

THE SHEFFIELD ANARCHIST

VOL. 3 NO. 2

SUMMER 1983

PAY WHAT YOU LIKE



THE SHEFFIELD ANARCHIST

This publication is produced by the Sheffield Anarchists as an aid to the wider dissemination of the libertarian viewpoint in the Sheffield Area and elsewhere.

Vol 1. No. 1 was originally published in 1891, and was intended to be published at fortnightly intervals. However, pressure from the law, christians, police and authority in general (anti-terrorist activity was used as a pretext) ensured its closure after only ten issues. It has been produced intermittantly ever since, issues being numbered consecutively.

The paper has no arbitrarily fixed price, a continuation of previous policy that ensures that want of a few pence shall not prevent the sharing of ideas. However, if you do give generously, it will mean that we shall be able to produce more copies for free distribution. Monies received are used in this way, we pay ourselves no wages, under any guise, have no expense accounts and support no other enterprise.



Well here it is folks, what you've all been waiting for, the Summer edition of The Sheffield Anarchist. We had hoped to get it out before the election, but have been too busy disrupting it in other ways.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the issue, either by writing articles, drawing graphics, etc, or by helping with printing, and of course, with distribution.

The last issue went really well, and we sold or gave away 400 copies. Some comrades also used the opportunity to street-sell on Fargate, and this too was very successful.

It is hoped to get out an Autumn issue, and those wishing to contribute or get involved generally should make contact at the address opposite. All articles, drawings, cartoons, poems, etc of an Anarchist/Libertarian nature are very welcome. These will be reproduced exactly as written or drawn (although text may be typed to aid easier reading and cut down on printing costs). No editorial control is exercised over these contributions, and inclusion is subject only to available space, although space has never been a problem in the past.

BLACK RAT,
SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS UNION,
WESTERN BANK,
SHEFFIELD.

We regret that our previous address for correspondence is now completely inoperative.

MORE GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT SHEFFIELD ANARCHISTS

We are a very loose conglomeration of people, having in common that we are Anarchists and live in Sheffield. We are not a formal group, and have no membership cards or anything like that, although we do try to meet together whenever possible. Our diversity acts as a safe-guard against 'leaders', police-infiltrators, etc and ensures that space is offered to Anarchists of differing opinions, for instance; pacifists and non-pacifists. The looseness of our grouping ensures that we do not become dogmatic and examine all avenues of anarchism. Also, as we are not a formal organisation as such we do not suffer from the same diseases that seem to afflict these structures i.e. bureaucracy, intimidation of the less verbally articulate, oppression of minorities, hierarchy, etc, etc.

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HOME NEWS

EXCLUSIVE: INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST CONSPIRACY HATCHED AT SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY

When John Osborn, Martin Flannery, and an unmemorable Liberal/SDP candidate came to Sheffield University to debate our future for the next five years, they were unprepared for what was to befall them. For unknown to them Anarchist forces were already plotting an international conspiracy of disruptive action, sabotage, mayhem, and inconvenience (to say the least) attacks that would begin at that very meeting.

As Osborn took the stand our intrepid comrades found that mere catcalls and verbal abuse was not enough, and so an Anarchist hit-person attacked with a salvo of pink polystyrene foam. However, the enemy was out of range, and so, risking life and limb, our friend moved in closer. A suicide-steward counter-attacked trying to wrestle the weapon away. At this point a giant smoke cannister was put into play, but it failed to go off and was captured by the steward. However, all was not lost, his retreat was blocked by another Anarchist, who pushed him against the stage, but still, he managed to push the smoke-bomb out of reach on the stage. Was everything to be in vain? Was the Anarchist conspiracy over??...NO, with a dynamic leap another of the hit-team scaled the stage, (sending Osborn scurrying to cower in the corner), and detonated the device, releasing clouds of orange smoke, before making his escape together with two other comrades.

Resistance continued in the meeting, and another comrade was ejected, only to carry on disruptive action from the balcony.

Meanwhile, John Osborn had been silly enough to park his car outside the S.U. with the window slightly open. The gap was just large enough to receive a large stink-bomb. And so Osborn's ordeal was not yet over, (it probably still isn't). Neither, for that matter, was Flannery's for as he tried to make his getaway from the campus, no doubt having had enough, a stink-bomb was thrown into his car from an overhead bridge.

All our comrades returned safely to base vowing more actions, and swearing to turn stateist political meetings into the circuses they are.



Smoke bombs at meeting

INTRUDERS brandishing smoke bombs and aerosol sprays have disrupted an election meeting at Sheffield University.

Three candidates had to leave the platform at the Students' Union, where they had gone to discuss education policy.

"THE GREAT ONLY SEEM GREAT BECAUSE WE ARE ON OUR KNEES, LET US RISE."



They were Martin Flannery (Lab) and David Chadwick (Alliance), who are fighting Hillsborough, and Tory John Osborn (Hal-lam).

Mr Chadwick said the intruders had no connection with the University. "We were driven from the platform and had to seriously consider abandoning the meeting. It was disgraceful."

FROM 'THE STAR' 2/5/83

Anarchy foams

A debate on education policy at Sheffield University students' union yesterday was interrupted by anarchists who threw a smoke bomb and sprayed coloured foam string on to the stage.

FROM 'THE MORNING TELEGRAPH' 2/5/83



HOME NEWS

MORE ANTI-ELECTION CAPEERS

Wednesday, the day before polling some of us decided to turn up at a Con. meeting to see how well their Sheffield Central candidate; Patricia Rawlings, could handle some serious opposition. The Labour Party turned out in force, outnumbering the Cons. about three to one. An idiot councillor spoke first whilst one of our comrades desperately chased an unbreakable stink-bomb round the floor. Re-enforcements arrived, our punk contingent instilling fear and revulsion into the small band of blue-rinse girls at the front. The councillor didn't need heckling, he managed to screw it up on his own. None-the-less, things had to be said. A couple of us soon became bored and left, setting off the fire-alarm on the way out. The stink-bomb broke and the rest of us went to look for the others.

After a while we went back in, past the distressed looking bunch holding their noses and trying to get some fresh air. Rawlings made the mistake of talking on defence. We kept up a barrage of heckling but she wasn't much of a speaker, either. Councillor Patnik heckled the hecklers and we had to make it clear to him that we didn't want to hear what he had to say. He declined the offer to go somewhere quiet and sort out the issue.

Rawlings made some rather difficult to substantiate claims about the city council being financed by the K.G.B. and C.N.D. being run from the Kremlin, etc. When she mentioned the Falklands campaign she provoked the response, "I remember the Falkland -s, you murdering bastards!!" This led to a general uproar. We explained to the

meeting that they had no right to a 'genteel' debate about which shade of shit we were to be subjected to for the next 5 years. Our idea was not to exchange opinions with them, but to deny their right to even debate anyone's future but their own. We made it clear that our respect for the Labour Party was no greater than that for the Cons. A Labour Party spokesman told the Con. chair -man that he could count on the Labour Party's total support in any action that they may take to throw us out, but they were all unwilling to be first to make a move. We left of our own volition.

Those comrades who were in town early on election day would have noticed that the result boards outside the Town Hall had the words "DON'T VOTE" and an Anarchist sign sprayed across them in bright red paint.

Stink bombs greet Tory candidate

PROTESTERS threw an election meeting into chaos last night by swearing, letting off stink bombs and triggering a fire alarm.

The outburst came at Sharrow school, Sheffield, in the middle of a speech by Patricia Rawlings, Conservative

candidate for Sheffield Central.

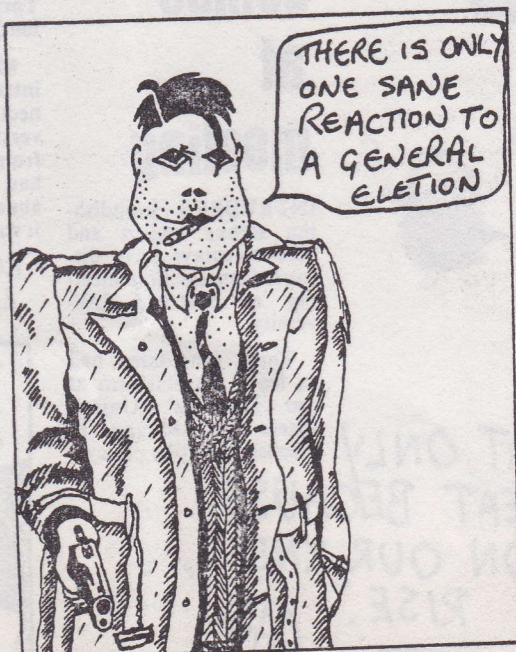
About half a dozen people disrupted the proceedings for about 20 minutes, while Miss Rawlings struggled to make herself heard, then they left.

Her Labour rival, Richard Caborn, turned up at the meeting with about 30 supporters, but denounced the demonstration as "vicious and obscene."

Coun Irvine Patnick, leader of the Conservative group on South Yorkshire County Council, said the protesters were using four-letter words, letting off stink bombs in what is a children's dining room, and continually interrupting.

Mr Caborn said: "I totally dissociated the Labour Party from the people responsible. They weren't any of my supporters."

He was at the 80-strong meeting, with Labour councillors Vivian Nicholson and Doris Askham.



HOME NEWS

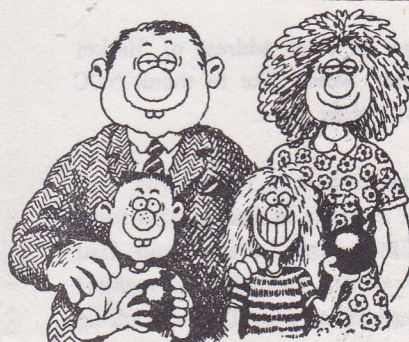
On election day some comrades obtained a car in order to do a spot of canvassing. We took a megaphone round several areas of the city urging people to reject their opportunity to take part in the Parliamentary sham. Obviously, being on the move means that it is only really possible to repeat slogans and phrases, but we seemed to provoke many favourable, or at least amused, responses. The best responses coming to the comments about politicians being compulsive liars. The Anarcho-battlebus endeavoured to visit as many polling stations as possible, where the lemmings were harangued about the foolishness of giving away control over their lives to the cretins in Westminster.

On March 16th Anarchist forces struck at Cole Brothers and raised the black flag from the roof, despite nearly being captured, our comrades successfully evaded the security forces and returned safely to base. We hope to publish a photo of the event in the next Sheffield Anarchist, but there are plenty of empty flag-poles in and around the city-centre, why not put them to some use yourselves?

While on the subject of flags, Sheffield City Council showed their real 'socialist' intentions yet again just prior to the above action, by flying the union jack from the Town Hall flag-pole on Prince Edward's birthday. Perhaps we could ask them if they'd mind awfully putting up a black flag on a suitable Anarchist date!



POPULAR MISCONCEPTION
OF TYPICAL ANARCHIST



ACTUAL ANARCHISTS
IN REAL LIFE.

At the end of April, 'The Star' reported that two Sheffield women had been sent to prison for six months for shop-lifting. The fact that one of these women was lucky not to have been another of Sutcliffe, the 'Yorkshire Ripper's' victims ensured that this example of everyday 'crime' received more than usual press interest.

The women were found guilty of stealing a joint of beef, some rice, milk powder, cordial and babies nappies. Judge Michael Walker said that he couldn't understand how the women were paid so little in state benefit, i.e. £26 for a woman and her child.

The judge also said, however, "You two seem to think that because you have got children and because you have got problems, whenever you feel like it you can just go out and help yourself to property from shops."

ANTI-SEXIST MEN'S NEWSLETTER

We didn't really know what to write because we didn't know what might or might not annoy the women and we didn't ask their permission for this newsletter, not that we need their permission or anything but, well, we're not sexist we've got nothing to feel guilty about, but we thought they might think we were infringing on their space or something, because we're men, not that we're sexist men but, well, we'll write another newsletter after the Summer holiday.

Tim Idperson

NEAF BULLETIN No 18

JUNE 83

The next NEAF conference will be held on Sunday, 17th July in the Raynor Lounge of the University of Sheffield Students union, Western Bank. Catch a 60 bus from the train or bus stations. Usually these things start around 12am.

The previous day – Saturday, 16th July, there is a Black Flag readers meeting at the same place. If you need accomodating it might help if you wrote to Black Rat.

P.O. Box 168, the NEAF address, has been discontinued because Sheffield Libertarian Society haven't paid for it since last June. For the time being the Secretariat address will be:

NEAF c/o Black Rat,
University of Sheffield Students Union
Western Bank, SHEFFIELD.

REPORTS

DONCASTER– Are no longer at thier address of Market Place Doncaster. Also they would like to thank NCC Leeds for helping them with their press.

LEEDS – Leeds DAM have taken part in Troops-Out, Anti Police Bill and May Day marches in Leeds. Also some comrades at Glasgows Easter Anti-Trident demo. Had a widespread May Day poster campaign throughout Leeds pointing to the origins of May Day, criticizing present conditions and posing the Anarchist alternative.

The group has had the first of a series of public meetings. The first one was on the subject of 'British Anarchism in Recent Times' (1960s – 80s). The second with the local health workers action group on the continuing struggle in the NHS both meetings had 22 people attending.

Group members have been on local picket line of medical technicians strike at St. James Hospital over a sacking. Sadly the dispute has now ended after 12 weeks without the reinstatement of the trainee involved (see D.A. 12 for more details).

The groups time and resources are now heavily committed to producing 'Direct Action', production of which was transfered from Manchester last year. 1st issue with Leeds as editorial group now out.

Also continue to sell Direct Action, Black Flag News Bulletin. No Frontiers etc. in the city centre.

SHEFFIELD – There was an anti-election campaign, disruption of meetings by heckling, stink bombs, and

smoke bombs, flyposting and a car with a megaphone was driven round on electionday urging people not to vote. Fuller reports on these activities and other articles and cartoons can be found in the next issue of Sheffield Anarchist which is due out very soon.

The KATE SHARPLEY LIBRARY – Libertarian Archive and Documentation centre. They have documents over a wide range of subjects. Although they dont loan material, they have a reading room and are prepared to photocopy material at 5p per sheet. Cheques payable to '121 Bookshop', their address is Box KS, 121 Railton Road, London SE24.

The address of the Anti-State Documentation and News Service is ASDNN, BM Hurricane, London, WC1 BXX and the news bulletin can be recieved (every 2 weeks) by subscribing £9 to Black Flag, c/o box ABC, 121 Railton Rd, London SE24.

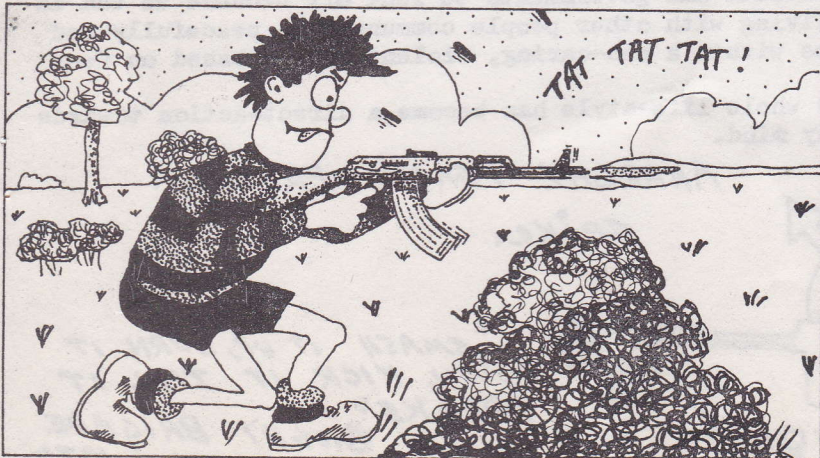
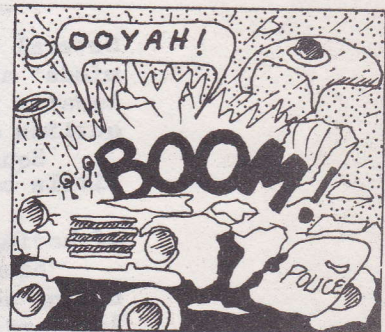
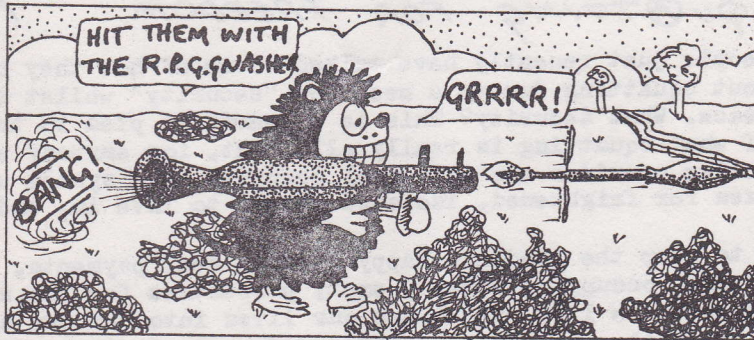
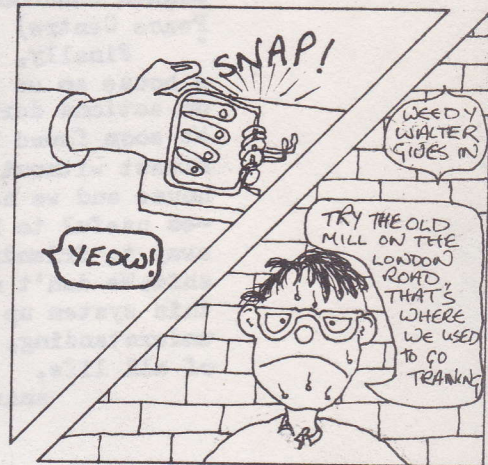
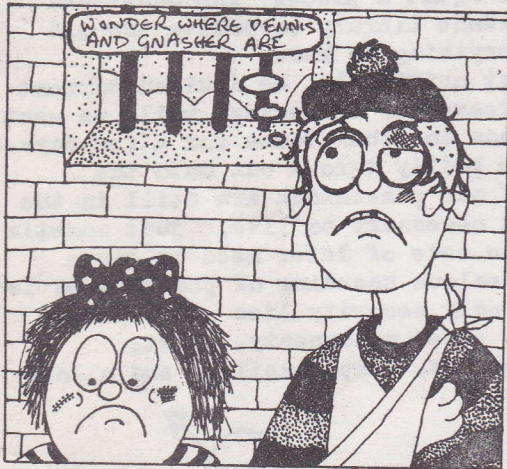
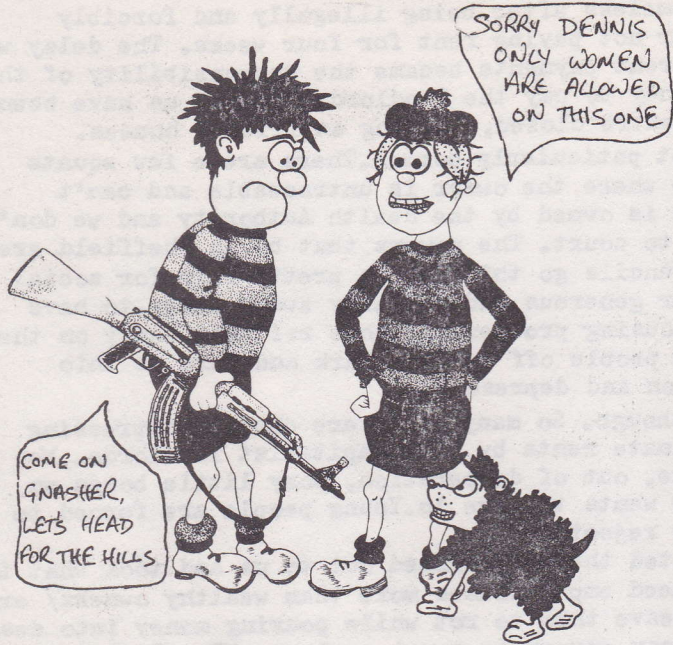
A letter was received in April from CRIFA (Relations Commission of the International Of Anarchist Federations) Saying they are going to send us documents about idealogical position and activities of the IFA. Dino in Hull is dealing with all correspondance.

A NEAF conference was held in York on the 23rd April. Little was discussed, however the minutes are available from the Secretariat if you are interested. The idea of a film festival was raised with comrades in Sheffield and York working on it.

£1 was recieved from Leeds DAM attempts by other groups to send money have obviously been foiled by an unacceptable degree of state repression. Anyway keep on trying.

DENNIS MINNIE AND GNASHNIKOV

A SIMPLE STORY OF EVERYDAY POLK



SQUATTING IN SHEFFIELD

On Tuesday 10th May a group of us moved into and squatted a house on the edge of Sheffield. Most of us were homeless after being illegally and forcibly evicted from a rented house after not paying rent for four weeks. The delay was caused when the social security rent payments became the responsibility of the council and we didn't get any money to pay the landlord. Some of us have been without a home since the Peace Centre closed, staying at friends houses.

Squatting in Sheffield is not particularly common. There are a few squats in council owned property and one where the owner is untraceable and can't take the occupants to court. Ours is owned by the Health Authority and we don't know yet when they are taking us to court. The powers that be in Sheffield are dead set against squatting. As councils go this one is pretty fair for social services and like to keep up their generous and socially aware image, to have squats in "their" city implies a housing problem and this reflects badly on them. They'd rather shunt all the young people off to Hyde Park and turn us into mindless morons through frustration and depression.

There is a housing problem though. So many of us are shut in depressing little boxes and charged extortionate rents by rich capitalist landlords. We are forced by the council, to take, out of desperation, poxy little boxes on some miserable estate no-one else wants to live in. Young people are forced to live in the squalor everyone else rejects.

It's about time we too rejected the shit dished out to us and took what is ours by right of needing it. We need empty houses more than wealthy owners/ exploiters or the authorities who leave them to rot while pouring money into desolate mass-produced cages. It's easy enough to squat a place, "The Squatters Rights Handbook is available in the Arts Reference Library (opposite the old Peace Centre) and this tells you virtually everything to know.

Finally, security; we didn't want to squat originally. We decided to rent a house so we could have somewhere secure to leave our belongings while we went on actions during the Summer, or visited friends in other towns for a few days. We soon found how secure this was when we were bodily thrown out onto the street without any warning whatsoever. Many of our possessions are still in the house and we have discovered that they are not necessary to live, just sometimes useful to have, and can always be stored in case of later need or given away to friends. Our false security is shit. Jealous hoarding of possessions is shit. We don't need that kind of security. Our only security lies in showing this system up for what it is and living lives based on honesty, trust, understanding, co-operation, individuality, respect, responsibility and a love of all life.

anarchy, peace, and freedom

SQUATTING FOR FREEDOM.



Several people just recently have talked to me of how they have "changed their minds" about squatting due to a need for "security" whilst they go on actions towards peace. What security? This is a heartfelt plea to those people and an outline of what squatting is really all about, for anybody who's interested.

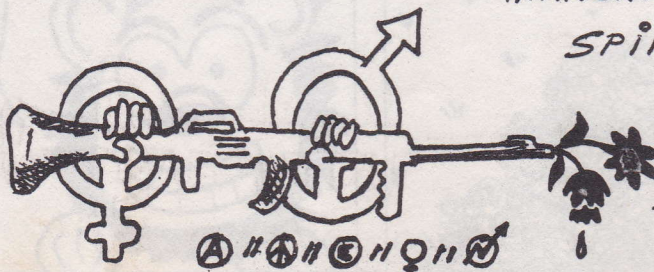
Squatting provides the only real security in a system which provides little boxes for frightened, isolated people to live in, under constant threat

of having to keep the landlord happy through rent payments, etc.

Squatting (occupying unused, empty properties for the simple purpose of having somewhere to live) is taking our lives into our own hands and telling landlords, councils, beauracrats and governments to fuck off because we can do it ourselves. It's about living with other people communally + peacefully and creating our own free space within a non-caring, violent system based on fear and isolation.

Through squatting, my whole life-style has become a direct-action towards peace and I won't change my mind.

ANARCHY PEACE + FREEDOM
SPIKE.



"SMASH IT UP, BURN IT
DOWN, KICK IT TILL IT
BREAKS"
ANGRY BRIGADE
1971

SQUATTING AS A DIRECT ACTION

In a recent squat much talk went on on the subject of unity, or how living together communally, we could stick together, and carry on squatting houses again and again in the same group. But when the eviction came, sooner than most people expected, most people went off to blockade at an airbase, professing that direct actions such as that were "much more important" than squatting, as they would lead to peace, and all squatting achieves is a home.

As we all by now have realised, peace will never come while there is a state. The state isolates us and teaches us to mistrust, and this on a giant scale is what leads to wars. Blockading of airbases is a real direct action. It disrupts and causes a nuisance, but it is only a small threat to the state as a whole.

To pay for the right to live in houses or flats, to make the rich richer is absurd when thousands of houses lay empty and unused. Squatting is legal. Their law allows us to occupy their houses until they can obtain a court order for possession, which takes time unless the property owners are prepared to spend literally thousands of pounds to buy the courts, which they may be the first couple of times, but after a few cases it is most likely they will give up.

By living together, sharing, trusting, in squatted houses we are telling all the useless parasites that make up the state that we don't need them. We can control our own lives, we don't need to be provided for. Living like this is a real rejection, a real state smashing, a real direct action for peace.

FIGHT

BACK

SEAN



YOUR LIFETIME SHARE
XXXXXXXXXXXX
OF DEMOCRACY

If

If you can stand erect,
While others round you fall,
If you can grin and bear it,
And hold yourself up tall,
If you can toil on regardless,
And keep your teeth around the bit,
Then you're a shit my son,
You're a lousy fuckin' shit.

13/9/80 Maidstone
Prison

MORE SHEFFIELD SOCIALISM

As readers may have seen in the press, Liverpool council recently decided they had had enough of paying £30,000 a year on a Lord Mayor. They decided they were no longer prepared to fork out for civic receptions and feasts in his name and topping up his Rolls with petrol; they therefore abolished the post (although only to replace the Lord Mayor with a "chairman").

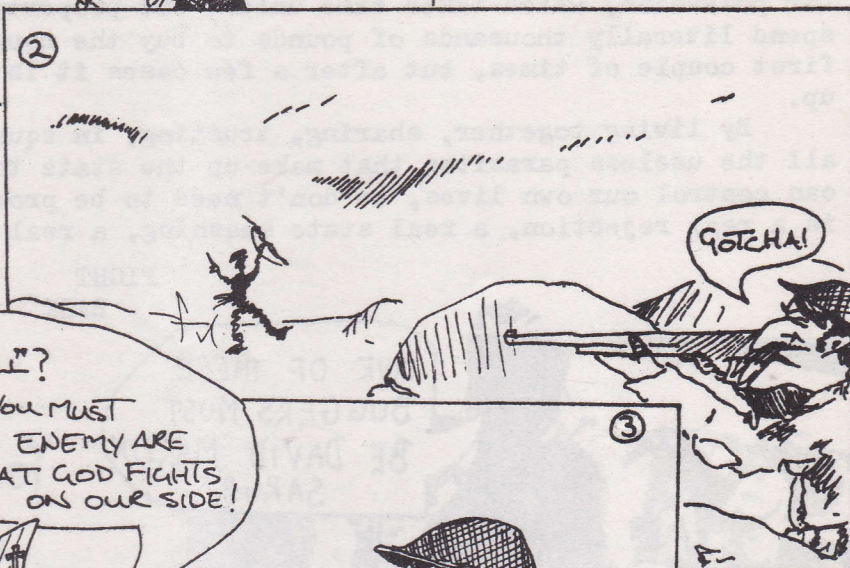
Good old Sheffield Council too are not prepared to spend 30,000 on the pomp and ceremony of this ridiculous post. No they in fact spend £132,000 a year of ratepayers money on keeping one of their fellow parasites. So much for the "Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire". Mind you, perhaps if the post were abolished people might start looking a bit more closely at the money the councillors spend on luxurious frivolities, banquets and expense accounts themselves. Take a walk inside the old Town Hall sometime you might be very surprised at what our so-called "socialist" council are up to.



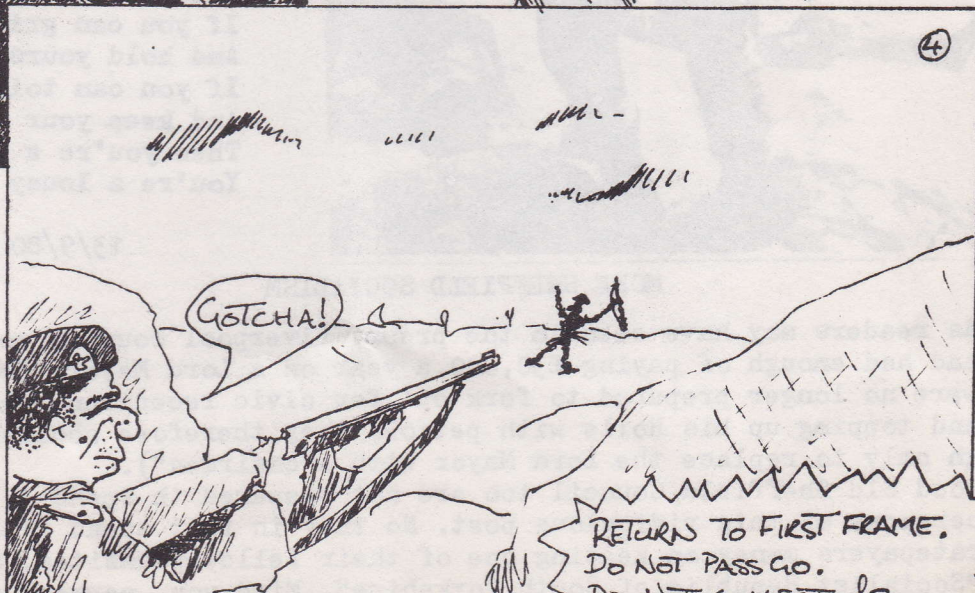
"THOU SHALT NOT KILL"?
YES MY SON, BUT YOU MUST
REALISE THAT THE ENEMY ARE
HEATHEN AND THAT GOD FIGHTS
ON OUR SIDE!

By

TDK



"THOU SHALT NOT KILL"?
YES MY SON, BUT YOU MUST
REALISE THAT THE ENEMY ARE
HEATHEN AND THAT GOD FIGHTS
ON OUR SIDE!



RETURN TO FIRST FRAME.
DO NOT PASS GO.
DO NOT COLLECT £200-

In a broadcast on the anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia a speaker looked back to the Summer of 1968 in Prague as one in which, as she put it, "We all seemed to be making a special effort to make life tolerable just because it had been so intolerable before."

When Soviet tanks rolled in to quell what conservative communists were calling "anarchy" Ladislav Mnacko wrote; "Nobody had given any order. Nobody was giving any orders at all. People knew of their own accord what ought to be done. Each and everyone of them was his own government, with its orders and regulations, while the government itself was somewhere far away, probably in Moscow. Everything the occupation forces tried to paralyse went on working and even worked better than in normal times; by the evening the people had even managed to deal with the bread situation."

And the resistance continued; "In November, when the students staged a sit-in in the universities, the sympathy of the population with the students was shown by the dozens of trucks sent from the factories to bring them food free of charge, and Prague's railway workers threatened to strike if the government took reprisal measures against the students. Workers of various state organisations supplied them with food. The buses of the urban transport workers were placed at the strikers disposal...Postalworkers established certain free telephone communications between university towns."

Of events in Hungary twelve years earlier an eyewitness gave the following account: "May I tell you one thing about this common sense of the street, during these first days of the revolution? Just, for example, many hours standing in queues for bread and even under such circumstances not a single fight. One day we were standing in a queue and then a truck came with two young boys with machine-guns and they were asking us to give them any money we could spare to buy bread for the fighters. All the queue was collecting half a truck-ful of bread. It is just an example. Afterwards somebody beside me asked me to hold his place for him because he gave all his money and he had to go home to get some. In this case the whole queue gave him all the money he wanted. Another example: naturally all the shop windows broke in the first days but not a single thing inside was touched by anybody. You could have seen broken-in shop windows and candy stores, and even the little children didn't touch anything in it. Not even camera shops, opticians or jewellers. Not a single thing was touched for two or three days. And in the streets on the third or fourth day, shop windows were empty, but it was written there that "The caretaker has taken it away", or "Everything from here is in this or that flat". And in those first days it was a custom to put big boxes on street corners or on crossings where more streets met, and just a script over them "This is for the wounded, for the casualties or for the families of the dead", and they were set out in the morning and by about noon they were full of money..."



In Havana after the fall of the Batista regime, but prior to Castro's army entering the city, the B.B.C.'s correspondent reported; "The city for days had been without police of any sort, an experience delightful for everyone. Motorists-and considering that they were Cubans-this was miraculous-behaved in an orderly manner. Industrial workers, with points to make, demonstrated in small groups, dispersed and went home; bars closed when the customers had had enough and no one seemed more than normally merry. Havana, heaving up after years under a vicious and corrupt police control, smiled in the sunshine."

History is full of events and situations such as the above, but rarely do these accounts of mutual aid and spontaneous order find their way into the history books. The quotations given above are taken from "Anarchy in Action" by Colin Ward, which can be found, (somewhat suprisingly), on the shelves of the central lending library.

"That that makes our dreams so daring is that they can be realised."

De Coupier

Preparing For Prison (extracts from the writings of an Anarchist in prison)
Part 1: The Cell Search.

"One night after I had locked-up and began to relax with a book, three men burst into my home. All three wore the same dark blue uniform. I asked to the purpose of their visit, but they told me that it was not my place to ask. They addressed me rudely and stripped me of my clothes. I knew that I was completely at their mercy for, at this time of night, everyone else would be preparing to go to their beds.

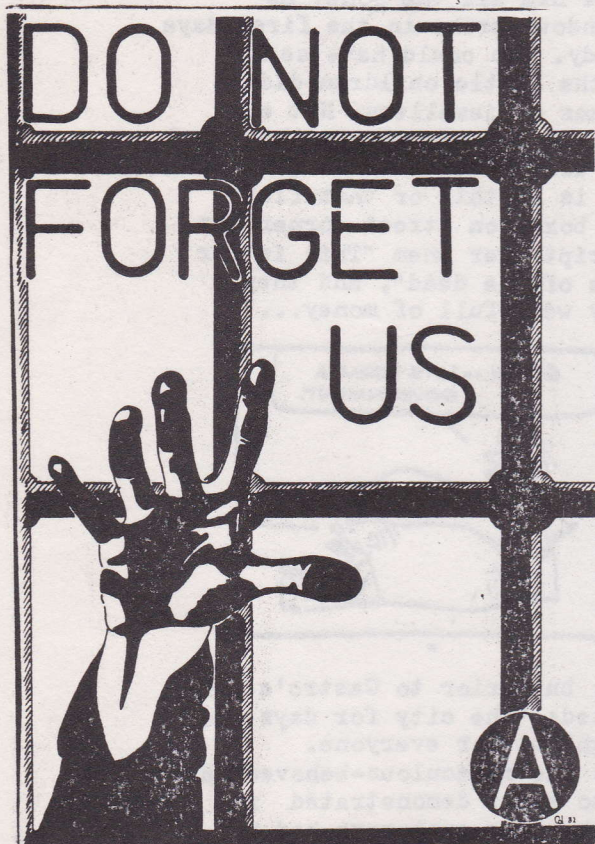
They proceeded to go through my belongings, they appeared to be looking for something, but would not say what it was. They ransacked my home turning over the cupboards, and upsetting my plant to go through the soil. They pulled up the carpets and went through my letters.

After searching the place completely and making an absolute wreck of my home, they prepared to leave. They did not seem to have found what they were looking for, and this appeared to anger them.

As they were leaving, (taking some items of furniture with them), one of them looked back over his shoulder at the mess they had created, he laughed, "Should take you until morning to clear this lot up". Then they were gone."
(Written December 1980, Maidstone Prison).

If you thought the above passage was really from a Kafka or Orwell style novel, you would be wrong. It is something that happens every day in Britain's prisons.

N.B. This particular incident occurred in a long-term prison; most prison cells have almost no furniture at all.



"WE ARE THE DEAD"

"From the moment one even contemplates armed struggle it is important to appreciate that one day you will be killed, or worse; captured. Maybe it will come today or maybe it will come tomorrow, but it will come. (The knowledge of this will not deter, for one moment, the true revolutionary). Let us appreciate the fact and prepare ourselves for its eventuality. For if we are not totally committed then we are doomed to failure from the very beginning."

Ali Al-Aswad

The windows of my room have bars,
The walls around my house are large,
The clothes I wear are uniform,
And I get up just after dawn,
But through it all one thought remains,
Am I the one who's wearing chains.

29/4/80 Ashford Remand
Centre

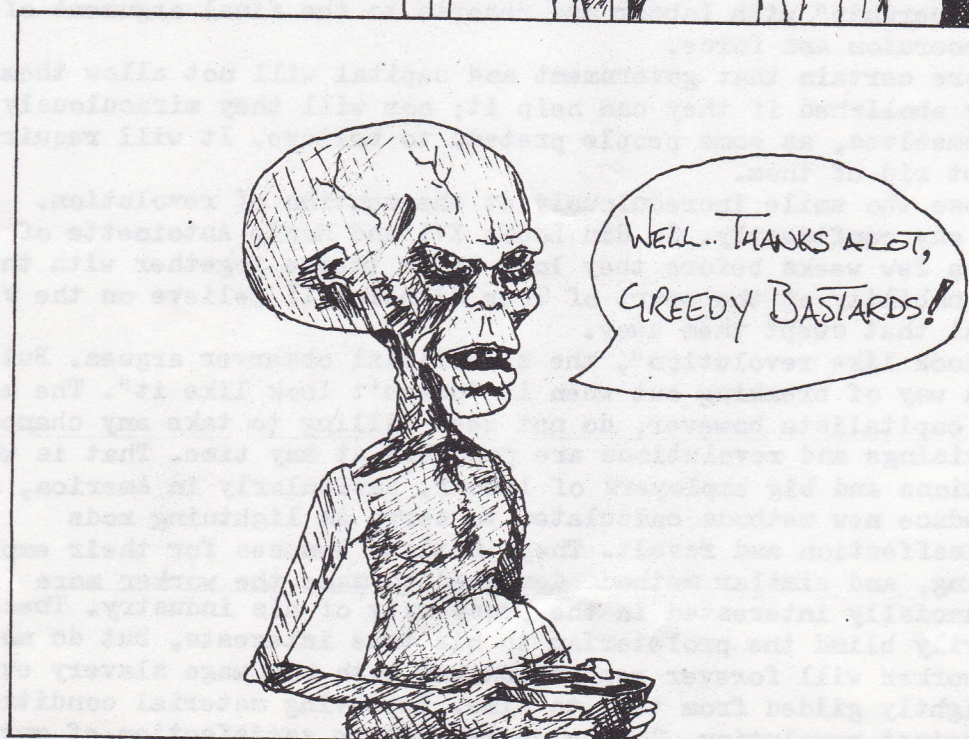
"I'm GONNA TAKE JUST ONE STEP MORE,
'COS I FEEL LIKE BOMBING A CHURCH,
NOW THAT YOU KNOW THE PREACHER IS LYING,
SO WHO'S GONNA STAY AT HOME
WHEN THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS ARE FIGHTING?"

Bob Marley: Talking Blues





By
TDX



ALEXANDER BERKMAN ON REVOLUTION
(From 'Abc of Anarchism', first published 1929)

History fails to show a single important social improvement made without meeting the opposition of the dominant powers—the church, government, and capital. Not a step forward but was achieved by breaking down the resistance of the masters. Every advance has cost a bitter struggle. It took many long fights to destroy slavery; it required revolts and uprisings to secure the most fundamental rights for the people; it necessitated rebellions and revolutions to abolish feudalism and serfdom. It needed civil warfare to do away with the absolute power of kings and establish democracies, to conquer more freedom and well-being for the masses. There is not a country on earth, not an epoch in history, where any great social evil was eliminated without a bitter struggle with the powers that be. In recent days it again took revolutions to get rid of Tsardom in Russia, of the Kaiser in Germany, the Sultan in Turkey, the Monarchy in China, and so on, in various lands.

There is no record of any government or authority, of any group or class in power having given up its mastery voluntarily. In every instance it required the use of force, or at least the threat of it.

Is it reasonable to assume that authority and wealth will experience a sudden change of heart, and that they will behave differently in the future than they had in the past?

Your common sense will tell you that it is a vain and foolish hope. Government and capital will FIGHT to retain power. They do it even today at the least menace to their privileges. They will fight to the death for their existence.

That is why it is no prophecy to foresee that some day it must come to a decisive struggle between the masters of life and the dispossessed classes.

As a matter of fact, that struggle is going on all the time. There is a continuous warfare between capital and labour. That warfare generally proceeds within so-called legal forms. But these erupt now and then in violence, as during strikes and lockouts, because the armed fist of government is always at the service of the masters, and that fist gets into action the moment

capital feels its profits threatened; then it drops the mask of mutual interests and "partnership" with labour and resorts to the final argument of every master, to coercion and force.

It is therefore certain that government and capital will not allow themselves to be quietly abolished if they can help it; nor will they miraculously "disappear" of themselves, as some people pretend to believe. It will require a revolution to get rid of them.

There are those who smile incredulously at the mention of revolution. "Impossible" they say confidently. So did Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette of France think only a few weeks before they lost their throne together with their heads. So did the nobility at the court of Tsar Nicholas II believe on the very eve of the upheaval that swept them away.

"It doesn't look like revolution", the superficial observer argues. But revolutions have a way of breaking out when it "doesn't look like it". The more far-seeing modern capitalists however, do not seem willing to take any chances. They know that uprisings and revolutions are possible at any time. That is why the great corporations and big employers of labour, particularly in America, are beginning to introduce new methods calculated to serve as lightning rods against popular disaffection and revolt. They initiate bonuses for their employees, profit sharing, and similar methods designed to make the worker more satisfied and financially interested in the prosperity of his industry. These means may temporarily blind the proletarian to his true interests, but do not believe that the worker will forever remain content with his wage slavery even if his cage be slightly gilded from time to time. Improving material conditions is no insurance against revolution. On the contrary, the satisfaction of our wants creates new needs, gives birth to new desires and aspirations. That is human nature, and that's what makes improvement and progress possible. Labour's discontent is not to be choked down with an extra piece of bread, even if it be buttered. That is why there is more conscious and active revolt in the industrial centres of better-situated Europe than in backward Asia and Africa. The spirit of man forever yearns for greater comfort and freedom, and it is the

masses who are the truest bearers of this incentive to further advancement. The hope of modern plutocracy to forestall revolution by throwing a fatter bone to the toiler now and then is illusory and baseless. The new policies of capital may seem to appease labour for a while, but its onward march cannot be stopped by such makeshifts. The abolition of capitalism is inevitable, in spite of all schemes and resistance, and it will be accomplished only by revolution.



The recent 'un-welcoming' event that took place in Sheffield during Thatchers attending of the anual Cutlers Feast served to remind us just how pitiful is the 'revolutionary' left in this bastion of the 'Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire'. That the council and local Labour Party should try to treat the whole thing like a birthday party, came as no suprise. Our old pal Roger Barton went so far as to say, 'I'm glad all the coppers are here tonight'. Perhaps he has more insight than you would credit him with. Maybe he realises that one day he will need all the friends he can get.

Very few of the 'Red Scum' actually got to see Thatcher, let alone got their hands on her. The only creature to almost succeed was that brave 'fifth columnist' horse, Fusilier, who has since been demoted to the rank of 'Pedigree Chum' following his attempt to hoof two police officers in their car.

There was absolutely no spontaneaty involved in the demo whatsoever. Even so, the events should be analysed, despite the fact that the era of the 'set-piece' demonstration should now be considered over. The police are so

well organised and trained at this sort of thing that it is impossible for a crowd to do any more than just shout obscenities and make a noise. Large demos are invariably well publicised long before the event, giving the police time to organise their outside re-enforcements police time to organise their re-enforcements from within and outside the area. Because of a standardisation of training in crowd control methods there is no problem with the integration of police from different forces.

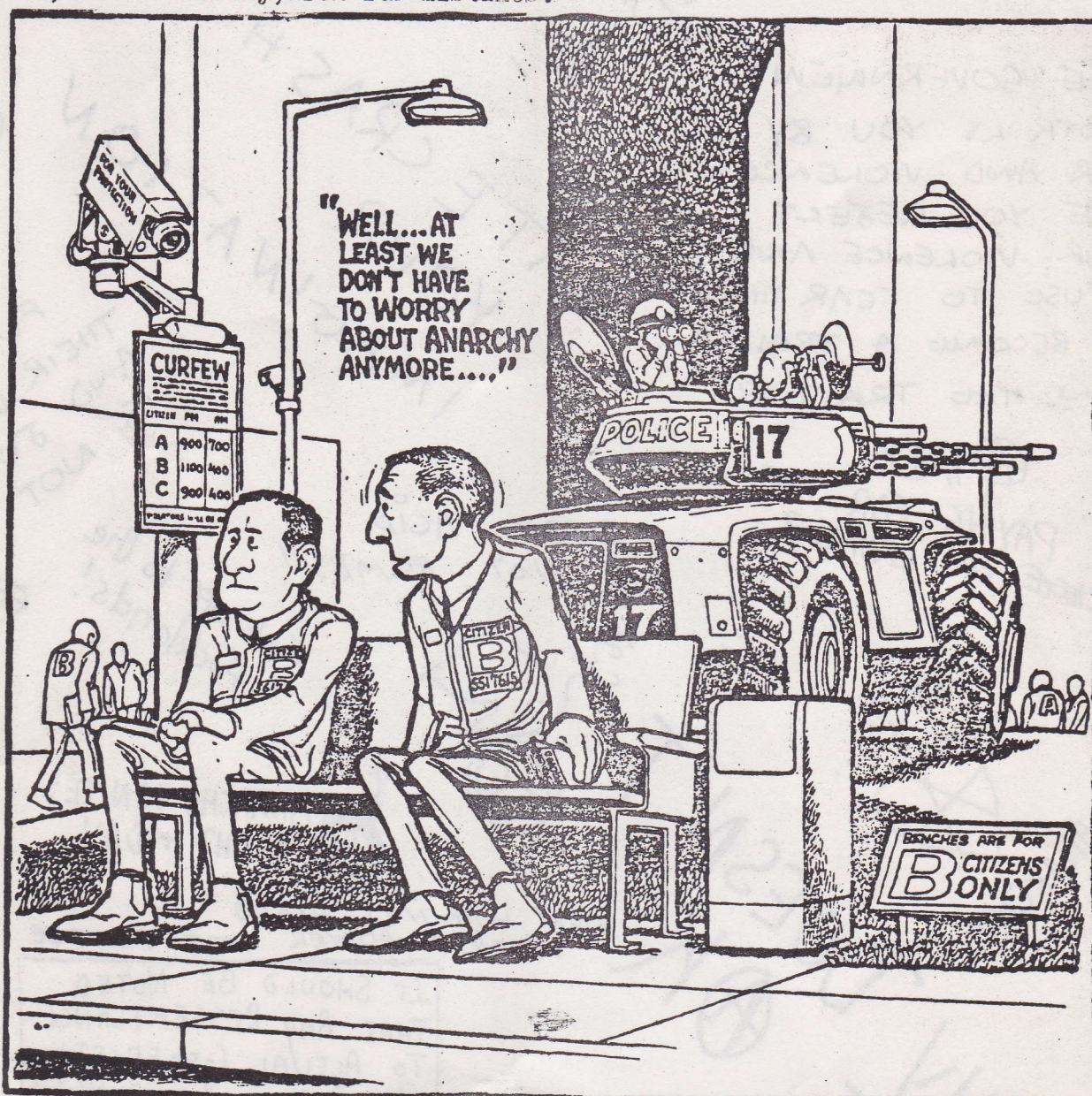
The demos, such as the Thatcher visit, only require the police to defend a small area which is a far easier task than, say, to clear several streets or control a large area. By using lightweight barriers, horses and (virtually) unlimited manpower, they can ensure that a crowd does not reach its objective. However, far more is happening. The police make no secret of the fact that they film the crowd from various vantage points. Probably every single person in the crowd on April 28th is now recorded on video film. This film will never be thrown away and, since that time, will have been studied dozens of times by police trying to put names to faces. Were you at school with a policeperson? Though the plebian masses were not there virtually all of Sheffield's dissatisfied politicians were. They may as well have left their names in a visitors book. The tragedy is that one day many of those there will see the futility of open political agitation and turn to more 'covert' activity. The state already knows who these potential 'guerillas' are. Using the sophisticated photographic equipment at their disposal and the already developed methods of analysing faces with computers, the police can identify an activist anywhere in the country much more easily and just as accurately as if their name, age and fingerprint code was tattooed on their foreheads.

Just having cameras displayed in prominent places is a good tactic in itself. Knowing that they can be filmed for posterity or for analysis prior to a court appearance is enough to dissuade the faint hearted amongst us from becoming involved in any physical confrontation. Those with mortgages, families and, above all, jobs within the State's institutions, are faced with great problems should they come before the court, let alone be identified as a 'political troublemaker'. Should we, as Anarchists, really care? Maybe not but subtract these people from the already pathetic number outside the Cutlers Hall that Thursday. The organised demonstration must be a thing of the past.

An interesting police tactic to observe is that each policeperson takes note of a small section of the crowd, studying the faces of the people in front of him, looking for potential troublemakers i.e. those who lead the singing and shouting- those who are potential leaders or instigators of action. In the event of any scuffling, these people will have already been singled out. Directions from those who are organising the police, i.e. those with the cameras or who are in other vantage points, can also single out people for special attention if the fighting starts. A description of the people in his section

of the crowd is committed to memory in preparation for making an arrest. The video can, of course, be referred to later. Quite often a person can be arrested for no apparent reason but, in fact, the person could well have been marked out a long time previously. What is the point of throwing an egg if you can be picked up at any time?

Demonstrations are just a game that the State has learned to win. Apart from totally spontaneous and massive riots, these games are hardly worth attending, serving no longer as an education to those embarking on the road to anti-state activity but as a demoralising lesson in the power of the State to learn, albeit slowly, from its mistakes.

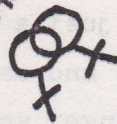


An interesting footnote to the recent Cutlers Feast is that a contingent of Thatchers khaki-clad heroes were invited to put in an appearance right at the beginning of the event. (Falklands veterans?) They weren't invited to stay for the food, however. They were bussed back to the Somme Barracks for a pie and peas supper, generously paid for out of Thatchers 'personal allowance', along with three barrels of beer, between them. Meanwhile, back at the Cutlers Feast they were treated to Turbot Tandoori and champagne.

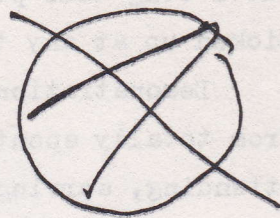
WHOEVER YOU
VOTE FOR THE
GOVERNMENT
GETS IN!

MEAT IS
MURDER

PORN = THEORY
RAPE = PRACTICE



PEACE
WILL
PREVAIL

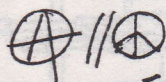


THE GOVERNMENT
CONTROLS YOU BY
FEAR AND VIOLENCE -
ONCE YOU REJECT
THEIR VIOLENCE AND
REFUSE TO FEAR THEM
YOU BECOME A TRAITOR -
JOIN THE TRAITORS

GATE CRASH
YOUR
IMAGINATION



YOU'RE PAYING FOR THE
PRIVILEGE OF LIVING?



DROP ACID
NOT BOMBS!!

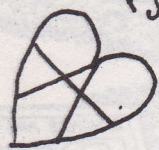


Fuck off to the
Fucklands!

FUCK!
THEIR LIBERTY
AND JUSTICE
'S NOT OURS!



LOVE IS...



ANARCHY

DOESN'T
OK



ANARCHY IGNITES
NIGHT + DAY

FIGHT WAR NOT WARS
DESTROY POWER NOT PEOPLE

IT SHOULD BE NOTED
THAT ANY RESSEMBLANCE
TO ACTUAL GRAFFITI
ON PUBLIC BUILDINGS
IN SHEFFIELD IS PURELY
UNINTENTIONAL

If Voting Could Change
The System It Would
Be Illegal!

VOTING COULD CHANGE
ANYTHING IT WOULD BE
ILLEGAL

THERE'S NO GOVERNMENT LIKE NO GOVERNMENT

2 VU'S ON THE PEACE CENTRE

Sheffield Peace Centre was a wonderful happening, run on an absolutely non-hierarchical basis and really "together".

Anarchism in action, right in the middle of Sheffield! 40 or so people, all energetically working towards the same, shared vision of a future, based on one simple word; **PEACE!** The spirit and atmosphere in the building was amazing; together we made peace a reality.

There was never a spare 5 minutes; always food to be made or washing-up to be done for the cafe, letters to be written; typed, work to be done in the library, bookshop, or creche, or cleaning up to be done.

A shame it couldn't last - people started to abuse the place. They began to treat it like shit, sitting around making no contribution to the running of the place except making a mess for other people to tidy up. People crawled into the place who wanted nothing but a bed for a few nights and what free food they could get. Also (naively) people lost faith at the first threat of eviction. A few other people decided to take the dealings with the council into their own hands and, consequently, the centre has been swallowed by the state; sucked slowly and painfully up the council's bureaucratic arse-hole.

The words from the old banner just inside the front door seem appropriate; "TIME IS RUNNING OUT!" SQUAT NOW WHILE SHEFFIELD LASTS!

Nevertheless it was a major success for the peace movement in general; let's do it again.

ANARCHY, PEACE & FREEDOM

SPIKE



We moved in on the 10th of Jan., everyone was very excited. There was a lot of work to do and everyone knew it and got on with it. There were approximately 20 of us, all anarchists, mostly vegans which meant that there was a strong bond between us all. We had no-one telling anyone else what to do everyone just got on with it. Anarchy at work.

As days went by more people joined in who weren't anarchists, but it was still running on the same lines-people working together etc.

Slowly people started sitting down for a few minutes then longer and longer. Things started going off.

There were still meetings every night and supposedly we worked by consensus, even though, when it really came down to it some people seemed to forget eg. four people went round to see the council, came back and stated that they had signed an agreement with the council (mainly stating that we -peace centre- would vacate when necessary). The council gave us their word that they wouldn't evict us. e.g. in a meeting about having a rota, list of chores, or making sure everyone knew what everyone else was doing, whatever you want to call it. Most people were in favour of having a rota, I wasn't, some other people weren't sure. We talked for a while then some people said that we could have a list of chores and sign up for it, if I didn't want to sign up for anything I needn't - end of discussion.

The rota came about, everything slowed down, the rota became shittier and shittier.

The council went ahead with legal proceedings even though David Blunkett said they wouldn't.

We carried on aimlessly for a while and then said we'd leave on Wednesday, they said that we could have until Friday. The council said that we could have a temporary place, but nothing materialised.

We carried on doing things like jumble sales and benefit gigs.

I said I'd organise a gig, "not punk bands", I was told, "it'll alienate people". "Folk bands", someone said, "I'll give you some phone numbers" - no numbers arrived because they hadn't got any. "I'll organise P.A." - they didn't. 'The Mysterons' said that they would play the gig.

"Our jumble sale will make more money than your gig" - so what.

The jumble sale raised £50.

I asked the person (who had said all the bullshit) if he would ask at the meeting for posterers - "no" he said. I got someone else to do it, but no posterers turned up.

I got a P.A. and the gig started, slowly people came along, and luckily by the end we'd made £20 profit.

Next day - "How much money did we make at our gig", and what had I done with the money? - I had given it to the peace centre fund.

Some people are still in to the idea of a peace centre, the council won't give us one, we can't afford one, and, at the moment, hardly anyone's interested.

It's a shame that our 'socialist' council and we ourselves destroyed something as brilliant as the peace centre was.

Written by Jesus

"Others, the careful ones who work to make a name for themselves whilst the revolutionaries work in the dark or perish in Siberia; Others - the intriguers, the demagogues, the lawyers, the men of letters who occasionally shed a soon-dried tear over the tomb of the heroes, and pass for friends of the people - these are the people who will occupy the vacant seats in the government and will cry "Back!" to the nameless ones who brought about the revolution."

Peter Kropotkin

A Message to the Peace Shop

Peace is about living with people, loving with people, sharing with people - it won't come about simply by banning nuclear weapons even though this is a part of it.

