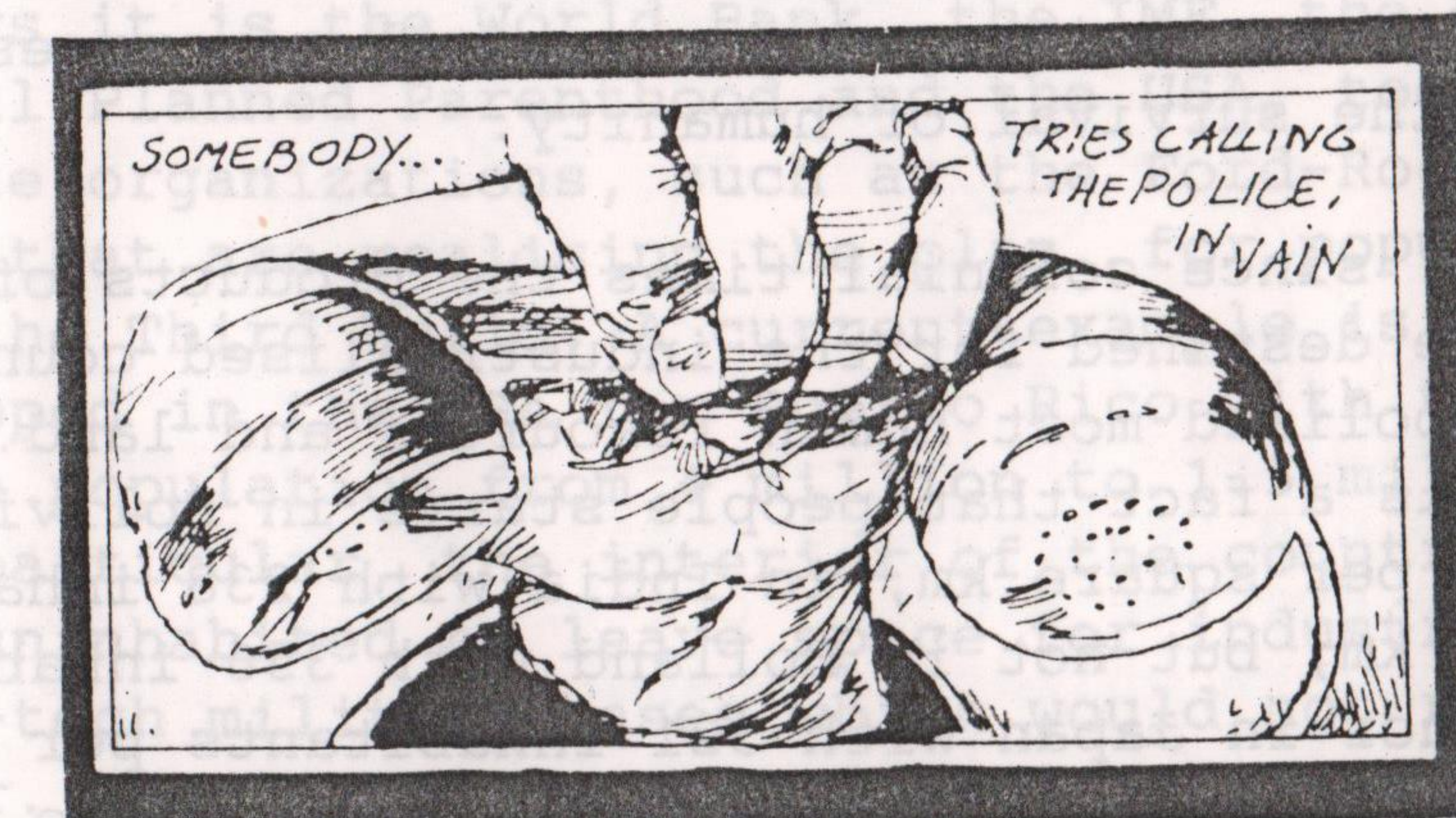
Third. The riots in LA and other American cities offer a clear example of development of patterns of grassroots self-organization. Capital circulation and capitalist coordination of work was replaced with circulation and coordination of struggles. The annoying and boring images of ulcerous yuppies walking around the streets of the Western metropolises with their portable phones talking about business and making capital circulate, was replaced by more carnivalesque and exciting scenes of youth coordinating operations on the battlefield. As one Guardian journalist reports: "I watched children with mobile phones co-ordinate the movements of their gangs with the arrival of the police and fire trucks, warning looters when police were on their way." **Autonomy here is development of patterns of self-organization.**

Forth. The recent riots have shown once again the vulnerability of the capitalist social factory.



After the depressing 1980's in which capital was able to erect its monuments to the market, the fortresses of capitalist consumerism were finally stormed. The new shopping malls erected in recent years, as a symbol and expression of capital's power, have shown their strategic weakness. The architecture of the power of consumerism was turned upside down into an architecture of counter-power and re-appropriation. Again, Guardian: "Strips of shops with giant parking lots in front, and the warehouses and fork lift trucks to the rear, proved so many honeypots to the looters, and too big for the overstretched police to control. At the vast FedCo store on La Cienega, as the police fought their way through the traffic jam at the front, looting continued unrestrained from warehouses at the rear." **Autonomy in this sense is class rupture of the social factory and inversion of capital's instruments of power.**

Fifth. The Watt riots in 1965 were confined in the ghetto. The main element of mobility was people's feet. Today, the rioters took the entire city and mobility was obtained through the car. Again, the gloomy picture of a capitalist city like Los Angeles with scarce public transport and jammed by millions of car trying to find their way to the parking places at work, was turned upside down by a different use of the car and a different meaning of mobility. "Almost by definition, these shopping malls were outside the traditional ghetto areas. Magnet for the looters, and built close to the skein of freeways which thread the urban sprawls, they gave the riots an extraordinary mobility and geographical spread." **Autonomy in this sense is class inversion of capital's meaning of circulation and mobility as circulation of struggles.**



Thus far the inversion, the anger, the rupture. The celebration of the LA riots is also the celebration of all this. But there is something missing, or at least a bit shadowed, in our representation of autonomy, something that the bourgeois press could only hint at. I am talking about the possibility and the extent to which a constitutive project of new social relations beyond those imposed by capitalism could spring out as a moment of these recent struggles. This depends mainly on two things. First, on the patterns and the forms of self-organization that have developed out of the riots. Unfortunately, at this time we know almost nothing about this. Second, on the degree in which these struggles circulate both in the USA and internationally. It is perhaps too early to evaluate this. We need I think to keep our eyes open, and be ready to grasp the political contents of this "movement from below", in terms of needs which have been put forward in the struggle and which can serve as common ground for the politicization of needs at the international level.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM, PATRIARCHY, SEXISM: LET'S FIGHT FOR OUR LIBERATION!!!

We translate and publish here an article/leaflet recently circulated in the European Counter Network. It deals with women's position within the capitalist relation of work as (re)producers of the most important commodity, that is labour power. It deals with the recent strategies outlined by international agencies and private corporations to control and plan the quality and the quantity of this commodity, through the control of women's bodies and their sexuality. It appeals for the circulation of political analysis on this subject and of struggles against these strategies.

One of the central aspects of imperialism in the new world order is the demographic control of population. The image of a globe full of starving masses in the Southern Hemisphere was one of the first concepts we were taught at school. The main reason for their so-called underdevelopment was the mythical 'over-population' of their living space. To explain this false interpretation, which hides the oppression of one class by another, of one sex by the other, of one region by another, it is said that the present enormous demographic growth jeopardises the material and natural needs for our existence, as natural resources are not enough for the survival of humanity.

In reality, since colonial times the products of the Third World were destined for the industrialised countries, which have monopolised most human resources and land. On the other hand, it is a fact that people starve in Bolivia with six inhabitants per square km, in India with 238 inhabitants per square km, but not in Holland with 356 inhabitants per square km, nor in Japan with 321 inhabitants per square km. In fact, the reasons for demographic control are of a political, social, and economic character: by regulating demographic fluctuation in relation to the needs of social and political control, to prevent riots, revolutions, and through the industrial production of human resources in relation to the needs of capitalism.

This is nothing new. Since the Second World War the US has imposed new policies of demographic control on the Third World by forming private organisations for birth control: for example, the IDA (International Development Agency, formed in the 1970's and directly managed by the ministry of foreign affairs) whose function was to develop a plan for demographic control to impose on Third World countries as a condition for obtaining economic aid. As a result, thousands

of women have been forced to be sterilised or to use dangerous contraceptives. Some examples: 40% of Puerto Rican women have been sterilised. In Mexico between 1978 and 1984 one and a half million women were sterilised. 70% of women who gave birth by caesarean were sterilised. The sterilisation happens without the women's awareness or sometimes in exchange for a bus trip, blankets, food, etc. In Brazil the Association for Family Welfare inserted the coil in women with the thread cut off, so that it was impossible to remove it. At least 7.5 million women were forcibly sterilised in this way.

We could go on forever. In this massacre of women's bodies an important role has been played by the pharmaceutical multinationals which produce contraceptive methods whose dangerous side effects are directly tested on women. The Capital Norplan Capronor, chemical hormone bombs in silicon capsules, which are released in the body over a period of five to six years, were given in Brazil to adolescent, pregnant women, who were breast feeding, without them being properly informed.

Nowadays it is the World Bank, the IMF, the WHO, International Planned Parenthood and the USA, together with other private organizations, such as the Ford-Rockefeller Foundation, that are realising the plan for population control in the Third World. A current example is Project 2020, developed in the USA for Puerto Rico with the aim of reducing the population from 4 million to 1.5 million people. In particular, the interior of the country would be completely uninhabited to leave space for industrial sites and 17 high-tech military bases which would not require human labour. The United Europe of 1993 is already developing programs of research in the field of genetic technology like Project Eureka, by entering the market and building research/experimentation centres, some of which are already in operation. In Holland, for example, TNO, a major centre for scientific research, is in possession of equipment which is capable of determining everyone's genetic identity, everyone's proneness to disease and their resistance to environmental factors. In Russia and in the USA the people who are employed in certain noxious factories are tested to determine their resistance to and tolerance of toxic substances with which they will come into contact at work.

THE ROLE ASSIGNED TO WOMEN WITHIN THESE POLICIES IS TO PRODUCE 'THE HUMAN RESOURCES FOR PRODUCTION' WHICH MUST BE CONTROLLED AND PLANNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEEDS OF CAPITAL. OUR BODIES ARE ORGANS, OUR SEXUALITY BECOMES THE OBJECT OF THIS PRODUCTION, TO BE USED AND MANIPULATED.

Today, within the imperialist project a fundamental role is represented by the development of the bio-technology sector and genetic engineering. The 'Gemona Project', or 'Genetic Passport', is probably the most ambitious project. Its aim is to select population discriminatively by determining individual identities, by controlling hereditary deviations, proneness to disease and resistance to environmental factors. This technology is used, certainly not for humanitarian reasons but as a continually developing tool of patriarchal power over women. What better tools to limit, diminish, or render completely impossible the reproduction by women of undesirable groups than the control of black women, immigrant women, disabled women, and lesbians; or on the other hand, to encourage and/or to make possible the birth of children to women of 'desirable' population groups, for example in Europe through sperm banks, artificial insemination, and surrogate motherhood (the rented uterus often belongs to women from the Third World)?

While forced sterilisation is the practice in the Third World, in the developed world the aim is to increase the birth rate, within a perspective where racism and the selection of the species are the criteria that determine who will or will not have children. Basically a sort of 'racial selection' which will constitute the future society in accordance with the rules of the 'New World Order' of which racism, exploitation, sexism, and barbarism are fundamental. How else do we explain the actions and racist attacks in Germany and all over Europe, if not as a sort of raid 'for racial hygiene' in the model of the eugenics movement, introduced into the Third World from the Third Reich, which also conducted mass sterilisation campaigns, and the USA?



The selective production of human resources has become a fundamental element for the development of capitalism. Women's bodies are the means for this production which must be controlled and planned. In this context patriarchal power over women and the division between sexes continues to be important for the stability of the capitalist economic system.



We antagonist women want to develop analysis and discussion on these issues, to single out objectives and initiatives which attack these policies. The anti-imperialist struggles against patriarchy, sexism, and racism, and for self-determination over our own bodies and our existence, must become part of all antagonist movements. Let's start by boycotting all those organisations, companies and multinationals which are involved: SHELL, BP, STANDARD OIL, IMPERIAL CHEMICAL COMPANY, GENERAL ELECTRONIC COMPANY, DUPONT, IMCC, NIKEL CONCERN, CIBA GEIGY, BOEHRINGER, HOFFMAN LA ROCHE, HOECHST, BAYER, BASF, SCHERING, FIDIA...

MIGRATORY FLOWS: THE MASS WORKER AND THE SOCIALIZED WORKER

Introduction

We present here an article which was originally published in *Incompatibili*, an Italian autonomist magazine, as an initial contribution for a class analysis of the current massive flow of migrants from the South of the world into - especially - continental Europe. The immediate political importance of this phenomenon is obvious, given the racist campaigns being mounted across Europe, the growth of fascist organizations, and the repatriation policies being supported by the various European governments.

A class position on migration and against racist strategies of division of the working class cannot rely only on militant anti-racist action and a political denunciation of racist attacks. This is good and necessary political work, but it is not enough. We need a class analysis which goes deeper into the issue of migration in order to grasp the relation between contemporary migratory flows and the present transformations of the productive system in the North. To what extent are these phenomena interrelated? How is the internal hierarchy of the working class affected? What are the new qualitative forms (not only in terms of income difference, but also in terms of forms of work) developing within this hierarchy? Which sets of needs might we expect to burst out in the form of new movement and new struggles? It is only within this analytical framework that we can and must begin to express new forms for the political organization of the class antagonism, for the politicisation of needs.

The article which we publish here does not give any definitive answer to these questions. But it indicates a direction for analysis. The strength of this article is one of method, in its most political sense. It uses as the background to its analysis of the migratory flows the relation between class composition and the form (and content) of struggle. In this way, "struggle" - that is, the movement of class subjectivity - is not interpreted as a mere voluntaristic process, but is grounded in its own historical and material condition.

A given class composition represents the particular form in which the working class finds itself scattered around within the capitalist production process, both inside and outside (the territory) the factory. In this sense, it corresponds to a certain form of productive cooperation among workers - a certain set of relations existing between them. In general terms, within the framework of this analysis the political leap comes about when the working class transforms the material condition which constitute the basis for capitalist organization of production into the material basis for its own power. With this "political recomposition" of the working class, struggle and resistance circulate among different sectors; the daily diffusion of antagonism and the latent process of constitution based on needs acquire a new qualitative political dimension; working-class needs explode and assert themselves both in antagonism



and as constitutive of new social relations which go beyond capitalism.

The key political issue underlying this article is therefore the following: what is the material foundation of a new phase of political recomposition of the working class? It does this by focusing on the migratory flows in Italy and, to a less extent, in continental Europe. It focuses its analysis on a new subject carrier of new needs, the migrant-as-subject. It is only on the basis of these needs that the subject-migrant can reconstitute itself as political subject. The struggles of this subject and their circulation across other sectors of the working class is the central pivot of this analysis.

The article was written with the Italian reader in mind and therefore refers to the present forms of migratory flows in that country. Here is not the place to extend the analysis to Britain, but a few observations can be made. Unlike Italy, Britain has a long history of immigration. Therefore, the new migrants find an already established hierarchy of "race" and a network of communities already more or less structured within the social and productive fabric. How the flow of recent and future migration will effect this structure is an open question - as is the question of the effect of their struggles - which will depend on, among other things, the quantitative dimension of the migratory flows.



Capitalism and Migratory Flows

At the basis of the wealth produced in every epoch of capitalist society, there is the experience of the migration of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children. This means dramatic movements, up-rooting from their original communities, poverty and exploitation which repeat themselves each time capital plans a massive effort in the restructuring of production and the labour market.

During the last two centuries the phenomenon of migration has grown without precedent. This has involved both forced and voluntary emigration, the flows of which initially concerned mainly Europe, at least up to the Second World War, and have covered all five continents. Forty million Europeans migrated to the Americas between 1800 and 1930, among whom 9 million were Italians. In the same period, tens of millions started to move

due to the effects of regional and world wars, and of colonialism in China, South East Asia, Africa, the Middle East ...

Ever since "primitive accumulation", migratory movement has been essential for the valorisation of capital: the most precious commodity - labour power - arriving from different continents, has from time to time the function of breaking up the rigidity of the work and wage of the national working-class, i.e. more work and less wages! But the new working class composition has started once again to organise itself, to refuse exploitation and the models of behaviour imposed by integration and segregation. Thus, by reaffirming its right to exist and not to be treated as a mere thing, the class composition re-emerges with all its unrestrainable drive for subversion and transformation and the political struggle between capital and labour affirms itself in this rupture. From a mere objective variable of the cycle, the class composition imposes itself as conscious, antagonist subjectivity.

Since the end of the Second World War, there have been two major migratory cycles which correspond to two cycles of production and to two class compositions: the mass worker and the social worker. The first was the protagonist of the 1950-70 era of struggles, the second continues to establish itself through a multiplicity of subjects, following the rhythms of the restructuring begun at the beginning of the 1970's which ended with the information technology "revolution". Both the mass worker and the social worker are mostly immigrated labour power. In the following pages, the genesis of these two figures will be synthetically reconstructed, showing

their underlying characteristics and diversities, their balances and perspectives.

Turkish, Algerian and Italian Workers in North Europe

In the 1950's and 1960's millions of immigrants were utilised in France, Germany and England, for post-war reconstruction due to a considerable lack of internal labour power. The South of Italy became the reservoir of labour power in Europe. In the first half of the 1950's the most important migratory flow was that of those expelled from the eastern territories of the Reich, and of the refugees of East Germany who settled in the Federal Republic. This was labour power highly skilled and to constitute the basis of German development, political consensus and stability. This labour power was also to play a crucial role in the control of the new labour power that was later to pour into German factories in successive waves.

North-Central Europe therefore functioned as a pole of attraction for unskilled labour power, to be used on the assembly line: millions came from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece. Yugoslavia, Turkey, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. By the end of the 1960's, foreign immigrants were more than 3.2 million in France (6.4% of the total population); 3 million in FRG (4.8% of the population); 2.6% in Britain (5% of the population); 1 million in Switzerland (16% of the population) [see Castles & Kosak, *Immigration and Class Structure in Western Europe*, Milan. Angeli, 1984]

As far as Italy is concerned, the migratory flow follows a double track: one addressed to the internal market, from the South to the North; the other addressed to the external market with an exodus of almost 7 million expatriates between 1946 and 1970, resulting in a migratory balance of 3 million people. There is an aspect which it is necessary to point out: in this phase, both international migration towards northern Europe and the South-North internal migration appear to be motivated by a strong demand for labour, to the point that unemployment among immigrants was almost unknown. Today's situation is instead very different: the immigration of the 1980's, which also affects Italy, finds itself in a different condition with respect to the possibility of employment. From this point of view, the motivations at the basis of present-day immigration can, and to a certain extent, must be necessarily different.

In the 1950's and 1960's, the mass worker not only made up for the insufficient internal labour supply, but was also useful for the satisfaction of the needs of the labour market which were induced by the transformation of the productive apparatus itself. The resort to the use of foreign workers - and in Italy to the labour power of the southern and north-eastern parts of the country - facilitated the development of determinate activities, allowing for the easy and rapid mobilisation of a new, abundant and not particularly skilled industrial labour force.

In other words, there was a passage from the organisation of work centred on the craft worker (who was in possession of the technical

knowledge of the productive cycle which was used against factory management) to the organization of the assembly line based on the mass worker. This passage was possible through the injection into the productive cycle of this mass of unskilled immigrant workers. Secondly, capital could take advantage of the cultural, existential and political divisions between the two working-class compositions. One unionised, often communist, tied to the work ethic, to reformism. The other with an atavistic hatred for the state and alienated work, often considering the unions as their opponents. Thirdly, capital was able to obtain notable advantages from a mobile and flexible labour force. "The migration of the 1950's and 1960's was composed of workers who were employed for a limited period. The migratory process conformed to the model of alternating migrations, so-called because there was a high turnover both in workers and in workplaces: the project for most of them was to work for a limited period of time...the average stay was between two and five years." ("Community orientations and the politics of immigration in Italy and Europe". Degree thesis, 1989-90, p. 49)

It is interesting to notice how this immigrant composition seemed to be anchored initially to the system of production without major conflicts: "the immigrants as a matter of fact do not appear to want to settle, they do not look for integration, neither do they aspire to obtain citizenship; they are prepared to accept temporary housing and their express needs are very limited...the system by which the countries try to control the phenomenon

is that of 'guest workers'." (Thesis, p.51)

However, things did not go as expected. The 1968-69 wave of struggles broke out. The policies of the various states to repatriate "guest workers" to their country of origin failed. "The closing of the frontiers did not have the hoped-for consequences of making foreign workers leave, or at least of not letting them enter, but had exactly the opposite effect of not letting them leave or of making them reconsider their migratory plans in a radical way" (Thesis. p. 53).

The Struggles of the Mass Worker

From the beginning of the 1960's the immigrant workforce was increasingly employed in the core sectors of the economy. Moving from services and construction work, the foreign workforce became more and more massively present in the heart of capitalist production: in engineering, electronics and in the chemical industries. This process delivered the immediate production of the wealth of the advanced capitalist countries of Europe into the hands of immigrant workers. This naturally led to a complete contradiction with the living conditions of immigrants: lack of housing, ghettos, mass redundancies, attacks against the combative workers, strongly discriminative EEC legislation against non-EEC workers and so on. This became less and less acceptable and led to an increasing element of cohesion and collective identity.

With the coming of 1968, the capitalist post-war plan was over.

Developments founded on mobility and low wages were finished. Political consensus for reformism broke down. But above all the mass worker became a recompositive figure in relation to the national workforce, the students and in general with the social whole. The struggles came out of factories on wages and work conditions, but then they switched to a broader terrain. "The struggles were not only aimed at the organisation of work in the factory but more generally they hit social organisation as a whole. The attack was directed against capitalist wealth. The process which had been ignited was that of a chain reaction of struggles and of their contents which were seen in the years after 1968-69.

This process increasingly involved the national working classes of Europe putting every reformist project into crisis, in the sense that it badly shook up the social democratic framework. In the first place, this happened through the breakdown of trade union control which had been one of the main pillars of that (social democratic equilibrium)." (From: A. Serafini (ed), *The Multinational Worker in Europe*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1974, p. 17).

It was in this context that the capitalist crisis came into being, interrupting the mechanism of profit which seemed to have had an exponential growth since the immediate post-war period, and turned it into its opposite: the fall of the rate of exploitation, the loss of disciplinary control in the factory and in society in general, the political opposition of a subjectivity which did not leave any room for manoeuvre for the trade

unions or the parties, but rather pushed them to the very edge of massive increases in social spending. Only technological restructuring and the expulsion of workers from factories, the modification of the capitalist organization of work based on automation and the substitution of living labour, the transfer of complete traditional sectors to the South of the world, and the widening of world markets, could eliminate the problem at its roots. But not without a crucial contribution from the state, consisting of a profound and extensive process of repression and social militarisation.

The 1980's. Between Crisis and Restructuring: the Socialised Worker.

It in this context that the crisis began, with its respective processes of the restructuring of production on a world scale and of the new market of international labour. The crisis of accumulation caused by the struggles of the mass worker, the shock of the oil crisis, the end of the Bretton Woods agreements (the end of the convertibility of the dollar into gold) are all at the root of the restructuring which is still under way. The big factory is no longer at the centre of the political reproduction of the social. The decentralisation of production and the transfer of entire cycles of production to the countries of the South, along with the creation of an information technology-based tertiary sector, have produced a new kind of class composition, employed in every corner of society, which has become productive in its every expression and activity.

The globalisation of markets and the internationalisation of the labour market, the real subsumption of every job in the movement of capital, the massive introduction of automation within systems for the production of commodities, has required a much more mobile and flexible workforce, precarious and without ties, whose upper sectors are as willing to go through continuous re-training as its lower sectors are to work at an ever-increasing pace in the "informal economy". in terrible conditions in unskilled, manual activities.

This new system of production, therefore, needs an immigrant "socialized worker", also in those Mediterranean countries like Italy whose turn it is now to receive international immigration. The jobs available are those in small and medium scale industrial enterprises, not yet touched of by technological restructuring, in the cooperative and traditional tertiary sectors and in agriculture.

The new immigration comes from North and sub-Saharan Africa, from the Far East and from Albania. What are the fundamental causes? First of all, the "demographic explosion" in the South of the world. The developing countries have a population increase rate of 2.3% per annum against 0.9% for the advanced developed countries. For every 100 people born, 86 come from the developing countries and only 14 from the developed world. The working population (aged 15 to 64) has grown two and a half times faster in the developing countries than in the developed. A second factor has been

the rapid collapse of economic growth, also due to the failure of the regional development plans of the World Bank and other international organisations. More generally, the rigid conditions put forward by the IMF and the World Bank have demanded privatisation programmes, cuts in service industry spending and redundancies. The fall of real "socialism" and regional wars make up some of the other causes both of current and of future immigration. Also in this case we are talking about the immigration, almost on a biblical scale, of tens, if not hundreds of thousands of people.

The composition of immigration in the Eighties and Nineties is particularly different from that of the preceding 20 years. The points of cultural and political reference are changing regarding the workplace of the "socialised worker", as are the productive characteristics of the social model which no longer revolve around the big factory but rather the information technology (IT) tertiary sector, automated firms and telematic service industries.

The new immigrants take their chances in the big metropolitan centres of the West, attracted by wealth, by consumption, by cultural models, without being put off by the effective demand for labour. The first characteristic of these young male and female workers is their "wanderlust". Often they do not immediately stop in one country or city but circulate, building up an important collection of experiences, motivations, needs and demands.

More than work, their first

needs are housing, services and rights. Between the cracks of society work can be found, even if it is unskilled, precarious and to be abandoned as soon as possible in order then to move on or establish themselves in employment in some small or medium-sized industry. But housing remains the main problem.

"Growing expectations" and "anticipatory socialisation" are among the terms used by sociologists to point to the acquisition, already at the point of departure, of the values and orientations of the society into which they will insert themselves. In other words, the unit of measurement chosen by these immigrants is the wealth they want to consume (the same that the West robbed from their countries of origin), rather than the effective possibilities given by work.

Foreign immigration began relatively late in Italy and has yet to reach the dimension of other countries. There are at least two million workers from outside the EEC, only a part of whom are regularised (700,000). The other two thirds are concentrated in urban areas and slightly less than half gravitate towards the three main cities: Rome, Milan and Naples.

The "socialised worker" is a class composition still mostly to be analysed, not least for the fact that the immigrant component tends to be increasingly representative within it. IT and telematic jobs, the new "professions", constitute the upper, skilled sector, the nucleus on which the present effort to globalise the economy is based. This globalised economy has entered a phase in which everything is money and where the immaterial

commodity and the information commodity are strategic for the valorisation of capital.

There is, however, a second, traditional, tertiary sector - the circuit of small and medium industries, the network of cooperatives, all of which are quite developed productive realities in Italy, requiring another type of worker, another "socialised worker": mobile, flexible, unskilled, low-paid, used to the work rhythms of the "informal economy". Naturally, along with the lowest sections of the internal workforce, this labour market is covered by immigrants. "They do the jobs Italians don't want to do any more." Let's list them: cleaners, dishwashers, window cleaners, car washers, petrol pump attendants, night watchmen, day labourers, porters. Or otherwise in the smallest firms of the rich provincial economic hinterland, so flourishing in parts of Italy (Emilia, Tuscany).

They are Arabs, Morroccans, Tunisians, Eritreans, Filipinos, Pakistanis, Senegalese and Nigerians. Certainly, a substantial number of these immigrants either settle down or tend to do so, giving up their "wanderlust", often wanting their families to join them, and looking for some stability in the workplace too. But the "central" characteristic seems to be another. The African immigration coming from south of the Sahara seems, at the moment, to be emblematic. Spreading recently to all the big and medium-sized cities (Bologna, Milan, Turin and Florence), it is mostly made up of young males who move around from one city to another or even from one country to another, without precise migratory

plans. They come from countries in a deep crisis, from every point of view, 'economic, political, social and cultural', and it makes little sense to enquire if they are here for economic or political reasons or if they are thinking of staying here, of returning home or of going to other countries. They themselves do not know because they live from day to day, content to get by in some way with "black market" or precarious jobs, with ways and means on the margins of legality..." (quote from *Inchiesta*, October-December 1990, p. 35).

There is an important consideration to be made. Sociological research and statistics, rather than analysing the phenomenon in itself, often tend to conceal it, to interpret it as the expression of "someone different" and therefore intrinsically dangerous, to be controlled and ghettoised. The nomadism of this class composition is used as an excuse to paint a picture of the "ruthless immigrant", without values, easy prey to criminality, and so racism is spread in all its forms. Only a serious worker's enquiry on flows, expectations, motivations etc, which is carried out by the immigrants, by comrades, in the knowledge of using it as a ready instrument useful for an effective socialisation and cohesion between various subjectivities can really explain the characteristics of this metropolitan worker. And not only this; also her/his hard-driving demand for self-organisation and utopias.

In this first scrutiny we can say that at the root of this nomadism there are two issues: 1) the lack of housing; 2) alienated and super-exploited work. As far as immigrants succeed in

organising themselves around these two issues they will effectively have choices, such as establishing themselves in one place or moving around and coming into contact with new metropolitan spaces. The struggles on housing which have been carried out in these last few months in the main cities are the embryonic movement for the identification of participation not only by immigrants but also by comrades. Wherever a process for the participation not only by immigrants but also by comrades, wherever a process for the quality of life comes together, new sedimentation take place and new prospects are opened. When the struggle is the place for the identification of subjectivities, mobility acquires a power which shifts the relations of strength towards the subaltern classes, constituting a wealth and a source of reproduction and contagion. The problem, therefore, is to turn the characteristic of the "social worker's" class composition against capital and its command, to consolidate at the highest point of contradiction the radicalities which it expresses, from the points of view of both production and reproduction. The computerised society is fragile, much more so than that of the past. It is enough to jam its points of command to put it into crisis. A radical critique of the organisation of work, a wave of workers' struggles for wage increases and less hours, for the reappropriation of time as the reappropriation of life and of the sources of culture expropriated by the factory of ideologies, are the basis for the reconstruction, both at the local and international levels, of a social and political opposition to capital.

It needs to be said that struggles only in the sphere of reproduction, in the service industries, are no longer sufficient by themselves. We need to make the leap. Political recomposition cannot happen unless contestation and criticism are activated, also against the organisation of work as far as production is concerned, whether they be linked to the subalternity of the worker to the machine or to cycles where the assembly line and manual work are still predominant.

The immigrant worker alone is not a recompositive figure. There is a need for a scheme of subjectivities, representing the advanced social and political expression of a rich scenario of subjects, diverse in language, culture and imagery, but brought together by their hatred for capital's command and by the creativity and potential inherent in their class composition.

And the means for these metropolitan subjects, atomised by central power, to get in contact with each other is the value of the use of antagonist communication, which creates the basis for a real multi-ethnic, multi-racial society, for a new metropolitan culture with new values - not money but solidarity, not individualism but the community, not the market but social cooperation.

The mass worker destroyed a way of producing and once more made central the ideas of subversion and self-organisation, sweeping away the old ideologies of power and inaugurating a cultural and political movement whose effects are still present today in the social body.

The "socialised worker" has yet to follow that path, if in a completely different historical context, with even greater difficulties ahead. But there is one thing s/he can take advantage of: the fragility of the social system and its relative immune defences, exactly at the moment when the international framework of command is restructuring itself in a blind struggle between the major-power winners of the Cold War. The new "world order" that is currently shaping itself, could already be weakened at birth if the worldwide "social worker" creates her/his means of identity, becoming visible at last.

Translated from an article by Comitato Senza Frontiere (Without Frontiers Committee), Via Avesella 5b, Bologna, Italy, dated 28 May 1991 and published in *Incompatibili* (the magazine of the self-organized workers of Rome), #6 Summer 1991.



About needs, and struggles, and squatting, and immigrant, and circulation of struggles

*We report here the text of the leaflet used for the discussion meeting
with a comrade from Bologna last march in London*

SOCIAL CENTRES AND STRUGGLE FOR HOUSING: ORGANIZING WITH IMMIGRANTS IN ITALY

Examples of recent struggles taking real and immediate needs as their starting points

Immigration, as opposed to internal migration, is a recent phenomenon in Italy, unlike other European countries where it has been happening for decades. Thousands of immigrants have arrived in the main Italian cities in the space of the past years.

The situation which came about has been "explosive" right from the start and the problem of housing became the first area of unity between Italian and immigrant proletarians.

The self-organised squatted social centres have had a central role in the initiation and development of immigrants' struggles. Together they have gone on to use various forms of direct action; above all the mass squatting of housing. In Italy, the first squatted social centres were set up in the late seventies and gradually this practice spread throughout the national territory. The social centres were created and spread as places for people to get together politically and socially and to experiment in being separate and autonomous from institutions. The presence of the social centres immediately highlighted the property speculation going on in working class districts. They opposed the commercialisation of creativity through the self-production of music, videos, etc. They are therefore one response among many to the real need for the self-organisation of spaces and the reappropriation of time as reappropriation of life, refusing (although there are unfortunate exceptions) to become ghettos or pseudo-"alternative" spaces separated from their locality.



It has been exactly this refusal to self-ghettoise themselves, that has allowed and still allows the social centres to be continually present within the territory, in the struggles against heroin pushers in working class estates, in anti-fascist and anti-racist struggles, in the struggles for the defence of squats and so on. This is the only way to practise real politics, the only way "that pays". It is therefore necessary to continue along the path of direct action and politicalisation of needs, to ground our political activity directly on our real proletarian needs.

NOTES ON SQUATTING AND SOCIAL HOUSING

Introduction

The threat to make squatting illegal has once again reared its ugly head. That the threat is hardly new and that the "discussion" paper put out by the government shows above all an almost total ignorance of their own laws, are hardly reassuring in today's climate where laws are passed in a matter of weeks, with the details decided by decree if necessary. More immediately, illegal evictions by councils and vicious raids by the cops make the law practically irrelevant. The following notes have been written to try and trace the development of squatting, within the general development of working class appropriation of housing, as well as the forms used to control and break it. The aim is to try to discover tactics to fight current attacks and to renew appropriation on a level suitable to present conditions.

Post - World War One

1920 saw a massive increase in social provision and policy on housing, with the introduction of the National Housing Scheme and Housing Bonds, direct building labour under council control, a new Rent Act and a ban on all commercial building in London to free resources for housing. New towns were built both by councils (e.g. Dagenham) and by private capital (e.g. Welwyn Garden City) and high-rise housing was rejected on health grounds. This intervention was due in part to a general lack of private investment in housing, brought about by the massive rent strikes during the war which had stopped landlord profiteering and turned large areas of working class communities into no-go areas for rent collectors and bailiffs, as well as the overall demands and combed of the

class. Returning from the bloody front or with experience of struggles at home, with the inspiring news from Russia and the promise of a "Land Fit For Heroes", workers' demands and struggles spread rapidly. While strikes raged, with even clergymen planning to set up a union, unemployment rose with thousands marching to the door of Number 10 and the Irish brought the war to England ... according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer no issue was causing more unrest than the lack of housing. Direct struggle over housing seems to have been minimal in 1920, with only an empty refugee camp in County Durham occupied by homeless families and the continued effects of the rent strikes. But the relationship between housing and the combativity of the class were made clear by the developers of Welwyn Garden City, who called for "enlightened" investment for "this scheme of bringing the workers under healthy conditions near their work as one of the means of dealing with the problem of industrial unrest". Of course not all workers would be moved out to nice, new suburbs - the point was also to break up the class concentration in the cities.

Post - World War Two

After WWII the scarcity of homes for the working class (caused by bombing, by the direction of labour and materials to the war effort and by homes being kept empty, waiting for rich tenants) led to the first modern squatting movement. All over the country empty barracks and other camps were taken over by homeless families who organised and ran them collectively. The movement spread while the authorities were unclear how to respond and though they were eventually clamped down, some camps remained occupied for some time until the families were rehoused. The authorities immediately

clamped down, however, when families, with the help of the Communist Party, started moving into empty flats in the West End of London. As well as a lack of housing, this movement indicated a development in demands, as many of the young families involved would previously have considered it natural to live with their parents until they could find their own housing. As well as winning rehousing for those involved, the movement won increased provision for social housing, including the right of councils to take over empty properties.

The Sixties and Seventies

The Sixties and Seventies saw struggles to extend the area of social housing, both in terms of the amount of housing outside the market and the groups with access to it. New council housing continued to be built, while the run down of the inner cities pressured some councils into buying up larger and larger stocks of properties left empty by speculators or in conditions below those required by increasing legal standards. On the other hand, black communities fought against residential qualifications that excluded them from council waiting lists, women fought for the right to rehousing to escape violent husbands and refuges were set up. Lesbians and gay men struggled for the right to council housing as they were discriminated against in the market.

The squatting movement re-emerged mainly in response to families being kept waiting on council lists, while council properties remained empty and often while waiting for demolition as part of grandiose development plans that never took place. Many of those involved in the movement, however, were young and single and they soon realised that squatting was a way of meeting their own housing needs, of escaping homelessness, parents and bed-sits, of living together and creating

their own environments. The squatting movement also highlighted and fought against excessive rents, speculation and the building of ever more office blocks, as well as helping those still fighting for access to council homes. Some squatters managed to get licences to stay temporarily until the council could use the property and often set up co-ops to run them. As the number of council properties started to outstrip the resources needed to bring them into use, and as the numbers eligible outgrew the number of properties, councils tried to work out priorities. Both squatting and the buying of keys were used to refuse this exclusion and new resources were always needed to house those with priority. To some extent this worked against those who had the most recent access to housing lists, as the children of council tenants or people with friends on estates were the most likely to get into the more attractive housing.

Since 1979

The growth of the council housing sector ended in 1979 and by 1986 had been reduced by 10% - 700,000 homes. The Tory government has increasingly restricted resources, introduced the "right to buy" campaign to take the better stock out of council control and now has "ring-fenced" council housing to make it work like the market. Councils cannot spend money on housing that does not come from housing (at present many are not allowed to spend money from property sales at all), so all costs must be passed onto rent-payers. Councils are now punished for properties left empty (including squats) and, in order to house those they have legal responsibility for, are forced to weed out squatters and "illegal occupants" (those who bought keys, remained after the legal tenant had died etc.).

Co-operatives are compelled to help out by taking people off their lists and are also made to take on increasing costs. Meanwhile the number of squatters has been swelled by the results of government policies; those evicted for arrears or as illegal occupants, those who bought homes and could not keep up with the mortgage, young people suffering cuts in benefits etc. The screwing of social housing resources was designed to break the increasing unity of the struggle for more resources for more people and instead to impose divisions, by isolating those who could afford to buy out and leaving the rest in competition. The re-imposition of the market has turned the task of getting housing into work and has reimposed the necessity of work, along with individual "advancement", to keep up with increasing costs. As with other areas, they have imposed their "looking glass world", where we have to run faster and faster to stay in the same place. However, they have failed to get the flexibility they need out of us, as the economy has been unable to create the necessary rewards and those who have played along with the plan are just as likely to end up on the streets.

Conclusions ?

Working class struggle has taken on the housing market in terms of allocation, cost and quality, and nearly beat it - at least as far as the first two terms are concerned. Capital and central government have responded by leaving local councils with the responsibilities, while moving resources. Now everyone has a right to a piece of pavement at no cost, while quality will cost most of your next 30 years' wages.

Squatting, resisting rent rises, evictions and repossessions are a necessity and

obviously the starting point for new struggles to impose our needs. But the battle is now against a state hiding behind the economy, leaving local councils stranded so that their only response to struggle is to run to the government for more powers against the working class. We have to fight the councils, as landlords, but the state is happy to watch us and the council housing sector sink into the ghetto. Council tenants are still the greatest concentration of the working class, and high interest rates along with the recession have reduced the ability to escape the frying pan into the fire of the market. Their struggles, and ours in general, need to be taken from the council ghettos to the market and the state. Every building is a valid target for our housing needs, as well as the resources necessary to make them fit for human beings. What was it that someone once said about everybody living in their own cathedral?

Mike



The Hidden History of London's Second Wall

New Year 1992: "London Notes" sends two comrades to attend a lecture at the Museum of London.

The lecture celebrates the events of New Year 1642 — three hundred and fifty years ago — when King Charles I went with a body of 400 armed men and forced his way into the Houses of Parliament. His aim was to arrest key figures of the opposition and to impose his anti-democratic will. He failed. Faced with the overwhelming hostility of the people of London, he chose to leave the city, taking his Court with him. He was not to return until 1649, when they chopped his head off.

No bad thing, you might say. But soft — what have we here? The museum lecture is supplemented by a bit of play-acting by members of the English Civil War Society. They clank around in their costumes. The musketeers fire their muskets, and as the smoke from the powder — most sulphurous — clears from the auditorium, it becomes clear that something is definitely *wrong* here.

Just how wrong becomes clear when we talk to one of the musketeers in question. He is still clanking about. "Just wait," says this cretin, "till we catch up with the bastards who killed our King...!"

The penny drops. The Civil War Society has two wings — the Parliamentarian and the Royalist — and this public event has been hijacked by the Royalists.

Now here is a fact. The Civil War — we prefer it under its title of the English Revolution — was one of the glorious periods of the history of popular resistance in London.

We shall save for another time the tale of the stirring events of New Year 1642, because we have another story to tell you — the story of LONDON'S LOST WALL. Not the Roman Wall, which everyone knows about, but the wall that the people built to keep King Charles and his murdering generals out of the city.

At this moment of its history, London armed itself to defend its democratic heritage. Twenty thousand people turned out, with buckets and baskets, shovels and forks. They shifted earth, they laboured, they fetched and they carried. They built a wall. All around London. From Mile End to Tottenham Court, then to Westminster and south of the river to Camberwell, and to Rotherhithe. A great fortification, with armed sentry points and cannons positioned all along it.

And what was most precious was that behind these walls a great flowering took place — of debate, of poetry, of imagination, of hopes for a new and better world, and of resistance to old forms of servitude. John Milton describes it thus:

"Behold now this vast city, a city of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas, wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation; others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convictionment."

John Milton: November 1644

Areopagitica

for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing,
to the Parliament of England.



"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance..."

John Milton: November 1644

Areopagitica...

This wall was a huge historical fact. But now barely a trace of it remains, either on the ground or in the history books. How is it possible that it has just disappeared from our history?

It has disappeared because our history has been hijacked, stolen, falsified, selectively edited and re-presented to us with a wholly Royalist gloss. The fuckpigs at the Museum of London have played no small part in the process. Their showcase exhibit on this period contains a label to the effect that "Londoners were forced to dig a ditch". Just that. Nothing more. At best an understatement. At worst, lies, fucking lies.

So, dear reader, we are proposing to set the record straight. Diligent research and a couple of chance encounters put us on the track of a couple of things: a map, and a diarist's account.

The *map* was published by G. Vertue in 1738, almost a hundred years after the event. It shows the London Wall in all its splendour, complete with forts and fortifications.

The *account* was written by a Scotsman, William Lithgow. He left Scotland on a boat bound for London in 1642, and did a couple of days' walking to view and document the fortified walls. He has left us a detailed description, which we print here. It is notable for the way he details the spirit of resistance and the class composition of that period. We are grateful to him for having retrieved this small part of our history.

Two Projects:

True to our formation as urban agitators and social aggravators in our time, we have a couple of projects to propose.

First, could somebody start a bit of serious work on this period, trawling through the literature, the letters, the diaries, in fact anything that remains, and reconstruct the spirit of popular resistance that undoubtedly prevailed in the city? With particular reference to the building of this wall. "London Notes" will be happy to publish the results.

Second: How about we have a celebration of the Wall? A celebration of its 350th anniversary. Take back a little bit of our history. Our own preference would be a day of small celebration to coincide with the day of the Lord Mayor's Show in November '92, when Big Business and the fat cats of the City Corporation turn out to claim the city as their own. If you fancy being part of an event on that day, drop us a line and we'll see if we can arrange a meeting to start the ball rolling.

And with that, we hand you over to William Lithgow (a pompous prosodist if ever there was) and his account.



THE PRESENT SVRVEIGH OF LONDON AND ENGLANDS STATE;

Containing a Typographical description of all the particular Forts, Redoubts, Breastworks, and Trenches newly erected round about the Citie on both sides of the River, with the severall Fortifications thereof.

By William Lithgow.
London, Printed by J.O., 1643.



After long fourtie yeares wandring since my first launching abroad to surveigh the spacious bounds and tertiat face of the ancient world: besides my daily fastidious and now frequent predestriat¹ progresses at home, and in neighbour Regions about; and being fallen in the rotten bosome of declyning age, the sun being set on the winter day of mine elabourat time, and that time past three score years: yet now I say for diverse serious respects, in this instant year, 1643. April 24th. it was my resolution to imbarke at *Preston Pannes*, with sundrie passengers bound for *London*: Where weighing Ankers, and hoisting saile, with large winds and fair weather, we coasted along the *Britannian* shoare. In all which deserted way, between Forth and Gravesend, wee found onely three ships, two *Scots-men* and a *Noruegian*, and one of the royal Whelps² lying at anker in *Aermouth* road, which made the sea resemble a wilderness, and the devastated shoare the confortlesse sight of a desolate land. Where never heretofore (winter excepted) these *Tritonian* bounds were seen (reciprocally taken) without 2000 saile recouring that sandie and shelfy marine.

Now for a generall view, the Citie hath many courts du guard,³ with new barrocaded posts, and they strongly girded with great chaines of yron; and all the opening passages at street ends, for the fields and road wayes are in like manner made defensive, and stricly watched: The sides of the river, as at *Billingsgate*, and other places have also Courts du Guard, and they nightly guarded with companies of the Traind Bands: which number being of six old Regiments, and they six thousand men, are now doubled with six new Regiments, which maketh up twelve thousand in all. Beyond the River in the borough of *Southwark*, is the self-same discipline observed, and all under the command of the Citie. So is *Westminster*, the *Strand* and all the liberties thereof, now taken in under the custodie of *London*: and their Traind Bands there, I mean, of *Westminster* are not betrusted with neither Parliament nor City; so that the quotidian⁴ guard of the Parliament come daily out of *London*: where they are placed in two courts of Guard, the one before the Hall in the Palace Court near the water staires, the other Court du Guard standeth in the Parliament yard, where the Peers ascend and descend from the upper House. Both Houses of Peeres and Commons having double Centinels, with Picke⁵ and Musquet at the entrie of their sitting places, remaine there ay as long as the Parliamentariat bodies remaine: The number of the upper-house amounteth to twenty-six Noblemen, besides eight others at sea and land service, the lower house by a just computation of the Clark and given to me in Print, amount to two hundred and twelve Knights and Commissioners, besides the deserted persons of both Houses, and some of them lately returned.

And what shall I say, I found the Street-enravell⁶ Court, before Whitehall gate, guarded also with a Court du Guard, a noveltie beyond novelties; and what was more rarer, I found the grass growing deep in the royall Courts of the Kings House, which indeed was a lamentable sight. And in that sight I rancountered there abouts with *George Withers*, my fellow Poet, and once my fellow-prisoner, where, digesting some discourses (for he is now a Captain of a Horse Troupe) he

From Edinburgh
to London by sea

A general view
of how London
is guarded

Watching over
Parliament

The King's
Palace under
armed guard



told me that he had beene plundered at *Michalmes* last by some of the Kings forces in *Surray*, for there he hath a wife and residence, where being civilized, his Poetick mansion met with uncivill fellowes, I would say Malignants.

And here I may not forget the false and lying aspersions laid upon *Scotland* lately by two English authors, the one work, named the *Plain English*,⁷ where his perjuriat falsehood averres, that we hold and enjoy our present peace and safety, of some of their Peeres in *England*; when contrariwise they hold their Parliament and present libertie of *Scotland*, and our invincible armie which procured it. The other work intituled *The subjects liberty*,⁸ will have *Scotland* at the first but a Dukedome and in subjection to *England*; see how these damnable villaines can coine & invent (as they please) such base absurdities, and yet go free unpunished. And why? Because they have from ancient and preteriat times, a generall and natural malignitie against our Nation, which neither can nor will be extermined till the day of doome; for it runneth in a successive line, as the Conduit from the fountaine ingorgeth the Pond. I would speak more freely here, and that justly, but that I do not love to be accounted for a Malignant, whilst there are too many already of that scyphanticke kinde in both Kingdomes; and so I proceed in a fair way.

The daily musters and shoves of all sorts of *Londoners* here, were wondrous commendable in marching to the fields and out-works (as Merchants, Silk-men, Macers,⁹ Shopkeepers, &c.) with great alacritie, carrying on their shoulders yron Mattocks, and wooden shovels, with roaring Drummes, flying collours, and girded swords; most companies being also interlarded with Ladies, women and girles: two and two carrying baskets for to advance the labour, where divers wrought till they fell sick of their pains. All the trades and whole inhabitants (the Insey Courts¹⁰ excepted) within the City, Liberties, Suburbs, and circumjacent dependencies went day about to all quarters for the erection of their Forts and Trenches: and this hath continued these foure months past, the half of which time I was a spectator to their laborious toyle, as after you shall hear.

The greatest company which I observed to march out, according to their turnes, were the Taylours, carrying fourtie six collours, and seconded with eight thousand lusty men: The next in greatnesse of number, were the Watermen, amounting to seven thousand Tuggers,¹¹ carrying thirty seven collours: the Shoe-makers were five thousand and oddes carrying twenty nine collours; and indeed the gentle craft¹² could never heretofore have mustered so many here since *Crispus* and *Crispianus*, the two supposed Princes, their Patrones, forsook the Trade. Neither in this catalogue dare I forget the Porters that marched forth one day toward Tayburne fields, carrying twentie three collours, being three thousand white shirts: and (*verbi gratia*) upon that same day, a thousand Oyster wives,¹³ advanced from *Billingsgate* through *Cheapside* to *Crabtree field* all alone, with drummes and flying collours, and in a civil manner, their goddess *Bellona* leading them in a martiall way. The next day following May 17, the Feltmakers, Fishmongers, and Coupers, marched three severall wayes to three sundrie fields, carrying twenty four collours, had their number amounted to three thousand and odds.

And now to shun prolixitie, let the ingenious Reader judge, what number of numbers would these sequel Trades be, as Goldsmiths, Ferriers, Bakers, Bruers, Butchers, Cooks, Candlemakers, Smiths, Cutlers, Carpenters, Shipwrights, Joyners, Boxmakers, Wheelwrights, Turners, Carmers,¹⁴ and foure thousand Weavers, Braziers, Dyers, Imbrouderers, Horologiers, Watchmakers, Engravers, Tinkers, Haberdashers, Feathermakers, Clothiers, Tanners, Curriers, Glovers, Spurriers, Painters, Printers, Stationers, Bookbinders, Gun-makers, Glaziers, Masons, Tecturers,¹⁵ Brickmakers, Plumbers, Vpholsters, Combemakers, Girdlers, Coblers, Chimney-sweepers,

Slanders on
Scotland

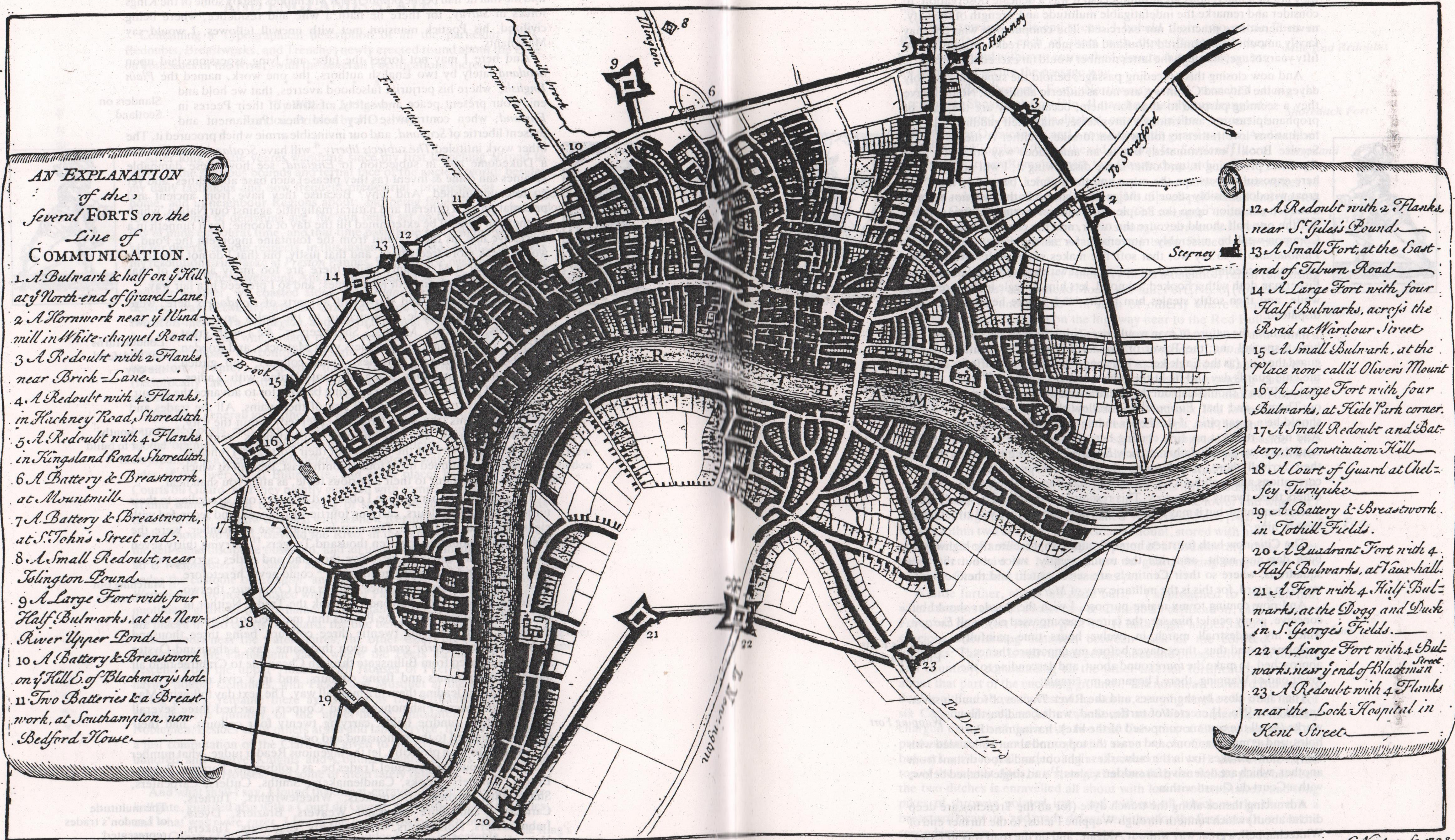
London turns
out to defend
the city

Four months'
labour to build
the walls

Marching out
with banners

The multitude
of London's trades
represented

THE WALL OF LONDON - 1642



AN EXPLANATION
of the
several FORTS on the
Line of
COMMUNICATION.

1. A Bulwark & half on y^e Hill at y^e North-end of Gravel-Lane.
2. A Hornwork near y^e Windmill in White-chappel Road.
3. A Redoubt with 2 Flanks near Brick-Lane.
4. A Redoubt with 4 Flanks, in Hackney Road, Shoreditch.
5. A Redoubt with 4 Flanks, in Kingsland Road, Shoreditch.
6. A Battery & Breastwork, at Mountmill.
7. A Battery & Breastwork, at S^t. John's Street end.
8. A Small Redoubt, near Islington Pond.
9. A Large Fort with four Half-Bulwarks, at the New-River Upper Pond.
10. A Battery & Breastwork on y^e Hill E. of Blackmary's hole.
11. Two Batteries & a Breastwork, at Southampton, now Bedford-House.

12. A Redoubt with 2 Flanks, near S^t. Giles's Pound.
13. A Small Fort, at the East-end of Tiburn Road.
14. A Large Fort with four Half-Bulwarks, across the Road at Wardour Street.
15. A Small Bulwark, at the Place now call'd Oliver's Mount.
16. A Large Fort with four Bulwarks, at Hide Park corner.
17. A Small Redoubt and Battery, on Constitution-Hill.
18. A Court of Guard at Chelsey Turnpike.
19. A Battery & Breastwork, in Tothill-Fields.
20. A Quadrant Fort with 4 Half-Bulwarks, at Vaux-hall.
21. A Fort with 4 Half-Bulwarks, at the Dogg and Duck in S^t. George's Fields.
22. A Large Fort with 4 Bulwarks, near y^e end of Blackman Street.
23. A Redoubt with 4 Flanks near the Lock Hospital in Kent Street.

G. Vautue Sc. 1738.

A PLAN of the City and Suburbs of LONDON as fortified by Order of PARLIAMENT in the Years 1642 & 1643.

Jackfarmers,¹⁶ with many more that I cannot recollect. Which, indeed (as they are of a marvellous great number) so it was a delicate observation, to consider and remarke the indefatigable multitude and strength of the City, never heretofore practised nor exercised. The computation whereof may facitly amount to an hundred thousand able men, not reckoning any above fifty yeares of age, although the latter number would far exceed the former.

And now closing this preceding passage, behold the superstitious Holy dayes in the City and Countrey, are not as hitherto abolished; Neither have they a seeming purpose to abandon them, because they are the baits of prophane pleasures, and vitious wantonnesse, which their gadding inclinations love rather to follow than forsake. Neither is their Service Book¹⁷ exterminated, but in an ambiguous way some Churches professing it, and other some disallowing it; I will not here expostulate between the mean and the manner, but surely there is a great wisdome visibly seene in the generall councell, that will not enforce a sudden alteration upon the People, till weightier matters be first settled, lest the one half should devoure the other, and the common estate of the Common-weal be miserably ramversed, for as the *Italian* saith, *chiua Pianouasano*,¹⁸ so say we, that soft fire makes sweet malt: Even so the prudent proceeding of provident policie must with a multitude dallie, as the Fisherman doth with a hooked Salmond, lets him struggle in the streame a while, and then softly steales him to the land, where he is catchd, and dispatchd.

And now the nature of man would ever either hear or see novelties, and here a speciall one; the Tower of *London* from long antiquitie, wont to guard the City (as the Eagle keeps her yong ones from the Griffon); but now the citie guards day and night the tower, lest Bishop *Laud*¹⁹ and Bishop *Wren*²⁰ should leap out through the iron windowes to swim on *Thames* and that *Euripus*²¹ to swallow them down, which should be a great pitie, if the Popes indulgence could prevent it. And now I recall at my first coming here, it was agitate in Parliament, to send these two ghostly fathers to new *England*, that the great ocean, before their arrivall there, might purge them (like to purgatorie) of all the corruptions and perfidious knaveries they had done in *England*, with many others these twenty five yeares: This resolution was relented, which many a heart lamented: but it may be against the next spring, they will either make saile or hing.²²

The Citie now hath fourteen horse Troupes, that scout the highways, both day and night, and ride the round nightly, twice about the foot squadrons, where so their Centinels are set at watch, and themselves to stand on guard, for this is the militarie way of *Mars*.

And now coming to my maine purpose, I wish the Reader should but conceive, as my pen let him see, the fairest encompassed city in all *Europe*, which my pedestriall march in twelve hours time painfully performed. And thus, three dayes before my departure thence, I approached, to make the *tour* round about, and descending to the lower end of *Wapping*, there I beganne my circuit.

Then here close by the houses and the River *Thames*, I found a seven angled Fort [No. 1] erected of turffe, sand, watles, and earthen worke (as all the rest are composed of the like), having nine Port holes, and as many cannons; and neare the top round about pallosaded with sharp wooden stakes fixt in the bulwarkes right out, and a foot distant from another, which are defensive for sudden scalets,²³ and single ditched below, with a Court du Guard within.

Advancing thence along the trench dyke (for all the Trenches are deep ditchd about) which runneth through *Wapping* Fields, to the further end of *Whitechappell*, a great way without *Aldgate*, and on the road way to *Essex*, I saw a nine angled Fort [No. 2] only pallosaded and single ditched, and planted with seven pieces of brazen Ordonance, and

Religious discipline with a light hand

Retribution for Bishops Laud and Wren

London's Forts Encompassed

Wapping Fort

Whitechapel Fort



a Court du Guard, composed of timber, and thatch'd with tyle stone, as all the rest are:

Where towards *Myle-end green*, I beheld there two pettie Forts or Redoubts [No. 3], each of them with three Ports and they Cannonned, stand within an entrenched closure, having five courts du guard, that secure the passage way: *Mile End Redoubts*

From *Whitechappell* Fort, Northwestward, I trenched along the Trenches to *Shoarditch* Fort [No. 4] standing mainly quadrangled, single pallosaded, and single ditched, carrying on three corners of the four eight Demicanons and a royall court du guard within: And without which and at *Kingsland* (being the old post way for *Scotland*) there stands two earthen Rampires with two Courts du guard. *Shoreditch Fort*
Kingsland Rampart

Thence returned; I followed along the champaine breastworkes to *Hogston*, where I found a quadrat Fort [No. 5] well pallosaded and planted with five Cannons at the two field corners: The strength²⁴ is double ditched and betweene the two it is strongly barrocaded, with wooden stakes, everie stake neare the top being fenced with three iron hooks of a span long. *Hoxton Fort*

Thence I marched through *Fineberry* fields along the Trench (enclosing there *Moorefields*) and came to *Mount mil-hill*, Fort [No. 6] (for all the forts about are blank and blanke²⁵ in sight of others) where being arryved I found it standing on the highway near to the *Red Bull*: This is a large and singular fortification, having a Fort above and within a Fort, the lowest consisting of five angles, two whereof towards the fields, are each of them thrice ported, having as many great Cannon, with a flanking piece from a hid corner: The upper Fort standing circular is furnished with eleven pieces of Cannon reall,²⁶ which command all the rest, and upon the bosome top of all standeth a Windmill: The lower bulwarks, are first pallosaded round about, and near their tops, and then in the middle flank between the two ditches, strongly barrocaded, beside two Countercarps, and three Redoubts of lesser importance, yet all defensive. This is one of the chief Forts about the city and first erected. *Mount Millhill Fort*

Thence footing along the Trench dyke (which is three yards thick, and on the ditch side twice as high) I courted *Islington*, at the lower end whereof I found a strong and large strength, called *Waterfield* Fort, [No. 9] having within two utter works a circularie Mount, stored with nine great pieces of artillerie, and on the point of a Countercarp three pieces more: there I saw the longest Court du guard (being longer than two ordinarie Churches) that I have seen as yet. *Waterfield Fort.*

A little further, about ten paire buts,²⁷ I approached to *Islington* hill, where there is erected a most rare & admirable Fortification, called *Strawes* Fort, but now *Fort Royall*. [No. 10] It hath eight angles, and a spacious interlarding distance, between each of the cornerd bulwarks: This fort is marvellous perspicuous and prospective both for City and countrey, commanding all the other inferior fortifications near and about that part of the enclining grounds. The northeast cornerd Bulwark is double altified above the rest of the worke, carrying on the two sides thereof six Cannon Royall; and the two South and West corners are mutually charged on each of them with two half Culverins of Brasse; and the East promontariat corner adorned with three whole Cannon. The altified bulwark is twice pallosaded, and at the root of the work answerable to the top of the inmost ditch, it is strongly barrocaded; the middle place between the two ditches is enravalled all about with low wooden Stakes, and long pikes of throwne pointed iron, and without all which works there is a breastwork cast up, and made defensive either for the first assault, or for the second invasion. *Strawes Fort*

Descending thence to *Holborne* fields, I accoasted a strength, named, *Pindar* of *Wakefields* fort [No. 11] being only quadrangled, pallosaded, and single ditched, and enstalled with five great *Pindar of Wakefield Fort*

Ordonance and a Court du guard.

Abandoning the place and shoaring along the trench a little further to Longfield, I presently rancouted with Nort Hampton Fort [No. 12] consisting of two divided quadrangled bulwarks, and each of them garnished with four Demiculverins of brasse; the intervening distance fortified, the two former bodies are pallosaded, double ditched, and the middle division whereof barrocaded with stakes a yard high, and each of them hooked with three counter-thwarting pikes of iron: *Northampton Fort*

Whence, conducted along with the Trenches through *S. Geilles* fields, I arryved at Crabtree Fort, in Crabtree fields, [No. 13] standing in a quadrangle, and loaded with six Culverines of Brasse, placed on the two field corners, defying the Malignants or what assailants may there encroach: The fort is pallosaded above, double ditched below, and barrocaded in the middle division, with thick standing stakes and they counterbanded with thwarting iron pyks and a stately court du guard within. *Crabtree Fields*

Leaving this and marching along the circular line, it grieved me to see so many rich grounds of grasse utterly spoyled with the erection of these works, insomuch that horse and cattell certaynels²⁸ will come short of their food there for seven years and the owners thereof must fall pittifully short of their yearly profits, for where trouble is, then cometh misery.

Having left the aforesaid fort, I saluted the banqueting-house fortress [No. 14] composed of two forts upon *Tayburne* way and *Maribone* fields: Here I found both the forts answerable to other, the way only divyding them, and they both, pallosaded, double ditchd, and barrocaded with iron pyks; the one cled²⁹ with eight demicanon, and the other fensed with foure semi-culverines of iron; both wondrous defensible. *Banqueting House Fort (Tyburn & Marylebone)*

A little advanced from this Tayburnian passage, I insulted upon Serjeants fort, [No. 15] composed mainly of foure angles, a court du guard, five piece of ordonance and fortified in all things, just like to the former: *Sergeant's Fort*

Departing thence, I shortly encroached upon Head Park Corner fort [No. 16] which is a maine great strength, having one fort above, and within another, and a third fort closing the road way standeth breasting the other two; The upmost inveloped fort, overtopping the other two; is garnished with eight cannon reall and on the inferiour bulwark northward, being a second part of the forts maine body, there be intrusted there five brazen half-cannons more; and before it towards the fields a breasting Countercarp: The third dependant fort standeth enstald with six demiculverines, amounting to ninteen of all: This great fortification, is but only pallosaded and single ditched, yet wonderful strong and of great bounds: all the three having seventeen angles. And this is the westmost fortification enclosing the park, the fields, the large mansion, and other enlargements belonging to *S. James* his liberty. *Hyde Park Corner Fort*

Thence drayning along a devalling Trench through Milk-field toward Tuttlefields, I rancouted with two halfmoon workes; some ten pair buttes distant, both of them pallosaded, barrocaded with irne picks, and each of them planted with three demi cannon of brasse: Both these works stand sighting Chelsay. Whence breasting along the breastworkes I happily imbraced Tuttlefield fort [No. 19] my familiar ground of old acquaintance. This fortress is composed of nyne angles being pallosaded, and only double ditched, and surcharged at the south and west corners with six pieces of ordonance and a court du guard. *Tuttlefield Fort*

Here is an end of Midlesex labour: from which posternall place, I courted the river syde, and crossed over to Lambeth in Surray: In the head of which town westward, and close by the river, I visited the nyne-elves fort [No. 20] composed of foure angles, five ports, and five demiculverines, being slenderly pallosaded and single ditched, for this fort and Tuttle fort stand opposite to other, the river only dividing them. *Nine Elms Fort*



Whence following my circulary progresse, I enhaunced my desired view of Fauxhall fort which indeed is a delicate large and defensive work being twice pallosaded, once ditched, and bearing the burthen of fourteen culverines. And hence transported amaine with a greedy desire to surveigh *S. Georges* fields, I found half way hither a singular countercarp, and fortified, besides workmanship, with three half culverines; and then I arryved at the fort royall [No. 21] in *Georges* field: Which indeed of all the works I have as yet made mention of, this is the only rarest and fairest, and contryved and reared after the modern modell of an impregnable Citadale: having four large bulwarks, every one counterbanding another from flank to flank, and the foure intervening quarters are also interlaced with spacious and defensible midworks: the maine bosome of which, with the incumbent insides of the foure Promontories, may easily containe three thousand men the four corners being destinated for twenty foure cannon reall. *Vauxhall Fort*
Fort Royal St George's

The exterior works are not as yet accomplished (although fast advancing) but certinly they will bee perfyted after the Londonian forts as I have newly rehearsed; Neither are the trenches done which are drawn along a line thence to the top of Southwark called *Nevington* Fort: [No. 22] The which is composed of two flanking Redoubts divyding nine pieces of ordonance between them, having two courts du-guard, and backed with two Countercarps, infringing the road way passenger, till a condigne tryall of what are you what carry you and from whence came you bee demanded; *Newington Fort*

Hence I continued my purpose to the top of Kentstreet and found there only a circulary rampire [No. 23] of smal importance, fensed with a single ditch between two ditches, and enstald with five pieces of ordonance, and so is the other at the back of *Redreiff*, but more defensible than the other: yet they are both to be interlarded with redoubts & countercarps, in the intrinched grounds.

So here at *Redreiff* fort just opposite to *Wapine* fort, I finished the pilgrimagious toyle of a wearisome dayes journey, the circuit whereof, on both sides the river amounteth to eighteen Kentish myles. From which I may say, that London was never truly London till now, for now she sits like a noble lady upon a royall thron, securing all her encroaching pendicles³⁰ under the wings of a motherly protection; yet these limites were never heretofore granted till the Parliament for their better safety, confirmed this construction; that (Grand *Cayro* excepted) I have not seen a larger inveloped compasse within the whole universe. By which computation I apprehend that this circuit comprehends above five hundred thousand dwelling houses, and in them large three million of soules, but methinkes he were a happy Prince, that could bee but only King of such a city, as London now sits intrinched though hee had no moe Provinces besides. *Redreiff Fort, Rotherhithe*
An estimated population

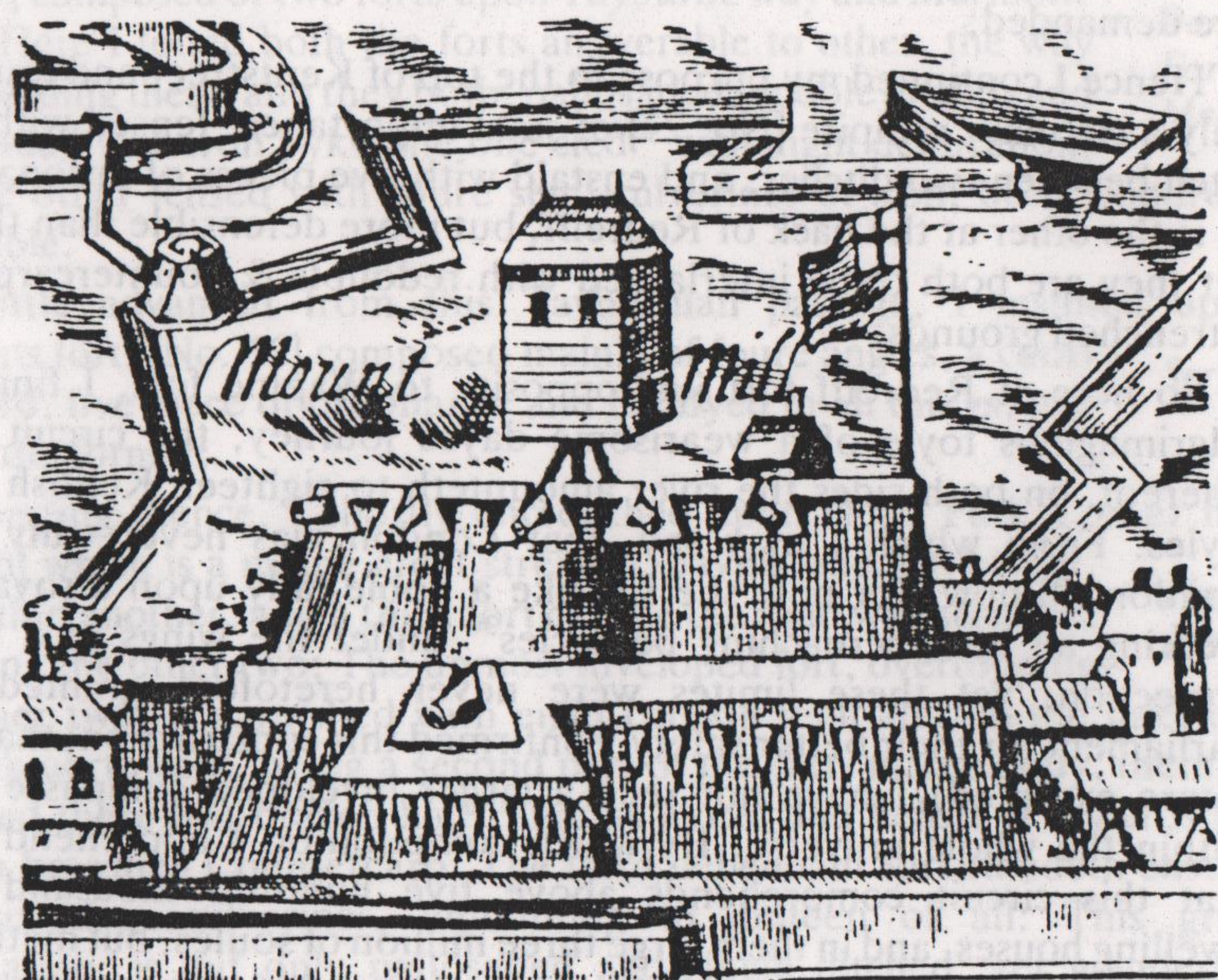
And now the maine number of all these circulating fortresses (besides redoubts, countercarps, and halfmoon-workes, along the trenches) amount to twenty-foure forts in all; & upon them planted and resettled two hundred and twelve pieces of Cannon, which indeed is a mighty and tremendous sight, where *Vulcan* and *Bellona* mean to make a bloody match if the esurious³¹ Assailants should come in a tragicall inconsiderable way, to surpryse the virginie of these new and now almost finished fortifications. Which indeed have been verie chargeable to the City, and daily will bee more, for all the Portholes are soled³² and syded with timber, the platformes where the cannons ly, are laid with strong oaken planks; all the ordonance are mounted upon new wheels, besides the pallosading and barrocading of them without, with yron works, and other engynes. *Strength & cost of the fortifications*

And now sorest in the daily maintaining of Commanders and forces in them, with ammunition and all things necessarie both for the Forts and

Souldiers. But it is no matter, let Guildhall pay for all, for there lyeth the Treasurie and weekly collections of the Citie, which amounteth to twelve thousand pound starling a-week, besides the Countrey about: and moreover, the customes, the Royall rents, the episcopall revenues, the plundering of Malignants, and all lye there: where there are sitting a daily Committee appointed by the Parliament and City, who have the disposing of all, as they think fitting: notwithstanding they must return their accounts to both the Houses.

And now in discoursing of these Forts, I have been somewhat prolixious, not usuall in my former styles, but done of purpose, that the Reader may conceive by Paper, which I have known by ocular experience; and so I proceed.

Finis



The only contemporary and authentic view of the fortifications is a woodcut from a 1643 broadside. It shows Mount Hill Fort (6), Finsbury (present site: the intersection of Goswell Road and Seward Street). The first fort to be erected, it was two storeys high and commanded Finsbury Fields. A trench dyke connected it with the next battery to the west at St John Street.

NOTES

The following notes cover unfamiliar terminology used in the text.

1. Most probably a misprint for "terrestrial".
2. Auxiliary war vessels established in the reign of Charles I, apparently so called because designed to attend on HMS Lion (OED).
3. Properly called *Corps de garde* (Fr.) Introduced into England before 1600, meaning a small body of soldiers on guard, or, as here, the post or station occupied by them.
4. Daily.
5. Pike.
6. Enclosed by railings.
7. Not traced.
8. *The Subject's Liberty: set forth in the Royall and Politique Power of England*. Anonymous pamphlet - "London: Printed for Ben. Allen in Popes-Head Alley. 1643." (BM Thomason Tracts E. 101 (19)).
9. Mace-bearer; in Scotland an official who keeps order in a court of law.
10. The Inns of Court.
11. Workers who draw, haul or pull.
12. The gentlemen's trade, so-called from the romance of Prince Crispin, who is said to have made shoes.
13. A woman who sells oysters.
14. Possibly a misprint for Loriners.
15. Texture - a covering, a roof. Tecturer appears to mean a roofer.
16. Jakes-farmer - worker employed to clean out privies.
17. A prayer book.
18. Italian. *Chi va piano va sano*. He who goes quietly goes wisely.
19. William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, at the time a prisoner in the Tower.
20. Matthew Wren, Bishop of Ely, a supporter of Laud, and now a prisoner in the Tower.
21. A sea channel renowned for the violence and uncertainty of its currents.
22. Hang, ie be hanged.
23. Attacks, by escalade.
24. Stronghold.
25. Apparently meaning within view of each other, without anything intervening on any side.
26. Royal.
27. Ten times the distance between a pair of butts. Butts were mounds or structures on which a target was set up for the practice of archery, usually one at each end of a shooting range. The distance between such a pair of butts would be from 200 to 300 yards.
28. Certainly.
29. Clad, clothed.
30. A subordinate or dependent part of an estate.
31. Esurient - hungry, impecunious and greedy.
32. Floored (as in the "sole" of an oven).

— The numbers in square brackets in the text relate Lithgow's account to the references on Vertue's map. Entries no. 3-16 seem not to tally precisely. There is a reworked map available at the Guildhall Library, London, for those wishing to pursue the matter further.

— The running captions accompanying the main text are ours.

— This article, originally reprinted in the "London Topographical Record" No. 14, 1928, pp. 1-35, is taken from a forthcoming book by RED NOTES, entitled *Five Articles on War and Class Composition and covering labour struggles in Nazi Germany; the economics of the Holocaust; the Gulf War viewed from a class composition perspective; London in the Civil War; and the storming of Newgate Prison*. For details, write to Red Notes, BP15, 2a St Paul's Road, London N 1.

STUDENT SELF MANAGEMENT: for a flexible workforce

The wave of student occupations in November/December 1991 showed the anger and potential of students to resist attacks and to fight for something new. The occupations - a sign of things to come - were short-lived and, returning after the holidays, it was almost as if nothing had happened. Everything was put off until after exams, the next essay deadline, and the next, as everyone knuckled down to the paper-chase for a qualification.

Everyone has spoken about students' loss of grants and benefits (even if the state demands statistical proof that taking away our money makes us poorer), about our pay cut, but little has been said about the intensification of work. Students' work has been increased by forcing us to take on more extra-curricular jobs to survive, by changes in the courses themselves and by the pressures of poverty forcing us into increased competition for the key to the "good jobs". The increased poverty of students has not made them drop out, as the National Union of Students (NUS) has claimed (at East London Poly drop-outs fell from 97 to 66) because they see their only hope of escaping overall poverty in getting qualified. All of these pressures have helped to atomise students and keep them too busy to fight, but are themselves increasingly unbearable and one of the main causes of our anger and revolt.

The rest of the article looks at the intensification of work on one course. It is not representative but shows a new, particular kind of intensification which will effect all courses and all of our futures.

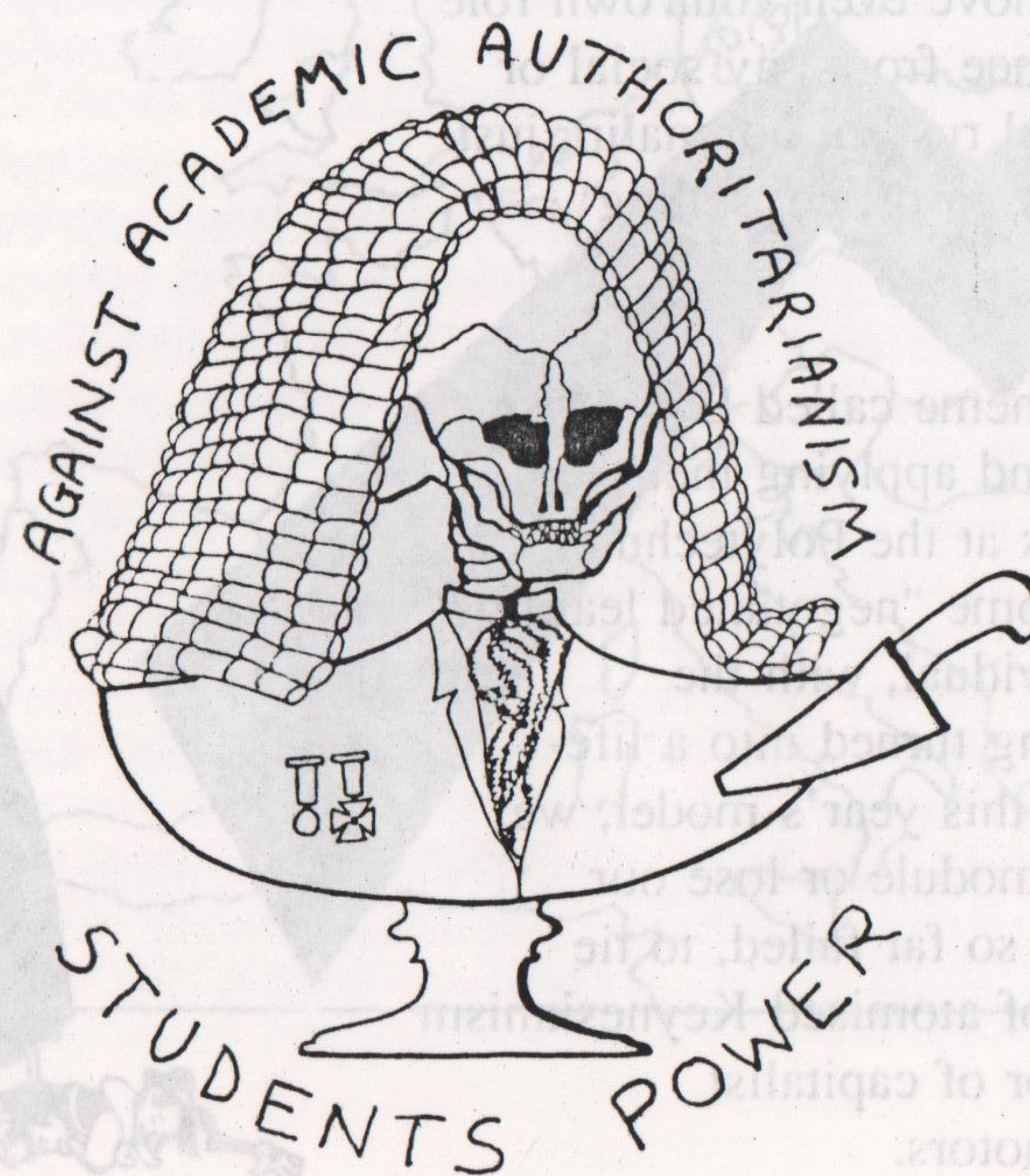
The Independent Studies (IS) course at East London Polytechnic is an experiment in education, one of the results of struggles by students against grading and for control of their own courses, as well as of the needs of capital in response to these struggles. Until recently students on the course were allowed to define their own study area and programme within vague limits that took the whole course to work out. Results were not graded and the programme ended with a "critical review" by the student of progress etc. The purpose was to "develop general skills which will enable [the students] to apply themselves to new and different situations in a modern, changing world". This meant that the actual study was less important than the process, self-analysis and development of "personal and social skills". They wanted to bring out under controlled (preferably self-controlled) conditions, our imagination, our ability to use personal and social skills and a willingness for them to be exploited.



By turning the demand for control over syllabus into an individual, private control, social skills and relationships become personal attributes to be developed, proved and then sold. Thus self-management becomes self-employment.

Most students, however, chose the course because they wanted to study an area not covered by normal syllabus. They wanted something different from their previous educational experiences and they had heard that they only had to turn up for half a day per week. They also wanted a grant!

At the end of last year the break up of the course was announced - the government inspector had complained of "students getting degrees in strange subjects like alternative medicine" and of the difficulty in finding students actually at college. Pushed towards vocational education and private funding, management were embarrassed by the course - who is going to invest in a course when they don't know what subject will be studied, with the probability that it will be something they would not approve of? It was decided that IS students should be divided up among the other departments, so restricting their subject choice and isolating them, as well as having their timetables filled up with compulsory workshops and lectures. Students resisted, using the skills and knowledge they were developing in their studies, turning the resistance itself into part of the course. But management were in no mood to back down and the students, isolated as homeworkers, were not around the college enough to organise properly. They were also defeated by the individualism fostered by the course itself, with many giving up when assured that the changes would only effect the new intake.



In fact the changes have effected everyone, not only because there are no first year students around to interact with, but also because the tutors have to spend most of their time in the other departments. They have also tried to tighten up the course, stressing the academic content so that employers will recognise it as proper education, while also increasing the pressure on students to be able and willing to sell themselves, their development and their ability to develop. "You have to turn the learning process into a product" (i.e a commodity), is how one tutor recently put it, while stressing the need to objectively analyze personal development. "You must remove the 'I' from the text", he said, which everyone decided was crap!

Some aspects of the course have been filtering through into schools, with the negotiated "Record of Achievement", as well as into vocational training through "flexible learning" (learning to be flexible and being responsible for your own re-programming) and crap about the "self-ownership" of skills. The new head of IS (who considers himself an anarchist) also runs courses for management to develop their interpersonal and decision making skills through playing mind games.

However, the experience of IS shows that students, like other workers, want flexibility and are pretty inflexible about it. The flexibility that capital has squeezed out of us has come not through education but through sheer poverty, and even that has not been enough. In fact, the needs of capital are fairly utopian. In the absence of workers who are flexible enough, capital is resorting again to attempts at the flexible use of workers through turnover, closures and "self-employment" (but less use of temporary workers who demand more flexibility than they give) and, going round and round in circles, it is sinking deeper into stagnation. The idea is to remove even your own role in an occupation or other form of resistance from any social or personal context - no anger, no communal rush of adrenalin, just a "personal skill" that can also be used in an office, selling socks or as a cop.

While IS was being broken up, a new scheme called Enterprise Learning was set up, taking parts of IS and applying them specifically to business skills. All courses at the Polytechnic are to be made modular and to include some "negotiated learning" - learning to negotiate as an atomised individual, with the "choices" already fixed. Education is being turned into a life-long paper-chase where, to keep up with this year's model, we have to continually study for this year's module or lose our place on the ladder. They hope, but have so far failed, to tie wages to this training, to impose a kind of atomised Keynesianism - smashing the working class as the motor of capitalist development into individual competing motors.



Mike

Report
on
An International Meeting
to
"Build a Europe of the Movements
Against
the Europe of the Bosses"

On the 7th, 8th and 9th of June 1991 about 1,000 radical grassroots activists from all over Europe gathered in Porto Marghera and Venice to discuss how to respond to the accelerating capitalist movement toward the unification of Europe. Also attending the meetings were a much smaller group of militants from other areas of the world, especially the Americas and the Middle East. The three days of meetings were organized by the activists of Padova and the Veneto area who run the movement radio Sherwood and publish the journal *Autonomia*.

In the preparatory materials for the conference the organizers set out a fairly open political agenda designed to appeal to a wide variety of militant activists, partly by explicitly rejecting any search for hegemonic analysis or action. The object of the meetings was to share analysis and experiences of struggle with a view to obtaining a better understanding of the current situation in Europe (and in the world more generally) and to speed up the future circulation of ideas and methods of struggle. The three days were organized around general assemblies, workshops on specific areas of struggle and the evenings were given over to other kinds of discussion and concerts in the occupied "social center" of Porto Marghera.



The Limits of this Report

I need to make clear, from the outset, that this can only be a partial report because the meeting was huge, the workshops multiple and it was impossible to participate in everything. I sat through two days of general assemblies and participated in two days of the workshop on "communication" —mostly about creating international networks to accelerate the flows of information and action among the movements. There was a third day of general assembly which I did not attend —spending my time making contacts and being interviewed instead— and about 6 other workshops I could not get to —a frustrating situation to say the least.

The Program

The general assemblies (which ran from about 2pm to 8pm) were the least satisfying aspect of the meetings because they consisted in one speaker after another with no interaction between speakers and audience. The presentations were often very informative, but as I told comrades at the time, the organization and style of most speakers made me feel as if I was back in the society of the left spectacle. Such unidirectional gatherings, speaker active - audience passive meetings with no chance for questions or challenge or discussion are mostly refused these days in the states and I was surprised to find so much time taken up this way during the three days.

Much more useful, because they involved considerable and sustained interaction and discussion, were the workshops. This was true for the one I attended and, according to reports also true for the others. The workshops were devoted to a variety of specific areas of struggle: communication, immigration, the liberation of space and time (esp. squats), the prospective unification of European legal apparatuses (esp. of repression), countering the forthcoming celebrations of Columbus and the "discovery" of the Americas, imperialism and international solidarity, the nuclear state. There was a noticeable absence in the program of either green or student issues as well as of wage-factory or peasant struggles. The absence of a specific workshop on women's issues was designed to force the discussion of gender into each of the other workshops but, apparently in reaction to discontent with this arrangement, there was a women's meeting which met to discuss both issues and the conference.

Who Came?

Although I don't have the exact numbers, the majority of those militants who participated in the meeting seem to have come from Germany and Italy with smaller numbers from England, France, the Netherlands and Eastern Europe. The representatives from the Third World were very few, as were those from North America. In the case of Europe those who came were entirely from outside the official political party and trade union movements. There were almost no academics, especially professors.

The participants in the meeting were also, overwhelmingly, young —the generation after '77 in Italy. There were very few older militants with experience in the 1960s and this was as true for the Italians as for those from other countries. The older participants were noticeable both by the paucity of their numbers and by their tendency to maintain a low profile, with little active participation in either general assemblies or workshops, even those dealing with areas of their own struggles. Partly as a result there was very little discussion of history, of "then and now" and everyone remained focused on present and near future struggles.

The Italians who attended came from a wide variety of cities —Venice, Padova, Milano, Brescia, Rome, Bologna, Torino and so on. It seemed to me that the Italians who attended were primarily those connected with the network of movement radio stations and the general space of "autonomia" as it exists in Italy these days. There were people there who were associated with a variety of publications, from *Autonomia* in Padova through *Collegamenti Wobbly* in Torino and *Invarianti* in Bologna to *Comunicazione Antagonista* in Bologna and *Decoder* in Milano. There were, especially it seemed, those associated with immigrant struggles, building occupations and computer networks, especially those which make up the European Counter Network (ECN) and the Cyberpunk network on Fidonet.

The German contingent seemed similar to the Italian; it was made up of a variety of "autonomie" militants, some associated with publications such as *Wildcat* (Hamburg & Berlin) or *Tekla*, some associated with radical computer networks such as the Berlin Chaos Club, more with experience in squats and immigrant struggles.

The only North Americans I met were from Canada (Prison News Service) and the West Coast (Bound Together Books). If there were Mexicans there, I missed them.

The only English participants I met or heard speak were from *Class War*.

The representatives from the Third World were quite few and, frankly, from a different span of the political spectrum than the autonomia organizers and most of the participants. From Latin America came representatives of the FMLN in El Salvador and the Tupac Amaru group in Peru, from Middle East came representatives from the Kurdistan and Palestine Liberation Movements. Noticeably absent were participants from Africa, either North or Sub-Saharan — which was particularly surprising given the emphasis at the meeting on the recent surge in immigration from that part of the world, especially in Italy. (I might add that I only heard one immigrant speak in the three days and he was quite ascerbic on the Eurocentric character of the meeting!) In all these cases the discourses of these Third World participants were permeated with the national liberation rhetoric of the 1960s and the sense of internationalism limited to solidarity and support work. Only one seemed to pick up on the critique of "national" liberation and different concept of internationalism held by most other participants and his reaction was primarily defensive. Despite this marked difference, the general attitude of the Europeans was uncritical and supportive —at least as far as I was able to gauge by the reactions to speeches in the General Assemblies.

The old-left character of those from the Third World seemed to indicate a real separation between the Italians who organized the meeting and what we might think of as their counterparts in the South. I had thought perhaps to find people from autonomous urban and rural struggles in the

INTERNATIONAL MEETING

International Meeting

Third World but nowhere was there evidence of any contact which would have generated such participation. Discussion with other participants, including those from Germany, reflected a similar estrangement from bottom-up struggles in the South —despite some people's familiarity with the work of those such as Claudia Werlhoff or Maria Mies who have written extensively about such struggles.

The number of participants from Eastern Europe was much smaller than anticipated, primarily because the Soviets who had been invited were unable to obtain exit visas. The most vocal participant from Eastern Europe was from Poland and called himself an "anarchist" ("Many of you call yourselves communists," he said, "we cannot do that —given our history!"). In fact it seemed that a sizeable number of those attending —and not just from Eastern Europe— called themselves anarchists and spoke in both anti-capitalist and anti-statist categories.

Background to the Meeting

According to the organizers, the meeting grew out of a felt need to build international linkages among militants in response to the unification of Western Europe, the resurgence of immigration in Europe, the collapse of the Berlin Wall and East to West immigration, Bush's declaration of a "New World Order," and most recently the struggle against the Persian Gulf War. All of these things have shown the limits of local or regional organization and action and the need for more international co-operation among the various movements —thus the title of the meeting.

In Italy, opposition to the war led up to a general strike on February 22, 1991 which was opposed by the government (which participated in the war) and the trade unions. It was organized through two national assemblies —of *autonomia* and *cobas* I gather— and some 150-200,000 people struck, including some 15,000 in Rome. The young *autonomia* militants called it "the first general political strike since WWII." It provided an occasion as well for building new linkages with the immigrant community struggles —a step in the direction of internationalization. At the same time there was a real lack of contact with other anti-war movements in Europe and a lack of information about what was happening in the U.S. in terms of both war resistance and flows of information about the situation in the Gulf. Thus an accentuation of the feeling that improved international linkages had to be built.

Those people in "*autonomia*" from the Veneto area who organized the meeting in Venice were emphatic in their pre-meeting statements and in their way of conducting the meetings that they were not searching a unification of political ideas or projects. With a political perspective grounded in a view of the "new political subjectivities" that emphasizes diversity as well as common class opposition to capitalism, their objectives explicitly sought a circulation of ideas and experience in ways which would contribute to the circulation of struggle but not generate any kind of centralized organizational structures. The bias was definitely for the "organization" of autonomous struggles, but against either atomization or unification. A summary statement of their conception of autonomous politics can be found in *Autonomia* No. 48.

The Workshop on Communication

The workshop on communication focused almost exclusively on political and technical questions of creating and operating movement computer networks. The lead speakers were from the ECN which had been involved in organizing the whole meeting. Their emphasis, which apparently grew out of prior debates, was on the politics of such networks —the rejection of any kind of Marxist-Leninist centralization and the point that the object was not just the circulation of information but the activities of autonomous subjects using the networks to link their struggles. The networks were treated less as technical means of social cooperation than as ways to facilitate the appropriation of these new means of production whose use by capital is already highly socialized. On the other side, there was some discussion of the hacker sabotage approach to the interruption and destruction of capitalist information flows and data banks.

It became clear in the course of discussion that the ECN differs in its approach to networking from the Cyberpunk Network which operates through Fidonet and publishes *Decoder* magazine. While there appears to be a common anti-capitalist, pro-autonomous struggle perspective, ECN is both the product and vehicle of militant groups involved in various struggles while the Cyberpunk network is made up of largely atomized individuals. Whereas the Cyberpunk network emphasizes complete openness and individual access to all information flows, the ECN by contrast emphasizes group to group communication of information needed in particular struggles.

An associated difference between ECN and Cyberpunk related to their choice of operating systems. While Cyberpunk utilizes a sub-area of a public system (Fidonet —analogous I gather to some public systems in the U.S.), ECN is built entirely autonomously and works only through direct computer to computer telephone links between cities. Like a public system, the ECN network is kept open and linked, i.e., it is possible to reach other parts of the system 24hrs/day, and they are working on automatic relaying of system inputs among poles. Unlike a public system, the system is not susceptible to some sysop outside of the autonomous network intervening to restrict or shut down channels of communication. This concern was echoed by the Germans who have also seen their use of the BITNET and INTERNET systems which link universities and research centers cut off by university authorities. While both groups seek to establish a non-hierarchical rhizomatic network of communication, they differ in their technical approaches, at least at the present —at least one member of the Cyberpunk network suggested that they intended to also eventually construct an autonomous network.

Within ECN and among computer network operators more generally, there was considerable discussion about other political aspects of system operation as well. For example, whether there should be "poles" within the system through which local operators are connected to the wider network. This is the way ECN operates —diagrammatically a system of interlinked stars. The opposition to such structures comes from fears of centralized sysop control over information flows and the lack of direct access by individuals or groups to every other area of the system. Closely connected to this issue is that of "press services" such as Spiderweb in Weisbaden which acts to pool, select and distribute movement information to various "cross points" in 150 cities in 40 countries, such as New Liberation News Service in the U.S. In such cases there is clearly a mediation in which "selection" takes place and the politics of that selection, indeed of its very existence was quite open to debate.

At the same time, at least in Germany where there are a variety of computer networks in operation, there is already a problem emerging which is omnipresent in the American computer network scene (and became quite obvious during the Gulf War): an overflow of largely unorganized information through which one must sort and sift to discover materials of interest. The Italians and French, who are at a lower level of technical operation than Americans or Germans, were less interested in this issue but it came up repeatedly. As the efficacy and number of such systems multiply, the movements will face a problem analogous to that which capital has faced for a long time: not merely generating information but figuring out which information is of use and gaining access to it without extravagant expenditures of time, energy and money. To date, as far as I could see, no one has worked out anything like a movement equivalent (based on very different politics) of the Library of Congress system of information classification to facilitate the storage and retrieval of information. Nor is it obvious, on a theoretical level, that any one such "system" is possible or desirable. Such an approach may work for capital which is unitary in its goals, structures and measures, but there seems no reason to think that a diversity of autonomous political groups and projects, with different theories and projects of self-valorization, would need or could use the same methods of sorting and selecting information —except in so far as they are all involved in the struggle against capital and have it in common. At any rate such questions were broached, but by no means answered during the workshop.

There was considerable German participation in the discussions of the workshop from a variety of people involved with one or another of the numerous networks in that country. In this case as well there seemed to be fairly close connection between the people in movement radio stations (Pogo, Radio 100) and those in movement computer networks. There too the preoccupation was with accelerating political discussion, exploring political ways of using new technologies as well as the creation of archives of information. There was some self-criticism of the austere, unattractive character of movement radio, e.g., in Frieberg, for being boring and unable to hold an audience. There was also an account of the use of FAX in student struggles (as in China or the Italian Panther) and in the struggles against the Gulf War.

Also from Germany came an account of Kaos Computer Club which was created in 1989 on the basis of a common opposition to the capitalist monopolization of technology and in favor of free access by all to both technology and information. The Club is not structured like a political group but is a loose network of young people (mostly men) who like to play with computers and who are frequently hackers devoted to penetrating closed systems and making their information publicly available. [This issue of the lack of women involved in struggles around computers was raised but not adequately, or even interestingly addressed.] This account sounded a lot like some ECN views of Cyberpunk which saw a danger of people being appropriated by the technology instead of appropriating the technology for the purposes of struggle. The ECN folks were strongly against any "mythologizing" of the technology and clearly uncomfortable with those who identified with "cyberpunk" science fiction even if they were using it and not just getting lost in "virtual reality."

That discussion led into one of technical competence and the use of technology. In reaction against the capitalist attempts to monopolize expertise there was a clear bias among those present to support universal computer literacy and a deprofessionalization of computer control and creativity. On the other hand, it is also clear that the technical problems are already so involved that ready acquisition of such skills (e.g., programming) is not practical for most people who are deeply involved in other areas of activity but who need to be able to use the technology for their own

purposes. It seems obvious that there is already a division of labor within the movements between those who are ready to become local "experts" and those who only want to learn what they have to learn for their own uses.

For geographically close networks, telephone hook-ups between nets provides a reasonable method for the internationalization of their operations. But for longer connections — such as those across the Atlantic or between Eastern Europe and Western Europe, or between the North and the South, such connections are costly and sometimes undependable (especially in the East and South). There was, therefore, some discussion of the use of such capitalist networks as BITNET and INTERNET which can be used for free by those with institutional connections. The Poles and those concerned with Europe-Atlantic connections were particularly interested in these paths. Apparently in Germany it is possible to obtain private access to these nets but at the not inappreciable cost of some 70DM/month — hardly a practical solution for most. Because these systems can be accessed by modem from private personal computers, however, they can be easily used from individual or movement computers with the necessary account numbers and passwords. The only problem is having persons with institutional contacts willing to acquire and make available said accounts.

One recent example of the political use of such movement computer networks occurred in Italy when the fascists firebombed a "centro sociale" in Rome, killing a young militant. Although the mass media mentioned this event it was quickly dropped (in two days). The networks took up the slack, distributed detailed information about the situation and the person killed (both on ECN and on Cyberpunk) in such a way as to generate a whole series of demonstrations throughout Italy against the firebombing and murder and for the defense of such liberated spaces.

A Palestinian participant in the workshop objected to the preoccupation with computer networks, arguing that there is neither access possible nor resources available to create such networks in Palestine or in many other areas of the Third World. While agreeing on the need for more rapid international flows of information (e.g., to mobilize support for the Intifada) he demanded a wider discussion. Given the paucity of Third World participants to provide more information on conditions outside of the North Atlantic and the immediate aims of the Europeans in building tighter links within Europe that widening proved impossible.

With regard to the sabotage of capitalist communications networks, there was some limited discussion of past and potential experience, from making phone calls for free to appropriating material to destroying data bases (e.g., of banks or government). There seemed, on the whole, more support for the liberation of information than for its destruction, with comments that harkened back to NACLA's early assertions that capital in its own processes of trying to control and manage us generates virtually all the information we need to destroy it.

The Feminist Protest

For two days I kept waiting for a feminist protest against the conduct of the meetings. In the General Assemblies virtually all the speakers were men (while many of the translators were women), few talks dealt with gender issues and at least in the communication workshop there was very little participation by women — although reports had it that there was much more women's participation in other workshops. When it finally came, the protest grew out of a women's meeting that according to one woman's report was highly charged and politically divided. The women it appears split into three groups: a group of Italians most of whom had participated in organizing the meeting, a group of Germans and a mixed group of both. Apparently the German women were the most angry about everything, from the prevalence of male speakers to the use of gender pronouns. Nothing they could have come up with would have surprised me because the general goal of introducing gender issues into each workshop and talk had completely failed to materialize, at least from what I had observed. These objections were brought to the floor of the last general assembly on Sunday in a series of fiery speeches, which I missed unfortunately because I was being interviewed outside the Arsenal when they began.

PROJECT FOR A PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL CAMP FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

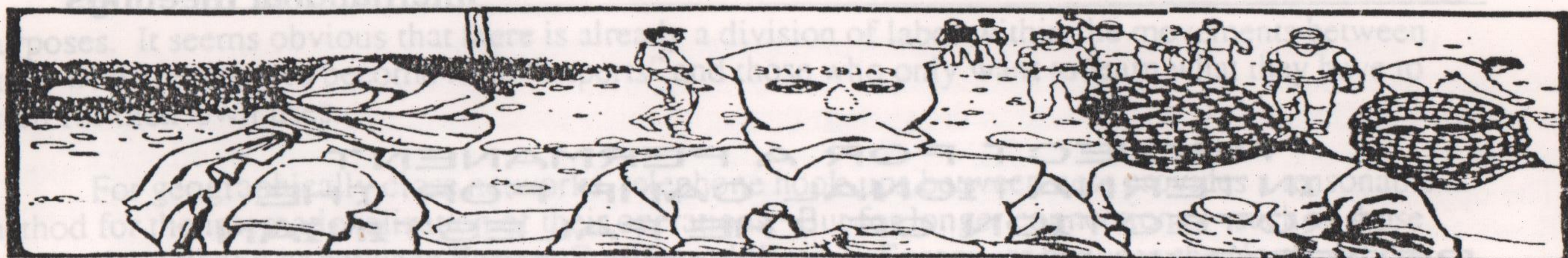
Introduction

The Intifada of the Palestinian proletariat in the Occupied Territories against the terror and oppression of the American-backed regime of "Israel" and its Arab middle-class collaborators is one of the most significant examples of autonomous class struggle. After almost five years of continuous struggle and the massacre of thousands of Palestinian men, women and children, the Intifada remains a potent force of social and political rupture, acting as a catalyst for the spread of class subversion throughout the Middle Eastern region; a region which, as the Gulf War bloodily demonstrated, is crucial to the interests of the imperialist North (ex-Soviet Union/CIS included).

The Intifada represents an eruption of class autonomy. It has plunged the fragile Israeli economy into profound crisis, as wave after wave of highly co-ordinated strikes, boycotts and stay-aways have deprived the settlers of their cheap labour and coerced consumers, forcing them into even deeper dependence on increasingly reluctant and depleted US strategic capital. At the same time, the Intifada is also a rebellion against those Palestinian shop keepers and businessmen who have raked off the profits of collaboration and who are now facing the wrath of a growing number of armed, organised class fighters; an aspect of class struggle which the bourgeois press tries to portray as "internal division and strife" within the Palestinian people.

All this has left the PLO clutching at diplomatic straws in its attempts to retain control and credibility among a section of the Palestinian people whose support is solid but by no means unconditional. This is perhaps shown on the one hand by the increasing support for the more revolutionary groups within the PLO, such as Habbash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which is opposed to the sterile charade of the present "peace talks". But on the other hand there is the problem of the apparently growing following of Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Hamas which accuse the PLO of being ineffective.

Finally and most significantly, the Intifada is not only young Palestinians burying Israeli soldiers and settlers under a hail of missiles, but also the creation of a new set of social and economic relations based around the needs of the proletariat, in incredibly difficult circumstances. As the appeals for both the international camp and the agricultural and shop co-operatives illustrate, the attempt by the Palestinian working class to break the capitalist cycle of WORK - WAGE - CONSUMPTION - WORK by setting up their own structures (including autonomous organisations like the Popular Committees) and through the "self-reduction" of prices, is a deeply rooted reality.



For years the Palestinian people have appealed to international organisations for a form of protection in the territories occupied by Israel. Not surprisingly these appeals have fallen on deaf ears, given that international organisations like the UN have legitimised and permitted the Gulf War and the extermination of the Iraqi people to go ahead. For this reason and also because of the need to reinforce relations between the European antagonist movement and the Palestinian Popular Committees, the proposal has been put forward for a permanent camp which will realise a form of practical internationalism; that which sees a horizontal exchange of experiences between antagonist realities throughout the world.

London Notes publishes here the proposal made by the Palestinian comrades present at the international meeting in Venice in June 1991, which was set out as follows:

1) Our presence alone helps to provide increased protection. It has already been verified that the presence of foreigners in certain periods of the year makes it more difficult for the Israeli regime to impose indefinite curfews and other forms of collective punishment.

2) This permanent camp will be organised into work and study brigades which will be active in various Palestinian refugee camps and villages. Together with the Popular Committees, these brigades will be able to organise training courses, the building of new structures, social work with children and study groups on certain themes in the socio-cultural and political life of the Palestinian people.

To explain better the possible kinds of work the brigades could carry out, here are a few examples which leave ample space for the creativity of different groups to make further proposals.

This project, as set out in the following points, should be used and spread throughout various sectors (teachers, workers, medics, etc.). It needs to be prepared and developed as a concrete programme so that it can attract the greatest possible interest and support.

A) TEACHERS:

Work in the nurseries and schools of refugee camps and villages with the aim of exchanging alternative teaching experiences with the teachers and children in order to create a direct relationship between European and Palestinian realities which could lead, for example, to the "twinning" of schools.

Summer training courses for nursery school teachers in the fields of animation, crafts etc., with the help of experimental techniques. As well as teachers, sociologists, educationalists, craft workers, artists etc. could also participate on these courses.

B) HEALTH WORKERS:

Work in the clinics and popular mobile surgeries as back up to the medical personnel on the spot, in the fields of physiotherapy and occupational therapy; support and stimulation of children's development and of other forms of medical assistance only recently set up.

C) AGRICULTURAL WORKERS:

Work for the popular agricultural co-operatives and for the introduction of new agricultural techniques in irrigation.

D) STUDENTS:

The University of Bir Zeit, closed for years but still functioning, is available to host students who wish to carry out research or prepare theses on any aspect of the Palestinian situation. Again, these could be the first steps towards forms of twinning between our universities and theirs.

E) WOMEN:

The Palestinian Women's Popular Committees have asked for an ongoing exchange between women and the liberation movements at an international level. Along with documentary and information material on every aspect of women's lives, meetings and seminars are also requested.

F) MEDIA WORKERS:

The making of videos and other forms of photographic journalism is possible, with the help of those who live the daily experience of the Intifada.

This international camp is open to everybody, including those who are simply interested in getting to know and report about the Palestinian situation, as well as giving those who have sponsored children the chance to meet them.

PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CO-OPERATIVE

1) Those employed in this project: there are five people working in this co-operative, most of whom have the green identity card [needed by Palestinian workers in Israel, ed.]. They carry out voluntary work, mainly consisting in the running of a shop selling basic commodities.

2) The co-operative is situated in the village of Beitillu, near Ramallah in the West Bank.

3) The aims of the co-operative are: on the one hand, to guarantee the sale of basic, essential commodities at "political prices", given that some shopkeepers are exploiting consumers, a fact which was verified particularly during the Gulf Crisis and the curfew. On the other hand, the co-operative intends to guarantee and to provide the possibility of work for the greatest number possible of people with the green card [almost all of whom were excluded from Israel and replaced by Russian immigrants after the Gulf War, ed.]. The co-operative plans for the minimum income necessary for it to continue its work.

- 4) The elements necessary for the development of the co-operative are:
- a) a guaranteed financial contribution in order to have an autonomous supply of electricity which is presently supplied by neighbours at the cost of 2500 shekels.
 - b) a 5 kw generator to use when the electricity supply is interrupted, resulting in severe damage to refrigerated products.
 - c) a larger fridge than the present one.
 - d) a freezer to conserve frozen meat.
 - e) 35 gas bottles as the co-operative also provides this service to its customers but has only 15 bottles at present.

These are the immediate needs of the co-operative which will guarantee its continuity. However, there is also a plan to open a shop to provide everything necessary for agricultural workers as Beitillu is situated among villages which depend on this for their living and the farm workers are forced at the moment to go as far as Ramallah to get what they need. The capital necessary to set up the above activity is about 15,000 shekels. We have a warehouse of 35 square metres for which we pay 10 dinars a month which could be used and where we could employ a worker responsible for sales, on a monthly salary of 600 shekels.

TOTAL COST OF THE PROJECT:

- Supply of electricity: 2500 shekels
- 5 kw generator: 5000 shekels
- Medium-sized fridge: 3500 shekels
- Freezer: 2500 shekels
- 35 empty gas bottles: 2450 shekels
- Capital to buy products for the agricultural workers shop: 15000 shekels
- TOTAL: 30,950 shekels (about £10,000)**

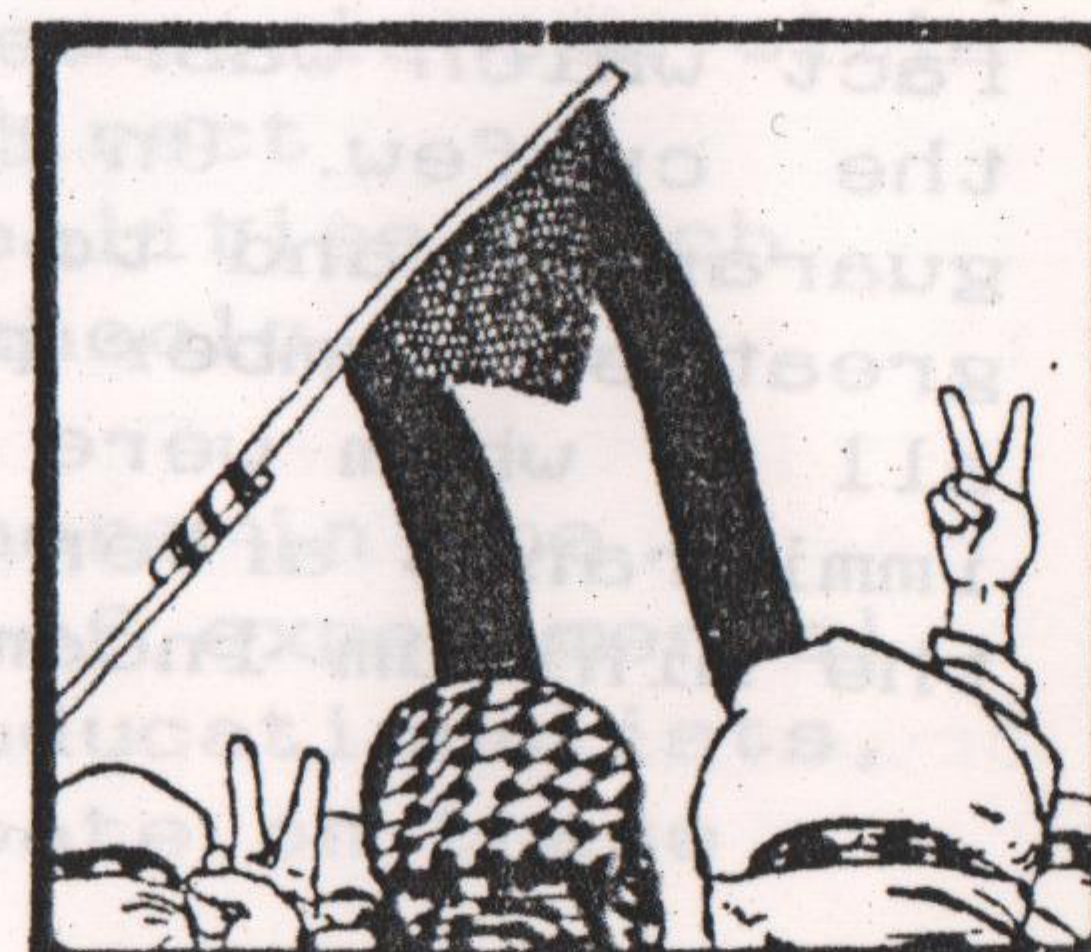
For further information and details on both these initiatives: either: contact directly the **INTIFADA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE**, Via dei Volsci 26, Rome, Italy, (tel. 39-6-491750 or fax 4400616, every Wednesday from 7 to 10 pm GMT);

or: write to **LONDON NOTES**, Box LN, 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London.

This appeal has been translated and distributed by LONDON NOTES on behalf of:

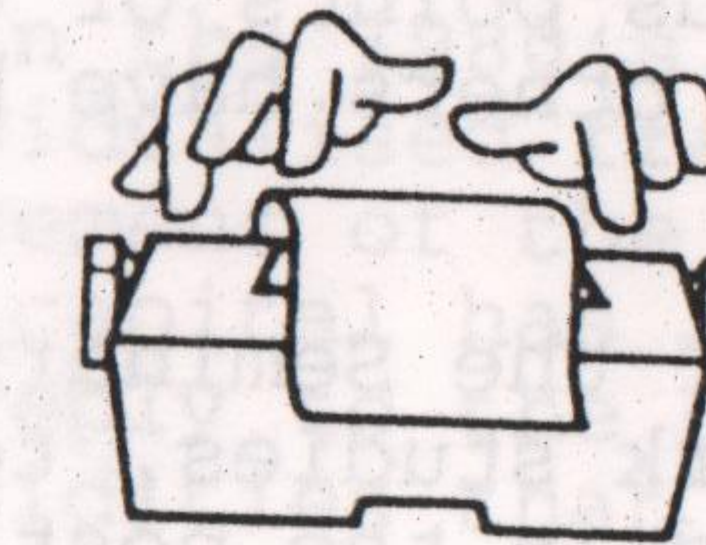
The National Intifada Solidarity Co-ordinating Committee (Italy)

Comitato Shebab



About a meeting held in Paris

We report here a letter received from a travelling comrade



Paris
24. ii. 92

Dear R,

The political project takes a small step forward.

Leave aside that: today I have my first sense that winter has come to an end. Walking the wide gravelled pathways of the Luxembourg Gardens, I feel the sun, hot, on my back. Light. Space. Open.

More to the point that: I have spent the weekend in a smoke-filled room with thirty Italian comrades in Paris. No doubt that it was a meeting of importance in what, for want of better words, I shall call the relaunching of the revolutionary communist movement in Italy.

The meeting was called by a section of the exiled Italian comrades in Paris. They invited local activists from several Italian cities to discuss the reality of political movement in their various localities. The intention was to measure these experiences against a set of concepts and analytical approaches that have been developed over the past decade, partly in the magazine *Futur-Anterieur*. Then, after an airing of issues, there was to be an **Inquiry** - an inquiry into what are social struggles and what is class composition as we move into the 21st Century.

The questions posed are:

let us embark on a process of political interrogation
(*un'interrogazione politica*).

what political composition corresponds to the present level of technical composition
(*quale composizione politica corrisponde all'attuale composizione tecnica*)

In short: grounded research; the collection of objective and subjective data; and a formulation of new concepts. All within a renewed model of Marx's "Workers' Inquiry", with a view to arriving at new guidelines for developing a movement of antagonism. A "work in progress".

The past decade was defined as "the years of absence" - *nota bene*, not "of defeat". Political repression during that decade stripped the Italian movement of its leadership (imprisoned, sent into exile, killed and otherwise destroyed). In Italy there is a generation that has come of age politically without the political tools to deal with the social realities of life under capitalism. The motive force behind this attempt to (re)interpret history in an antagonistic and projectual way is Toni Negri. He described the work that is being done by the Paris group. I quote roughly:

* The Paris group has built the magazine *Futur-Anterieur*. The journal is now in its ninth issue. Published from Paris, in French, it carries more or less Italo-French contributions on the realities of the "post-Fordist" world. One of the focus points of this theoretical work has been the Seminars which Negri and others have been running at the University.

* In the past year the programme of the Seminars has consisted of inviting experts from the field of work studies, to discuss what is the nature of work in the capitalist world in the post-Fordist era. What has the restructuring of the past decade been about? How has the disciplining of labour taken place?

* The journal now has a prestigious presence within the French Left intelligentsia. In parallel with their publishing activities, the comrades have been following the social and labour struggles that have shaken France over the past few years, and have been involved in practical organisational work. And, from a distance, they have been following recent developments in Italy.

Negri was clear about the strengths and limitations of the Paris group. They are a kind of slightly detached intelligence, a collective brain, a theoretical laboratory. As political exiles, having organised ways of earning a living, they are now able to devote their energies entirely to political theorisation (plus, in the case of several of the comrades, a detailed following of the Italian football scene, but that's another story). Their juridical condition prevents their wholehearted involvement in the French movement, and also keeps them out of Italy (they are political exiles). In this condition they have an enormous thirst for data inputs. They want to know what people are doing in Italy; what are the struggles, however small; what kind of discussions are under way in the various tiny focuses of antagonistic movement. They fully realise that their pre-existing political categories have to be re-elaborated in order to match present realities - but there is a shortage of objective and subjective data.

It was for this reason that the various comrades were invited to come to Paris. They were from the universities of Turin, Milan, Bologna and Pisa (Livorno), and came as representatives of larger groups in those cities (the Milan group, for example, were a section of the editorial board of *Klinamen*, a magazine which represents the bridging operation that the Paris meeting was designed to achieve). Each of these groups is, with all the limitations imaginable, trying to define and describe the present political composition that confronts it. Each of them is engaged on a more or less formal *inchiesta* ("Inquiry") into intellectual labour in the 1990s. (*Klinamen* No. 2 publishes some interesting articles on this front: *Lavoro intellettuale oggi - ipotesi per un'inchiesta* - "Intellectual Labour Today - Suggestions towards an Inquiry"). All of them are capable of contributing to what Negri called the *interrogazione politica* - a "political interrogation".

With all its hopes, all its weaknesses - the magnitude but at the same time the humble span of its reasonable expectations - I found the weekend more than stimulating. It was a promise, a challenge flung in the face of the future.

In Britain, for a good decade now, we've been living dark times. Times of political impotence. At the formal level we have been disenfranchised; at the informal level, either the material bases of class power have been destroyed (the miners, the auto workers, the dockers, the building workers...) in what were once the fortresses of class power, or people's brains have been addled by the mind-numbing hypnotic power of simply having to survive the re-imposition of capitalist control in the 1980's. The collective brain has been shattered into individualised fragments, without a central driving motive of the advancement of the antagonistic movement. And not surprisingly, since capital has reorganised itself massively and comprehensively in reply to the consolidation of class power and structural class rigidities that developed through the 1980's.

We too have lived the "years of absence", each of us poking around in our own little corners, each of us finding ways of surviving (and some not) and in many, many cases, our brains have gone to sleep. Creative intelligence can only sustain itself for so long when it lacks political power.



However, I have the sense that something is in the air. In Paris scattered fragments came together this weekend, and very definitely reconstituted a collective brain. There was an urgency there, a hunger that was as real as a hunger for food, a need for a continual exchange of material, data, impressions, and a determination to re-lay the foundations of a movement of creative antagonism. The three specific projects which the Paris comrades laid before the meeting were solid, definable and wholly necessary building-bricks for the construction of that project.

The projects they outlined were directed to the Italian movement. However they have a general applicability. Already the German comrades are well on the way to defining their own project of "militant Untersuchung", which will take shape at the Wandlitz II meeting in June. And other comrades in Italy (Rome, *autonomia*) have been hard at work redefining the terms of a possible "Inquiry" for the 1990's.

My suggestion is that we take up these projects, and apply them to our own situation as part of the process of building a coherent, conscious and self-aware movement of social antagonism in Britain. A project of reconstituting a collective brain, based on the work and struggles that are being developed in single localities all over the country.

So saying, it is early morning. Dawn is creeping up over London as I finish these notes. The train ends its journey, pulling the last half mile past the sleeping bulk of Battersea Power Station, and over the sparkling Thames. The night-boat train. Arriving at Victoria station. Terminus. My fellow passengers are still asleep, sprawled at various uncomfortable angles.

I have transcribed (and roughly edited) some of the Paris comrades' final summing up of the meeting, and include it attached hereby...

Paris
23. ii . 92

"...The only concrete thing we can undertake to do, over the coming period, is to DO things.

As regards us here in Paris, and what we can be doing from here (with a view to an exchange of materials, possible future meetings in Italy etc), for the moment the most we can hope for is to prepare a further stage of debate and discussion, possibly at a more advanced level.

...between now and May 1992, from Paris, we should be trying to set up at least three things:

First, a schema of historical analysis, a particular analysis with a view to entering the debate. (*Trans. note: This came up in the morning session, under a heading of the "archaeology of the past 10-15 years, in order to provide a re-reading of our history, and to develop political positions from within that re-reading".*) There are already materials prepared, and I think we could re-locate these materials within a political framework, as a basis for a general discussion. Some of the positions that were presented on Friday could become materials to be circulated and thus create discussion and counter-positions.

...one of the fundamental things for the revival of political debate in Italy is that, with the collective work that we have already done, we are now in a position to give an historical interpretation of the "years of absence". The initial schema of this interpretation could probably be laid out during this period.

Second, something which is anyway going to be part of our work from now until the summer. Namely, the preparation of the next round of Seminars here in Paris. This will see a transition: from the re-reading of the nature of work, to what is effectively a political project. Our question for the coming year is, to put it in traditional terms: what is the political composition that corresponds to the new technical composition that we have today?

In operational terms, this means addressing ourselves to the form of the "Inquiry" that we are planning to set up. In our Seminars for this past year, we have invited experts from the field of work studies to tell us about what has been happening in the organisation of work, the organisation of control etc; for the coming year we are planning to invite people like the French students who were involved in the recent struggles; health workers; engineering workers; people who are working at the territorial level, etc. We shall invite them to come and present their stories to an audience of researchers - reversing the traditional role - so that we can ask questions of these people, within a general discussion on the nature of work etc. Our main question in this period is: what is the political composition that corresponds to the present technical composition?

So, with the above, we can offer a programme of concrete work, which will be completed by next year. This is the decision that has been taken by the group who have attended the Seminars this year.

The third thing we could set up is an attempt to reconceptualise the notion of the "Inquiry". We shall refer back to various texts, including *Capital*, and also the work on this theme done by other comrades, in Rome for instance. A month ago we had a conference here at the University, including comrades from America, Britain and Germany, where this notion of reconceptualisation was very much on the agenda. The question we posed was: is the value form, as it was developed in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse* re-applicable at the level of the new composition, the new phenomena of... for example, what does the value form mean in the light of feminism? Or in the light of "immaterial work" (*lavoro immateriale*)...? This conference was very important, because it enabled us to refute some of the theses of the "new revisionism" Marxists, found in a journal called *Actuel Marx*..., which develops a concept of value which is purely contractual. But there was also an undercurrent of conflict over precisely the questions that have arisen this weekend - whether the prospects are such as to make us optimistic or pessimistic, in our understandings of the modifications taking place in the nature of work.

I think that we can undertake to do the three things above, always assuming that there is not the intervention of some *deus ex machina*, like a revival (which seems ripe and very close) of a new student movement and a new movement of struggles. This would make possible a far more concrete verification of a whole series of propositions.

In addition, there are a number of practical interventions that we are involved in Paris, and the work that the comrades are doing in the area of communication.

I think that we have to consider everything that we have done here in Paris thus far as a "work in progress". I don't think that at this point we can expect to come out with a common line of research. Obviously everyone has their own problems to deal with in their own situations... We in Paris are lucky because we are immigrants. We are forced into this role of study and research because we have few possibilities of being active at a practical level, having a practical relationship with the real world of struggle (*il reale*). Others of you have all kinds of practical everyday problems to be dealing with, and it's obvious that this will condition the commitments you are going to be able to make.

Basically, everyone should just do what they can..."

And so saying, I end this letter. It remains only to wish you well, and to raise a small hope for some useful work in the coming period.

Peter.



**THE TEXAS ARCHIVES
OF
AUTONOMIST MARXISM**

The Texas Archives of Autonomist Marxism is a collection of materials from around the world mostly written within the tradition of workers' autonomy. That is to say, by people who recognize and appreciate the ability of workers (broadly defined to include unwaged workers such as students, peasants, and housewives) to take the initiative in the class struggle and to act independently of "official" organizations of the class, e.g., trade unions, political parties. This tradition includes strands of anarchy, council communism, the new left, autonomia, feminism, indigenous peoples' and peasants' movements, youth movements, counterculture, eco-militancy, and so on —from the 1920s to the present.

The Texas Archives was created to help speed up the class struggle by accelerating the circulation of materials produced by such areas of militancy and does so by making copies of the written materials we have collected available to kindred souls at the cost of reproduction and mailing. To let others know what we have available, we produce an Index to the Archives which we update periodically with supplementary listings of new materials —so far there have been three such supplements.

Individuals and autonomist groups can obtain the Index with the three supplements (200 pages reproduced on 50 pages) for \$10.00 US (includes trans-Atlantic postage) or an equivalent value in autonomist materials (including subscriptions).


The Texas Archives of Autonomist Marxism
c/o Harry Cleaver or Conrad Herold
Department of Economics
University of Texas
Austin, Texas 78712-1173
U.S.A.

Fax: (512) 471-3510

!! GET CONNECTED !!

The European Counter Network (ECN) is a system designed to store and aid the circulation of information about our struggles across Europe and the World. It connects comrades and groups across Italy, Germany, France, Poland, ex-USSR, US..., etc, and collects their news and analyses.

To load or retrieve information you need an IBM compatible, a modem, and a phone. For more information call directly the Italian pole in Padova at the number below or write BOX LN, 121 Railton Road, London, SE24.


ECN NETWORK

E COUNTER EUROPEAN

INFOFAX ← **STERWOOD**

Vicolo Pontecorvo n. 1/A - 35100 PADOVA

**NODO TELEMATICO
GRUPPI AUTONOMI
★ VENETO ★**

fax 664589
 tel. 049 8752129
 modem 8756112

"Of particular interest is an international conference which was held in Venice in June 1991, attended by 2,000 militants which signals the fact that anti-fascist organisations have reached a new and higher level of professionalism. Clear indication of this comes from the formation of the 'European Counter Network' (ECN), an on-line network of computers which circulates left-wing information.

...However the militant extreme-Left movement is more dangerous (ed. note: than that of the Right) because it is developing a higher level in organisation and a greater intelligence in the elaboration of plans and tactics." From 'Kriminalistik', German police review, March 1992.

Flattering!! However, the assessment by the German secret services tallies with similar assessments by the Italian secret services (Parliamentary weekly report, October 1991) is not how we measure ourselves. The thing about ECN is that it is a public secret. The open nature of the network, the complete freedom of access to all messages by anyone who wants to connect into them - this, for us, represents its attacking and defensive strategic

composition.

In this age of computerised control of society, a clandestine computer network would be both unthinkable and unrealisable - but it would not even be desirable politically: our greatest defence is a maximum of socialisation and of diffuse activation of social subjects. The strength of ECN is precisely its proliferation: as a symptom and vector of its ability to do damage to systems of social control in our society.

Continued from the inside front cover.

PRISON REVOLTS:

● December 21st: 80 prisoners clashed with prison officers at Full Sutton prison on Humberside. They refused to return to their cells for two hours.

● At the end of December 1991 prisoners rioted at Moorland prison, near Doncaster. 19 cells were wrecked and 65 partly damaged. The riot started when ten inmates were dragged inside by prison officers in riot gear after refusing to return to their cells at the end of an exercise period. 120 prisoners were disciplined for taking part. Moorland is a showpiece jail for young offenders (15 to 21 year olds) which opened at a cost of £56 million in July 1991: during the riot the prisoners' slogan was "Moorland-opened '91, closed '92". In August a recreation room and staff rooms were wrecked in another riot.

● In the 12 months up to the end of November 1991, there were 188 escapes from prisons (involving 317 prisoners) in England and Wales, compared with 130 in the year before. In the same period there were 110 escapes of prisoners travelling under escort between jails and courts, compared with 81 in the previous year. There were also record numbers of acts of concerted indiscipline, fires and barricades. Between May 1991 and the end of November there were 81 'acts of concerted indiscipline', 21 bomb threats, 17 losses of keys and 13 rooftop demonstrations. 881 people absconded (mostly from open prisons), and 862 people failed to return from home leave. The Government is now planning a Prison Security Bill which will increase penalties for protesting prisoners, including introducing the offence of prison mutiny.

JANET GARDNER

A campaign has been launched in support of Janet Gardner, a woman in prison for killing a man in self-defence. On November 20th 1991, Janet was jailed for five years for killing Peter Iles. Since knowing Iles, Janet had lived a life of hell, defending herself from continual violent attacks. The night she killed him she was suffering yet another beating. Janet stabbed him out of sheer panic and desperation, to save her own life that Iles had threatened for so long.

Send messages of support to Janice: Janice Gardner Campaign, c/o P.O. Box 26, Portsmouth, Hampshire, UK. (tel: 071 704 0651).

FRAMED PRISONERS

Britain is notorious for the number of people in prison for crimes they did not commit: framed up by the cops and the courts for being the wrong class/colour or creed.

Winston Silcott, one of the Tottenham Three has had his conviction for the killing of P.C. Blakelock in the 1985 Broadwater Farm riot quashed. He is still fighting another "murder" conviction for killing a man in self-defence. He is going back to appeal. Letters of support to:

● Winston Silcott, B74053. HMP Gartree. Market Harborough. Leics. LE16 7RP.

Kenny Carter: framed up (for life) for the death of his cellmate who committed suicide. He has constantly fought his conviction. Write to:

● Kenny Carter, AD3434, HMP Whitemoor. Longhill Rd, March. Cambridgeshire.



Glen Lewis: Framed up for ten years for armed robbery by the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad (who framed the Birmingham Six) has had his conviction quashed but is to be tried again on the same charge (this has never happened before!)

● Glen Lewis, W56246. HMP The Dana. Salop, Shrewsbury. SY1 2HR

There are many other framed prisoners. For more info you can contact either ● LONDON A.B.C (address below) or ● CONVICTION, PO BOX 522. Sheffield. S1 3FF (a framed prisoners organisation)

OPERATION IGLOO - A.L.F TRIAL

On 14th October, Keith Mann and Vivien Smith were arrested and charged with "conspiracy to commit arson" and other offences for alleged attacks against 86 meat industry vehicles in Kent in '91. Vivien was arrested after a high speed car chase during which she was rammed off of the road. Keith was nicked as he entered a friend's house. The aim of Operation Igloo, the police initiative, was to break an ALF cell where they proclaimed Keith as "second in command" and Vivien as "the Commander". The cops used cameras, phone taps, bugs and vehicle tracking devices with the aid of 12 permanently assigned cops and 6 cars for this massive surveillance exercise.

Both prisoners are still on remand but Keith has been moved up to Manchester to face questioning and further charges. On 11th March, eight people were charged at Manchester Magistrates Court with conspiracy to commit criminal damage. (SOURCE: ALF Supporters Group March-May 1992)

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Regular pickets are being held of the Spanish Consulate in Manchester, in support of Pablo Serrano. Pablo, an anarchist, was jailed in Spain in 1984, having been convicted of the political murder of an Employers' Association consultant. Pablo is now due for parole, but it has been refused him ten times. The Manchester pickets happen on the first Monday of every month. On the 4th November and 5th December 1991, the pickets succeeded in closing the consulate for two hours. (Details from: Bolton Anarchist Black Cross, Box 47, Bolton, England.

Write to: Pablo Serrano Serrano, Prison de Torrero, Av.America 80, 50007, Zaragoza, Spain).

● 16.3.92: The Spanish airlines office was picketed in London in support of Gerardo C. Ferre, a 27 year old anarchist from Barcelona who was jailed in the summer of 1991 for burning a Spanish flag.

Prisoners news here was mostly supplied for us by London Anarchist Black Cross -

" We support prisoners of the class system, people inside for revolutionary activities, framed prisoners and people resisting inside. We support campaigns for better conditions inside but ultimately believe in destroying the prison system as it stands as part of a social revolution.

We produce a regular news-bulletin and various leaflets. Send us a donation for info or if you want to, we can put you in touch with other ABC groups in your area". (London A.B.C: 121 Railton Road. London SE24)

NO POLL TAX...EVER!

Although the government has announced that the poll tax is to be abolished, people are being told that they will have to continue paying it until a new local government tax ("the Council Tax") is introduced. Resistance to the poll tax, including mass non-payment is continuing. In Scotland only half of the 1991/92 tax has been collected, with non-payment standing at £690 million. In England and Wales 26% of people registered for the poll tax have been summonsed to court for non-payment.

Strikes against the Poll Tax cuts continue. Back in December, many Camden council workers took strike action and joined a Day Of Action against poll tax cuts and rent increases. Later on, 200 tenants, squatters, workers and Anti-Poll Tax folk lobbied a Council meeting where further cuts were agreed on. Recently all of Southwark council's finance department struck against compulsory redundancy for 30 workers. The Council had payed CAPITA (a private firm) 250,000 to phone non-payers and intimidate them but this caused a large deficit in the Dept. budget which the redundancies hoped to clear. In Newham, teachers went on a half day strike and marched on the Town Hall to protest at £11 million being cut from the education budget. (A further £35 million of cuts is in the offing). On the same day NALGO held their second one-day strike over the sacking of eight Poll Tax staff. In Ealing on 5th March, the day that Council set the coming years Poll Tax rate, many council workers went on a one day strike and 1000 people demonstrated and marched against the Tax and cuts. The council promising to keep the Poll Tax below £300 set the rate at £299!

bailliffs! We have long memories...

On 10th December bailiffs (called Sheriff Officers in Scotland) planned to enter up to 300 homes in the Glasgow area to seize non-payers' goods. Resistance meant that they were only able to enter one of the targeted homes. Up to 1000 people went on to the streets of the Springburn area of the city. Crowds of up to 200 blockaded the entrances to non-payers homes, kids on bikes carried messages, and fleets of cars chased bailiffs. 29 people were arrested during the protests, and 300 people surrounded a police station demanding their release.

Bailiffs from the firm Gaults sexually and racially abused a Bromley woman on March 6th. When the cops arrived they continued the assault and helped with the theft of her property. A private prosecution against these two bailiffs was dropped on the grounds that it was the woman's word against theirs. A demo was held outside Penge police station to protest at the cops behaviour in this case and that of another woman assaulted by Gaults on the same day. Police are now meeting with Bromley Anti-Poll Tax Union to discuss possible charges in the second case.

The case of two Pate Wallis Today bailiffs who are being privately prosecuted by a Southwark resident for assault continues.

we are still winning

On March 19th, activists from Haringey and Camden staged a "go-in" on Haringey Council's Poll Tax office in Wood Green. After easily obtaining access, they handed out leaflets to the workers and explained that they were protesting the jailing of Lingval Cousins for non-payment on March 16th.

Gravesend non-payer Jill Emerson gave a political defence during her liability order hearing on March 25th and was sent down to the cells for contempt. In solidarity, all the other non-payers present trooped down to the cells and were all fined £50 for contempt as well. Some have vowed not to pay the contempt fine.

On April 21st, 22 people were arrested (but none charged) for staging a sit-in at Highbury Magistrates Court, where a number of people were threatened with jail for non-payment. 120 people picketed the court. Cases were adjourned.

support the poll tax prisoners...

By May, it is likely that only Tim Donaghy will still be incarcerated from the Trafalgar Sq. riot in March '90. Tim got knocked back on his parole and may not be out until Feb. '93. A campaign to fight for early parole is under way to allow Tim to re-attend his College course. Write to Tim at: Tim Donaghy MW0105. HMP Down View, Sutton Lane. Sutton. Surrey SM2 5PD.

(A man was picked up by the cops in April and found to have charges outstanding from Trafalgar Sq. First court date April 22nd).

● Over 1500 people marched through Glasgow Pollock on March 27th demanding the release of local poll tax prisoner Tommy Sheridan.

Colchester 15

The trial of the Colchester 15 continues. Of the first eight defendants (arrested at an Anti Poll Tax demo in Colchester in March '90) four were found not guilty but the rest were jailed. The next seven face a pre-trial hearing in May. All those found guilty are appealing.

Terry Frost DL1911 A-Wing HMP Norwich. Knox Rd. Mousehold. Norwich NR1 4LU. (Riot, two years. Earliest parole date, 6.12.92. Earliest Release: 6.8.93)

Andy Hester NL2430 HMP Britania, Knox Rd. Norwich. (Riot, 18 months. Earliest parole date 6.10.92. Earliest Release: 6.4.93)

Christine Hammett TV0063 HMP Holloway, Parkhurst Rd, London, N7 ONU

(Violent disorder, nine months. EDR 20.8.92)

Patrick Tyler HMYOI Norwich, Knox Rd. Norwich (Violent disorder, six months. EDR 6.7.92)

(The info above was mostly compiled from the excellent monthly London Fight The Poll Tax bulletin which is the only regular source for news about the Anti-Poll Tax struggle inc. liability order legal challenges, committal news, prisoners, bailiffs (addresses, car numbers), etc.

The bulletin always needs money (about £35 a month) and so donations (and/or requests for copies) can be sent to: London Fight The Poll Tax c/o BM CRL, London WC1N 3XX.)

SQUATTING/HOUSING

SQUATTING - the truth and nothing but...

Well, the Government (old one) finally did something about squatting. The Home Office held a six month "consultation" period to gather the nation's property owners views on squatting and to pretend that new laws on squatting are needed. Needless to say, before the consultation ended, the Tories announced during their election campaign that if re-elected they would make squatting a criminal offence. Well, they got back in but the Queen's Speech on 6th May didn't put forward the Criminal Justice Bill (which was expected to contain the changes in the squatting laws) for the next Parliamentary session. The Home Office news desk said that the criminalisation of squatting will be considered by the Minister and made the subject of its own bill later in the year.

The news that 50,000 squatters in the U.K could be criminals in the near future brought about a new lease of life in the organised squatting communities (although this is only a tiny percentage of all those who squat). A demo of 150 marched through Hackney on 21st Dec and George Young, the Housing Minister was given a noisy reception by Hackney squatters during a recent visit to the area. Local groups in Birmingham, Cardiff, Bristol and London held occupations of city centre buildings to highlight the proposed criminalisation. The campaigning group Squatters Action For Secure Homes (SQUASH) was started and put in a lot of hard work to encourage advice centres and national housing charities to respond to the Government "consultation" paper and also informed the media with the true facts about squatting. The pro-squatting coverage in the media was tiny compared to the massive anti-squatting hysteria put over by The Daily Mail and The London Standard (amongst others).

National squatters chat and prepare action...

On March 28th, a national conference on squatting was held in Birmingham which, although badly attended due to late publicity, initiated a national squatting information network (S.I.N) which mails out news and stuff between all the known squatting groups in the U.K. every fortnight and a Day Of Action against criminalisation. (Tuesday 26th May with the focus on each regional group occupying a Town Hall, Housing Office etc and a joint national press statement announcing the action). On March 31st, the end of the "consultation" period, about 50 squatters demonstrated outside the Home Office with banners and a small push and shove with the cops who prevented us from going en masse into the Office to present a formal complaint about the phony consultation.

Right now, it's just a case of working out the best strategies for defeating the new law. Realistically, the squatting movement is not strong in the U.K. (precisely because squatting is only a civil offence and not a criminal one). There is no need for people to defend their houses against the cops etc and when evicted it isn't too difficult to find another empty place, although evictions in council properties have risen dramatically in the last year in the heavily squatted London areas of Hackney, Lambeth and Southwark.

Cops get in early practice for new law

On 1st February, a gig at a squatted bank in Mile End, East London was attacked by the police. Hundreds of police arrived at about 11pm and smashed their way through the doors, attacking the occupants as they forced everyone outside. 50 people were arrested and eventually 22 were charged (initially all with violent disorder but later some charges were dropped down to threatening behaviour and affray). Immediately, the Mile End 22 Campaign was established to collate evidence of the police's brutal and illegal eviction of the Bank. The court cases continue.

Again on 23rd February, the police attacked a squatted centre, the Nevil Arms (a squatted pub) in Hackney. 9 people were arrested and charged with violent disorder. Some of the court cases have been won by the squatters but other cases are still ongoing.

Elsewhere, in London, squatters occupied the empty Dole Office in Brixton and put the space to good use (excellent meeting by friends from Italy about Italian squatted social centres on 18th March) with a regular cafe and occasional gigs (even a hip-hop night). Despite going to court and winning a two-month adjournment, the place has now been evicted.

Some squatters and tenants in Southwark hit back at the local council's poster campaign announcing that they would be evicting 1250 tenants for rent arrears. Using the same typeface and graphic (a silhouetted family holding packed bags) they printed and flyposted their own propaganda - "EVICT SOUTHWARK COUNCIL" and "RENT STRIKE - EVICT US ALL".

Contacts: S.I.N c/o 612 Old Kent Road, London SE15. U.K.
SQUASH - 2 St Pauls Rd. London. N1. U.K.

At the beginning of January homeless people occupied a temporary shelter in Fulham, West London. Hammersmith and Fulham Labour Council opened the homeless hostel at Munster Road School on December 7th, but threatened to close it on December 16th. After residents occupied the council leader's office, it was agreed to keep it open until the new year. When the council again tried to close it, residents refused to leave and began running the building themselves. A woman involved said: "Here we are living as a community. We meet every morning to decide what to do. We set our own rules. We are showing we could run our own lives - if we had the chance". (donations/messages of support c/o Hammersmith Unemployed Workers Centre, 190 Shepherds Bush Rd, London W6 7NL)

On February 5th SQUASH activists occupied an empty office block in the City of London to highlight the amount of empty office space in London. The occupation lasted three days during which banners were hung from the building and leaflets given out in the street outside. The building was owned by Prudential, a company currently making mortgage defaulters homeless by repossessing their homes.

20/1/91: Squatters resisted evictions on Haggerston Estate in Hackney. The housing office door was glued up, banners were hung out, tyres let down on a police van, and a council official's clipboard stolen. 4 people were arrested but all were released with cautions.

LESBIANS AND GAY MEN

Lesbian and gay activist group OutRage have been busy with their "Equality Now" campaign in the last few months. 45 people were arrested on the 6th February on an Outrage march on Parliament demanding the repeal of all anti-gay laws. After marching through London's West End, the demo was stopped by the police on Charing Cross Road. Demonstrations near Parliament are illegal when MPs are sitting.

In 1989, there were 3500 prosecutions for consenting homosexual relations between men over 16, up to 50 men went to prison. More than 460 men were convicted simply for cruising or chatting up other people in public. This fact was highlighted by Outrage in March when they held a "wink-in" at Piccadilly Circus in Central London, where gay couples looked lovingly at each other and winked - illegal under Section 32 of the 1956 Sexual Offences Act. This time however nobody was arrested.

(OutRage c/o London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 67-69 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6BP)

ANTI-RACISM

The re-elected Tory government has announced it is to re-introduce the Asylum Bill, which will make it harder for refugees to settle in Britain. On the 18th of January thousands marched against the Asylum Bill in London.

15/2/92: The British National Party had to abandon plans for a public meeting in Rochdale, Lancashire, after hundreds of people occupied the pub where the meeting was supposed to be held. Local Asian taxi drivers kept a look out for fascists, and any who showed their face were quickly chased away. 600 people turned out to oppose the BNP.

20/2/92: Taxi drivers in South Manchester took strike action for four hours to attend the funeral of Mohammed Sarwar, a taxi driver beaten to death by racists in January. More than 200 cabs joined the funeral procession. Two days earlier, 300 people spontaneously blocked the streets of Withington in Manchester to mark the funeral of Sadiq Dada, a 60 year old Asian shopkeeper hacked to death by white youths.

22/2/92: On the first anniversary of the racist murder of 15 year old Rolan Adams, 3000 people marched to the British National Party bookshop in Welling, South-East London. Racist attacks in the areas have increased by 140 per cent since the shop opened. The march was called by the Rolan Adams Family Campaign.

22/2/92: 25 BNP papers attempting to hold a paper sale in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, had to be escorted out of the area by police after 600 people turned out to oppose them.

Over 2000 people marched through Newham, east London on March 28th in protest at racist attacks and police violence. In particular they were marching in defence of two local black men, the Deanes. Mr Deane, aged 53, and his son Tony were viciously assaulted by police on 4th November 1991. Both required hospital treatment. Despite this, the Deanes were charged with assaulting the police. On the 29th of December a Tamil refugee, Mr Sanithara, was murdered by a racist gang less than a mile away from the scene of the assault on the Deanes. As the Newham Monitoring Project point out: "We simply cannot rely on the police to protect us from racist attacks. For, as the case of the Deane family shows, the Police policy of criminalising innocent Black people makes them a part of the problem of racism. Policing is not carried out for Black people but against us".

contact: Defend the Deane Family, P.O. Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7 (tel: 081 555 8151)

Anti-Fascist Action put a stop to fascist paper sales in Bermondsey, South London one Saturday at the end of March. BNP and National Front paper sellers were physically surrounded and prevented from carrying on. One person was arrested when a brief fight broke out.

The BNP held an election rally in Tower Hamlets, east London on April 6th. 500 people protested outside the meeting, and placards, coins and bottles were thrown at BNP supporters. 6 people were arrested.



ACT-UP

Fashion house Benetton announced plans to use a picture of a man dying from AIDS in an advertising campaign in January. ACT-UP Norwich picketed their local Benetton store with a banner stating "The true colours of Benetton: turning death into dollars". On February 15th, ACT-UP protested at a Benetton shop in central London. On March 7th, there were protests all over Europe, marked in London by people visiting Benetton outlets unfolding pullovers and shirts. There have also been protests in Manchester, and in Dublin where the AIDS Alliance picketed a Benetton store.

March 1992: ACT-UP activists flyposted the offices of stockbrokers Robert Fleming in London, with the message: "This company is guilty of AIDS profiteering". Flemings will make an estimated £2 million from handling the new £5 billion share issue by the Wellcome Trust, manufacturer of the anti-HIV drug AZT.

11 April: Around twenty activists from OutRage and ACT UP stormed Tower Records store in Piccadilly Circus, Central London to protest against the American rock band Guns 'n Roses. The band's song 'One in a million' includes the lyrics: "Immigrants and faggots, they make no sense to me. They come to our country and think they'll do as they please. Like start some mini-Iran and spread some fucking disease". The protestors plastered the band's records with stickers saying "Queers say Fuck U", "Women say Fuck U" and "Blacks say Fuck U". One person was arrested. (ACT-UP London, BM 2995, London WC1N 3XX)

FOOTBALL

Football supporters up and down the country have been staging protests against money making schemes which will make it harder for working class fans to watch football. West Ham FC launched a bond scheme under which fans were asked to pay up to £975 each for the privilege of seeing the team play in the future. The scheme aimed to raise money to build a new All-Seater stadium - a move also opposed by fans.

At West Ham 5000 stayed behind to call for the sacking of the board after the match against Wimbledon on 11th January. They stormed the pitch and laid siege to the Board Room waving red cards with "resign" written on the back. On 29th February West Ham fans released 11,000 red balloons, sat down on the terraces and stood up in the stands. Later play was held up for 5 minutes by a pitch invasion.

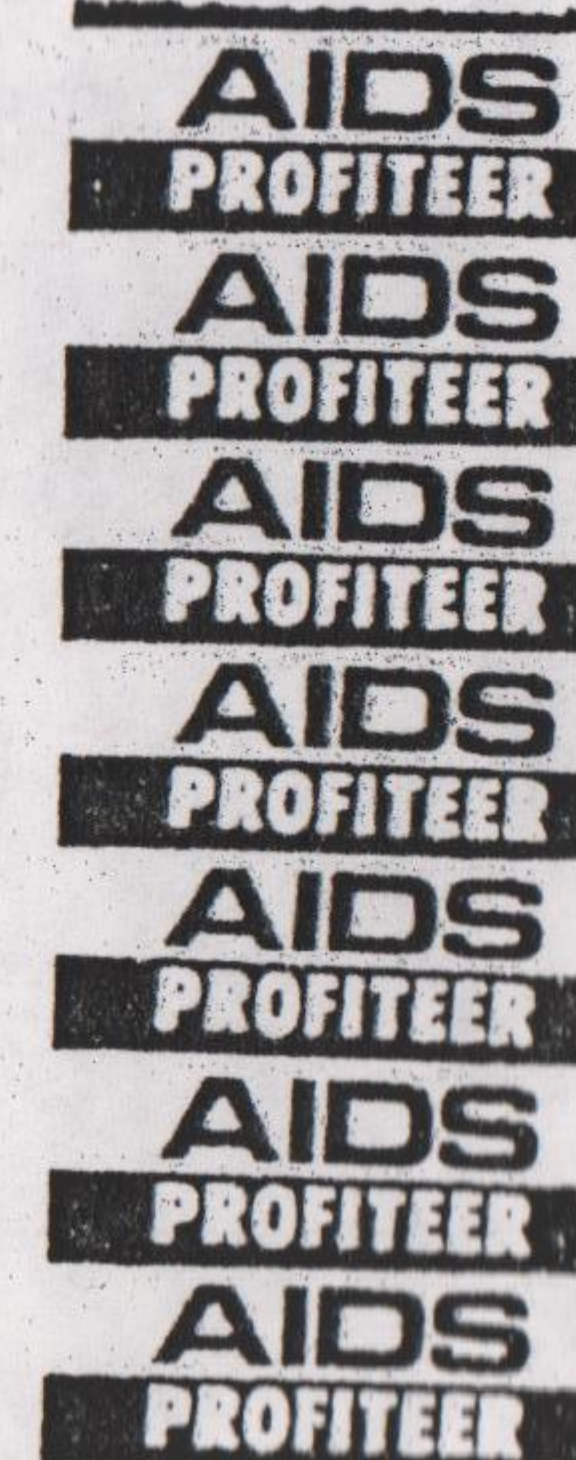
On February 1st, 1000 Arsenal fans remained at Highbury after the match against Manchester Utd to protest about the club's debenture plans and chanting "Board out". West Ham and Arsenal fans staged a joint protest against bond schemes and all-seater stadiums before the match between the two teams on March 14th. Thousands of balloons were launched, and two large banners unfurled saying "United we stand" and "Stuff the bond".



ENVIRONMENT

4/12/91: Earth First! co-ordinated the first action in Britain against the importation of tropical rainforest timber. Using boats, they managed to delay the docking of a ship at Tilbury Docks on the River Thames carrying timber from Malaysia and Indonesia. On 19th January there was a blockade of Newport Dock in South Wales to stop the unloading of rainforest timber from Sarawak.

3/3/92: 400 people demonstrated at Liverpool docks to protest at the arrival of a ship carrying hardwood cleared from rain forests in Malaysia. Some people got inside the docks, blocking the gates and climbing on to cranes with banners.



A Sarawak Solidarity Campaign has been set up to support the indigenous peoples of the Sarawak Forest in East Malaysia who are fighting the destruction of their home by logging companies aided by the Malaysian government. On October 7th 1991, the Malaysian Tourist Office in London was occupied to coincide with the trial of 31 indigenous people in Sarawak. Sawdust was emptied over a word processor and other office equipment. For information contact: London Rainforest Action Group and Earth First!, 9 Cazenove Rd, London N16 9PA (tel: 081 806 1561, fax: 081 806 5226).

At Twyford Down in Hampshire there have been protests against the extension of the M3 motorway. The project will involve the destruction of an area of outstanding natural beauty. On 13th March police with boltcutters removed protestors who had chained themselves across the entrance to Twyford Down, stopping the contractors for five days. On 17th March, protestors temporarily stopped clearance of meadowland after they confronted a bulldozer.

Earth First! have initiated a Carmageddon campaign against what they call the "car empire" (recently in London people were officially advised to stay indoors because of traffic pollution). On 21st December, they carried out a road blockade in Brighton, "reclaiming the streets" by stopping traffic for half an hour.

contact: South Downs Earth First!, c/o Prior House, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2GY

In April one of the first major eco-sabotage actions took place in Britain. A group destroyed hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of equipment belonging to Fisons fertiliser company in South Yorkshire. They cut wires and poured sand into the engines of nine tractors and earthmovers, and wrecked pumps and fire fighting equipment. This machinery was being used in the stripping of peat from the few remaining lowland peat bogs in the country.



POLICE

As we go to press there have been two nights of rioting on the Wood End estate in Coventry. The trouble started on May 12th when the police arrested three youths and confiscated their motorbikes. Around 200 youths congregated and threw bricks and stones at police. Petrol bombs have been thrown at police vans and a shop looted.

A minor argument in an east London bagel shop ended in a battle between 150 youths and the police on April 6th. When police turned up at the bakery in Dalston the crowd turned on them, throwing bottles and glasses. 12 cops were injured and the tyres of police vehicles were slashed.

5 police were injured when they were attacked by a crowd on Stonebridge Park estate, Harlesden, West London, on April 27th. When police tried to arrest a man, a crowd gathered and threw bricks and bottles. 6 people were arrested.

MET POLICE ATTACK DEMO

On 24th March at 11am, a demonstration by 400 Kurdish people outside the Turkish Embassy in Belgrave Square was violently attacked by the police. Over 30 people were injured, 9 people put in hospital and 17 arrested. A ten year old girl was set upon whilst lying on the ground by cops with truncheons. Other children were bitten by police dogs.

The protest was against the slaughter by Turkey's military of Kurdish people celebrating Newroz (21st March...New year). Within minutes of the demos arrival, the police raced up in vans and began laying into demonstrators who attempted to disperse. One protestor was ferried to hospital by helicopter and was put into intensive care. In Rochester Row police station, four injured people were denied treatment for eight hours.

(From Press Statement - KURDISH INFORMATION CENTRE 24.3.92)

On 17th April, 40 Kurdish men and women started an indefinite hungerstrike in London in protest against the continuing savagery of the Turkish state against Kurdish people.

The hunger strike in London is part of a European-wide action organised by supporters of the ERNK (National Liberation Front Of Kurdistan).

Hungerstrike Committee Press Statement - 17th April '92. (Tel: 081-880-1759)