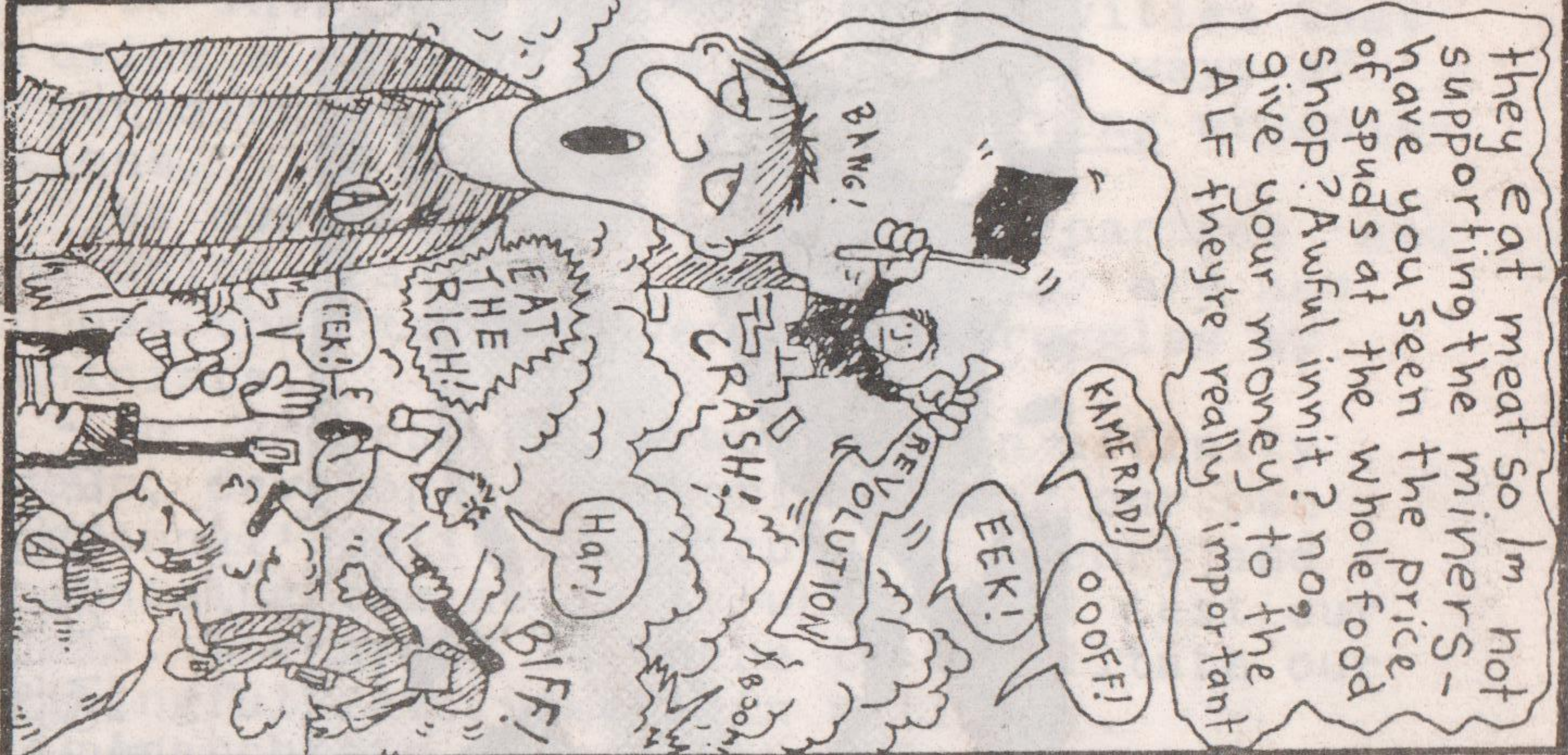
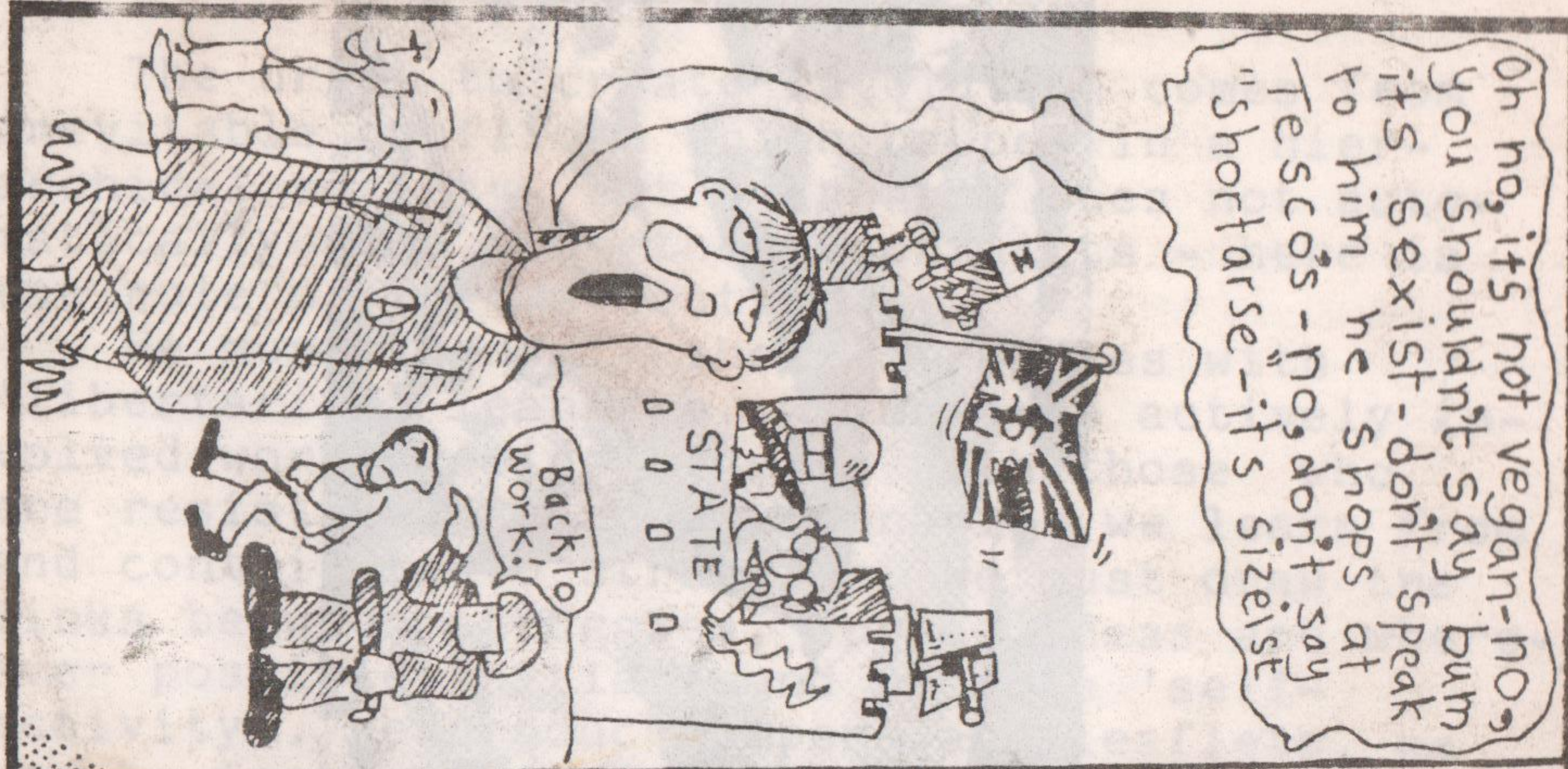


TOO MANY REBELS.....



**AND NOT ENOUGH
REVOLUTIONARIES**



WHAT IS ANARCHISM ?

Anarchism, whatever anyone might say to the contrary, is revolutionary - both in theory and in practice. When we say that it is revolutionary, what we mean is that anarchism involves a complete change in society. Anarchism is about the destruction of Capitalism, not just in terms of its economics but also in terms of the destruction of the sexual/patriarchal, cultural and political arrangements that all add up to Capital.

What all these arrangements have in common is the way in which they are organised, using methods of hierarchy, domination and exploitation. It is these methods of organisation that we aim to destroy. We're not just talking about destruction, because all the time in all our activities we should be working towards a society based on the 'political' involvement of all people. A society based on co-operation, where all people play a role in the running of their society and in decision making.

Anarchism is not a dogma or an ideology. it is not an unchanging truth which shines like a light at the end of a tunnel, showing us the way forward and giving us set answers to our problems.

Anarchism is not something that only self-proclaimed anarchists can define. Anyone who claims to have the true anarchism, anyone who sits on the sidelines, digging their organic gardens and waiting for the masses to wise up is staring up their own anus.



INTRODUCTION

When we started to write this what we wanted to do was to spark off some discussion about the anarchist movement and anarchism itself - so we'd be more than glad to receive some feed-back.

What mostly interested us was the way the anarchist movement seems to be divorced from alot of what is happening in society and being on the margins, how it relates to the revolutionary processes going on in the rest of society.

Looking at the anarchist movement we thought that it would have to get its act together if it were to play any part at all in changing society. We don't mean that by 'getting its act together' that everyone should rush to join D.A.M or Class War. In fact we would deny that any one group or position has the answers.

What we mean by it is that anarchists have got to go beyond the 'smash the state' and spray paint approach. We've got to start to analyse our approach in the light of what is happening in society.

We don't claim to have any solutions- just some tentative suggestions.

Anarchism is something which comes out of a conflict at the very heart of our society. As a method of organisation people have chosen libertarian forms time and time again. If we look at history we can see the way in which people opt for direct democracy, without leaders or order givers and takers. Look at the early Soviets in Russia, the Hungarian workers councils or the more recent mass assembly movement in Spain.....the list goes on.

Anarchists are sometimes heard complaining about the apathy and lack of awareness in our society today. But if we actually look at what is happening we can see again that people have taken up libertarian ways of organising. The



A striker in the 1984 French steel strike blocks the trains.

hit squads in the miners strike, some pickets at Wapping, some aspects of riots - they are all saying loud and clear that people can and do organise themselves. It may only happen when people have little choice but to resist, but it happens nevertheless.

We can also see aspects of anarchism in such things as the peace and womens movements, where people often operate according to anarchist principles.

They stress direct democracy, individual involvement and responsibility. They are trying to get away from the methods of organisation of capital.

None of these examples of the 'anarchist urge' are what we could describe as consciously anarchist, but they show the way in which libertarian ideas and practice come almost naturally in the course of events.



Anarchism is about just this sort of emergence. It is an ongoing process. People when put in a situation where they must resist will tend to choose libertarian methods. All the time in society, in small pockets, people resist. There is a drive to organise themselves and take back the power stolen by Capital and state. What we cannot understand is that much of the anarchist movement seems to cut itself off from this process, from its very roots. It seems to prefer a kind of self-righteous purity which makes anarchism as a movement meaningless. We may be angry, radical and extreme, but we are talking to no one but ourselves.

ANARCHISM AND REVOLUTION

We hope that we'd all agree that anarchism can only be achieved by the mass of people working in co-operation.

A central part of anarchism is that revolution cannot be imposed by a party or state. For revolution to happen people have to be aware of their position in society and where their interests lie (consciousness if you like!) But in a similar way, elite revolutionaries cannot teach people consciousness. In the course of their everyday lives people can learn and become aware. In the course of struggle especially people can become aware of their situation and potentially create a revolution. This learning process, this growing happens to us all - anarchists included!

We learn from our experiences from the very fact that we live within Capitalism.

Capitalism is founded on a real conflict between those who have to work to live and those those who have power. These two groups have very different interests, in a way Capitalism creates its own opposition because conflict will always be present in society. In conflict and struggle people can become aware and out of awareness can come revolution, although the process is not automatic.

Capitalism needs to exploit and dominate. The best way to do this, to make profit and keep power, is to keep the workforce well under control. The dream of Capital is to reduce us all to no more than cogs in its smoothly running machine. No more worries if people do as they are told. It will try to do this by any means they can find. We are manipulated and indoctrinated in a multitude of ways.

If we eventually resist it will not hesitate to use brute force (witness the Miners Strike!)

To keep the machine rolling, Capitalism demands that we accept dehumanised roles. We become consumers, housewives, workers and voters who passively accept its decisions and the values of its society.

But people will resist, they cannot be manipulated, duped and denied existence forever. Yes, the level of resistance varies, it comes in different forms depending on the times and situation. It can be as open or violent as a strike or a riot or as subtle as 'skiving' off work or 'avoiding' employment.

It is this sort of resistance that has the potential to grow, to create a new society. Anarchism as a theory was forged in this resistance..... anarchism as a movement belongs there.



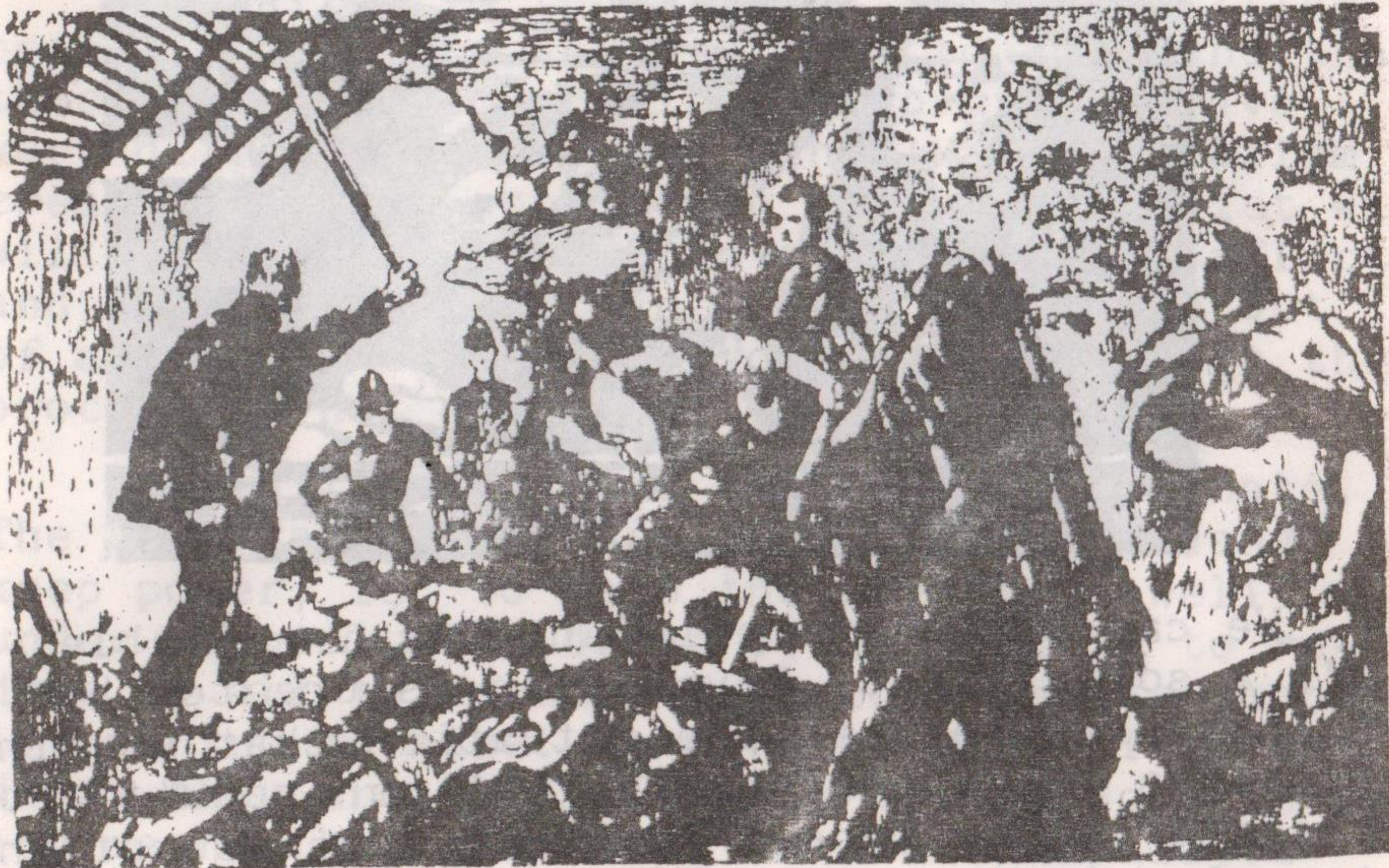
We can see that resistance is inevitable it's a social fact. Revolution is created by an interplay between the situation that we find ourselves in, the struggle that can result from this and the awareness that can come out of this struggle, it is a social process. So it's pretty obvious that revolution has nothing to do with the ideological battles between so-called revolutionaries. Revolution won't be created by the debates of anarchists or marxists.

If we set ourselves apart from this process we are no longer relevant and we are no longer revolutionary. It may be easy for us to sit back and discuss the brainwashed morons out there, but we are wrong to do so., it makes us no better than the leninists we say we oppose.

It is these 'ordinary' people who fought pitched battles against the police at Orgreave and Fitzwilliam. It is these 'ordinary' people who fought Soviet tanks 30 years ago in Hungary.

It is these 'ordinary' people who have time and time again formed grass roots organisations to defend themselves in the workplace and in the community.

We oppose leninists not because we 'disagree' with them but because they seek to put themselves at the head of people who need no leadership but themselves.



An eviction slege in 1886, during the Land War of the 1880's.
a Connacht family still defies eviction from their cottage even
after its being breached by battering ram.

THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

It's a bit difficult to explain exactly what we mean by the Anarchist Movement as it's a pretty mixed bag. On the whole we'd focus on those people who describe themselves as anarchists rather than the 'anarchist urge' we've talked about which exists in society as a whole.

There are alot of different positions and groups in the anarchist movement. What unites them seems to be a general 'lack' of politics. Instead of thought out strategic action there seems to be a knee jerk reaction to the symtoms rather than the cause.



Activity in these groups is often centred around single issue campaigns such as the peace movement or animal rights. There is often a routine round of direct action against things we know to be 'bad'. We spray paint Barclays because we know that Apartheid is 'bad', but what do we know or think about the situation in S.A as anarchists?

There seems to be little analysis of how the the 'bad' things fit into the general situation

in society or of the nature of revolutionary movements. It is only if we look at questions such as these that we'll know how best to expend our energies. The problem seems to be too many rebels and not enough revolutionaries.

The sort of thinking expressed in Crowbar - 'if you havent smashed x number of windows this week then you cant be an anarchist' is just pathetic. We don't want to start a round of bickering about who the real anarchist are, but we felt that we had to raise the fact that there was very little political thought and discussion in the anarchist movement as a whole.

We'd like to offer the following reasons as to why this is and the consequences of it.



A) General Lack of Analysis

We've found that anarchists often discuss their personal experience, but there is no attempt to generalise from this. No attempt is made to fit them into any kind of pattern, to put them in the context of society in general. There's not much point in talking about being in various cells at Stop the City or what happened to us when we were three if it doesn't lead to a deeper understanding of how these things fit together and society itself. We have to know how society operates, just knowing that it's 'bad' is not enough.

Anarchists often write things which urge people to change their lives and act differently but this won't achieve much if we don't understand what is happening in society and what causes people to act as they do.

We have to stress the importance of the concept Solidarity. It is rooted in an awareness of how different struggles relate together and so their common purpose in the liberation of us all.

Briefly, we've got to go beyond just recounting our experiences. We must recognise that our experiences have a common root, in patriarchy and capitalism, and a common solution - revolution!



B) Theory - Where's it Gone?

The anarchist movement as a whole seems to have rejected mere academic theorising, and quite rightly! But this has also meant that there's been a tendency to throw the baby out with the bathwater and reject all theory. It's got to the stage that any thing vaguely difficult or abstract is just rejected out of hand as 'intellectual wanking'. Other anarchists seem to take the view that theory is something that males and male - identifiers entertain themselves with.

We'd like to point out here that Voltairine de Cleyre, Emma Goldman and Lucy Parsons all saw theory as a vital part of anarchism.

So what is theory?

It's just about the generalisation from our own experiences of race sex and class. We must be able to understand our experiences in the context of the values and structures of society. We have to look at how the values and structures of capitalist society can be seen in class, sex and racial divisions

Action without theory is just pissing in the wind. To work out effective tactics we need to know, for example, not just that people are exploited, but how they are exploited and how they see and respond to that exploitation.

Theory and action go hand in hand. As we develop our ideas they are tested in our activities and so are modified. Out of this interplay between ideas and action comes a greater understanding of situations and how to deal with them.

C) Anarchism as an Ideology

There's alot of stress in the Anarchist Movement on 'individual salvation'. What we eat, growing our own food, refusing to work (unless in co-ops) and alot of our activity is centred around thses kinds of things. This is all well and good but many anarchists seem to adopt a sort of 'moralistic' position and thses kinds of activities become the path to revolution - other people who are sexist or meat eaters are not worth talking to.

What we must realise is that these things are just our own responses to the situation we find ourselves in, other people have different responses. Whilst such 'alternative' organisations are useful to learn skills, how to organise and to provide an example of a different way of existing - they cannot create a revolution. Revolution can only be created by the mass of people working collectively - so co-ops and such alternatives are only

relevant if they are involved in other struggles. They must be involved in drawing the links between struggles and have a base in their community.

In another sense, if the local radical bookshop withdrew their labour or stormed county hall, we don't think that Capital would tremble. On the other hand if Miners in solidarity with other workers in the service and other industries were to do the same, we think that Capital would have problems.

In this sense we can prioritize struggles some groups of people are in a better position to physically callenge Capitalism. This does not mean that we think that some people are more important than others, but it does mean that we must work in solidarity with other groups. How can we critisize and be listened to if we are not involved.

Anarchism should bring together the individual response and collective action.



THE ROLE OF ANARCHISTS

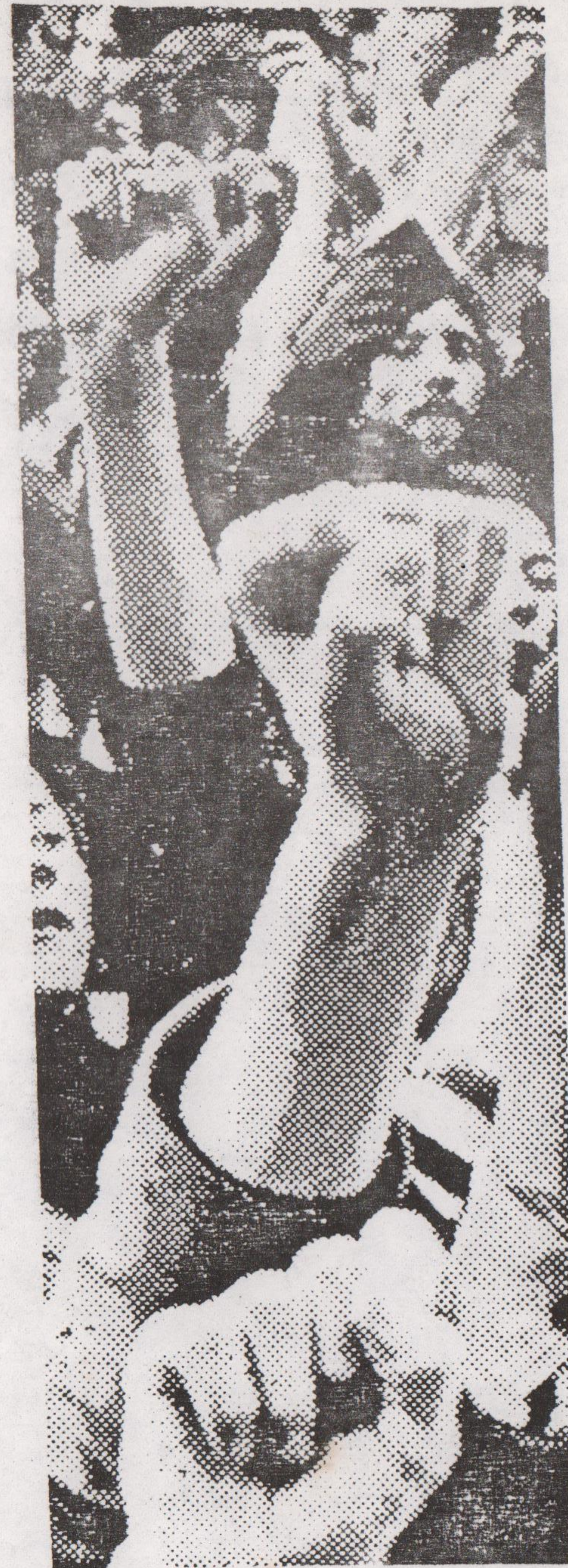
The urge to create revolution comes from inevitable conflicts which happen in a hierarchical society. But awareness does not automatically come from these conflicts - here is the role of the revolutionary.

We must identify these struggles with 'libertarian' leanings, we must be actively involved working side by side with those who are resisting. As revolutionaries we learn from and contribute to struggles. We must draw the links between struggles, spread ideas and wherever possible initiate and promote 'self-activity'. We produce papers and leaflets, we may be involved in co-ops or activities that provide a working example of other ways of organising which must be campaigning organisations.

We must expose the political parties and the union leadership for what they are and oppose the 'taking over' of struggles by leninists.

In groups we can work as an affinity group, developing and criticising our own 'personal' politics, discussing theory and organising the activity which will test our ideas. The group is there to facilitate our meaningful involvement in activity.

Anarchists do not have the answers, we inform struggles and learn from them. People themselves ought to be in a position to work out the solutions. We point out those institutions, beliefs and practices which prevent them from doing this.



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WRITTEN BY - THE POMPOUS LIBERTARIANS.