

# Anarchist Worker

Fighting  
racism  
-SPECIAL FEATURE

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10p

## As profits and shares rise, we demand:

**THE SOCIAL Contract is dead but its corpse still stalks the trade union movement.**

The most serious danger for the movement is fragmentation which will pave the way for a massive defeat of the working class.

The threat comes from what is Phase III of the social contract in all but name—the 10% limit and the 12 month rule.

At the TUC congress in Blackpool in September there were two tendencies. Men like Murray, Jones and Scanlon, who built the old social contract, argued successfully for the 12 month rule and the 10% limit. Their opponents, led by men like Clive Jenkins, were really only united around one issue, the need to return to free collective bargaining to restore differentials. The right-wing won, largely thanks to Scanlon's total disregard for elementary democracy in casting the votes of his union, the AUEW, for the remains of the social contract, clearly going against a mandate from his own National Committee.

Already many workers have shown their contempt for the rule by ignoring it—at Heinz, Nabisco, Wilson's Brewery and elsewhere.

But there are hidden dangers in simply rejecting the rule without a clear programme of action for the movement as a whole, the dangers of allowing divisions among workers, in particular for those with weaker organisation and between public and private employees.

### Contract

The Social Contract was sold to the rank and file on the understanding that unemployment would be halted and public services would not be cut.

Instead unemployment has risen to over 1.6 million, we've had more cuts than under the Tories and real wages have fallen by over 10%.

Despite this, the TUC bureaucrats were able to seal phase II on the argument that things would have been worse otherwise.

Both times they took the bosses' side and blamed the crisis on the workers: high wages eating into profits and raising prices and high public expenditure draining investment and causing inflation.

### Crisis

In Anarchist Worker October 76, we rejected all such analyses.

We said: "The crisis is not confined to Britain: it is worldwide.

"The falling rate of profit is a tendency built into the capitalist system.

"The capitalists own the machines and plants; they hire workers at a fraction of the value workers produce and so make their profits.

"A stage is reached where the value extracted from the worker is not large enough to invest in more machines and plants to keep up their profits.

"This stage is the crisis."

The crisis is being paid for by the working class.

Already many major companies like Parsons (which has sacked over 1,800 workers) are announcing record profits.

But the Leyland toolworkers, the Heathrow engineers and the rank and file of many unions like NUPE have made it clear that they are not prepared to accept another year of wage controls.

Scared of their own positions, the TUC bureaucrats refused a new wage limit.

Instead the new policy will allow the bosses to divide the movement and avoid paying increases necessary for people to maintain their standard of living to all but a few well-placed sectors.

Struggles over differentials and "special cases" do little to help or mobilise those sections with less fighting experience, or the lowest paid or those already on the dole.

What's more, they may well isolate such struggles and permit the bosses to alienate them from other workers.

### Demands

What we must fight for are demands that will unite the entire working class.

We must fight for wages to be brought up to 1973 levels, before inflation accelerated; we are all hit by rises in food, fuel and rent.

We must fight for a minimum national wage for everybody; whether employed or not we all have the right to a human standard of living.

We must fight for a cut in the working week, with no loss of pay; force the bosses to employ more workers.

We must fight for real rises in pensions, disability payments etc. for all workers that capitalism throws onto the slagheap.

Most of all we must protect against future erosions by fighting for all these to be indexed against inflation.

### Alliance

Neither will limited sectional struggles win back some of the greatest losses we have suffered—cuts in social services.

The public sector will be a major battle ground for the government.

Just like the 1960's when Callaghan was treasurer, the government will tightly restrict pay rises for public workers.

At the same time the workload still increases as the cuts continue to bite.

The struggle in the public sector

# LESS HOURS— MORE PAY!



Jack Jones, Alex Kitson and Moss Evans confer at Blackpool TUC conference. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

is more than a struggle for the quality of life for all the working class.

This struggle will become harder with the new policy; more than ever before there is a need for an alliance in the public sector.

What we must fight for are joint committees uniting rank and file

workers from many workplaces.

Already moves have been made in this direction by for example CLASH (Committee of London Area Stewards in the Health service) but are limited.

Links must be built between all public sector workers and between them and local trade unions and

community groups.

Direct works departments must build links with tenants and squatters; health workers with women groups, NAC groups and so on.

Then we can begin to fight for a public service according to workers needs rather than capitalists' profits.

Editorial Collective.



# Big Flame and IMG propose new organisations

## Left unity initiatives

RECENT MONTHS have seen two important unity initiatives on the Far Left in Britain. These are healthy developments. They increase the possibility of joint action, and also raise many important questions.

The International Marxist Group's paper *Red Weekly* has been enlarged and renamed *Socialist Challenge*. It now carries the by-line 'Build a Socialist Opposition. For a Unified Revolutionary Organisation.' It has raised issues for debate in the paper, expanded the letters page, and set aside certain columns from contributors from outside the IMG. Big Flame are also working for unity on the Left; they have opened their letters page to debate and promised to publish any particularly long contributions in their internal mailing.

So far both groups seem to have gained some support for their proposals. The Revolutionary Marxist Current, a small non-sectarian grouping have decided to work with Big Flame for six months as a preliminary to joining them. The IMG seem to have attracted the interest of the Workers League.

### Why unity?

What are the reasons for these initiatives, and on what basis do they hope for unity with other sections of the Left?

Both groups point to the practical advantages of unity, and the necessity to avoid sectarianism in what could be a crucial period of intensified class struggle. It is very true that many militants are deterred from revolutionary socialism by the alienating sectarianism and 'absolute purity' of many left groups, and also by the very existence of so many tiny left organisations.

The IMG does not believe that it has a monopoly of the truth. On the central political questions we believe that we are, in general, correct, but we still have a lot to learn both from other organisations and from the masses in struggle.

is an abstract call for unity around a simple desire to be united. It ignores the important question, unity around what?

'Revolutionaries can only unite if they have a shared view of what they should be doing. This can contain large differences on given issues. But they must have a common outlook on what is happening in society and how to build socialism. Such a common ground does not yet exist in Britain today. We wish it did, but it doesn't, we have to build it. The only way to do that is around *unity in action*. If the left can successfully unite around joint initiatives... such unity can be built from the bottom up.' (R.M.C. in July issue of Big Flame.)

Perhaps not too much should be made of this criticism. The IMG do after all work well in some united front campaigns, such as the Socialist Teachers Alliance, whilst on the other hand Big Flame do of course try to win support on the basis of their policies and programme.

### Leninism

There are considerable basic differences, and also similarities, between the politics of the two groups. Although the IMG stress the necessity for internal democracy, and should not be confused by libertarians with the other really hard line Trotskyist outfits such as the WRP, which are very authoritarian, they do base themselves in Leninist ideas and practice. Big Flame's attitude to Leninism is not quite so clear.

'Big Flame recognises the historical validity of aspects of the Leninist model. But we are aware that it has to be reassessed in today's conditions: where the state, the ruling class and the working class are very different than in pre-war Europe. No-one has come up with a clear new model for the seizure of power under advanced capitalism precisely because there has been no successful revolution under these

ments from the IMG, although at that rather rarified theoretical level which I object to as alienating, are of some interest to libertarians. In particular, I'll quote from a Resolution of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat (p.11). This calls for, amongst other things, 'regular rotation of elected officials; restriction of their incomes to that of skilled workers; the right

is important, and so is "theoretical correctness" but an overemphasis on the latter can lead to a tendency to what Big Flame in their pamphlet "The Revolution Unfinished?—A Critique of Trotskyism" refer to as "principled dogmatism". At its worst this is a complete refusal to integrate one's practice into one's theory, a real error of method.

A crucial problem referred to in the article I've quoted is that of "substitutionism", that is the

initiatives, but as yet there is no evidence for it. For the time being Big Flame stress the need for action as a basis for unity, their preparedness to reassess the relationship between the revolutionary organisation, the mass movement, and the class as a whole, and their realisation that the struggles of women and other oppressed groups have their own revolutionary dynamic, makes their ideas more attractive. However, even with them there is, or seems to be, a contradiction between some of these ideas and their views on the role and scope of their organisation.

### Debate

The A.W.A. is a libertarian communist group, but we are not only prepared to debate with other organisations on the left, but also to work with them in united front campaigns provided that these are organised democratically, and have a clear minimum basis for participation. We are active in several such campaigns at the moment, and will also be taking the opportunity to raise the question of a Public Sector Alliance in the left, since we see this as important for the success of the struggle against the present attacks on working class living standards.

The initiatives are welcome since they open up, rather than give the answers to, a wide set of questions about the scope and role of a revolutionary organisation, now and after the revolution, its relationship to the mass movement, its internal democracy etc. Libertarian ideas not only can but should be raised around these questions. More important perhaps, the unity campaigns can encourage the growth of joint action from the bottom up.

C.M.

### Socialist Challenge

'We are convinced that unless the far-left understand the fact that internal democracy and open discussions are *not* a luxury, but a necessity in today's conditions, it will not be able to go very far. If it can grasp this fact and operate accordingly then the task of building a unified organisation will be facilitated a hundred fold.

'Can we accomplish these tasks on our own? We doubt it. That is why we appeal both to other socialist groups in sympathy with our two aims (i.e. building a socialist opposition and building a unified organisation) to join with us and try and take the far-left forward.' (Editorial—first issue of *Socialist Challenge*.)

This is the sort of statement that has led Big Flame to stress that unity is also built through action, rather than by pious hopes. This criticism is most strongly made by the Revolutionary Marxist Current.

'The IMG has called for regroupment on the simple idea that revolutionary unity is "good", and that all revolutionaries should therefore be inside one organisation... But this is not enough. To us it

conditions. We can learn from history how to avoid "riding to power on the backs of the workers" by refusing the inflated role given to the party in some traditions. We can learn from history how to avoid "riding to power on the backs of the workers" by refusing the inflated role given to the party in some traditions.' (Big Flame—June 1977)

Big Flame point to groups in Italy such as Lotta Continua to explain their concept of the relationship of the revolutionary organisation to the mass movement. *Socialist Challenge* has recently been carrying a series of articles which criticise the large and quite successful non-Trotskyist groupings in Italy, such as Lotta Continua, for lacking politics, a clear programme etc. Their alternative is of course the Fourth International section in Italy, which is tiny in comparison, but doubtless very 'political' and 'correct'. This seems to me to illuminate a real defect of the IMG, they react to problems and try to solve them at a level which causes them only to appeal to certain rather limited layers of people.

However, some recent pronounce-

to recall them at any time.' It says 'Revolutionary Marxists reject the substitutionist, paternalistic, and "apparatus" (bureaucratic) deviation from Marxism that sees the socialist revolution, the conquest of state power, and the wielding of state power under the dictatorship of the proletariat as a task of the revolutionary party acting "in the name of" the class or, in the best of cases, "with the support of" the class.'

This is quite encouraging, a change in emphasis (I always thought it was a nasty "anarchist deviation" to want to have rotatable and instantly recallable delegates) and also a more "libertarian" outlook than other Trotskyists. Certainly, this sort of approach makes it ever more indefensible for libertarians to, in a sectarian way, confuse Trotskyism with Stalinism. However this is only one isolated article, it does not attempt any sort of critical reassessment of the history or practice of modern Trotskyism. Also, typically, it is a "theoretical" article. Theory

substitution of the party for the class. However, this is the result of incorrect ideas about form and role of revolutionary organisation, which are themselves the product of the belief that the "working class by itself can only gain Trades Union consciousness." (Lenin—What is to be done?). Libertarian Communists point to the capacity of the working class for revolutionary self-activity. We don't think you avoid substitutionism simply by denouncing Stalinism.

The article also raises the whole problem of the relationship that will exist between revolutionaries and the existing instruments of state power. The class as a whole must take power, in order not only to destroy capitalism, but also the co-ercive mechanisms of the state.

The present unity initiatives should not be dismissed out of hand as attempts to poach members from other left groups (because of a failure to gain new members from outside the orthodox left). It may be that this lies behind such



Photo: Laurence Sparham (IFL)

### Squatters Union

THERE HAS been little all-London coordination of squatting work since the days of the London Squatters Federation in the early 70s. This grouping soon collapsed, due to inactivity and the number of people involved who were opposed to all forms of meaningful organisation.

### SAC

A small grouping that attempted to act as an all-London body, the Squatters Action Council, while

active in getting out a regular broadsheet and in organising a large number of large scale squats, was not really representative of the squatting groups in London, in that few delegates from these bodies ever attended SAC meetings.

Now, however, with the Tories firmly ensconced in the Greater London Council, and the Criminal Trespass Act about to become law, a more determined line has been taken by many London squatters in the establishment of the London

Squatters Union.

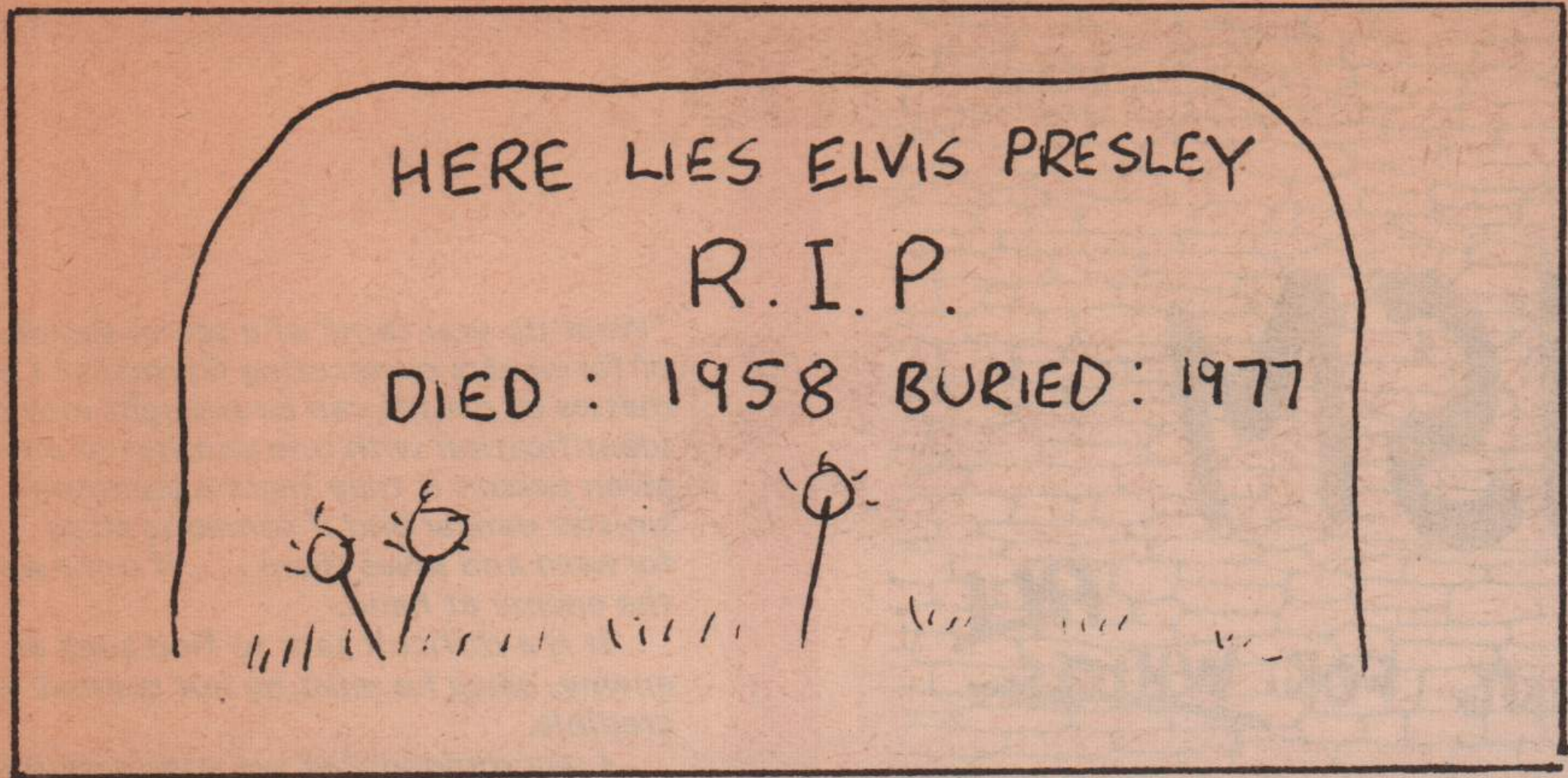
The SAC announced its intention to dissolve itself into the new organisation and tentative moves were made to discuss forms of organisation and a Squatters Charter to be adopted by the Union.

### First meeting

When the first meeting of the Union met on July 31st, just off the Tottenham Court Road, some draft proposals on organisation were ready to be discussed.

80-100 squatters attended the meeting, and a number of established local groupings were





**ELVIS PRESLEY** made his first recording 'That's All Right Mama' in 1954 for Sun Records of Memphis, backed with 'Blue Moon of Kentucky'. The first was a blues originally recorded by Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup, the latter a cover of the bluegrass song by Bill Monroe. "How rhythm and blues was plundered by white capitalism in the evolution of rock 'n roll has now been put on record, although subsequent histories have failed to emphasise the injustice of this situation", Tony Cummings in *Roots, Forerunners and Originators*.

In many ways this analysis, widely accepted in certain circles, fails to understand the originality of Presley and other white artists in evolving a fusion of blues and country music, in the form of rockabilly and rock 'n' roll.

What the rise to fame of Presley shows is the deeply entrenched racism throughout America, where enthusiasts of black music, like Sam Phillips, the owner of Sun, realised that it was necessary for a white artist to perform black songs to bring the whole range of rhythm and blues to a white audience.

There had always been a mutual exchange of styles between black and white musicians in the South, and this cultural crossover was the only thing that ever broke through racist institutions.

That is until artists like Presley were able to reveal the hidden treasures of 'race music' to the great white public.

Black artists like Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, the Coasters etc., were able to march through the gap in the wall that Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis and Bill Haley had opened, and this

represented.

One of the encouraging aspects of the meeting was the unanimous feeling that a structured organisation had to be built, with membership, monthly payments, and elected officials. This shows a great development in that many of the people who were urging this, had several years before in the London Squatters Federation argued against all formal organisation.

## Autonomy

Much of the afternoon meeting was taken up with a discussion over whether the Squatters Union should be open to anyone who agreed with the Squatters Charter or whether it should be limited to squatters, licensees and the homeless.

Certain members of SAC argued for the former. Two libertarian communists at the meeting, one a member of the AWA, then put forward a motion that the Squatters Union should limit membership to squatters, the homeless, licensees and short-term housing tenants.

They argued that the autonomous organisation of squatters was vital, and that any move against this would not only damage squatters' self-organisation, but the principle of autonomy as applied in womens and black groups.

They felt that those who wished to support the Squatters Union, who were not themselves in one of the above categories, should receive membership with no voting rights.

After a number of motions being voted on, this concept was finally accepted by a large majority.

was followed up in later years with the popularity of soul music.

Presley himself on his first Sun recordings reveals a remarkable talent. "Those sides . . . catch a world of risk, will, passion and natural nobility." Greil Marcus in *Mystery Train*.

Young whites, attempting in an incoherent way to break away from wartime austerity and the dominance in the charts of people like Rosemary Clooney, identified heavily with Presley's songs.

They seemed to celebrating freedom and the casting away of constraint.

One of Elvis's chief contributions was his catalytic role in helping crystallise a volatile new culture, the youth culture, which demonstrates from time to time young people's dissatisfaction with capitalist society.

This rebellion is manifested through style, adopting a particular form of music, type of dress and patterns of speech.

Only rarely does this youth culture speak in an openly political way, though it can be that youth plays an active role in the revolutionary upheavals of the last twenty years, in particular Hungary '56 and France '68.

Unfortunately, Presley's uniqueness was not to last.

The big record companies began to realise how they could exploit what they saw as a new market.

In Charlie Gillett's words: "Gradually, but thoroughly, the characteristics that had distinguished the rock 'n' roll of 1956 were eliminated: strong regional accents; self-composed songs; simple open musical arrangements, featuring a small number of instruments with a solo an improvised solo by

The establishment of the London Squatters Union is a big step forward for squatters.

However, to consolidate this, it is vital that strong local groups develop inside the LSU, and that these groups actively work with tenants and trade union groups around the question of housing.

Squatting will become more fraught with hazards over the next few years, with the Criminal Trespass Laws making it so much easier for councils etc to get evictions.

Nevertheless, the housing crisis, wich is worsening in London, will increase the numbers of people squatting.

## No cure

The new laws won't prevent squatting, they will only aggravate the chances of violent confrontations between squatters and the police and bailiffs.

It will become necessary for mass squats, i.e. a whole street or a block of flats, to become the norm, rather than isolated squats that can be easily evicted.

All this requires coordination and organisation, and regular squat meetings to keep up communication with local trades councils, union branches and tenants associations.

A united front of these bodies can draw up alternative housing policies to present to the local council, and stop evictions of squatters and the gutting of empty houses.

The London Squatters Union has taken up organisational problems, now the way is open to take up these political ones.

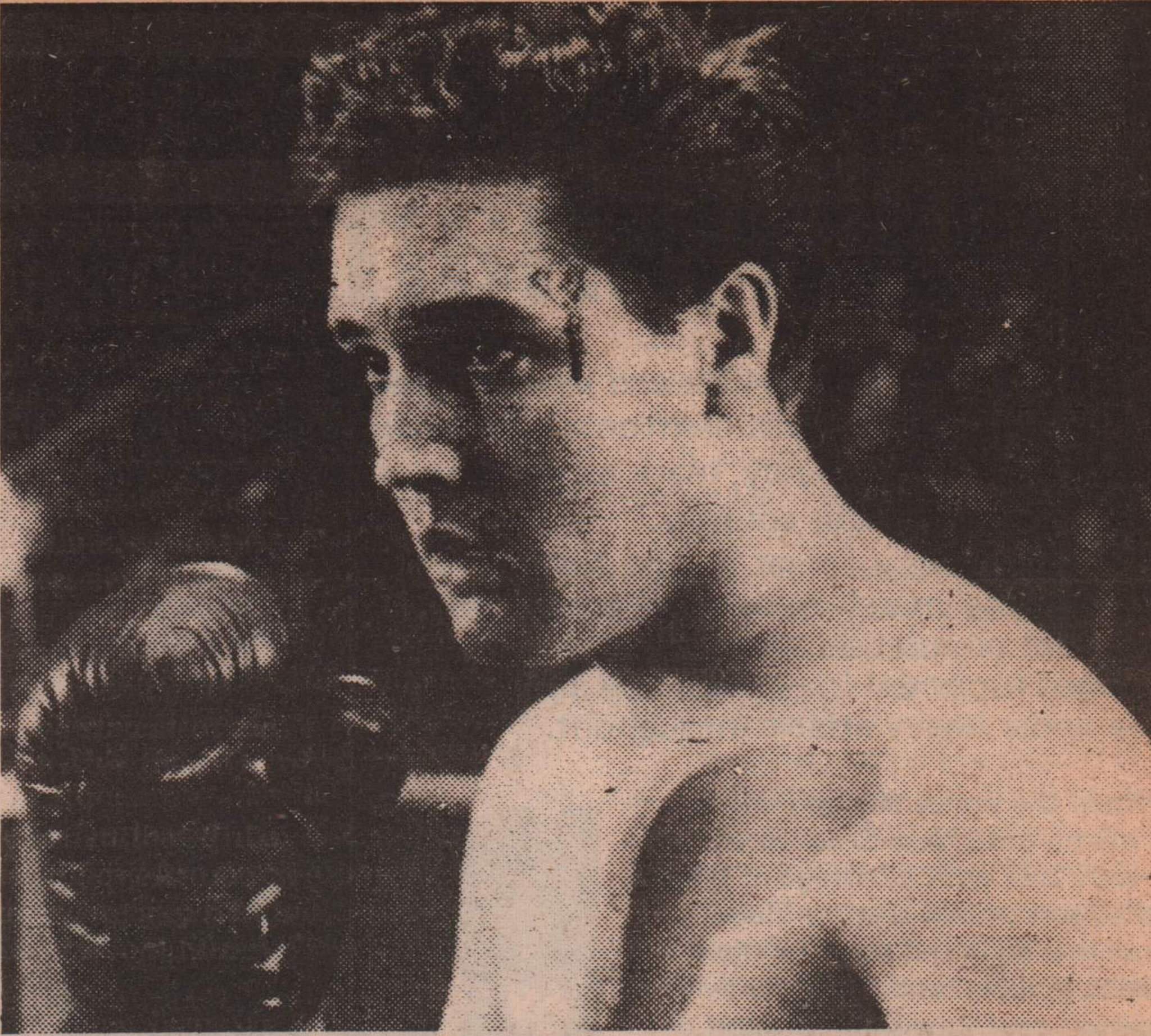
saxophone, guitar, or piano worked out spontaneously in the studio. In their place, unlocalised voices, songs composed by people who didn't sing, written arrangements for large orchestras and choruses." (*The Sound of the City*)

And so Elvis, under his astute manager Colonel Tom Parker, became a simile for everything that was most effete, plastic and unspontaneous about popular music.

The bis businessmen, in their search for a quick buck, had torn the guts out of a music that had some vitality, some life, and which had been the product of young blacks and whites, in the cities like New York and Chicago, and in the deep south farmlands of Tennessee.

Presley lived on to become a denizen of one of his songs—Heartbreak Hotel—lonely and isolated, and able only occasionally to break through the cocoon of blandness that had been woven around him.

H.N.



# What's in a name ... WHY WE'RE CHANGING

**IN THE last copy of Anarchist Worker we promised to explain fully why we were changing our name from AWA to Libertarian Communist Group.**

Over the last few years, the AWA has been going through a number of changes.

It developed out of traditional anarchism, and away from the "affinity groups" form of organisation towards something that guaranteed the utmost democracy whilst being effective at the same time.

In England, unlike the continent, anarchism has been plagued with various forms of liberalism and pacifism masquerading as forms of libertarianism.

The recognition of the working class as the key to a revolutionary change in society was absent from many groups.

The AWA reaffirmed an allegiance to working class revolution.

It saw that it was necessary to go beyond theatrical rhetoric and the trumpeting of "revolution now! revolution now!" to attempting to organise thoughtfully and effectively so that that revolution could be achieved.

The AWA/LCG is still attempting to show ways in which the working class can mobilise around demands that will strengthen it and prepare for the taking of power as a class.

This requires much work and discussion.

This process is not complete inside the organisation, and we know we have a long way to go, but we hope and feel we can achieve greater political clarity. Our policies around united front work and the public sector alliance are examples of this.

Along with other groups on the continent, who began to describe themselves as libertarian communist, we saw the way in which traditional anarchism had fossilised, had become yet another 'religion' like the other ossified 'religions' of the left.

Traditional anarchism refused to look at the modern world, developed its own list of saints of whom it was anathema to criticise in however mild a form.

It acquired a Pavlovian reaction to any discussion about the merits of aspects of other currents of socialism.

## Half Marx

When we, and our comrades in Europe, began to talk about the need for a transitional period between the first day of the revolution and full communism, when we began to talk about workers' power or an anti-statist dictatorship of the proletariat,

we were attacked as 'authoritarians', as 'Marxists'.

And yes, we saw that Marx had great historic contributions to make to the revolutionary movement, although we had our criticisms to make of the behaviour of Marx and his followers in the First International, and the way in which the Marxists had quickly collapsed into reformism and social democracy (the history of German Marxism is a classic example).

Marxism became identified with social democracy, until Lenin and Luxemburg moved out of its orbit.

Yet we saw the need, as Marx and Bakunin had done, for a scientific analysis of the processes of capitalism, for a dialectical materialist approach.

We were able to see some strengths in the theory and practice of socialists outside the anarchist movement, like Luxemburg, Pannekoek, Korsch, and Gramsci.

Does all this mean we are moving away from a commitment to workers' self-management, to direct action, to autonomous working class revolution? Are we becoming Leninists?

No. Our commitment to these principles is just as strong.

Whilst we see that on many occasions in history—the Russian revolution, the German revolution, the Spanish revolution, the labour movement in France, Italy and Bulgaria, and the anti-fascist resistance there, anarchists and anarcho-synicalists were often the most devoted and courageous of their class, and were a source of inspiration to many, we see too the

failures of syndicalism, in particular in Spain.

We see the failure of anarchists to develop a satisfactory form of organisation to effectively combat capitalism.

Where we do look in history is to the actual moments of revolution when the class itself became a major actor on the stage of social struggle. Hungary 56 and May 68 are prime examples.

And we look to those groups who attempted to move forward. The Organisational Platform group of 1926, Camillo Berneri and the Friends of Durruti (Spain 1937), the Federation Communiste Libertaire and the Gruppi Anarchici di Azione Proletaria (France and Italy, the 50s) the Groupes Anarchistes d'Action Revolutionnaire around the journal Noir et Rouge (1955—1968).

The date is 1977. Capitalism has advanced and developed: we have gained a host of new experiences in revolutionary developments since the late 50s.

We must move forward out of the mausoleums and cemeteries where the bleached bones of sectarianism and the mummified corpses of ideology lie.

## Links

We define ourselves as libertarian communists and we seek links with those abroad who share our perspectives in order to build an international.

Our approach to other groups will be open-ended, on the lines of principled discussion, feeling that a *genuine* affirmation of effective organisation, self-management of struggle and society are more important than labels.

**The Liberation of the Working Class is The Task of the Working Class Itself.**

Editorial Collective

## BRISTOL RECOGNITION DISPUTE

**LOW WAGES, primitive work conditions, an autocratic boss who pushes his workers around and doesn't like unions. Sounds familiar doesn't it? No, this isn't Grunwicks, but Radford Electronics, a small engineering firm in Bristol.**

Pay there is very low, with engineers taking home as little as £21 or £28 a week, and women earning 80 pence an hour before deductions. There are no fire alarms or extinguishers, and heating, ventilation and safety are all bad.

The dispute blew up over the rights of engineers to go on day release courses. Arthur Radford, the managing director, wouldn't pay the workers' tuition fees, or for the time they spent there, and finally stopped the workers going altogether.

This was the last straw. Some workers joined AUEW-TASS. Radford refused to recognise the union and

then sacked two men. Now ten workers are out on strike. Radford obviously thinks he's still in control. He told strikers picketing the factory "I'm going to stop you boys from ever getting a good job . . . I've done it before to other people that I didn't like."

He's going to have to be shown that he can't behave as he has in the past. Though the strikers have as yet failed to get the support of the women workers, who understandably need the money, but support from the union and Bristol Trades Council has been good. Picketing, blacking and financial support will win this dispute.

To help, contact Dave Yeomans (AUEW-TASS full-timer) Room 5, 2nd floor, York House, Bond St., Bristol.

*With acknowledgement to "Bristol Voice".*



# The Lessons of Lewisham

AT LEWISHAM on Aug 13th and at Ladywood in Birmingham on Aug 15th, two anti-fascist confrontations occurred which, because of their size and militancy, mark a step forward in the campaign against Fascism in this country.

Lewisham was a defeat for the National Front. Their provocative 'anti-muggers' march through an area of South London with a high immigrant population was small, probably less than a thousand, on what was supposed for them to be a national mobilisation, and came under heavy attack throughout.

When the police charged and led the march onto New Cross Road the NF were met with a barrage of bricks, bottles and smoke-bombs. Their march was split and some of their banners grabbed and burnt. They dispersed near Lewisham Station, having only gone half the distance they had planned to, and most of that down side-roads.

At Ladywood the NF succeeded in holding their by-election meeting, but were severely harassed by anti-fascists.

## Violence

Both of these events were confrontations on the grand scale, and have gained a great deal of distorting publicity from the media. The injuries to the police were exaggerated, as usual, and the number of the demonstrators hurt was minimised.

Both events were very violent and the majority of the violence occurred between demonstrators and police. We must be clear that the responsibility for the violence rests with the police.

At Lewisham the police allowed the NF to march, and insisted on clearing New Cross Rd for them to use with a charge of mounted police, when of course they could have dispersed the NF or led them by another route. In Lewisham High Street they issued riot shields and attacked the rioters in order to show that they were in charge. If they only wanted to disperse the anti-fascists, they could have told them that by then the NF had already given up and gone home.

As long as the police protect the right of Fascists and racists to express their views there will be confrontations. We know that Nazi movements must be smashed before they can gain a foothold. We know that for every successful racist demonstration many immigrants and Trades Unionists will suffer physical



Riot shields, developed N. Ireland, are used for the first time on mainland UK streets. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

attacks. We cannot allow the NF to win control of our streets.

## Blacks

The most surprising thing about the confrontations was the militancy of the black youth. In both Lewisham and Ladywood it was they who in the main were prepared to take on the police and to throw missiles. The reasons for this militancy are fairly obvious. Blacks in this country are discriminated against. Many are unemployed. Many black youths have no future except the dole queue. In South London, Birmingham and elsewhere they are subjected to racist abuse and frequently

physical violence.

Blacks, especially young blacks, are constantly harassed by the police. The struggle in Lewisham is largely due to controversy between Fascists and their opponents over the midnight police raids on so-called 'muggers' which resulted in the arrest of 21 West Indian youths under the notorious conspiracy laws.

What was apparent at Lewisham and Ladywood was the naked hatred of the police by the blacks. The events of this year's Notting Hill Carnival show that there is a rising tide of frustration among the blacks, and their determination to hit back at the police.



Mounted police attempt to force a way through anti-fascist demonstrators at Lewisham. They were forced to retreat. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

FIGHTING  
RACIALISM

ALL  
HOUSING FOR WHITES

MAKE BRITAIN  
GRATE AGAIN ANF

"What do you think of a secret society of foreigners persecuting Germans? Large masses of people can be brought into deep identification with one another or any given person if they share a common sinister danger and if someone steps forward and saves them . . . If only we had the enemy at hand.

It is a difficult task to find such an enemy, since he must be not present yet credible.

I recommend that we nominate the Jews to be this enemy. In Germany there exist 600,000 of them against 60,000,000. That is a good ratio." — Siegfried Bernfeld, psychoanalyst and socialist, 1925.

CONDITIONS in Britain are very similar today to those in Germany fifty years ago. Rising prices, industrial stagnation, unemployment and increasing misery for the mass of people.

A fragmented, weak and confused working class lost all faith in the promises of German politicians.

Except for one — Adolf Hitler, who turned Bernfeld's speculation into reality.

## Scapegoat

Today, sections of the British establishment are creating a "common sinister danger" — the blacks.

There are 1.5 million blacks in a total population of 55 million.

Not a bad ratio.

One way they have done this is to paint all blacks as criminals. The press, local and national, have been at the forefront of this.

A few years back, the Press began saturating the news with cases of muggings, reporting those which involved blacks.

This gave the impression that mugging was a new crime and that blacks were the main offenders.

In fact, mugging existed long before. Its incidence did not increase a few years back; only the reporting of mugging increased.

In fact, all the figures used by Powell and other racists are based on the figures of blacks arrested not those convicted.

This is true of all the other areas of crime that blacks are blamed for. Since police harass black people everyday — note the number picked up on 'suspicion' — its not bloody surprising that the arrest figures show a high proportion of blacks involved.

In fact, the number of cases where violence has been used is greatly exaggerated by the newspapers carefully selecting sensational news.

No one can deny that some blacks commit crime. Given that there is higher unemployment and more low paid jobs amongst blacks than whites.

But this is a long way off from saying that blacks are the main criminals. Yet some people in authority have said just that.

## Justice ?

Take the case of Judge Gwyn Morris: On sentencing black youths in South London in May he said, "Within living memory these areas were peaceful safe



Victims of police attack at Notting Hill

The events have altered the nature of the anti-fascist struggle. We must still try and rally as wide forces as possible against the NF, though we've got to avoid the kind of mistake the Communist Party makes, and not end up tailing behind some loose liberal of left vicars! We will work with people, but on the basis of a clear political agreement.

An encouraging facet of the Lewisham event, which I attended, was the presence of groups such as Women Against Racism and Fascism, gay groups and even a sizeable Anarchist contingent! Such militants should not be ignored by the more 'orthodox' sections of the Left when groups organise together against Fascism.

Above all, we've got to face up to the challenge that the militancy of the young blacks presents to the Left. We shouldn't try to co-opt them into the party as the SWP tries to do, but we shouldn't be uncritical of the blacks' lack of political awareness either. The first step to solve this will be to work with blacks against racism, without ignoring the need for their self-organisation. Co-option is one thing, co-operation another.

## Police

Tactically, we need to be prepared to be faced by an increasingly highly-trained police force using increasingly sophisticated technology of repression, riot-shields may be only the first piece of equipment in daily use in Northern Ireland to be given to our police force. We need to examine the problems raised by the escalation of the conflict, the use of riot-shields, police horses, missiles etc.

In the near future, on Oct 8th, the NF are holding a march and meeting in Tameside. Tameside Anti-Fascist Committee are calling for a mass counter-demonstration. Help build for this now. Create a mass anti-fascist presence that can stop them!

Dave Higgins.



# Blacks against the law



Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)



rnnival. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

and agreeable to live in. But the immigrant settlement which has occurred over the last 25 years has radically transformed the environment."

A while ago he passed sentences on six black youths convicted of theft, robbery and burglary. No violence was involved.

The youths, aged between 16 and 17, were given sentences ranging from three to seven years in prison or detention.

While passing sentence the Judge advocated that whites set up vigilante groups.

Within a week Judge Gwyn Morris was presiding over a case in which three whites had assaulted and injured three blacks.

Two were given suspended sentences while the third was given a mere three years.

Did the learned judge advise blacks to set up self-defence groups?

You bet he didn't.

As the crisis deepens, blacks will be singled out more and more in the attempt to create the common sinister danger.

The result will be, as it was in Germany, to divert the attention away from the true crisis and to raise the sort of hysteria among the working class that will make it easy prey for the tactics of the fascists.

Black and white must unite to fight this racism together.

More fundamentally they must fight against the economic conditions which give rise to racism.

The small but growing resistance to the cutbacks in public spending can form the beginning to this.

Ken Hartwell

## Anarchist Worker talks to anti-racist militant

THE ANTI-FASCIST and anti-racist activities that usually get reported in the Left press are counter-demos against the National Front. Anti-fascist work also involves more than this.

*Anarchist Worker:* Do you think counter-demos are of any use?

**Keith Harris:** The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Fewer N.F. turned up than we had expected on April 23. It is vital that Fascists are not allowed to openly provoke national minorities.

A counter-demo is one way for the working-class, black and white, to show its determination to prevent such provocation.

**What tactics should be used in the counter-demo?**

The tactics must fit the circumstances, but basically the aim must be to prevent the fascists from marching.

It is not enough to hold a "demonstration against racism", as the Trades Council did at Stechford, over a mile away from the racists!

The right tactic was shown by the larger number of people who prevented the racists from marching into the areas of Stechford where the blacks live.

Some of those who took part in the April 23 counter-demo, Labour councillors and such, were more interested in making fine vote-winning speeches against racialism than in stopping the Front.

In fact the Labour Council has a racist housing policy and has recently white-washed a report which only proved what Black youth have known all along, that Haringey police

*Anarchist Worker* spoke to Keith Harris, a member of Haringey Campaign Against Racism, one of the groups that originally set up the 23 April Committee.

harass black youth.

**Do you not believe in unity of the Left on such issues?**

Being Left is not what you call yourself, it's what you do. The people who call for most unity on the left are usually those who either do fuck-all or what they do is so much of a compromise to the right that they have to cover themselves by calling the others, who take the working-class line, splitters.

There are real dangers in Popular Fronts, that is, an alliance of working-class politics with wishy-washy social democratic and liberal politics.

First, such people are not usually committed to stopping the Front, and may, if they are stewards, try and prevent such action.

Second, they'll barrage you with such platitudes as "we can all live together", "one race—the human race" etc. Working-class politics is quite clear on this point—racism is not a failure of races to integrate, but a product of capitalism. The nation-state exists to look after the interests of national capitalists. In a crisis, the capitalists see a national solution.

Fascism is one such solution, a very extreme one. But another example is precisely what the Labour Government is doing; it was Labour that introduced the 1967 Immigration Act.

Working-class militants must clearly state: There is no single human

human race, but a race of classes—bosses and workers!!

**How then should socialists operate in anti-racist and anti-fascist work?**

All anti-fascists with a working-class perspective, that is to say, who see racism as firmly rooted in capitalism itself, must organise together. Such a united front would consist of revolutionary socialists and left social democrats from many political tendencies.

It would be united on specific objectives. I see three such objectives.

First, no platform for racists and fascists. This covers for example, counter-demos and actions against local racist newspapers.

Secondly, an attack upon racism in the state institution.

The most glaring example of this is immigration control. Such control suggests that it is the numbers of immigrants that cause problems such as unemployment, bad housing, etc. whereas in fact it is the capitalist crisis that is the cause. These racist laws must be challenged.

Thirdly, black self-organisation must be encouraged, and supported by the white working-class. An autonomous black movement is necessary to combat the specific oppression that blacks suffer.

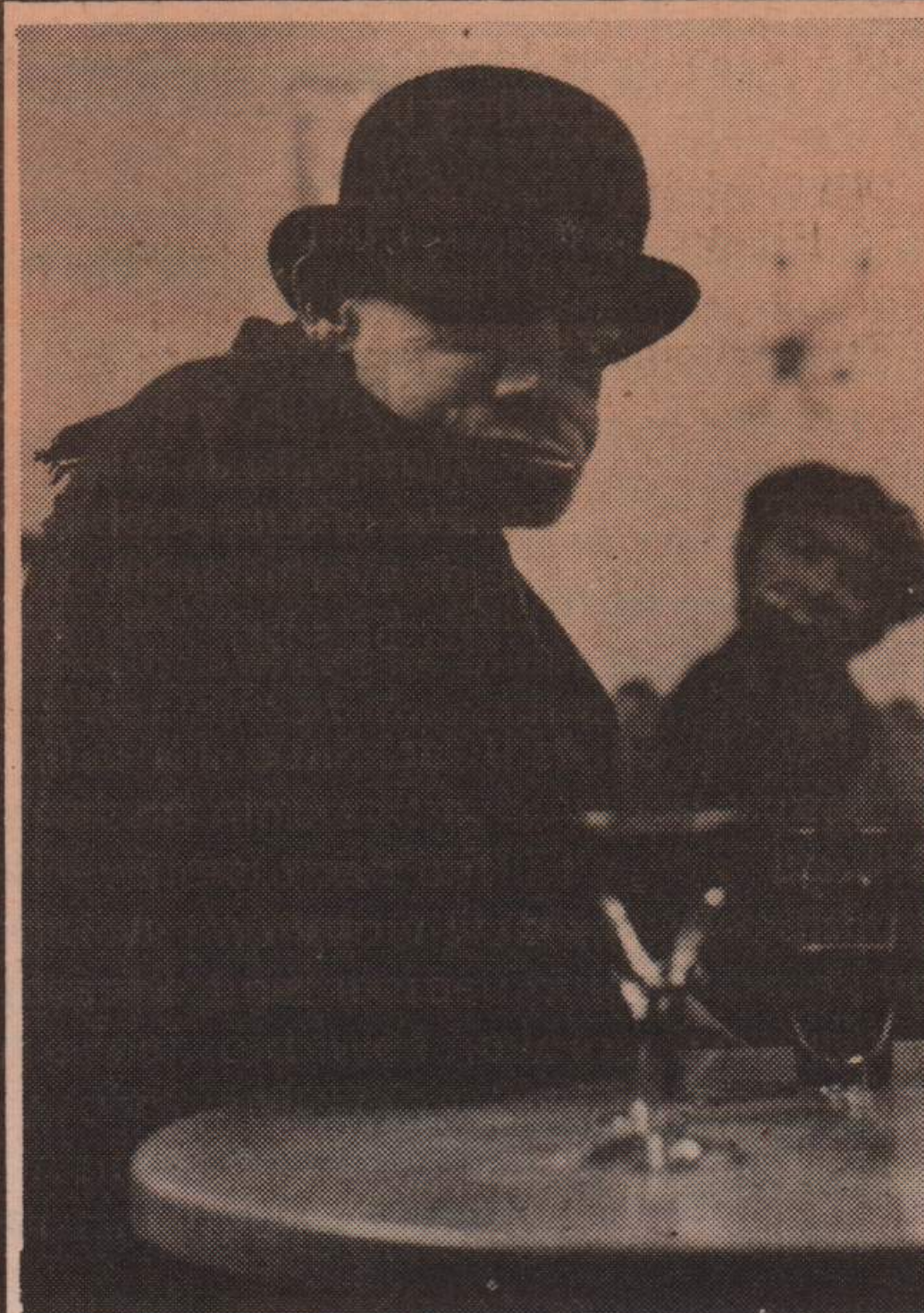
This will range from defence against fascist and police harassment to challenging discrimination in unions and the like.

So you see, anti-racism is far more than just Front bashing.

**What do you see as the next step?**

The next step must be for local committees to form a national federation. This is crucial, because local struggles need wider support, and some issues, such as immigration controls, can only be fought nationally.

Furthermore, a nation federation would be better equipped to investigate, expose and fight fascist activities.



Jim Partial

## 'HOWLING MOB ATTACK POLICE'

From my seat in Finch's wine bar I looked down upon the most violent scenes yet as ranting left-wing rentamob extremists clashed with police.

The trouble started when rentamob leftwing ranting extremists charged at the police who were escorting a peaceful demonstration.

The extreme leftwing ranting rentamob showed its utter disregard for democracy by attempting to prevent every Briton's right to incite racism and organise a fascist state.

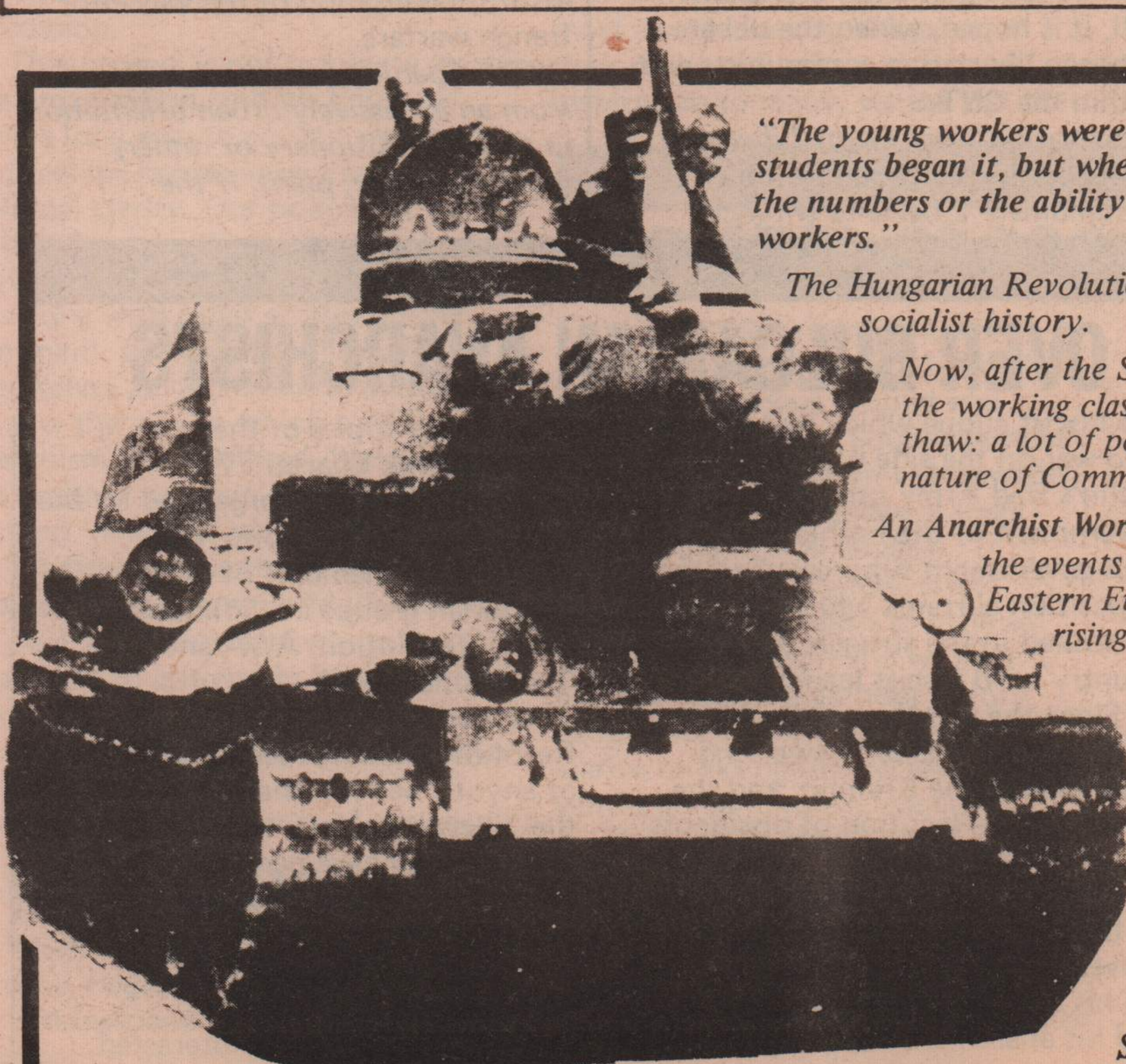
They hurled concrete slabs, corrugated iron and ten-ton lorries at police after the Front had dispersed.

400 people were injured, 500 of them police. Over 2,000 arrests were made.

Animal grunts and cries were heard from the ranting rentamob extreme left-wingers and trade unionists as they moved toward Ladywood, where not a single building was left standing after another night of violence.

Later on, there were calls throughout Lewisham and Finch's wine bar that this sort of violence should not be allowed to happen again.

Indeed there was a call for tougher measures to deal with those who challenge law and order, endorsing the slogans of the National Front



"The young workers were the power of the revolution. The students began it, but when it developed they did not have the numbers or the ability to fight as hard as these young workers."

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was a watershed in socialist history.

Now, after the Stalinist ice age which had gripped the working class movement for so long, came a thaw: a lot of people began to question the very nature of Communist Party ideology.

An *Anarchist Worker* Special Supplement describes the events — the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe; the death of Stalin; the risings in East Berlin and Poland; the unrest in Hungary leading up to the revolution of October; the formation of workers and peasants councils, a glorious flowering of genuine proletarian revolution; the street fighting; and the eventual crushing of the revolution.

Single copies 5p + post from AWA, c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8. Bulk orders welcome.



# DISSECTING THE CNT Upsurge in Spain

THE revival of the Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo (legalised the 4th of May—40,000 strong at that time) is indicative not only of the strength of the libertarian movement in Spain but also of a real new non-party, non-aligned movement in favour of workers self-organisation.

The CNT gains credibility through its practice of supporting struggles unconditionally and with no strings attached, and through its call for the destruction of the Francoist union structure, its refusal to indulge in class collaboration and its proposals for workers self-organisation at grass roots level.

It is becoming the main opposition to reformism and the spearhead of the anti-capitalist struggle.

From what was seen at meetings in Barcelona the CNT has a large percentage of young militants (20-30 years old) a great number of whom are women, which gives it a particular outlook—not altogether without problems.

At the moment an important discussion is going on in the CNT between several tendencies, often on a regional level.

This has not affected the growing support of workers but will no doubt, if the contradictions become more acute.

In the main there are 3 tendencies  
1) The Anarchists—made up of the Federacion Anarquista Iberica (traditional anarchists, *Frente Libertario*, a more radical group around an exile paper of the same name in France, anarcho-syndicalists and the tendency which has grown out of the ideas of 1968 in France, generally anti-syndicalist and 'folklorique'.  
2) Libertarian communists and the tendency for workers autonomy in general.  
3) The reformist syndicalists.

In Catalonia for example antagonism had reached such a point that an extraordinary general meeting was convened and the general secretary and the regional committee resigned, forcing re-elections. Nevertheless, the ever-growing Catalan CNT is the most important in Spain.

In the Basque country collaboration with the local union (LAB) and some separatists could give the Euskadi CNT a short life.

In the regional developments can be found ideological tendencies which illustrate the complexity of the Spanish situation even within the CNT.

In Central Spain the dominant tendencies are FAlist and syndicalist;

in Asturia, Proudhonian tendencies; in Andalucia, libertarian communist and council communist; while in Valencia trotskyist tendencies have entered the union.

In fact there are people from all sorts of traditions—ex-members of the Communist and Socialist Parties, and the Trotskyist LCR, ex-phalangists, christians, council communists, which creates enormous problems and an atmosphere of confusion.

A libertarian communist said on this "The fact is, that despite its growth, the CNT has not yet got a big working class base, it has not yet defined an alternative trade union strategy, to the establishment or to the left. It is in this context that we are struggling for a CNT that is able to respond to the revolutionary demands of the workers. For this it must overcome the immediate problem, that the militants fight more on an organisational level than on base level, where spontaneous demands need the support of a class-based organisation which will deal with them as they stand without embroiling them in the infighting of tendencies which rivals the reformist parties."

The Spanish situation shows us that a union organisation that is a real weapon of struggle, but in a wider form than in the anarcho-syndicalist tradition from which it has sprung historically.

The CNT must be independent of all the political tendencies, libertarian included, and must be open to all groupings of autonomous workers. The anarchists must have their own specific organisation, as well as the young libertarians.

In Spain, the libertarian communists are syndicalists only in the sense that they believe that the CNT is the only mass organisation with clearly revolutionary aims and practice as far as workers self-organisation is concerned, and that it would be crazy to create another organisation.

They work within the CNT in order to advance the struggle in this context, to oppose bourgeois influence and reformist influence, and to promote the discussion on all fronts.

However, the Movimiento Comunista Libertario dissolved itself into the CNT last year which was a mistake. The MCL is now reconstituting itself, realising the need for a nationally coordinated organisation which can act effectively both inside the CNT and within the broader social and political struggle. The launching of a national paper will, it is hoped, widen the debate between libertarian communists and within the CNT.

Information from *Front Libertaire*, the paper of the Organisation Communiste Libertaire (France).

## THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE



CNT meeting at San Sebastian: 25,000 people. Photo: Front Libertaire

### IN BRIEF

French president Giscard d'Estaing gave his Cabinet Ministers strict instructions before their holidays this summer—don't wear swimming trunks while the photographers are around. The reason—the French people are undergoing a period of severe belt-tightening, as workers living standards are slashed to pay for the crisis of capitalism.

Giscard was worried that if the bulging waistlines of some of his ministers were exposed to public view, it could cause unrest.

Leader of the cabinet fatties is Economy Minister Raymond Barre. His other main claim to fame is as author of the austerity programme, known as the Barre Plan.

He's obviously been having a swell time while forcing workers to cut back on essentials.

## Review

*Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution* — Jose Peirats, *Black and Red* Paperback, 400p. £2.95.

Jose Peirats was an active member of the Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo, the anarcho-syndicalist union that at times commanded the allegiance of masses of workers. For some years he was Secretary General of the CNT in exile.

This book printed for the first time in English, is a welcome addition to the literature of the Spanish revolutionary movement.

It gives in some detail the growth of the Spanish libertarian movement from the last decades of the 19th century up to the Civil War and Revolution. It chronicles the various important labour disputes the CNT was involved in.

Unfortunately, Peirats has not learnt enough from his own experience and that of the CNT as a whole during the Spanish Revolution.

### Guerrillas

He has learnt some things however, and at times he is able to see things clearly.

For example, he admits the institutionalisation of the war into trench warfare.

"The Spanish Anarchists suffered from an excessively urban orientation in their revolutionary or rather, insurrectionary, plans. If the

## Peirats and the past

insurrection was lost in the cities, the villages were written off. We never thought that we would have to prepare for civil war by organising support bases for guerilla actions in the countryside and the mountains, and by developing supply systems for such activities and training select troops as guerillas. With its tortuous geography Spain is a good terrain for guerilla warfare, and a well organised guerilla force would have defeated soldiers trained for a war of continuous fronts.

In the last world war the Spanish Army itself used guerilla warfare and the Vietnamese and the Palestinians are still using it. Guerilla organisation could have saved the North from Franco. Our trench warfare was a gift that we made to Franco... The war of fronts led the CNT into the mire of political collaboration and to give up our past without any kind of recompense, since the more we surrendered as we collaborated, the more was demanded of us."

### Excuses

Peirats attempts to make excuses for the failure of the CNT and the anarchist organisation, the Federacion Anarquista Iberica, by pointing to the work of the regular militants.

Now the work of these militants was very important, especially the ongoing tasks of collectivisation (see Sam Dolgoff, *The Anarchist Collectives*, Gaston Leval, *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution*). It does not go far enough, however, to absolve the CNT-FAI leadership in their collaboration with the government and the betrayal of the working class in Barcelona (see last AW).

### Sell-outs

Furthermore, Peirats attempts to play down the role of the libertarian communist opposition to the sell outs (Camillo Berneri, the Libertarian Youth, Friends of Durruti).

The last group Peirats dismisses with the comment that it never had "the importance ascribed to it by some foreign historians. The relative unimportance of its members (what does this mean, that they weren't part of the 'leadership'?), POUM participation, and the Marxist flavour of some of its communiques all served to dilute the real influence of the Friends of Durruti".

By 'Marxist' language, Peirats

means that the Friends of Durruti called for the extension of the revolution and the seizure of power by the working class.

### Honesty

Peirats is honest enough in his detailed accounts of the divisions in the CNT, between the more 'reformist' elements and the principled revolutionaries of the Catalan Young Libertarians, who consistently denounced the 'circumstantiality' of CNT participation in the governments of Madrid and Catalonia.

He is critical of the way in which democracy began to disappear inside the libertarian movement, but because he stands in the centre, halfway between the collaborationists and those who wanted to deepen the revolution, he is unable to come up with any satisfactory explanations of the course of events.

Peirats is able to see that the CNT and the FAI went in for far too simplistic propaganda to the masses.

"Anarchism is largely responsible for its own bad reputation in the world. It did not consider the thorny problems of means and ends. In their writings, many anarchists conceived of a miraculous solution to the problem of revolution. We fell easily into the trap in Spain. We believed that "once the dog is dead the rabies is over". We proclaimed a full-blown revolution without worrying about the many complex problems that a revolution brings with it."

### Renaissance

Hopefully now that the Spanish libertarian movement is re-emerging with a vengeance the mistakes of the past can be learnt from.

Peirats was able to prophesy the renaissance of libertarian socialism (he wrote a postscript in 1976) and ends with a note of hope.

"A promising new stage is opening up to anarchism in Spain. The old militants, still ready for the struggle, are contemplating former successes and failures: the young, having recently entered the arena, are supplementing inexperience with their devastating dynamism and superior intellectual preparation. The revitalisation of anarchism in the Iberian Peninsula may herald an anarchist renaissance in Europe and America."

## PICKET PROTEST OVER BULGARIAN ANARCHISTS

ON THE weekend of Sept 10th and 11th two pickets were held in London to protest against the maltreatment of anarchists in Bulgaria. The picket on Saturday was held outside the offices of the Bulgarian Tourist Board in Regent St, the one on Sunday outside the Bulgarian Embassy near Gloucester Road.

Bulgaria is one of the most Stalinist of the states of Eastern Europe. Its foreign policy is totally subservient to the Kremlin, and there is very little internal democracy. This state of affairs has existed ever since the Red Army moved in at the end of the Second World War. They took over the workers councils and soldiers militias which the Bulgarians had formed in their struggle against

the fascist clique which had led them into war on the side of Germany. Stalin's Red Army ushered in the government of the Fatherland Front. This government suppressed all the opposition currents which had briefly flourished in the struggle against the country's old fascist leaders.

Since the war the political history of Bulgaria is one of unswerving allegiance to the Kremlin, and the continued persecution of dissidents inside the country.

Christo Kolev, a leading militant of the Bulgarian Anarcho-Communist Movement, has spent 11 years in gaol for his attacks on the bureaucracy and his anarchist beliefs. A group of libertarian students were imprisoned in 1969 for distributing a pamphlet attacking the regime. More recently, dissidents have been arrested for

distributing copies of the Czechoslovak Charter 77.

The pickets were organised by the Social Revolution group, and attended by members of most libertarian groups i.e. Solidarity, Social Revolution, AWA and 'Provisional' AWA.

It was a pity that Social Revolution did not seek the support of anyone beyond the confines of the 'libertarian' left, and also that this seems to have been a one-off event. However, they say that they intend the pickets to be "part of an on-going campaign against the repression of libertarians world-wide." If you're interested, contact T. Liddle, 83 Gregory Crescent, SE9 5RZ.

C.M.



# letters

## Pre-packed

As an anarchist I have been interested in the AWA for some time now and agree that it is necessary for the anarchist movement to get itself organised and felt as a presence in the labour movement . . . but organisation for what and how? The AWA have taken a lead, but the (ill-informed) impression I have is one of the AWA in action being similar to the myriad of trotskyist and Maoist vanguards. The similarities between *Anarchist Worker* and *Socialist Worker* are obvious, but although I sometimes feel the headlines are “authoritarian” (telling me what to do), the content of *Anarchist Worker* is more in line with my views and infinitely better argued and freer of dogma.

However, it is the approach of the AWA that I find odd. Basically, it falls within the limitations of “competitive politics”. In a way, perhaps this is unavoidable as the AWA is competing with other competitive groups—WRP, SWP, IMG, CP etc and is the only anarchist group to do this. It is much to the groups’ credit I haven’t seen an “*Anarchist Worker* says:” poster . . . yet. But let’s not forget the effect of acceptance of this bourgeois notion of politics. To someone attracted to the left the situation is like going to the supermarket to purchase (join) the organisation with the ideology of your choice. No real opportunity of real decision making based on experience—which may change with further collective experience. Pick your pre-packed ideology and set of policies. Above all don’t think, don’t question, seal the party paper and on no account shalt thou enjoy thyself.

So what am I trying to say? Basically, I feel there is a need for a *libertarian* organisation committed to *mass politics*. An organisation where decisions are made not on the floor of the national conference but in pubs, clubs, in the canteen, on the shopfloor, on the bus, anywhere where people come together. An organisation whose main commitment is to mass democracy, which sees people more important than conference motions. An organisation whose paper will put different, often contradictory, points of view across which people can discuss, argue, debate and decide. An organisation

which rather than have specific policy is a ferment of radical ideas. An organisation which says “well 70 (or even 1½ million) members of the working class came together and they thought . . .” And most importantly an organisation which by its practice will overcome peoples conditioning into passivity. How many times have I seen anarchists get up at public meetings and say “organise yourselves, organise yourselves”. The point is people don’t believe they can. This is why hierarchies can exist.

My impression was that around 72-73-74 IS was approaching such an organisation. An organisation out of control. Out of the control of its leadership—but with purges and splits and divisions the leadership regained control to create the SWP we see today.

Can the AWA become the IS of 72-73? If so, will the same thing happen?

S.D.

# Review

Portugal: The Impossible Revolution. By Phil Mailer. Solidarity paperback, 399pp. £2.25.

**“I shall never forget the First of May. The noise, the noise, the noise is still ringing in my ears. The horns tooting in joy, the shouting, the slogans, the singing and dancing. The doors of revolution seem open again, after forty-eight years of repression. In that single day everything was placed in perspective. . .**

How can words describe 600,000 people demonstrating in a city of a million? Or the effect of carnations everywhere, in the barrels of rifles, on every tank and every car, in the hands of troops and demonstrators alike? It is the climax of a week of hectic, fast moving events.

Working people have left an indelible mark on the situation. The call is for socialism and masses of ordinary people have been involved in making it.”

Portugal—The Impossible Revolution is outstanding as a blow by blow eyewitness account of the Portuguese Revolution of 1974-5. Phil Mailer opens the pages of his book to the experiences and the hopes and aspirations of the peasants and workers.

The book scores where it is able to strongly evoke the exhilaration of living through a period of revolutionary change, moments when one is really alive.

Where it *fails* is exactly where it has been most successful. The on the

## Don’t rely on TUs

As a libertarian communist who’s a member of NALGO working for local government, I should like to comment briefly on Ian Sutherland’s article ‘What’s Wrong With NALGO?’ in the July *Anarchist Worker*.

Whilst I’m all for co-operating with other militants on important issues we agree on, and have myself been a member of the Nalگو Action Group until quite recently, I think we need to take a much firmer stand on the question of the Labour Party and the role of NALGO and trade unions in general, than Ian suggests.

To concentrate on trying to develop ‘unofficial’ organisation and activity is not wrong in itself, so long as this doesn’t mean ignoring the established union structures. We should certainly organise and attend union general meetings and devolve

decision making on important issues down to the general membership wherever possible. But this won’t automatically involve greater militancy or more radical policies. It will only provide openings for us to argue our case ‘face to face’ with a larger number of our fellow workers.

We must firmly reject the idea, however, that the trade unions will ever be transformed into fighting instruments of our class for liberation. It’s time we faced up to the face that they are irretrievably integrated into the system. Whilst militant action may sometimes start off within the trade union base, it can only develop by going outside and beyond them.

The process of trade union integration has of course been greatly assisted by the Labour Party connection. Whilst not taking up a position of ‘defending’ NALGO from the Labour Party, we should in no way encourage the belief that even

‘marginal’ improvements would be gained by affiliation. Because NALGO has been slow on the uptake as far as the Labour Party and ‘genuine trade unionism’ is concerned it doesn’t mean that local government workers must go through all the ‘stages’ which other workers have already experienced and are now moving away from. That kind of mechanical approach should be exposed for the bolshevik rubbish it is. We shouldn’t allow ourselves to be ‘blackmailed’ by leftists in the union into supporting, or even acquiescing in their manoeuvres.

We have our own independent political approach, and it’s about time we stopped hiding it in the shadow of leftism for fear of being identified with the ‘right wing’. In fact it is vitally important that we state loudly and publicly that there is a third alternative to the traditional left/right dogfight.

Mike Ballard, Social Revolution

# THE REVOLUTION CONTAINED

What is most disturbing is that while the Leninists are pilloried for their activities, nowhere is an effective way shown in which libertarian communists can organise and act to strengthen the autonomous workers movement.

The womens movement and the oppression of women in a thoroughly male-dominated macho country is only lightly touched upon, too, and one feels that more space could be given to this.

All this sounds harsh criticism. However, we will get nowhere unless we analyse and criticise in a rigorous fashion anything coming from the revolutionary movement.

Only in this way can we move towards effective theory and practice.

I will repeat that the book is very valuable indeed in laying out how workers and peasants organised. As such it should be read by every militant and socialist.

We see how in many enterprises and individual factories general assemblies were created, which elected workers committees or commissions to draw up lists of demands and in some cases to run the factories.

These committees were usually elected for one year and usually subject to recall.

There were problems here, the problems of how on many occasions

the mass of workers leaving things up to the committees. There were the problems of more articulate workers tending to dominate meetings.

There were the problems of the better-paid workers putting up resistance to narrowing wage scales.

The committees were unable to move beyond immediate problems. Few talked about how to change the nature of work, how to produce socially useful products rather than what they were producing at the moment and common ownership was rarely raised, although it was discussed in the background.

Above all, the committees were rarely able to effectively federate nationally, let alone regionally or inside a firm.

Where it did happen, in Inter Impresas, where 24 firms, some of the largest in Portugal were federated, delegates from different left and revolutionary left groups tended to manipulate the meetings.

Many committees stopped sending delegates to general meetings as a result.

Yet the achievements of the Portuguese workers in the factories and on the land, were impressive, in spite of many years of fascism, in spite of widespread illiteracy, in spite of the virtual embargo exercised by foreign capitalists.

The problem of revolution in one country were painfully illustrated.

Now we must learn the lessons of the Portuguese revolution, the better to strengthen revolutions around the world.

# AIMS & PRINCIPLES

- 1 Capitalism is a class society.
- 2 The basic irreconcilable contradiction within it is between the class which owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, the bourgeoisie, and the class who produce the agricultural and industrial wealth, the working class.
- 3 The social enslavement and exploitation of the working class forms the basis upon which modern capitalism stands, without which capitalism could not exist.
- 4 The state is the instrument of the ruling class. To destroy the power of the bourgeoisie, we must destroy the power of the state.
- 5 Russia and China are class societies in each of which a ruling class of administrators collectively owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, and in which a working class, the sole producer of all wealth, is exploited by that class. These states we define as corporate state capitalist in that the ruling class is totally integrated with the state, as is the trade union structure.
- 6 The class nature of society is reflected in all the dominant philosophies: class, race, sexual, social and personal relationships. The class relationships are expressed through all social relationships and generate attitudes such as sexism and racism.
- 7 The conflict of interests between the two classes generates the class struggle. In the history of society, the class struggle has been the primary factor in the determination of the form and structure of society.
- 8 The day to day struggles of the working class reflect the class struggle. The position of the working class as the collective producer of society’s wealth makes it the only

force capable of replacing capitalism by a classless society. The existing defensive organisations thrown up by the working class, such as trade unions, whose bureaucracy is increasingly incorporated into capitalism, are not adequate for the smashing of the capitalist system, and the building of a free, classless society. However, the working class rank and file organisations such as democratically controlled shop steward committees, factory committees, strike committees, are developing through the place of work. These organisations are the forerunners of workers councils, which are the expression of working class power. Outside of work, the working class has developed other forms of organisation that are potentially revolutionary, such as tenants action committees, rent strike committees, and tenant-worker joint action committees.

9 Dual power exists before the power of the bourgeoisie is smashed. If the working class are successful, then the organisation of the needs of society will be firmly based in working class hands. This is the collective working class in power, in which the working class destroys all remnants of bourgeois society, such as racial hatred, the family and hierarchies. This is the period of transition between capitalism and libertarian communism.

10 From our analysis we reach the inevitable conclusion that capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way and that the only meaningful transformation of society is through the development of working class organisations and by means of a violent social revolution. Violence becomes inevitable for the working class to defend themselves against the onslaughts of the

dispossessed ruling class.

## The role of the AWA

- 1 The task of the AWA is to aid the preparation of the working class for their seizure of power. The establishment of an anarchist society is something that has to be consciously fought for by the working class. The AWA is a conscious organised expression of libertarian communist ideas. Through the shared experience, information and knowledge of the class struggle, AWA must be able to analyse and disseminate the nature of the problems facing the working class and apply these lessons in the class struggle.
- 2 The AWA aims to offer a lead within the working class movement by example and explanation; and to build into the movement a high level of political consciousness so that it is capable of defeating capitalism and fighting the creation of a new ruling class. Fundamental to this is the contradiction between the organisation as a tendency within the class and its being in ideological advance of it. This contradiction can only be resolved with the establishment of a libertarian communist society. During the period of transition, the potential basis for the emergence of a new ruling class is progressively removed so that the need for a separately organised libertarianism will decrease.
- 3 The AWA seeks to develop and support working class organisations which are the forerunners of workers councils and to develop in them revolutionary consciousness. The AWA does not seek independent power for itself

but seeks to work through the working class organisations.

- 4 The AWA seeks to establish international links with libertarian revolutionary organisations and groups with an aim of establishing an international libertarian communist movement.
- 5 The AWA seeks to combat attitudes of sexism, racism and national chauvinism as attitudes that help maintain class society. The form our organisation takes is a realisation of libertarian perspectives in the current situation. We recognise that it is not a social model of a free society and must itself develop in interaction with the developing liberation of society.
- [1] We are a membership organisation.
- [2] Membership is open to those who agree with our analysis of society and its transformation, and who work towards this end.
- [3] The main policy making body will be the National Conference. Between National Conferences there will be held bi-monthly Delegate Conferences to co-ordinate and carry out National Conference decisions, to decide interim policy and to initiate activity. Delegates are mandatable and rotated. Delegate Conference decision can be revoked by National Conference.
- [4] We seek to establish AWA groups in all areas, not only geographical but also industrial, educational, etc. Groups interpret National and Delegate Conference decisions to relate tactics to their local experience.

As agreed at the National Conference in London 31 August—1 September 1974.

# Cough up!

REVOLUTIONARY newspapers run on money, and we need YOUR money to keep the furnace burning. We need money for printing, for postage, for layout materials, and a host of other things. ALL of these have risen in price in the last few months, and it becomes more and more of an effort to bring out a paper.

So please give generously. We feel that our paper has an important role to play, an important place to fill, and we know from rising sales that many of our readers feel the same.

Although our sales are rising, we need to keep boosting circulation, so try and take a bundle to sell to friends. Selling the paper doesn’t mean total commitment to the organisation, and remember, you can help to make the paper yours by writing letters and articles.

The paper will improve through a two-way process of criticism and feed back, and will better reflect the reality of struggle through readers communicating with us.

As from the next issue, and in line with our name change, the newspaper will be called Libertarian Communist and will come out more regularly, A3 size with 20 pages, and it will contain, we hope, more analysis and comment.

Please make all cheques payable to ‘AWA General Fund’ 13 Coltman St, HULL.



# Anarchist Worker

## CUT GRUNWICK OFF!

A YEAR has now passed since the workers at Grunwicks first struck against their reactionary, anti-union employer, George Ward, over conditions and the issue of union recognition.

The struggle continues, though since the decline in the size and combativeness of the daily picket the bourgeois press have been paying the affair much less attention.

No poor suffering members of the Special Patrol Group to present as victims, so less coverage, perhaps?

The Government's plan to defuse the situation by its use of Lord Justice Scarman's 'Court of Enquiry' seems to be at the end of its usefulness. Contrary to what some of even the Left press has said, the report only came out very indirectly in favour of the strikers.

### Report

The report condemns mass picketing, and points the way for the Government to tighten up the law on it.

It recommends re-instatement, and if that's 'not possible', compensation for the strikers. In effect Scarman has approved of Ward taking on scab labour to replace the strikers, and said that the scabs' jobs now have a higher priority than those of the workers they were brought in to replace.

Even though the report says that Union representation at the factory would be 'a good thing', it at no point makes any clear recommendation on it.

Of course, the Court of Enquiry was a Government manoeuvre from the start. It has no power to enforce its report. Ward has said in the past that he would rather close the factory than take any of the strikers back. He and his advisers from the 'New Right', the National Association For Freedom, have said that they won't be bound by the decisions of the Court of Enquiry, but only by the Law Courts, and it looks as if the legal battle between Ward and the Government's Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service will go to the House of Lords and take ages.

### Militant

Of course the militant Strike Committee and the union involved, APEX, want a speedy end to the dispute. If Ward refuses to accept the Scarman report, or refuses to negotiate at all, then all the resources of the labour movement will have to be mobilised. The Trades Union Congress will be told of the situation and asked

for their support. All supplies and services to the factory will have to be shut off, and mass picketing used to close the factory.

However, things probably won't be as simple as that. The strike committee are more militant than the Union, as you'd expect, and are not so prepared to be sidetracked into meaningless negotiations. It is their directions as to how to carry the dispute forward that we should pay attention to, not those of the APEX bureaucracy.

Ward has not got the support of most capitalists, who prefer less explosive labour relations. If he wins this dispute it'll give a great boost to the Right throughout the country. Indeed, even if he loses, one thing that will have come out of the dispute is the apparent ease with which scab labour can be recruited, from among the same layer of people as make up the majority of the strikers.

### Victory

If we win this strike it'll open up the way forward for those very same layers of workers. The majority of the Grunwick strikers are Asian women who are getting dreadful wages and working in dreadful conditions. Many workers in similar situations will take heart from their example.

Of course, we're not uncritical of Trades Unions, because of their reformism and lack of democracy, but anyone looking at Grunwicks can see that in such a situation a union is an essential help, and unionisation is a progressive demand.

Supporters of Anarchist Worker are urged to do all they can to help win this dispute. Raise the issue in your union, send donations to the strike committee, above all if you can, join the picket and any mass action that may occur. Let's make the slogan a reality:

THE WORKERS, UNITED, WILL NEVER BE DEFEATED!!

Billy Williams.



Grunwick picket at first day of TUC conference—delegates angered the strikers by passing a vague resolution. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

## The shape of things to come?

SIR Keith Joseph, millionaire reactionary Tory politician, recently caused rather a furore by condemning the Scarman Report on the Grunwick dispute.

The question immediately asked by even the reactionary press was "Does he speak for the Tory party, are they all set for another clash with the unions?"

Well, a speech by James Prior, Shadow Employment Minister, fairly soon made it clear that the official Shadow Cabinet line was less overtly anti-union, and that Sir Keith was speaking only for himself. However, the fact remains that Maggie Thatcher is pretty reactionary even for the Tory party, the most right-wing leader they've had for years, and she regards Sir Keith as a kind of guru figure.

### Election

We've got to worry about such things because it's a very real possibility that the Tories will win the next election. Even if there is some kind of minor economic recovery in the next six months or so, and even if the benefits of that are passed on quickly to the voters in tax concessions etc., it's difficult to see Labour voters turning out in vast numbers to re-elect the most consistently anti-working class Labour government in history.

So, what kind of Tory government would Thatcher lead? We know that Robert Moss, a leading light of the NAFF has written speeches for her, and that she has

had social contacts with NAFF members and their groups.

We know that the ideas of such people as Joseph and Moss do influence the Tories. I think that Joseph in his remarks was just keeping his supporters aware of his existence, and undoubtedly he does appeal to the sort of people who read the *Daily Mail* or *Express*, the reactionary petit-bourgeoisie.

### Attacks

Essentially the Tories have moved to the right since the days of Heath, and we should all remember that he fought the unions over the Industrial Relations Act in 1971 and the Miners Strike in 1974. However, though Thatcher is definitely committed to the idea of the strong state, to fighting for the reestablishment of reactionary cultural and social ideas, she may

have learnt some of the lessons of Heath's period in power.

I think that she will keep Sir Keith and co. under control certainly until after the next election, and probably away from sensitive ministries such as Employment when in power.

Nevertheless we must be prepared to face a vicious attack on working-class living standards if the Tories do come in. In particular, any Tory government would almost certainly launch an attack on the 'social wage' i.e. the provision of such things as education, housing, health care etc..

A Tory government is by no means a certainty, but if it comes we must be ready to fight. Sir Keith Joseph's support for George Ward is only one hint of the kind of conditions that might prevail in the struggle in a year's time. L.C.

## COMMUNITY PAPERS

THERE ARE many alternative and community papers around the country, adopting a wide variety of styles, concerns, and political outlooks. Community politics are a valid, indeed important area of libertarian activity. Though we shouldn't be too didactic, we should be prepared to point out the 'political' lessons of much community activity.

Attempts have been made recently to share information and experience, at a conference held in Leeds last year and at one in Bristol this July.

### IDEAS

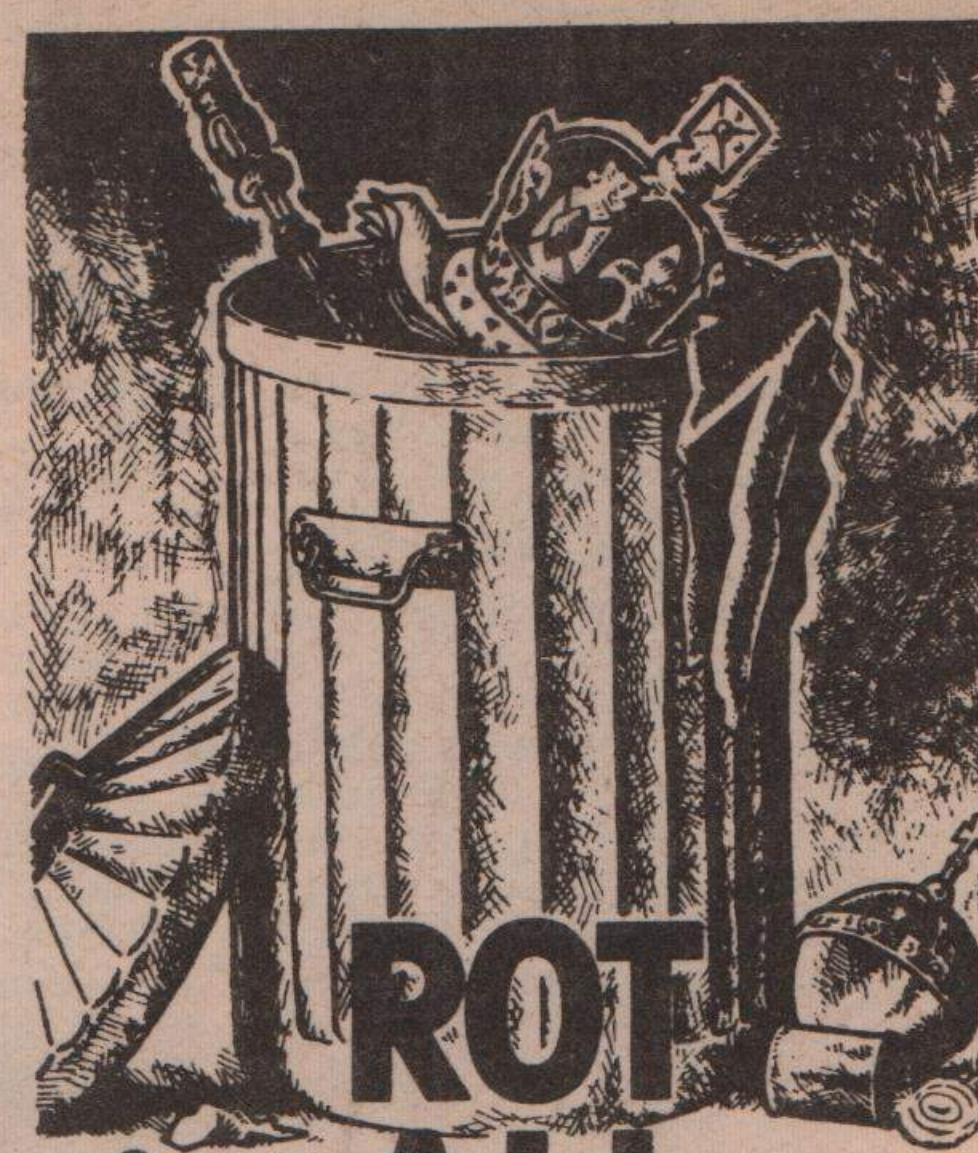
Because the papers were dissimilar, ranging from the *New Manchester Review*, which has a large circulation and fortnightly production, but looks like London's *Time Out*, to small neighbourhood papers like Newcastle's *Byker Phoenix*, the discussion in Bristol tended to be a bit vague, though of course some good ideas came up.

The workshop on women and trade unions brought up the idea of consistently leafletting workplaces in order to develop campaigning links there, and led on to people realising the lack of women working on the papers.

### FUTURE

However, what is really needed is to relate the papers' politics to coverage of issues such as housing, education, transport etc. The next conference will take place in York in March 1978 and will cover that sort of ground.

For further info contact *York Free Press* at 1 Newton Terrace, York, Yorks. Telephone York 37188.



## ROT ALL RULERS

KEEP ON KNOCKING! MOVEMENT AGAINST A MONARCHY's message to anti-monarchists around the country is "Keep on knocking"! The response to our stickers has been tremendous, we've barely been able to keep pace with the demand.

We're producing a badge—selling at 15p— with the slogan "We won't stand for the National Anthem!"

Movement Against A Monarchy Box M, c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London N1.

JUST OUT: "Campaign against Racism and Fascism, CARF" 12 page bi-monthly anti-racist, anti-fascist paper for use in the fight against racism and fascism. Price 10p. Obtainable from most progressive bookshops, or from the Anti-Racist, Anti-Fascist Co-ordinating Committee, Flat 3, 5 Huntley St. London W.C.1.

Libertarian Spain. Bulletin of the Libertarian Spain Committee, 20 pages of information on the situation in Spain, with illustrations. 20p inc. postage, bundles 5 for £1 cwo, from LSC, 136 Burley Rd, Leeds 4. No.1 carries info on the rebirth of the CNT, the June elections, economic and political background.

The tyranny of sTRuCTurEleSSneSS

by Jo Freeman

5p

In this pamphlet Jo Freeman attempts to sketch out an approach to organisation that would prevent the growth of elitist leaderships—which both highly centralised and highly informal groupings tend to produce.

In revulsion from the tyrannical structures of governments, unions and other organisations some anarchists have shied away from any meaningful consideration of self-organisation.

The Anarchist Workers Association played no part in the writing of this pamphlet but has found it highly applicable to the ineffectuality of anarchism in Britain in recent decades.

Send 5p + 7p p&p to AWA, 13 Colman Street, Hull, Humberside for a copy. 10 or more 3½p each. Please make cheques/POs payable to: 'AWA General Fund'.