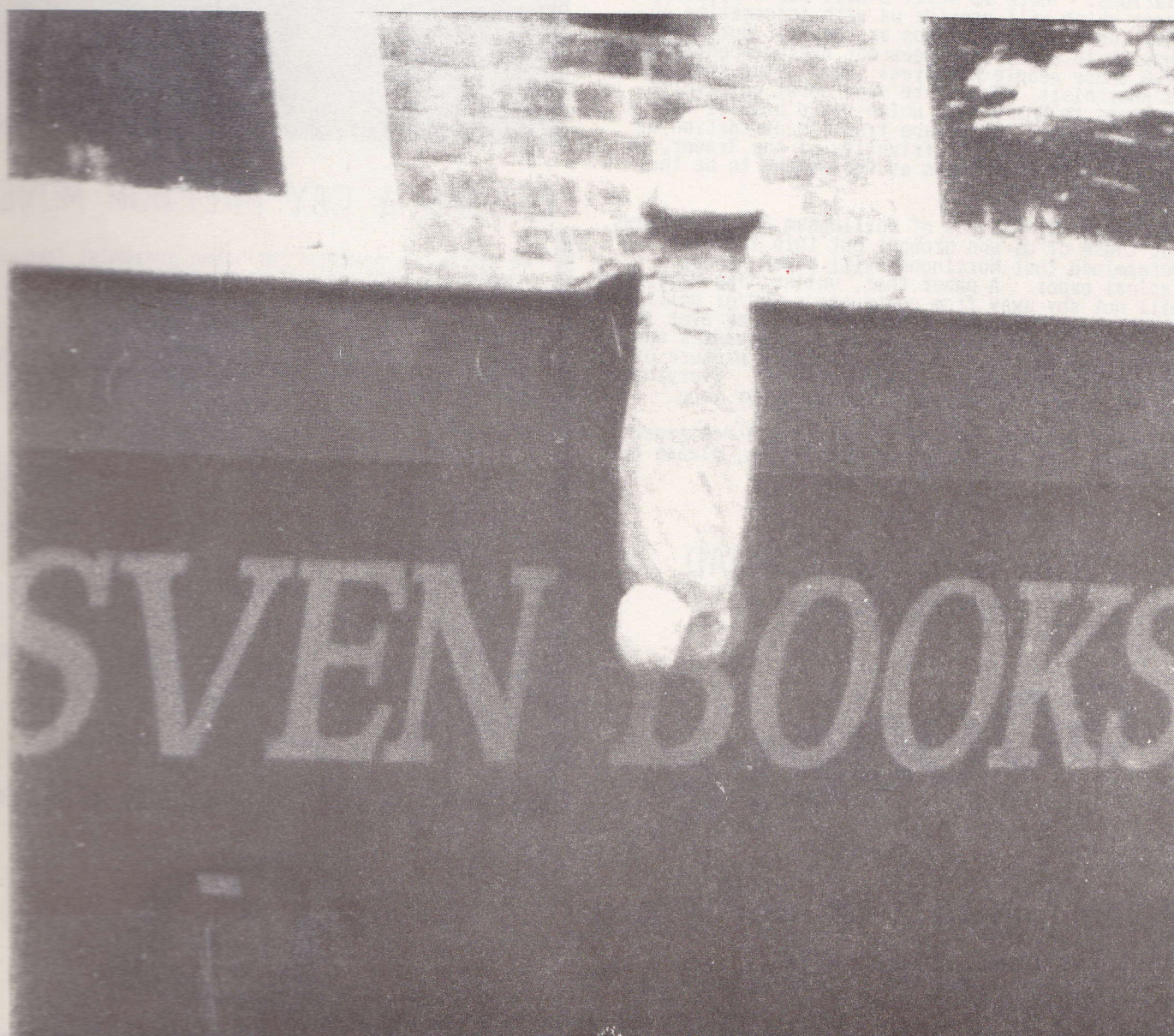


Nottingham Anarchist ★ News ★

No: 20
1989 - ?



LAST EVER
ISSUE?



INSIDE: POLL TAX, MUSIC, THE CORRECT
LINE, TOURISM, ACTIVE CITIZENS & MORE

HELLO

Welcome to the Twentieth (and maybe last) issue of Nottingham Anarchist News. Its over four years since we started and in that time many, many people have been involved. A big, big thankyou to all of them. Thanks to you, too, the reader for sticking with us. We estimate that well over 1000 people read each copy of the News, but we've no way of telling how many of them are regulars.

But now its time to stop. Things have moved on in those four years and it is becoming increasingly difficult to bring out a paper that sticks to the original aim of the paper: news of what anarchists are up to in Nottingham. Many of us have moved on from working in Anarchist Groups to working as Anarchists with other groups, campaigns and organisations. There is still a need for a local news paper which will provide us with information on what those various groups are up to. But which does so in a way that does not exclude contributions from those people not (yet) identifying themselves as Anarchists. There are many good, worthwhile projects in Nottingham which would benefit from a radical paper. An escape from the distortion of the Evening Post, the frivolity of the Trader, or the oblivion that seems at the moment to be the only alternative.

So, it may be the end of Nottingham Anarchist News, but those of us who brought out this issue are determined that Nottingham will have a local radical paper. A paper that, unlike "The Magazine" will not shy away from contentious and/or political issues, will not have to constantly look over its shoulder to see if the funding body approves any particular policy, and will provide a picture of what's really happening in Nottingham. Everything is not rosy. And we won't be quiet for long.

If you'd like to help us in starting a new paper, or would like to discuss possibilities, please get in touch.

BOX A
180 MANSFIELD ROAD
NOTTINGHAM

GOODBYE

GREAT CHANTS OF OUR TIME

Here's just a small selection of chants to keep you amused on those boring demos around the back street streets of those deserted cities.

"Blow it up, Burn it down, Kick it til it breaks"

"Maggie, Maggie, Maggie, Out, Out, Out!
Cecil, Cecil, Cecil, In, Out, In, Out!"

and for the vast army of vegans:

"Vegan jelly on a plate,
Wobble off and smash the state."

"Haddock, Bream, Sturgeon, Pike,
One struggle, one fight!"



LESBIAN & GAY FREEDOM MOVEMENT

We are a new movement to bring anarchist ideas and ideals to lesbians and gays, and to make sexuality a major campaigning issue for all anarchists.

We believe that we will never achieve real lasting lesbian and gay liberation without the overthrow of all governments and laws, which oppress and exploit us.

WE WANT:

- Freedom of sexuality for all ages.
- Freedom from oppressive laws such as the age of consent.
- Freedom from political party control and Trade Union leaders.
- Freedom from all situations where anyone is ordered about, exploited, or oppressed by others.
- Freedom to control our own lives.

We are going to provide advice, support, information and penfriends - and see these services as an integral part of our campaigning work.

INTERESTED?

- Write (with 2 stamps) for more information.

LGFM, BM BOX 207, LONDON WC1N 3XX



COVER

An alteration to the shop front at Sven Books on Mansfield Road. Local residents were concerned that passers-by might not notice the shop's discreet exterior, and that they might even be losing customers. Aspokeyperson for the residents said: "We think that since our action the true nature of the business is much more apparent."

Nottingham MEDIA Centre

If you flick through your back issues of Anarchist News (cruelty free leatherette binders in red & black still available) to the heady summer of 1985 you'll find my delightful piece about alternative media and the Nottingham Media Centre. Well, since then things have moved along at a creeping pace and I thought I'd keep you in touch.

The story so far . . . the idea was to bring together a number of organisations working in the whole media area and provide good facilities with training and access. It includes groups like CODA (community computers), Nottingham Video Project, New Cinema Workshop, City Lights Cinema, New Music Network and others. The British Film Institute (national organisation, government financed) was keen to see something special happen, and so were the local councils and East Midlands Arts.

Even at that stage there was some concern about exactly what the centre would do, and why it seemed to be concentrating on the razzle-dazzle world of film and video rather than say . . . printing or community radio. A lot of the above groups were at the time providing equipment and training for free to community and radical organisations (striking miners, peace movement, womens groups) who wouldn't normally get a chance. How would these ideals survive?

Fast forward to 1989 . . .

- * adverts (costing over £1000) appear in the Guardian looking for an Artistic Director on £17,000 a year.

- * City Lights Cinema announces that it will close in June, to re-open as part of the new Media Centre. Some people think this might be a bit shaky considering the money isn't 100% guaranteed, and others can't understand why a new organisation is tied to continue an old one and maintain some of the workers.

- * the Media Centre buys the old City Lights building - the Co-op Educational Centre - for £450,000. This is £100,000 more than was asked for it a year ago, and shows the Co-op being unusually on the ball to suss out the new value of Lacemarket area.

- * central Government has given £300,000, EMA and BFI £150,000 each (over three years) and City and County Council are also due to cough up.

- * but with refurbishment costs of at least £650,000, the plan is to get more money from . . . the Private Sector!

And what's going to happen in the Media Centre? Well, there's lots of films & videos & television showings, and popular exhibitions ("photography - design - fashion") and events and festivals and conferences, and of course a cafe-bar! Down in the basement will be the production centre where dynamic independent production companies will be making TV programmes. Somewhere in there will be the training as well, though it's reassuring to know that just over the road is CODA in case things get a bit crowded.

so far I've not seen anything about a commitment to work with community groups or trade unions, or to support radical non-profit making work and provide free resources though it does talk about the need to "open up modern media to the public in an enjoyable and accessible way". And I've yet to see an explicit statement on equal opportunities although with training "special attention will be paid to the city's multiracial community". Still, these things should all emerge with the involvement of local business people.

Actually, the Board of Directors was only appointed last month so they're having a few problems settling down, and hopefully they'll have the sense to forget about the whole thing and get back to the real world.

Who cares? The danger with these things is the way they draw resources and make it difficult for other people to get anything going. Like the old Midland Group, they cling onto white middle class culture and package it up as "independent". And it's sad to see the slow shift of former radical organisations and individuals into the cosy world of £17,000 a year, as yesterday's rebels become the new bourgeoisie. But didn't we always know they would?

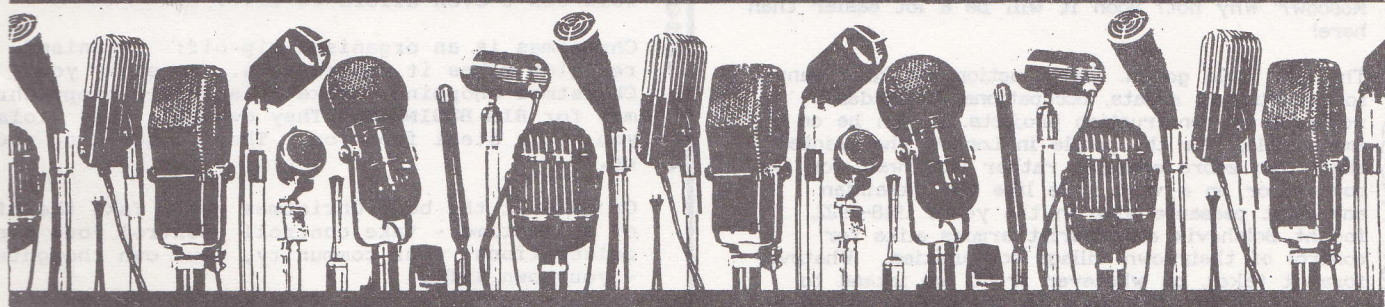
Hickey

P.S. And on similar lines let's hope our French comrades destroy the exhibition on the Situationist International while it's on in Paris before we have to do the job when it gets to the ICA in June.



press balls

Highlight of the social calendar this year is no doubt the Nottingham Press Ball. Held on April 15th at Royal Moat House International Hotel. 80% of money is going to Childline charity (fair enough) and you'll be able to meet Esther Rantzen, Lord Mayor Martin Suthers, Sheriff of Nottingham Brian Marshall and Notts Chief Constable Ron Hadfield, amongst the cream of Nottingham society. In with the entertainment are Post Glasnost comics Mick Tariff and Mike Crook, who understandably want to get away from gigs at Spotz and the Peace Festival. But what sort of set will Nottingham's own alternative comics be doing? Unfortunately tickets are £17.50 so we're not likely to find out.



ACTIVE CITIZENS

In the philosophy of 'active citizenship', as defined by a tory MP on the radio recently, the family comes first, the old people next door are given a jar of home-made marmalade from time to time, and voluntary organizations are supported, especially 'neighbourhood watch'.

So the tory active citizen looks after number-one, keeps his head down and grasses on anyone who looks poor or different. He salves his conscience by patronizing the 'deserving' poor, the old, the disabled and gives his old clothes to the charities that are trying to deal with the mounting casualties caused by the world's market forces.

There are two classes: Those performers in capitalism's greed show who have power and money, to whom Thatcher has extended "freedom of choice", in whom to exploit and in ways of spending. They obviously have an interest in an active citizenship which maintains the status quo. And there is the old underclass of 'workers' now widened to include everyone who has no power or resources. You can fill in the categories yourself. It is this second class which is under attack from all sides, a situation that active citizenship won't change.

But a few of us second class citizens have got together to be active- to fight back with direct action. We have all been involved with direct action before, mostly against nuclear weapons, but our activities at remote airfields were largely invisible to the general public. Despite successes- the actions of the Greenham Women made the land-based cruise missile system unworkable - our numbers diminished as we failed to attract new people. Although the threat of nuclear war is still very real, the worsening problems of our everyday lives are more immediate. But if we can take direct action for peace, why not in other areas:

COMMUNITY. Our views are ignored as yet another superstore is to be built where homes are needed. Hospitals are closed while waiting lists grow longer. Council houses are sold off while people have no-where to live, or turned over to greedy landlords.

BENEFITS. The April 11th changes are extremely complicated, but the bottom line for young unemployed and old age pensioners is that you get a lot less to live on.

WORKPLACE. As unemployment rises, wages fall, and conditions become more unhealthy and dangerous. In dispute after dispute, the official union answer is a routine sell-out.

MEDIA. In this so-called democracy, public opinion is moulded by newspapers and TV in the hands of a few capitalists who ensure that people make the 'right choice' come election day.

POLLUTION. Its now fashionable to say loudly what we were being warned of 15 years ago. The government's crocodile tears for the earth, fouled by capitalism, are a thinly disguised attempt to push nuclear power as a clean alternative to coal.

CIVIL RIGHTS. "Why don't you try demonstrating in Moscow?" Why not? Soon it will be a lot easier than here!

The list could go on. Direct action can take many forms; strikes, squats, occupations, blockades, work-ins or construction projects. It can be on a small scale, like the people in London who painted their own zebra crossing rather than wait for the council, or on a vast scale like the Ukrainian anarchist peasants who, in the years 1918-1922, fought Bolshevik and Czarist armies alike for control of their own village communities. Whatever form it takes, on whatever front, we intend to bring it closer to home than the nuclear issue, and involve as many people as possible, rather than a clique of fairly well trained head-bangers.

There is now one Active Citizens Group meeting regularly in Nottingham. As more people join, new groups will be set up, working together as a network. Hopefully, the Nottingham network will make contact with other like-minded outfits around the country, so that we can get together for big actions.

You can argue about what constitutes "direct action" and "success", but one thing is certain, authority of left or right doesn't like it! Often, the success of direct action is measured by the massive efforts made by authority to crush it. But the memory of those few months when for once we were in control stays... until the next time.



WELCOME TO THE SHOPPING MECCA OF THE EAST MIDLANDS

Christmas is a time for giving, and that means buying. Whether you're 8 or 80 there's something for you to BUY BUY BUY from a range of Quality stores.

Christmas shopping in Nottingham can be fun if you've money to spend and don't mind the crowds. Linger over the displays of designer clothing, fashion accessories, glittering jewellery and useless novelties. For the children; everything from miniaturised armies and junior riot police outfits to small business playsets and mini household appliances.

Then queue up to pay - why not? Many prices are increased specially for the festive season. A harrassed, badly-paid shop assistant will serve you the very same day. Having been pushed and shoved, over-charged and ripped off in shop after shop, then you can struggle home on the bus. No wonder we ask ourselves why we bother.

Some of us work all week to keep the shops full of goods. Then we buy them back for money than we were paid for making them. Those who don't work can't even afford to live.

Christmas is an organised rip-off: organised religion makes it respectable. So enjoy your Christmas shopping - make it a really happy Christmas for BIG BUSINESS. They own you, they violate you, they steal from you. They're screwing you up.

Or make it the best Christmas yet. Take the offer of a lifetime - take control! Control your own celebrations, your community, your own thoughts - your own life.

TOGETHER WE CAN FIGHT BACK

4 STOP PRESS * * ACTIVE CITIZENS MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 17TH MAY - 7.30PM - WEA SHAKEPEARE ST

LEAFLET HANDED OUT TO CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS.

At home we're all Tourists



So what do you do when your mum & dad turn up on a Sunday afternoon and demand to be shown around Nottingham? What are the picturesque highlights and places of fascinating historical interest? What can you say to the family of Australian (or were they South African?) tourists on Forest Road who ask you where they can find Robin Hood?

Whatever it is that we might like or hate about living in Nottingham, the basic fact is that it really does look boring. It might be fine to sit in the Arboretum but it's not really worth coming from Dallas for. This is all a bit of a problem for those - like the City Council - who are desperately trying to sell the area as a tourist attraction, but who know that the Castle just doesn't have the style of Windsor, Edinburgh or Caernarvon. (Apparently it's the region's biggest tourist draw - but the figures include everyone who goes there to eat their sandwiches at dinner time.)

The desperation reaches fever pitch over Robin Hood. Again, the sad fact is that Robin Hood probably lived in a valley just off the A1 near Doncaster rather than round here - if he existed at all. Last March the City Council's Tourism Department brought out a leaflet that dared to suggest that Maid Marion was probably an invention from French poetry and that Friar Tuck was a combination of two completely different outlawed clergy. Prepared by a Cambridge pro-

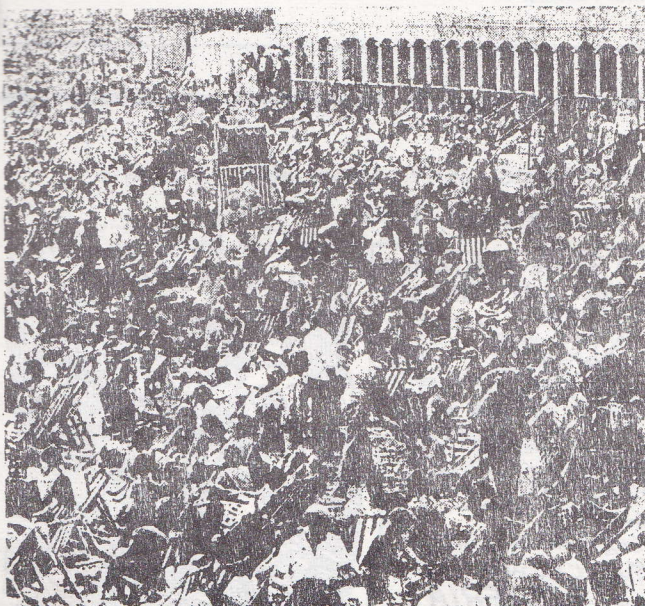
fessor of medieval history, it caused a minor bombshell with TV crews turning up from all over the place. The Sheriff of Nottingham appeared on USA television in full gear to defend Robin (they're going to have problems when Black City councillor Tony Robinson gets made Sheriff next month) and called for those responsible for the leaflet to be put in the dungeons (joke, I think). And Conservative MP for Sherwood Andy Stewart called for public burning of the leaflets in the Market Square (definitely not a joke). The Conservatives were in power at the time, and with their usual regard for historical integrity the Labour party called for the leaflet's withdrawal too. 10,000 were printed and 500 were sold but you'd have to try very hard to get a copy now. The Central Library Local History Section is still waiting for theirs, because the original has now 'disappeared' and been replaced by a new version that goes back to the good old lies.

More tales from Robin Hood

Robin Hood is set to make a spectacular appearance at the new "Tales of Robin Hood" centre on Maid Marian way (can't you feel the disappointment of those who come for miles to look at that road?) Inside one of those ugly buildings they're building a whole new Sherwood Forest and medieval Nottingham out of cornflakes packets and old squeezey washing up bottles. You'll be transported through the air in little cars and bombarded by the sound of chopping wood and hooting owls, while you listen in four languages to disembodied heads telling you Robin's tale. Sounds extraordinary doesn't it?

If you want to buy shares in the Tales of Robin Hood they only cost £1.10 but you've got to buy a minimum of 500 and there's no payout until 1993. They seem to be having problems selling them although the City and County Councils have both invested £100,000. Directors of the company include a former boss of the Castle Museum, the owner of the Lace Hall in the Lace Market, and Nicholas Forman Hardy - vice-chair of T. Bailey Forman who do the Evening Post and whose holding company also has £100,000 worth of shares. (So we can look forward to unbiased coverage in the Post as usual.) The main figures appear to be Hubert and Gilbert Nesbitt, who live in Bangor in North Wales and have a lot of business interests in Northern Ireland.

Out in Sherwood Forest the County Council (with head of Economic Development councillor Paddy Tipping) have announced that they are going to have a £2million tourism venture following discussions with



"the private sector about a major investment of capital". Details are yet to come but hopefully they won't be as gross as the proposal for Major Oak. This is the oak tree where Robin Hood was supposed to have hung out (as it were) and which is now falling to bits - as trees do. The council paid £19,000 to a firm of engineers to come up with the idea of covering the whole thing with a dome of wire mesh and steel supports to hold the branches up. Then each local Labour party could choose one to have their branch meetings on...

In the city of illusion

This is only slightly less daft than the well progressed plan ("mastermind behind the scheme, local businessman George Akins" and owner of Rock City) to turn the old Shire Hall courts into a museum of crime and punishment complete with torture dungeons. The Lacemarket in general is likely to become the next main focus in the city, as the Council wake up to the fact that it's the only old and pretty bit of the city left. But it's hard to see how they're going to market all those old warehouses without going flat out and turning the whole area into a cobbles and cast iron Victorian wonderland. (A bit like all those fake 19th century signposts to the Broadmarsh Bus Station.)

It's been obvious for some time that nationally the Government has given up the idea of Britain actually manufacturing anything anymore. Instead we're going to become an island theme park for other people around the world to spend their money here (or else a toxic dump for their nuclear shit). This might make sense if you live in, say, Oxford or York, although you probably wouldn't want to live there anymore with the amount of tourists. But in Nottingham it's going to take a complete denial of what it only takes half an hour for any unfortunate day tripper to realise. Their problem? Well yes, but for those of us who live here it's frightening that the people who run the city (including the Labour councils) actually seem to believe this fairy tale.

Nottingham Castle is a squat 19th century anti-climax because the earlier one was burnt down in the 1830s. When the House of Lords threw out the Reform Bill that would have increased the franchise, the crowd at Goose Fair attacked the castle as the home of the local gentry. (Now that's what I call history!) The real point about the Robin Hood farce is the distortion of the past and the denial of a history which contradicts the cosy tourist version. D.H. Lawrence was originally seen as a pervert who wrote dirty books and got out of the area as fast as he could. Now he - like Byron - is resurrected as a famous son of the city. Without a knowledge of our real history we aren't going to make our own history for the future. It's a question, as Debord would say, of the proletariat as subject or as representation.

OPEN SORES

One of the final hangovers of the 1984-5 miners strike locally has been the road repair bill. When railway workers refused to handle coal from the working Notts pits it went by lorry to trent valley power stations. And being heavy things they wrecked a lot of small roads and left labour run Notts County Council (responsible for roads generally) with more than £1million repair bill. British Coal coughed up £630,000 for repairs but the rest will come from the council. Isn't this a shocking waste of ratepayers' money?

NEW COURTHOUSE

New building to look out for is the £36m courthouse planned between Carrington Street and Wilford Street (near all those wonderful British Rail warehouses we never got round to squatting). It's going to have 26 courts and room for 90 prisoners and when it's open in 1994 will take over from the existing Guildhall and Sandfield House magistrates courts. Oh joy, it's nice to know that we're not being excluded from Nottingham's new development after all!

RED NOTTINGHAM SHOCK

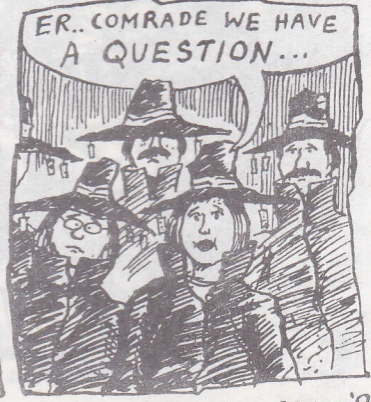
Since the last issue of Anarchist News, Nottingham City Council has changed from Conservative to Labour control with the Labour win in the Byron ward bye-election. This gave the two big parties equal numbers but Labour got the cherry by having the support of Communist councillor from Bulwell John Peck.

How did Bulwell come to vote for a Communist? Well basically because he's been around for years and involved with lots of local campaigns. The Evening Post emphasised his war record as an RAF bomber pilot and called for sensible moderation not to scare off new investment - and by and large he's behaved.

The Byron election was also fun because of the efforts of a certain David Merrick who originally got the numbers of candidates up to record numbers. He spent days wandering around Forest Fields and Hyson Green promising people rides in Rolls Royces if they agreed to stand for the council under various wild labels. The extraordinary thing is not just how many people agreed to it, but that they also agreed to talk to the Post and have their pictures taken afterwards. Have they no sense of embarrassment?

LIFESTYLE

YOU ARE PROBABLY WONDERING WHY ADAM HAS DRAWN A THUMBS UP SIGN IN FRAME TWO. SO AM I...



©TITANIC BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS DIVISION AND ADAM '89

BEER NEWS

There's been a lot of activity in the brewery in the last few weeks, particularly around Home Ales. Last year the big Australian brewers Elders (who make XXXX) tried to buy Scottish & Newcastle who own Home Brewery and 450 local pubs. S&N objected and there were fears that Home Ales would be closed with Elders threatening to shed 2,000 jobs nationally. A fairly tacky publicity campaign was launched ("Robin Hood doesn't give a XXXX for Elders"), and the takeover has now been stopped because the Monopolies and Mergers Commission ruled it was against the public interest.

The irony of course is that there had also been opposition to the Scottish & Newcastle takeover to start with. S&N also own Youngers, Kestrel Lager, Newcastle Brown, McEwans, the Thistle Hotels and small Yorkshire brewers Theakstones. Since they took over they've been in conflict with Nottingham pub landlords over restrictive constraints and quadrupling rents. Still, some seem to think Scottish capital is better than Australian...

In the meantime the Monopolies and Mergers Commission has come out with a new report which criticises the whole system of tied pubs, i.e. where a brewery owns the pub and the landlord has to buy their beer and pay them rent. The report proposes (and for once the Government seems fairly likely to accept) that all breweries only have 2,000 pubs. This means 22,000 pubs for sale in the next three years! Although Scottish & Newcastle only have to sell 300, the last laugh could be if they simply sold off... yes, Home Ales.



CONSERVATIVES INFLATE

Strange but true the Conservative Party have increased their membership in the City by a third - up to 2,000 - in the last year. Fair amount of this comes from the efforts of Mohammed Magsood, estate agent and candidate for Radford in the county elections, where he's increased party membership from three to over one hundred. Another star was Jack Simon who recruited 25 in Forest ward. Well done!

SATISFACTION

Even more strange but true was a survey showing seven out of ten people as satisfied with the City Council. The best things about Nottingham apparently are the shops and the friendly people (didn't realise the council provided these). Those people not satisfied? The unemployed, single parents, disabled and Afro-Caribbeans...

ASDA APPROVED

The Labour City Council has given final approval to the building of the Asda hypermarket on the site of the Hyson Green flats, after opposing it when the Tories were in power. It's been cut down from 8.8 acres to 7 (that's still 61,800 sq feet!) and the price of the land's gone up from £3.7m to £4.62m. The Tories now in opposition have the audacity to claim it would have gone up that much anyway with inflation, and point out Labour members originally claimed it was worth £8m.

The scheme will also have some 150 houses, and Asda will be open for your Christmas shopping! No-one has yet managed to explain how the new Asda is going to revitalise the second hand shops that now take up Radford Road, or how the out of town shoppers will fit into exotic Hyson Green.

ALL WEATHER FOREST

Cynics are suggesting a link between the new Asda and the new style Forest (Goose Fair Site). There's a new all weather sports pitch and new changing rooms in the pavillion in the initial £250,000 package the city have planned. Other exotic ideas include a cafe or a pub, and landscaped gardens where the BMX trail currently is. Surely only Asda shoppers can bring this degree of sophistication to the area?

(The original planning document 'for public consultation' was wonderful only for its description of the main paths across the Forest as being "Desire Lines", both major and minor. Some kind of super erotic Ley lines?!!)

MEANWHILE, "BOGTHWAITELY ANARCHIST VENGEANCE" ARE PLANNING TO INSERT THE NEXT NAIL IN THE STATE'S LONG OVERDUE COFFIN...



© TITANIC HEAVY POLITICAL RESPONSES DIVISION '89

MEN WANTED at MOST SOUTH NOTTS. COLLIERIES

GOOD BASIC WAGES · INCENTIVE BONUS · SUBSIDISED TRAVEL
FUEL ALLOWANCES · UNSOCIAL HOURS PAYMENTS and other benefits

**EXPERIENCED UNDERGROUND
MEN and MEN WILLING TO BE
TRAINED should call at their nearest
JOB CENTRE OR COLLIERY**

NCB
South Notts Area

IN THE PITS

This year looks like it will see pretty much the end of the Nottinghamshire mining industry. Back during the 1984-5 national miners strike (against pit closures) Nottinghamshire played a crucial role - most miners carried on working. Ultimately this saw the formation of the anti-strike Union of Democratic Mineworkers (UDM) in opposition to the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).

It's never much fun to say "I told you so", but the last four years have seen all the worst predictions of Arthur Scargill and the NUM come true - half the miners have lost their jobs through closures nationally. In Nottinghamshire this has been only fractionally less, despite local pits being among the most profitable. Having been told last year that jobs were safe at Blidworth for 25 years, British Coal announced on January 30th that it would be closed with 767 laid off. Then 450 more out at Gedling, 540 at Shireoaks near Worksop and 500 at Cotgrave. Over 2000 jobs in less than two weeks has to be some sort of record even for British Coal.

Nearly all the coal from Nottinghamshire pits is sold to the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) for its power stations on the Trent like High Marnham and Staythorpe. In a further twist to the tale the CEGB recently ran a trial run of bringing coal from the USSR to these power stations, to see if it was feasible and cheaper. The CEGB is soon to be privatised (as will British Coal) and they're obviously going to buy the cheapest coal they can get, be it Russian or - more likely in the long term - South African.

All this enterprise culture is very upsetting to the UDM and local Tory MPs who obviously thought the working Notts miners would be forever enshrined in the Tory Holy Hall of Loyal Workers. Notts UDM president Neil Greatrex said "It was Notts coal which kept the country going during the NUM strike in 1984. They owe it to us to burn Notts coal in Notts power

stations", while Sherwood MP Andy Stewart moaned "When the miners were going through the picket lines and were being called scabs, they considered it a compliment, but the CEGB has now stuck its knife straight between their shoulder blades". Quite.

It's difficult to be optimistic about any of this. Campaigns to stop the closures are happening, involving local Labour party people and the remaining NUM branches. But the UDM is refusing to cooperate, majorities are voting at the pits not to contest the closures and the miners seem to be going for the quick pay out. (Workers get £500 - £750 per year worked, depending on age.) The Notts mining community is still bitterly divided after the national strike, and since the defeat of the miners militant trade unionism has pretty much vanished. How much does it take before we learn from all these old lessons of history?

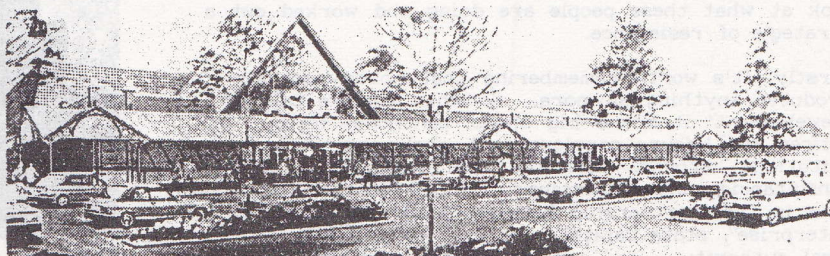
OPEN SORES

While British Coal is happily cutting its deep pits, it's ploughing ahead with plans for a series of open cast mines along the Erewash valley (land around Ilkeston - Eastwood - Alfreton). Open cast mines are basically big holes in the ground, where the coal is near the surface and can be dug out without lots of troublesome workers, and they are UGLY. Nottinghamshire County Council and Derbyshire County Council are opposed to them, but approval is pretty much in the hands of so-called Environment Secretary Nicholas Ridley. Much of the land around the Erewash is surprisingly wild considering years of industry, so give the local action groups (at Smotherfly, Shilo and Cossall) as much support as you can.

CITY FOR SALE

New plan unveiled

●An artist's impression of the Asda store



New games

The whole process has also seen the abandonment by both Labour councils of any alternative strategy or vision of what the area might be like. It makes you almost long for the days when they claimed that the economy would be revived by building lots of council houses and doing the repairs and when they had to do it all with union support. Nowadays the projects are announced and up pops either County Council chair of Economic Development Paddy Tipping or City Council Deputy Leader and chair of Employment and Economic Development John Taylor. Sometimes their support involves direct cash, other times it's for planning permission and bringing in central government or EEC funds. And of course the City relies on the casting vote of Communist John Peck.

The local ruling class feel no doubts about what they're up to, and no doubt it's all perfectly legal the way the same people crop up on different schemes working with MPs and ministers and councillors and council officers. But the rest of us feel very much in the dark with no-one making links or trying to work out new ways of opposition. It seems more and more clear that the traditional trade unionism based on heavy industry is outdated, and that the mainstream Labour party has thrown itself in with capital.

Perhaps we have to start by making those links and realising that the state and international capitalism isn't something 'out there' in the distance - it's operating on our doorstep. And that the ruling class of patriarchs aren't a theoretical concept but are real people in this city getting very rich from our exploited labour. Find out who's got the power, challenge those running your homes, your jobs, your education. Challenge the Labour party members who still try and maintain radical credibility, keep asking awkward questions and get ready to make up new games for the 1990s!

CITY FOR SALE

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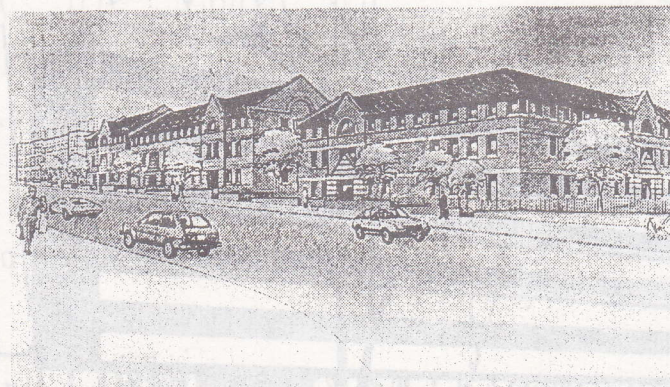
Nottingham's economy is gearing itself up ready for blast off into the 21st century, with the local authorities, government and private capital all in on the act. Maybe it's about time we started to look at what these people are doing and worked out a strategy of resistance.

Firstly, it's worth remembering that nobody actually produces anything anymore. So when there's talk of 'development' it means big shops, penthouse flats, offices and leisure complexes. A whole web of institutions around which the local ruling class have consultancies and consortiums. What's central to this is the 'partnership between public and private enterprise', state capital - central government, local authority - and private - often finance companies and venture capitalists.

Part of what's happening is the abandonment of the inner city and the move out of town. You get a flavour of this with all the things around Castle Boulevard / Lenton Lane, the big Showcase Cinema and the new Black Orchid nightclub, which basically say piss off if you've not got a car. Out in Netherfield the new Victoria Park has opened with lots of car parks and tastless shops like the curtain company called Texstyle World (geddit?) A public enquiry has just finished over plans for a £50m shopping and recreation centre on the site of the old Wilford Power station by the Trent. And you wondered why Habitat closed and said they hoped to re-open elsewhere? There are plans for a business park at Ruddington on old Royal Ordnance land, a £3.5m one in Colwick, and even for the closed Saxon-dale hospital to be turned into flats and surrounded by a new hotel and conference centre.

In the city centre things are more high rise, the £6m conversion of warehouses on Commerce Square in the Lacemarket into flats and offices, (including the building where '10' restaurant is based,) the old Lamberts factory on Talbot Street becoming a £3.3m office block, a 37,000 sq ft office block called Byron House on the old Albert Hall Institute site, and new offices on Mount Street off Maid Marian way.

Despite all these out of town shopping centres (along with the new Asda and shops where the Players factories were) there's apparently a danger that Nottingham is going to 'lose out' to places like Derby and Leicester as shopping centres. Within the city we've had a revamp on the Broadmarsh Centre and £13million was spent doing up the Victoria Centre (and they've just won the International Council of Shopping Centres European Award for Refurbishment for it!). The next area of expansion is the Lacemarket.



● An artist's impression of the new office development being built by Wimpey along Mansfield Road



Inner City

Meanwhile, back in Radford, unemployment is still 36%. While the national drop in inner city unemployment last year was 20%, in Nottingham it was only 16%. Conservative MP for Nottingham South and Thatcherite creep Martin Brandon-Bravo wants a government inquiry to find out why unemployment in Radford, Lenton, Forest and Manvers remains so high when he claims there are 1,500 jobs advertised in the Post every night. This might have something to do with racism, and the fact that most of the jobs are only for skilled people moving from other areas or other jobs. (The danger of Brandon-Bravo's antics is the increased activity of the DSS fraud squads and Restart teams.)

Of course there are schemes to help the poor and unemployed. The Nottingham Task Force on Radford Road has just announced a Development Fund of £100,000 for residents in Hyson Green, Radford, Forest Fields and Lenton who want to set up their own business. If you're lucky you'll get £2,500 from government grants and . . . a £2,500 loan from Barclays Bank. Hopefully there won't be too many people in the area still concerned about Barclays' links with apartheid.

The Task Force is central government funded and one of a number of bodies operating in the city, like the City Action Team which seems more concerned with anti-crime measures on the basis that if people feel secure they're more likely to want to set up businesses. There's also the Nottingham Development Enterprise (NDE), a group that brings together private developers to coordinate how they're going to 'revitalise' the city. In the long term they're involved with grandiose plans to build new railways within the city, possibly including space age ones that hang above the streets. (This is all to do with Trent Bridge falling down because someone miscalculated the level of traffic coming into the

CITY FOR SALE

~ Nottingham ~

NEW PRESTIGE OFFICE BUILDING

Byron House - 37300 sq. ft.

- Prime Central Office Location - 42 Basement Car Spaces.

- Available on lease, May 1989.

Full details from: Director of Property, Economic Development & Tourism,
Lawrence House, Clarendon St., Nottingham NG1 5NT.

Tel: (0602) 483502 Ext. 241 or 243.



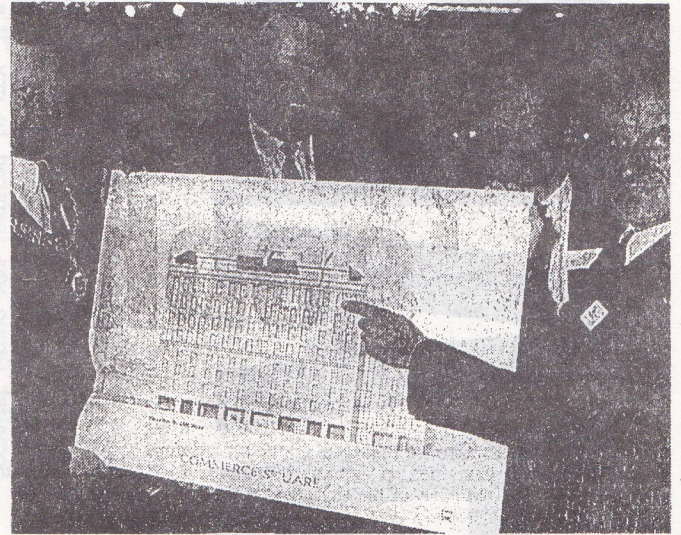
City of Nottingham

city.) NDE are now setting up a new company to redevelop the Lacemarket in partnership with the City Council. Deputy Council leader John Taylor says 'The company will be the developers of the Lacemarket. They will give projects to individual firms in return for a cut. They will use money-spinners to help non-profit making schemes.'

This whole mixture of local councils with private firms is hailed as a success story by the Government. Junior environment minister David Trippier is apparently 'overwhelmed' by the way that city businesses want to use job creation grants. There's also money coming from the EEC through the Social Fund and now the Regional Development Fund. Labour county councillor Paddy Tipping went off to Brussels and returned pleased that most of Nottinghamshire had now been designated bottom of Europe's shit heap.

Lets Go Crazy

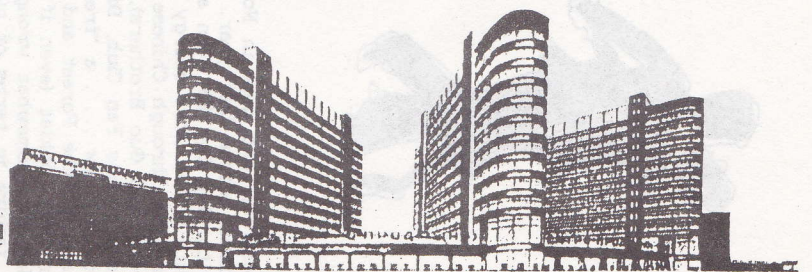
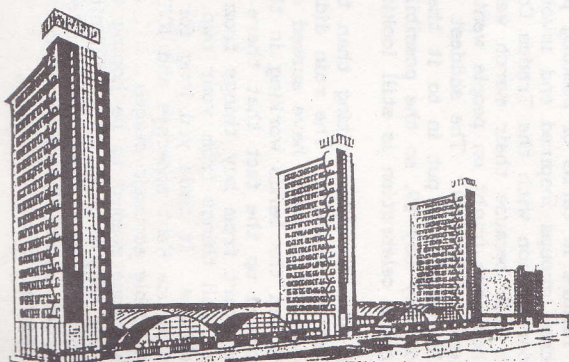
It's been one of the main aims of the Thatcher government to demolish municipal socialism and hand over the local state to private capital - and locally it's clear with education. The City Technology College being built on Sherwood Rise is a national showpiece of the Government's plan to set up hi-tech privately funded colleges to give a more job related education to pupils. Nationally it's been a disaster because private business hasn't come up with the cash, and though the Nottingham one got £1m from Harry Djanogly, most money ended up coming from the government. Teachers will be allowed union membership but have to sign a no-strike agreement. And this month Trent Polytechnic has been taken out of the hands of Nottinghamshire County Council and



become 'independent', sitting nicely on £125m worth of assets built up from law abiding ratepayers money. Councillor Fred Riddell has long been Chair of the County's Education Committee but even he's resigning from the new poly because the majority of the new directors are from private business. 'I am strongly ideologically opposed to this high representation of industrialists. This is a blatant example of the Government deliberately replacing the elective element of local government with an appointed element who are accountable to no-one but themselves.'

Obviously there's nothing new about understanding that education is essentially a form of conditioning for us to take up our assigned places in the land of the fathers. And perhaps it's good to see this revealed instead of hidden behind the cosy veil of 'public accountability'. But it does represent a shift of power and assertion of confidence by the local ruling class that we'll need new ways of challenging. (Why don't all those students in the RCP do something about it instead of trying to get us supporting Iran?)

And what's wrong with all this new development? Well, in the case of the out of town shopping centres and industrial parks there's the plain fact that they are soulless and ugly, and you can only hope that they will fall down of their own accord like the high rise flats flung up in the 60's did. It's also frightening to see just how easily the 'job creation' jargon has been accepted. Nottingham had the dubious distinction of being chosen to start the whole ET (Employment Training) scheme where you get an extra £10 a week but still remain on the dole for the privilege of working without guaranteed training or job security. A lot of the Government money coming into the city is for this kind of cheap labour, and it's been taken up by a lot of organisations (like Family First and JIPAC) that you'd hope would know better. The kind of development being encouraged is all the classic low paid and non-unionised: tourism, shops, small offices and businesses.





FESTIVALS

Festivals and gigs in Nottingham were a fairly dismal affair last year. There was a hopeful start with May Day 88 - an attempt to celebrate May Day with a bit more energy than usual. Three gigs ranging through Chinese traditional folk (the wonderful Guo Brothers), the disorderly Disorder, Joan Collins Fan Club, Dick Gaughan, Premi and the Cookie Crew . . . a "free university" day event, dawn on the Forest and picnic in the Arboretum, and an info booklet (even if it got the pagan roots of May Day somewhat wrong!) . . . Lots of good fun but a failure in terms of pushing politics or getting other groups inspired and involved - there was coordination with the Trades Council but they seemed to sulk because their march wasn't packed with thousands (right on people went to the Clause 28 demo in London). The saddest thing is that after all the energy put in to it there was none left over for May Day 89, so the possibility of making an annual celebration is still looking distant.

It was all more exciting than the appalling Peace Festival in July. The rain didn't help much (but shouldn't someone have sussed out a way to keep the PA and the bands working in the wet?) and it really showed up the fact that there was nothing there to do apart from buy things from other peoples' stalls and sell things from your own. Or give out leaflets. It made you long for those far away days of Bruce Kent speeches and NVDA workshops and inaudible acoustic stages . . . At the time everyone seemed to be hoping that with it being a Tory City Council they wouldn't get the site for 1989. Please - don't be tempted to try, let's forget about the peace movement til it gets its imagination back.

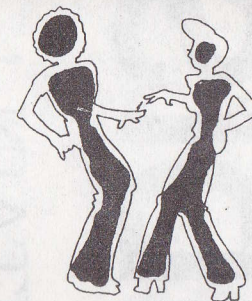
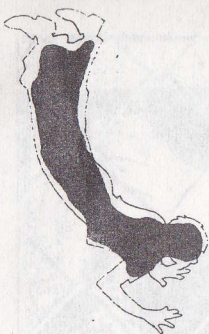
Late July brought the Rock n Reggae on the Forest. Strange how things contrive to exist as social events long after the reason for them has disappeared. The very label "Rock n Reggae" hangs like a dead weight describing musical forms well past their peak, though obviously important in the late 70's when they seemed to have a political, anti-racist value. So what was wrong with it? The awful sound, the same old bands, the predictability of everything running late and blokes looking for any excuse to get pissed. There was an edge of violence when the police moved in to close down the late evening sound system tent - but that seemed to reflect bad tempered disorganisation rather than revolutionary conflict. But things are being thought through and hopefully there will be new ideas to give it strength and reflect what's really going on in communities these days.

In August it was more good natured chaos at the national festival of Asian music at the University Park, organised by Nottingham's own Apna Arts. Only the truly inspired would try to set up such a major event in two months with volunteers who'd never done anything like it before. It worked, it was hot, the performances were stunning. It also lost £thousands, and it was disappointing to see so few white people turn up - part of that insidious racism which still sees Asian culture as a confusing block. Some complained of the cost, but it's a shame that those quite happy to spend a fiver getting pissed up for a lefty benefit at the Boys Club couldn't spend the same and a day with a culture far older and richer than their own. Second chance this year!

Apart from these festivals 1988 wasn't much of a thriller. In May, Public Enemy came to a half empty half student Rock City with a fairly stunning set and angry rap on the meaning of black consciousness . . . Even a member of the now defunct Anarchist Socialist Group was inspired to cry "it's even better than punk rock!" but it wasn't quite the same as the previous November when Public Enemy arrived with the Def Jam package and a packed out, predominantly black, audience. Rock City also featured the Class War "Rock Against the Rich" tour with Joe Strummer. Does anyone know what happened to the money raised from this? It was supposed to go to local 'community groups', but maybe it was better going to Strummer as a testimonial so that he doesn't have to go through such an embarrassing effort again. You've got to know when to stop, Joe.

By the end of the year, Rock City had settled into white cock rock, and early this year sacked most of its DJs and main promoters. (Anyone know exactly why?) They've now taken to having whole back page adverts in the NME begging for promoters to get in touch, but other rumours suggest they're going to pack in bands and just go for the night club scene. The Poly is now turning out to be main venue apart from ultra expensive Royal Concert Hall, but it's mainly sweet young indie bands and aging hippies (Roy Harper, John Martyn). The Garage closed and reopened as the Kool Kat with the excellent Graeme Park as DJ on Saturdays but few bands. The skatecore gigs seem to have dried up, and it's now getting to the point where another Central America do at the Boys Club is something to look forward to.

But to be honest I didn't go to anything after August. Having seen Prince nothing could compare...



The festival action this year is a curious response to what happened in 1988. Nottingham and District Trades Council have decided to actually hold the May Day march on the first of May! Is this a revolutionary breakthrough to mark International Workers Day on the proper date?! No chance, . . . May 1st is a Bank Holiday Monday, so our striking comrades will be rallying the pigeons in Market Square and their proletarian cries will echo around the empty streets and the closed shops. Doesn't it give you confidence for the General Strike!?

And Nottinghamshire County Council were distinctly uninspired by the idea of supporting May Day 88, but, what do you know, aren't they just organising their own 'Mayfest' - a 'multicultural art festival' - in Rufford Park this year. It's maybe a small example of what the local authorities are consistently doing: refusing to fund voluntary groups when they start, on the grounds that it's "too ambitious", watching and learning from the inevitable failure and then moving in with their own rsion.

Meanwhile May-June sees the City Council's Nottingham Festival - a major jamboree. Last year the theme was "Byron and the Spirit of Rebellion" (based on the vague idea that Byron used to live at Newstead Abbey and he was 200 years old) which was sufficiently broad to at least bring in Sweet Honey in the Rock and Ivor Cutler. This year the theme is "Hope and Glory? : British Art 1880 - 1915", which has nicely excluded not only black and Asian community, but everyone in Nottingham from Poland, the Ukraine, Italy, China, Vietnam, etc etc. The theme emerged while the Tories ran the council, so it might all be their fault . . . 1880 to 1915 was actually a very important time in British revolutionary politics - particularly for anarchists - and there were a lot of radical artists (William Morris, Walter Crane, Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, through to Virginia Woolf) but you won't be getting anything about them. In fact, you generally won't be getting much on the theme at all apart from Julian Lloyd Webber in Last Night of the Proms (Rule Britannia, Land of Hope and Glory), so you wonder why they bother. Isn't it about time a Labour council organised something with some connection for working class people?

The Asian Music Festival will be happening on August 12 - 13, partly saved by City and County coming up with money for last year's event. Again, having played it down the first year, the politicians are now pushing it as one of the wonderful things about wonderful tourist Nottingham. With such small voting majorities Labour and Conservative will do all they can to try and buy the Asian vote - hopefully their grubby fingers will be kept out of this autonomous project. It frightens them as much as Beeston police were frightened last year by a few thousand boisterous Asian youth having a good time on a Saturday night: the colonial nightmare!

But the real highlight of 1989 has got to be the visit of Radio One during the Nottingham Festival. On May 29th this includes the Teddy Bear's Picnic from Wollaton Park, a truly awesome event with thousands of people turning up with their teddys to listen to Mike Reid. Aaaaaarghhh! Be there!

nottingham festival



SATURDAY 3RD JUNE - JAZZ DAY

this is a total package of 4 excellent gigs at the Old Vic & the Albert Hall. Concession tickets (borrow a UB40!) are £6 for the lot which is cheap. You get to see Morrissey Mullen Band - one of a few white British groups who can actually play funk. Keith & Julie Tippet & friends - Keith plays piano, Julie used to be Julie Driscoll and sang "Wheels on Fire" in the 60's . . . The Happy End - big band, play different stuff including labour movement specials. Danny Thompsons Whatever - Thompson used to play with Pentangle, now does lots of 'world' music.

Also JUNE 3RD (terrible clash with above)

Budhaditya Mukherjee and Anindo Chatterjee - sitar & tabla at Congregational Centre. 7.30pm.

SUNDAY 4 JUNE

Rajab Ali and Party "evening of popular Asian music". Nottm Playhouse 7.00pm.

TUESDAY 6 JUNE

Pitman Browne - simply the finest poet in the area. Old Vic 5.45pm. FREE.

WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE

Barbara Castle talk on Sylvia & Christabel Pankhurst. Barbara Castle remains one of the few senior Labour politicians with a brain and some sort of radical integrity. (Does this have anything to do with trying to smash the unions during the Wilson government? [typist]) Castle Museum 7.15pm.

SUNDAY 11 JUNE

Mehfil-E-Mavsiki: Asian music and dance at Indian Community Centre 6.30pm.

JUNE 13,14,15

Whale Nation. The book by Heathcote Williams is supposed to be very good (anyone read it?) - the performance is by Roy Hutchins who is very good. Lace Market Theatre, 7.30pm.

THURSDAY 15 JUNE

Molly Bloom. Performance based on the last section of James Joyce's "Ulysses" - one of the revolutionary books of the century. Can a male writer understand a woman's soul and sexuality? Albert Hall 7.30pm.

THURSDAY 15 JUNE

Drummers of Burundi & Doudou N'Diaye Rose. East & West African drumming troupes. Albert Hall 9.30pm.

N.B. Concession rates for most of these gigs are reasonable.

AND ALSO: 30 MAY TO 24 JUNE

About the only thing that tries to give an anti-imperialist view of 1880 - 1915. An exhibition about four people living in Hyson Green area who were born before 1915 - but not necessarily in Britain! Nottm Community Arts Centre.

VIRAJ MENDIS

DEMOLISH FORTRESS BRITAIN !

At dawn on Wednesday 18th January police sledgehammered their way into the Church of the Ascension in Manchester and arrested Viraj Mendis. Viraj had spent two years in sanctuary attempting to avoid being deported; 48 hours after his arrest he had been expelled from Britain, put on a plane to Sri Lanka and an uncertain future.

From the publicity this case received you might think that all this was an unusual occurrence -- in fact last year **700 people** were deported from the UK. The only difference was that a campaign had made Viraj Mendis virtually into a household name and won him considerable support, as was shown by the fact that 2000 people marched to Manchester police-station on the night of his arrest.

Viraj's deportation does however signal the start of a further acceleration in the harassment of 'immigrants' in Britain. Having made an example of Viraj -- himself an anti-deportation activist -- thousands of others now face being dragged from their beds and put on planes to the other side of the world. For some this could mean a return to arrest, torture and death in 'their' native country; for the 'lucky' ones the psychological torture of being forcibly separated from their friends, family and chosen home.

'GO OUT AND WHACK THEM'

Those waiting for the knock on the door include Kabul Khan, camping in a Birmingham mosque with his family after escaping from immigration officials who want to deport him to Pakistan. They include the 50 or so people hiding in a network of safe-houses run by the 'Underground Railway' of helpers. They include 8000 would-be refugees waiting in Britain and up to 250,000 people labelled by the State as 'illegal immigrants'. According to a source within the Immigration service, 'Everything had to wait until Mendis was out of the country. Now the word is to go out and whack them. It is going to be like Mendis -- snatched and deported within 48 hours.' (*The Observer*, 22/1/89). Anyone harbouring 'illegals' could face 6 months in jail or a £2,000 fine.

The Immigration authorities share computer records with the police, and their job is obviously being made much easier by the general increase in State surveillance and information gathering. For instance, the Poll Tax registration process will give the State a comprehensive list of exactly who lives at what address. Benefit claimants have to produce ID at Social Security offices if they or any members of their family have come to live in the UK in the past 5 years. Immigration offices have unlimited powers of detention without trial, and those not immediately deported may be kept in detention centres such as Harmondsworth (near Heathrow) and Latchmere House in Richmond (where detainees are locked in their cells for 18 out of 24 hours).

A CLIMATE OF FEAR

The immigration crackdown is calculated to create a climate of fear amongst those without the correct passport. Working on the fringe of the economy in sweatshops, building sites etc., run by both black and white bosses, people know that to draw attention to themselves would only invite further trouble. Complain too loudly and deportation is only a phone-call away.

Immigration controls in general are used in an attempt to isolate black people from the rest of the working class. Controls define immigrants as a 'problem' which needs to be 'regulated', and in Britain and elsewhere 'immigrant' is used to mean 'black', and all black people are treated as immigrants. By encouraging racism our rulers hope to stop the struggles of one section of our class (e.g. the inner city riots where young black people played a leading rôle) from spreading to the rest of us.

Furthermore by accusing immigrants of 'swamping' Britain (as Thatcher did in 1979), or of being 'a burden on the welfare State', they hope to reinforce a British national identity, along with a loyalist working class who believe they share a common interest with their exploiters in defence of national culture and the national economy. This is the old myth of us all being in the same boat.

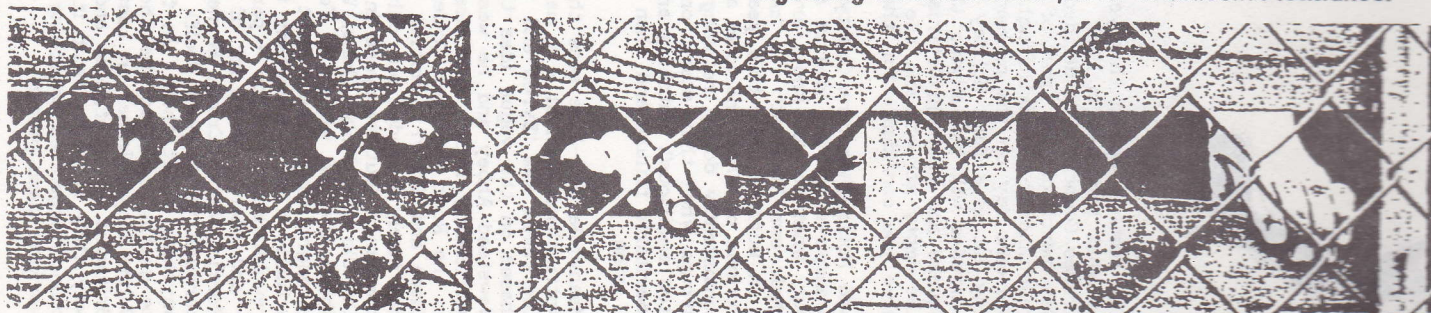
FORTRESS EUROPE

All of this is not due simply to 'nasty Tories'. Labour governments have acted in exactly the same way, rushing through the 1968 immigration Act, for instance, to keep Kenyan Asians out of the country. It's the same story too in the rest of the world -- witness the treatment of Turkish workers in West Germany, or North Africans in France, where a 'Communist' Party-controlled local council sent in bulldozers to destroy immigrants' hostels. In Western Europe as a whole there are moves towards a common immigration policy for all countries, leading up to the erection of a *Fortress Europe* in 1992 that will be more difficult than ever to enter from outside.

FOR A WORLD WITHOUT FRONTIERS!

The State cynically distinguishes between genuine political refugees with a 'well-founded fear of persecution' and illegal immigrants who have entered the country for economic or other reasons. This division between 'worthy' and 'unworthy' immigrants (or claimants, or AIDS victims,...) has to be rejected outright. It is only in this twisted world, where humanity is imprisoned by the frontiers of nation-states, that somebody could be called upon to justify making their home on one part of the planet rather than another.

In deporting Viraj Mendis the State has demonstrated that it means business. Against the naked power of sledgehammers and dawn raids, prayers and petitions will be worse than useless. Instead we need to begin discussing ways of organising our own counter-power of collective resistance.



TAKEN FROM RED MENACE N°1, AVAILABLE FREE FROM BM WILD, LONDON WC1N 3XX

POLL TAX

With registration beginning in April this year, the fight against the Poll Tax is taking off - at least, everywhere but Nottingham it is. In this article we give you more information about the Poll Tax, together with a beginner's guide to bugging-up registration

As the Poll Tax looms closer, resistance continues to grow. In Scotland, registration (to compile a list of all adults eligible to pay the tax) is now complete. There was determined resistance to registration for the tax - in Strathclyde alone, 50 000 people received 'Final Warning' letters from the council for refusing to register, and many people have now been fined.

Yet a massive 93% of Scotland's population ended up on the register without even using the information from the registration forms. This indicates the size of the spying system the government have created by linking computers run by the DSS, Inland Revenue, the police, and many others.

Because so few people were able to avoid registration, Scotland's 'popular press' have been claiming that the fight against the poll tax has ended. Yet their attempts to defuse the campaign are having little impact: a recent Marplan survey showed that 32% of people in Scotland still support a campaign of non-payment.

In England, state preparation for the Poll Tax continues. The government are obviously worried that the tax might be a teensy-weensy little bit unpopular, and are doing everything they can to lessen its impact on their own supporters.

New legislation on local authority financing will, in future, prevent councils from using money they collect from the rates or the poll tax to cover the cost of rent rebates for council house tenants receiving benefit. After all, it wouldn't be fair if wealthy home owners had to subsidise

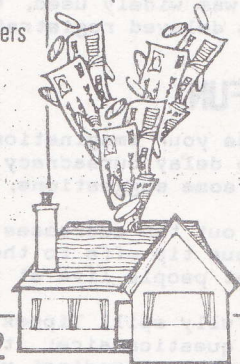
those who were only renting, would it? Instead, council house rents will be increased by as much as 25%, so that the poor, rather than the wealthy, will be subsidising the poorest.

Bradford council made the headlines recently when the Tories used their casting vote to push through £8 million of spending cuts. One consequence of these and other cuts will be a slight reduction in local poll tax bills - a tactical move by the Tories in the marginal constituencies of Bradford.

Here in Nottingham a recent survey by the County Treasury, based on Government calculations and using current rates as a base line, shows that over 70% of Notts households will be worse off after the tax is introduced.

On top of this, the average increases are much greater in the less wealthy areas of the county - and the proportion of people worse off after the tax is much greater in these areas.

District	Percentage of Adults living in households that lose/gain		Average extra cost per household per annum (before rebates)
	% losers	% gainers	£
Ashfield	83.7	16.3	217
Bassetlaw	82.8	17.2	236
Broxtowe	61.8	38.2	86
Gedling	61.1	38.9	57
Mansfield	76.0	24.0	183
Newark and Sherwood	73.9	26.1	156
Nottingham	71.3	28.7	154
Rushcliffe	52.5	47.5	18
County-wide	70.8	29.2	£142



The table summarises the County Treasury's survey. Notice the average increases of £18 and £57 in the wealthy areas of Rushcliffe and Gedling, compared to increases of over £200 in areas like Ashfield and Bassetlaw. Notice, too, that very nearly half of those living in Rushcliffe will gain from the tax. The figures show clearly how the Poll Tax will make the rich even richer - at our expense.

BUGGERING-UP REGISTRATION a beginner's guide

Starting in April this year, poll-tax snoopers will be knocking on our doors and demanding details of all the adults living in our homes. It is an offence to refuse to give them information, but there are many ways - not involving the risk of prosecution - to make their job harder.

BE YOUR OWN GUEST

If poll tax questionnaires arrive by post, simply send them back marked 'not known at this address'.

When snoopers are around, try not to answer the door - but remember to stay out of sight of the windows.

If speaking to the scum is unavoidable, don't admit to living at the premises. Be a babysitter, a visitor, a friend. Later, you can say that you never received the questionnaire.



POLL TAX

CONTINUED....

ACCIDENTS DO HAPPEN

Wait a couple of weeks after receiving the poll tax questionnaire, then write back and tell them that your dog ate it or it fell in the fire or the baby was sick on it - any excuse will do - and can you please have another one.

TAKE YOUR TIME

If a snooper comes around, s/he might try to make you fill in the form on the doorstep - DON'T. Say you're too busy, you're just leaving, you're about to feed the baby, have a bath, walk the tortoise - again, any excuse. Ask them to leave the form - then you've got 21 days to complete and return it.

KEEP THEM BUSY

Wait about 18 days, then return the blank questionnaire with a letter asking them what one of the questions means. When they return the form with an answer to your query, wait another 18 days then send it back again - still blank - with a query about something else. Keep doing this until you run out of ideas. In Scotland, where this tactic was widely used, they found that five or six queries delayed registration for at least four months.

HAVE FUN

Use your imagination - there are a thousand ways to delay bureaucracy and enjoy yourself too. Here's some suggestions, just to get you thinking.

- find out the addresses of local scumbags and send anonymous tip-offs to the snoopers that extra, non-existent people live at their homes
- carefully spill Tippex (or ink) onto the bar code on the questionnaire: this stops their computer from quickly 'reading' your details

- before you write to them, spray any correspondence with Dog Training Fluid - a kind of piss-in-an aerosol sold by many pet shops. It stinks.

Get the idea??

AND IN NOTTINGHAM?

The basis for an effective community-based campaign in Nottingham is slowly emerging. It's important that non-payment is the tactic that groups adopt, as this is the only tactic that has any chance of being successful. Resistance to the Poll Tax by any other means is really no more than token resistance, the appearance of dissent without any real chance of achieving anything. Other ways of fighting the Poll Tax can achieve limited gains, and can be used to raise anger and awareness. But unless the eventual thrust of a campaign is non-payment, then ultimately it will help government by isolating people when not paying the tax is the only option left.

At the moment the most well-organised group in Nottingham is the Bulwell Anti Poll Tax Group. This group is Militant dominated, and although they claim to have over 300 people in the Bulwell area who have promised not to pay the Tax, they really see the issue as one of propaganda. They are using the Poll Tax as an issue to "fight the Tories", getting a Labour Government elected who will then repeal the Tax. And pigs might fly. This line is with a few minor differences the same as every other group on the 'left'. The only disagreement seems to be over how "honest" to be with the punters. Militant, for example, publically state that the Tax can be beaten by mass collective action, when really their only real aim is "to get rid of the Tories". On the other hand, the Communist Party openly states that there is absolutely no way to stop the Tax short of getting a Labour government elected. In reality, of course, any future Labour government would only repeal the Tax if they found it unworkable. And that means mass resistance. Whatever the face of the government, whether it be Thatcher, Kinnock or any other megolamaniac, it will need civil disobedience on a grand scale to stop them taxing our very existence. GO FOR IT!!!

**WE'LL TRAIN THE
WORKERS WITHOUT JOBS
TO DO THE JOBS
WITHOUT WAGES**



SHOPLIFTING. THE QUIET ONE.

Shoplifting. Its the perfect crime - easy, quick, effective and satisfying. See what you want, work out the best way to get your hands on it, then just take it. Shoplifting improves your lifestyle and pokes a finger in the eye of big business at the same time. In fact, its such a normal part of everyday life for so many people that its difficult to think of it as being a crime at all.

But. There is some evidence that children, aged 10 to 14, are among the fastest-growing group of shoplifters. In a classroom survey of 11-to-15-year-olds conducted by the Nottinghamshire Police, nearly half admitted that they had stolen from shops.

Yet some people, including many 'left wingers', still say that you can't justify shoplifting: they say its immoral, dishonest, illegal, selfish and greedy. Well, greed and selfishness can be a problem - we must share the goodies around, think of others when we put our hands into our pockets. But as for the rest, it sounds suspiciously like the old trendy-lefty martyr complex - you know, 'if it makes my life a little more bearable now, then it must be wrong'. Here's another way of seeing it:

- * shoplifting is **MORE ACCESSIBLE** than the world of big business: anyone can do it, and many of the people whom big business usually shits on (parents with prams and the wheelchair-bound, for example) have a positive advantage

- * shoplifting is **LESS IMMORAL** than big business: it doesn't exploit workers, kill animals, destroy rainforests or give cancer to children

- * shoplifting is **MORE HONEST** than big business: shoplifters don't pretend to be providing a public service, they don't create artificial shortages, nor do they invent myths of fashion or style

- * shoplifting is **LEGAL**, but **SO ARE MOST THINGS THAT DAMAGE PROFITS**: armed insurrection, industrial sabotage, most strikes and many demonstrations. The African National Congress and some of the actions organised by CND are illegal, but this doesn't prevent them getting widespread support from lefties.

If you think I'm being flippant, then perhaps I am. To be honest, it seems that its actually easier to justify shoplifting than to justify paying for the things we need.

.. you don't have to be a Marxist to know that worker's pay is far less than the value of the goods we produce and the services we provide. The difference - called an "honest profit" - is taken from us by big business. . .

.. you don't have to be an economist to see that the prices of goods in the shops has little to do with the cost of producing them or getting them there. Market forces can't be touched, tasted, seen or heard, but their influence is written on every price tag. . .

.. and you don't have to be a revolutionary to see that shoplifting re-distributes a little of that "honest profit" in the right direction. It strikes a tiny blow at market forces, too, as it separates demand for goods from its yardstick, price, and from its basis - profit

Shoplifting can have a personal impact, too. As well as making life easier, it can help change the way you see shops and the things they sell.

When you've got no money its easy to wander around the shops and get hypnotised by all the goodies, to start thinking 'if only I had that .. and that .. and that .. then everything would be alright'. You feel this way because you associate certain goods with certain lifestyles: not so much the crude links of The Margarine for Men, but more subtle ones drawn from ads aimed directly at your 'market segment'.

But because you gave up nothing to get the things you shoplift, merely owning them means nothing. Shoplifting removes the glamour from goods, it devalues them so that their worth is measured only by how useful they are. And, as the things that you've shoplifted become truly price-less, you see more clearly than ever before that no amount of books, records, drugs, clothes, food and drink could ever compensate for the misery this society creates.

If you're still dubious about the whole thing, ask yourself why. Perhaps you still feel that shoplifting is just wrong? As we grow up we learn rules, mainly from our parents, that shape the way we live. This happens to all of us, mostly without us even noticing. Its that little voice in your head, the nagging feeling that tells you which things are right, and which are wrong.

You probably call this little voice your conscience. But it isn't really yours, in fact it isn't a natural part of you at all. Its simply a part of the society that you (and your parents before you) grew up in - the very society you want to change. So when the little voice stops you from fighting back, encourages you to put up with things as they are, don't call it

CAPITALISM

TOGETHER WE'LL CRACK IT

your conscience. Call it the *THOUGHT POLICE*, and give it as much respect as you'd give any copper (This doesn't mean it's OK to do whatever you like when you like, with no regard for anybody else. But once you realise why the little voice speaks up when it does, it's easier to ignore it when it's talking crap).

Enough of that old chat - if you're still reading then you're probably convinced. Here's some basic tips on how to do it. Read them, think about them, talk about them with your friends. Then get out there and use them.

THE 'OUR PRICE' TOP TEN TIPS!



1 Don't dress up like a terrorist every time you go shopping. Be as bland and uninteresting as possible. Choose boring clothes with conveniently placed large pockets.

2 Know your shops. Work out what security they have, where the blind spots are, and when they're busiest - for most shops this will be Saturdays, and between twelve and two during the week.

store	advantages	disadvantages
small shop	Hidden areas. Few people.	Staff able to see you. Personal service.
supermarkets	Big. Aisles to hide behind. Lots of people. Lots of choice.	Lots of store detectives.
chain stores	"Attractive" layouts. Worth ripping off.	Hard sell assistants.
department stores	Big. Lots of hidden areas.	Better security. You can get lost in them.

3 Watch out for cameras, mirrors, one-way glass. None of these things are much use except as a deterrent, but don't take un-necessary risks.

4 Take a knife to cut plastic security tags off clothing, by cutting either the plastic or the cloth. Pliers are useful, too: tags can sometimes be removed by pinching the rounded end tightly, then pulling or sliding the two halves apart. Changing rooms are usually the best place for this. Remember that shops which use security tags are usually lax about the rest of their security.

5 Cultivate useful habits that involve reaching inside your clothing: blow your nose frequently, have an itch in the small of your back. And always try to appear ten times more stupid than you are. But make sure you don't overdo it, or you'll look nervous.

5 In your hands carry gloves, a bag, a newspaper, or anything else that might easily conceal small objects (jewellery, cassettes, books, many types of food) by simply folding it around them.

6 Work out ways to throw store detectives off the trail: you might buy some cheap items and only steal the more expensive ones - a good way to approach your food shopping, as many of the more expensive goodies are conveniently pocket sized; make a point of speaking to an assistant before you leave the shop - this gives you a chance to look around you a bit and see if you're being watched, and might confuse any suspicious store detectives.

As part of a class project, three high-school students, Gayle Young, Chris Mader and Scott Deerfield, got permission from the store manager to rip things off in full view of customers. "They must have taken \$300 worth of merchandise," said Richard Baran, the students' marketing teacher. "There were more than 100 customers in the store during the three hours, and at least 50 of them saw the whole thing. Many of them were standing next to the shoplifters. They got one dirty look, but the rest of the customers either looked away or walked away. I'm totally amazed.

7 Always remove price tags and brand labels as soon as you can - go to a public toilet (watch out for plainclothes police), or examine your goodies at leisure over a cup of coffee.

8 Take advantage of circumstances, like crowds, bomb scares, fire alarms, complaining customers or gossiping shop assistants.

9 Work with some friends. Working together you can shield each other from view, create diversions, and stash the first lot of goodies somewhere else whilst you go back for more - then if you're caught, you've got less stuff on you.

10 If you do get grabbed, it'll almost definitely be by a store detective. If you can, it's usually best to drop the goodies and run. Otherwise, don't tell them anything, and don't admit to anything at all - they can't prosecute you without proof.

TOGETHER WE CAN CRACK IT

If you work with friends, there are many ways to shoplift more effectively. Here's one suggestion: You buy something for, say, £9-99. Make sure you get a bag and a receipt. You take it to your friend who stashes it, then you go back to the same shop and put something else that costs £9-99 into the bag. If you get stopped, just show them your receipt. If not, take it to your friend - then go back and do it again (but beware of shops with tills that write what you've bought on the receipt).

And it really is that easy. To give you an idea, I added up the prices of all the goodies I liberated from the evil clutches of our heartless oppressors during the last month. It would have cost me over £100 to buy them all.. so don't be put off by police propaganda telling you you'll get caught. If they could do more to stop it, they wouldn't issue such feeble threats. I could say more, but wouldn't you rather get out there and see for yourself how simple it really is?

by Frank Appraisal

FROM: "THE ABOLITION OF WORK AND OTHER ESSAYS" BY BOB BLACK.

THE CORRECT LINE

A Spectre is haunting Terra: the spectre of comedy. East and West, "left" and right, power's pimps and property's property (businessmen and bureaucrats, socialists and socialites, commissars and clergymen, Coke and Pepsi) - all the fat cats and phonies and their marching morons and stultified tools are as one in their efforts to exorcise the mockery of those who fly in under their radar. Banished or bridled again and again, the Trickster always gives them the slip in the end, wearing countless faces as the institutionalised slip on their faeces. They'll never catch the Roadrunner!

And now the time has come "to make the silence audible"...with the radio off. Ragnarok'n'roll is here to stay. "Take back the night"? Why settle for half measures? For the unbossed and unbought it is better to score than to keep score, better to prey than to pray. Let all the she-and-hedonists shit-can the (sub) humanists; let hungry Morlocks everywhere eat the rich; let the ludic and the Luddites put an end to the supreme servitude work. The depressive have reason to dispose of the repressive. Why not take the socio path? It leads to a leaderless life of permanent revelry beyond the Reality Principle.

As the economy implodes and the culture corrodes and the old world erodes, as even the oblivious incline to Oblomovism, as time runs out on the time-clock - with Armageddon imminent, the sentients and the sensitives had better make sure the Antichrist wins. It's autism against oughtism! Necronomics is bankrupt: statism is withering away. This is the fight to the finish between Them and Us, between gorillas and guerillas, quantity and quality, Marxists and Groucho Marxists, the inane and the insane, Locke and Loki, the Syndicate and the cynical, the Trots and the hot-to-trot, common sense and common sensuality, Catholics and catholics, Protestants and protestants, the ruling class and the declasse, the static and the stateless, the negation of pleasure and the pleasure of negation. All reet!

Confused by Cartesian, Manichean, left brain/right brain structuralist binary oppositions crosshatching the wrinkles on your brain? Would you hesitate to play chess with Karen Quinlan? Your prudence (but not your prudishness) is commendable and, hopefully, not commandable. What you need is a different (but not diffident) industrial-strength ideology, a foray into fuckturalism, the (non-illuminist) illumination of north-brain consciousness, a plunge into 3-chord politics and nothing-leftism. Too much is enough! Self-help means help yourself! Pursue liberation through logosexuality: see for yourself how cunning-linguistics adds a whole new dimension to oral sex. Use the power of absurdity to expose the

absurdity of power. You say you hear a different drummer? Maybe so - but is the rhythm syncopated? Give yourself permission to feel okay about trashing the Totality and its countless loyal oppositions, its artfully engineered illusory alternatives to itself. Accept no substitutes!

You're entitled, after millenia of civilisation, after centuries of industrialism, after decades of schooling, after years of television, after months of rock music, after minutes of reading - you're entitled to the straight poop. And here it is, the question to the answer you've been hearing all your life, the correct line:

INCORRECT

CORRECT

Sedation.....Sedition

Vanguard parties.. After hours parties

Freedom of religion.....Freedom from religion

Legal practice....Target practice

Behaviourism.....Misbehaviourism

Meditation.....Premeditation

Leninism.....Lennonism

Praying.....Playing

Free trade.....Rough trade

Counter-culture...Countering culture

Political movements...Pelvic movements

Dad.....Dada

Revelation.....Revolution

Wars.....Whores

Classical liberals...Recoco radicals

Reason.....Treason

Sects.....Sex

Capital punishment....The punishment of capital

Atomic power.....Anomic power

Lawyers.....Sofflawyers

Homophobia.....Nomophobia

Separation of church & state....Abolition of church & state

Consultants.....Insultants

Elections.....Erections

Force.....Farce

Historic materialism...Hysterical materialism

Racism.....Erase-ism

Neurotics.....Erotics

Positive thinking..Positive drinking

Libertarians.....Libertines

TV.....TV's

Theologians.....Neologins

Foreign affairs...Foreign affairs



BOOK REVIEWS

THE ABOLITION OF WORK

BY BOB BLACK

"No-one should ever work" begins this pamphlet. A beginning like that made me feel sceptical (who will clean the toilets?), and my first impression wasn't improved when I noticed that there were lots of very long words indeed all over the place. However, I read on and was soon very glad that I had.

The *Abolition of Work* argues intelligently, if a little too academically in places, that work is the major cause of evil in our world, and proposes that instead we should turn work into play. Bob Black agitates for "permanent revelry" and shows that "all the old ideologies are conservative because they believe in work". Leftists "look to be the last champions of work, for if there were no work there would be no workers, and without workers, who would the left have to organise?" (I cheered inwardly when I read this bit.)

So how is work defined? It is "never done for its own sake, it's done on account of some product or output that the worker (or, more often, somebody else) gets out of it." Worse still, in modern times, people don't just work, they have "jobs". "One person does one productive task all the time on an or-else basis." "A 'job' that might engage the energies of some people, for a reasonably limited time, for the fun of it, is just a burden on those who have to do it for forty hours a week."

The degradation of most jobs is made explicit: "Discipline is what the factory and the office and

the store share with the prison and the school and the mental hospital." "...prisons and factories came in at about the same time, and their operators consciously borrowed from each others control techniques. A worker is a part-time slave." "If you do boring, stupid, monotonous work, chances are, you'll end up boring, stupid and monotonous."

Work doesn't only degrade, it controls us. Work is the main means of making us obey the appalling rules of capitalist society, east and west, without question. "Anything is better than nothing. That's why you can't go home just because you finish early. They want your time, enough of it to make you theirs, even if they have no use for most of it." "Once you drain the vitality from people at work, they'll likely submit to hierarchy and expertise in everything."

Bob Black also goes into the dangers of work and the uselessness of most of it. He sees housework for what it is ("the largest occupation, the one with the longest hours, the lowest pay and some of the most tedious tasks around") and points out that once we abolish wage-labour and achieve full unemployment, we undermine the sexual division of labour.

And yes, he talks about what we will put in the place of work. He doesn't advocate inactivity, he advocates living joyous and playfully active lives. "I'd like life to be a game - but a game with high stakes. I want to play for keeps." Most work at present is useless or worse (I am sure we can all make extremely lengthy lists of our own) and should be got rid of. "We have to take what useful work remains and transform it into a pleasing variety of game-like and craft-like pastimes, indistinguishable from other pleasurable pastimes except that they happen to yield useful end-products." "Under a system of permanent revelry, we will witness the Golden Age of the dilettante...there won't be any more jobs, just things to do and people to do them."

I have quoted so much from the pamphlet in this review because I think it puts its case so well. There is even an answer to "who will clean the toilets?", but you'll have to read *The Abolition of Work* yourself to discover that! And I hope you do, because what it has to say is really important. For work to be abolished, there can be no tinkering with society or purely economic revolution - we need a complete change with no half-way measures. This is total revolution. Life will be utterly transformed.

Olga da Polga



BLACK
RAVEN
BOOKSTALL

Black Raven stocks Anarchist papers, pamphlets, books and periodicals. We can also order books on request.

The stall is usually at St. Peter's Gate on Saturdays.

For information contact:

Black Raven Bookstall,
c/o Box 1, Hiziki,
Goosegate,
Hockley,
Nottm.

ONE STEP BEYOND

or

SMASH THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY

This pamphlet was originally printed in the January 88 edition of Nottingham Anarchist News under the title "the next step?" At the time the authors were told that they ought to stick to "politics" and not write about "gossip", as if systematic intimidation was not a proper subject for concern. The RCP was so unnerved by our revelations that the principle bullies were moved to other towns.

The pamphlet is the first project handled jointly by Pirate Press (Sheffield) and Phoenix Press (London). Hopefully it will receive wide circulation - if you have any thoughts about dabbling with the RCP, read this pamphlet. Likewise it makes a good little present (only 45p) for any acquaintances who appear to be reading too much of Lenin. But be careful. As the publishers warn, "It is not intended to provide other left groups with something to gloat over or argue around because we consider all authoritarian parties, movements or groups to be equally at fault".



AUNTY SEPTIC

Do you have a problem? Are you anxious, tense, lonely, and feel that you've got no-one to trust? Take some drugs and you'll feel better. But if you can't afford them and the psychiatrists are busy, then write to Aunty Septic - she's got all the answers.

Dear Aunty Septic,

Until I discovered Nottingham Anarchist News I was a passive proletarian. Now my consciousness is raised and I am painfully aware that I'm a victim of a patriarchal and capitalist society.

I know that only collective action can change things, so I get depressed when I see friends worrying about nuclear disarmament and the price of futons. Even fellow comrades spend more time over Prisoner: Cell Block H and practising Rizla Origami than they do creating the climate for a social revolution.

If there was a glimmer of hope I'd feel much better, but sometimes I can't help thinking that the working class are even bigger bastards than the bosses. I get angry and resentful, and want to smash the whole rotten system - now! Please help me.

Aunty Septic replies:

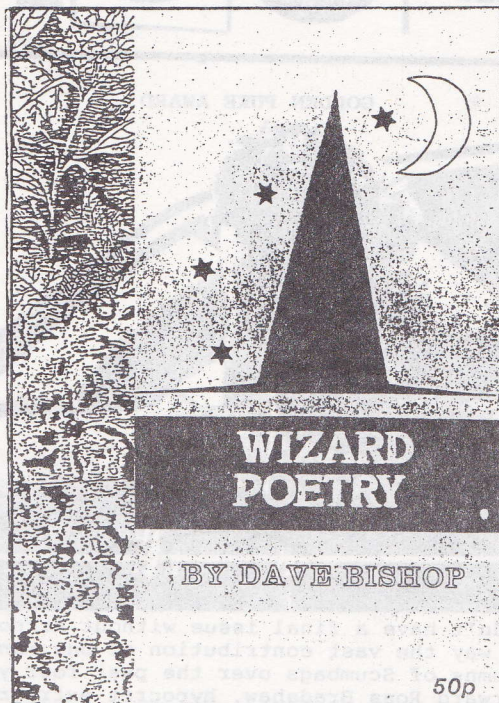
The bad news is that you've got a dose of Baader-Meinhof Syndrome (BMS, or the 'Big T'). The good news is that it's still in its early stages and needn't be terminal.

Martyrs aren't much use. Many terrorists imagine they're making a revolution, but the will to martyrdom is merely a surrender to slavery. In your fight against BMS, remember that terrorism and revolution are like cancer and the healthy growth of a living being. Learn the difference between nihilism and revolutionary fervour, and act on it.

But don't give in to the apathy around you - your anger is real. It's now 200 years since the first revolution failed, yet we're still knee deep in shit. And it won't just happen spontaneously, by itself (y'know, like a flower, man): we have to struggle now to create a climate of revolt. This isn't being a vanguard, it's being committed.

I was saddened by your comment about the working classes, especially as I'd guess that you don't even have a job yourself. Don't think that because you've begun to understand how capitalism bleeds us all, you aren't working class any more. And if you're a real man, you won't be afraid to cry.

SAMIZDAT?



REVIEW: Wizard Poetry, by Dave Bishop

"...misguided Madonna, Queen of the Jungle, the stench of all the shit in the world can never match the fragrance rising from your manicured forefinger as it strokes that godless red button. I warn thee cold eyed Medusa, you and your atomic cocksucking disciples who threaten her earth with the ultimate orgasm, The Goddess who spawned thee grows tired of these dangerous games it shall not go on forever and ever."

This extract from "Blue Eyed Medusa" is fairly typical of Dave Bishop's writing. It's the kind of writing that at its worst is turgid and confusing, but (occasionally) when it works the juxtaposition of images and phrases can hit you like a snort of amyl nitrate.

Is it art? Like everything else, art is poisoned by capitalism, and the aesthetics of good poetry didn't evolve in a social vacuum. Perhaps it's more relevant to ask ourselves why we need to have something, not a part of our usual daily lives, that we call art?

Personally, I don't think it's the best writing ever. There are frequently too many words between subject and object, noun and adjective, verb and adverb. Dave's preference for lurid imagery sometimes pays off, but tended to leave me blind to the subtleties of the issues he was writing about.

Having said that, the overall standard of Wizard Poetry is little different to many other Nottingham anthologies I've seen, and at least Dave Bishop tries to include some politics. Compared to the middle class sterility of Poetry Nottingham, the gritty triviality of the Nottingham Writer's Workshop or, on the other hand, the ego that is Steven Lowe, it makes a refreshing change - and he did it himself, too.

SCUMBAGS

GOLDEN PUKE AWARD



We couldn't have a final issue without acknowledging in some way the vast contribution of one man to the columns of Scumbags over the past four years. Step forward Ross Bradshaw, hypocrit extraordinaire, liar, opportunist and self-centred bastard. Three things have come to our attention (excluding the surely malicious rumour that Mushroom have once more called in the police to help out at the shop) that clinch his position. First we have him in his new-found role of reviewer of books for The Magazine. That organs policy of "no politics" should suit Ross down to the ground, and he proves this by his miserable little piece on the Salman Rushdie affair. If you've nothing to say Ross, just shut up! But, of course, his role as book reviewer has nothing to do with offering a critical appraisal of books and the issues around them and everything to do with offending as few people as possible and promoting the profits of a certain bookshop. There's plenty of people with no vested interest apart from a love of books who could do the job far better than Mr Bradshaw but who haven't got their sticky fingers on as many strings of influence. And that brings us on to the second item on the menu: The latest edition of St Anns Ward Labour Voice (free to every home in the ward) contains a piece on pedestrian refuges on Woodborough Road. "'Its a big improvement' says Hungerhill Road resident Ross Bradshaw." Now, thats a matter of opinion. Has Ross never tried cycling down Woodborough Road with a number 51 bus in hot pursuit whilst trying to avoid parked cars. Those refuges are a positive danger to cyclists. As I say, thats a matter of opinion, but would it not have been more honest to point out that "Hungerhill Road resident Ross Bradshaw" is, in fact an active member of St Anns Ward Labour Party? The third item on our menu shows that Ross' manipulation is not confined to the Human species. Ross has tried to turn his cat into a vegan! Cats are carnivores, like it or not, and this experimentation is no better than the kind of experiments undertaken in animal research labs up and down the country. To attempt to change the fundamental nature of any animal to fit into human ideas of nicety is just plain sick. Lets hope that the next visit paid to Mushroom by freinds of the ALF will not be just to collect their mail.

Scumbags en masse to Forest Fields. Walking home late one cold, rainy night I came across an old man lying on the pavement. He stretched out a hand, croaking "Please help me." I bent down, found out what was wrong, hauled him to his feet and helped him home. Several people had passed, ignoring his pleas for help and not giving him a second glance. I can only hope they find themselves in the same position some day.

The (rather badly reproduced) photos on these pages of Scumbags are taken from an exhibition in Hyson Green library. They were scheduled to be seen for six weeks but some of them only stayed on display for a few days. The exhibition was designed to take us on a "... journey through the tarnished streets of a disparate and disillusioned Nottingham." One of the pictures removed was "Halal Chicken", even though the library is no more than a couple of hundred yards from a Halal butchers where similar scenes can be witnessed through the windows every day of the week. The excuse used for removing some of the pictures and moving others was the harm it might cause children. As if a photo could be worse than the real thing just up the road. The reality is that some people (and more often than not those with the power to implement their prejudices) have a very rosy view of things and want nothing to disturb their complacency.

We are not the only publication to make reference to that last story. The News of the World carried it to millions of homes. And how did they come across this obscure item of (very) local news which they ran under the heading "Silently Squeamish"? Well it seems that NotW, owned by Murdoch and despised openly by many Trade Unionists is printed by our very own T. Bailey Forman of Evening Post fame. There's supposed to be a boycott of the Evening Post in solidarity with a long running dispute with the print union NGA. In fact this boycott is at a very low ebb. The labour party decided to drop its part in the boycott as a "pragmatic" move during last years elections. That's bad enough, but they haven't reimposed their boycott after the election. When it comes down to it, they're scabbing! And remember this, local lefties, because of the nature of the Evening Post, when you're talking to your "friendly" local reporter, you're also talking to Murdoch!

Given the Labour Party's new-found enthusiasm for contact with the Evening Post it seems odd that the comrades in Forest Fields should try so hard to keep their own difficulties out of the local press. Earlier this year the agm of the branch was severely disrupted by fighting between warring factions of muslims. Knives and knuckledusters were used in a meeting of hundreds which had been packed by both sides with people living outside the ward but giving bogus addresses. As a result of all this the branch has been suspended by the national party whilst investigations are carried out. It must be doubly embarrassing for the leadership because the leader of one of the factions involved (though astute enough not to be present at the fracas) is none other than Mohammad Aslam. He was imposed by the national party as parliamentary candidate for his tolerance and moderation as opposed to Sharon Atkin, who was the locals choice, but was seen as a dangerous leftie by the higher echelons.

Just a few lines on "the ones that got away". Because of lack of space, nothing here about arch scumbags the RCP (who unfortunately havn't got enough credibility of any sort to merit an award, and, anyway, they're such an easy target). So, no story on the Day That The RCR Refused To Sell A Paper! And no story on the banning of Lobster Telephone by 118 Workshop and its humourless management committee. And nothing on the rise of CODA to realms of high finance and big business and what that means for the poor user. Oh well!

ISCUMBAGSI

There is a campaign at the moment to fight the closure of Family Planning Clinics. The plan is to reduce this much-needed service by 44 sessions in Nottingham and surrounding areas. The campaign has widespread support from care and medical workers in the area. One of the services provided by the clinics is the free provision of condoms. Very strange indeed, then, that the closures should be supported by one Dr Miles of the Area Health Authority's AIDS sub-committee. If you'd like to discuss the stupidity of this position you can contact Dr Miles at Forest House, though something more substantial than a phone call is probably needed.

ROTTEN MAGGOT AWARD



The rotten maggot award for corporate contribution to the columns of scumbags goes to purveyors of all that is worst in modern capitalism, MacDonalds. Local catering group Veggies have come under a lot of pressure from the multi-national after detailing some of the outrages perpetrated by the corporate scumbags. However, MacDonalds has realised that its on a hiding to nothing by spending many thousands of pounds in hounding an organisation whose total assets don't match even an hours takings in any of the MacDonalds outlets in the world (including the one in revolutionary Managua). The solicitors letters and the threats of legal action have now dried up. Not so lucky the Guardian newspaper; prospects of a costly court case have forced them to publish an apology to MacDonalds. The Guardian withdrew allegations that "McDonalds exploited young people by employing them in degrading conditions at excessively low wages for long hours without proper meal breaks or time off ... and maintain unreasonably low staffing levels, and that employees who had sought to engage in trade union activities had been dismissed." All this is true but money talks and to the Guardian as well as to McDonalds money is more important than the truth. Which makes it even more sad that people with some kind of understanding of modern capitalism and its effect on people and the environment still insist on eating there. Please stop it!

We can't let Veggies get away scot-free, though. As you leave their base in the Rainbow Centre, you'll see a prominent poster by the door urging you to "Boycott Boots" and detailing some of the nastier things they do to animals. Don't get to absorbed looking at the poster, though, because you might trap your finger in the door and need a plaster from Veggies first aid kit. And where do the plasters come from? Only one guess, I'm afraid.

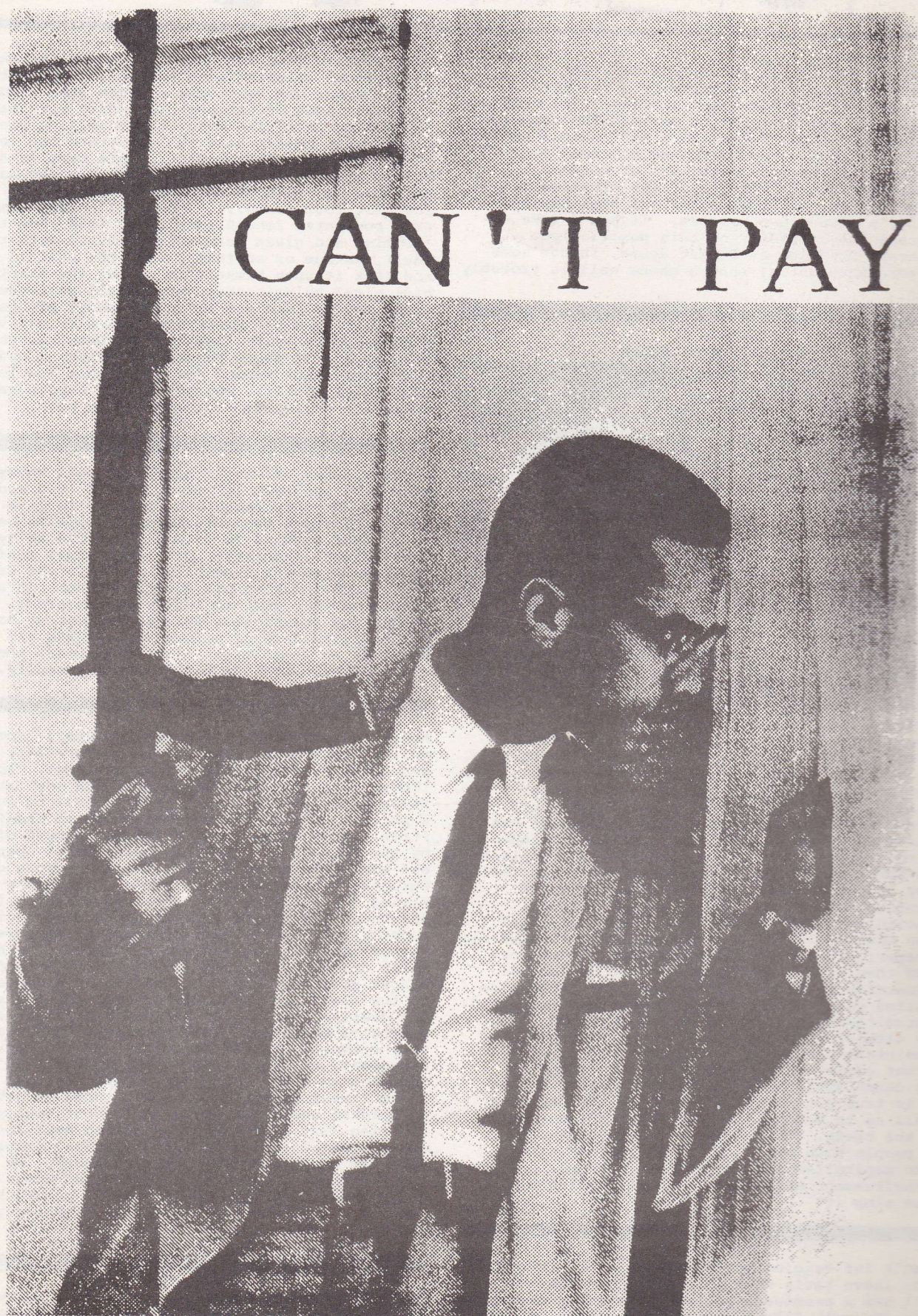
A cautionary tale for any of you careless enough to be found relaxing within lens reach of 'radical' photographer and Rentasnap supremo John Birdsall. A recent issue of national community work magazine "Community Care" featured happy smiling picture of man with small child to illustrate the less common aspects of fostering. This came as a slight surprise to the child's mother who has brought the child up as a single parent for the last four years... When challenged, Community Care contacted John Birdsall who told them the "models" had given permission (untrue with the adult, untrue or unethical with the child!) and took it upon himself to reveal the exact (!) biological relationship between all concerned. Now, times may be hard and we're all short of cash but it's getting a bit desperate when alternative photographers start flogging off personal photos to outposts of Reeds Business Publishing and show such scant regard for the rights and feelings of lesbian mothers, who get enough hassle and prejudice as it is. Thank you very much.

A hearty fuck off to Mr Aziz, the well known socialist landlord of Forest Fields (you know, the one who only rents out property to give homes to the poor and sees any attack on him as being racist and nothing to do with his role as cynical capitalist). Recently, his ideological confusion led him to berate female bar staff in the Carlton pub for not serving him quickly enough, on a night when they were obviously understaffed. Anyone who thinks that Aziz could improve both his understanding of alienated work and his attitude to women might like to discuss these - and other - matters with him. Vigorously.

And a hearty 'goodbye' to Paul Spicker: social policy lecturer at Trent Poly, Labour Party member and Child Poverty Action Group activist. As he leaves Nottingham to take up his new post at Dundee University, we can reveal that in 1977 he won a prize in the Ross McWhirter Memorial essay competition. This named after a fascist bumped off by the INLA in one of their more useful operations and administered by twin fascist Norris of Guinness Book of Records infamy. Spicker's essay titled "On striking a balance and standing firm" addressed the question: "How can a Democratic country protect its citizens against subversion without sacrificing individual freedom?" The short answer, of course, is that its a bloody stupid question, since subversion is directed at the state and its institutions, not its citizens. But despite (or perhaps because of?) his very expensive education, Spicker misses this and gets very confused. After long tortuous and convoluted argument, he comes down firmly on the hang'em and Flog'em side. The only answer, Spicker says, is to "treat crimes as crimes". When we interviewed Mr Spicker about his essay he thought deeply before replying "But I got £200 and a free meal for that essay", which (allowing for inflation) probably puts him on a financial par with Judas. We are touched that Mr Spicker is so worried about democracy's survival, and would like to assure him, and all his Labour Party comrades, that we at NAN share their concern

The very last Scumbag of all must be reserved for something very close to home. Which local paper aggressively independent and standing against exploitation is printed using ET labour? If only a could tell you the whole story!!!!!!

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