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VIRUS

THE ENEMY WITHIN

ISSUE NO.4
IS ON THE STATE



Summer 1985

MILITANT ANARCHISM.

VIRUS NO.4

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COMMENT

Anarchism seems to be undergoing some sort of revival, judging from the the numbers of people who are turning up to Anarchist bookfairs, CLASS WAR demonstrations, STOP THE CITY type events etc. The press is even starting to take an interest, though predictably it has concentrated on the more violent aspects. Even VIRUS got a mention in one issue of the NEW STATESMAN.

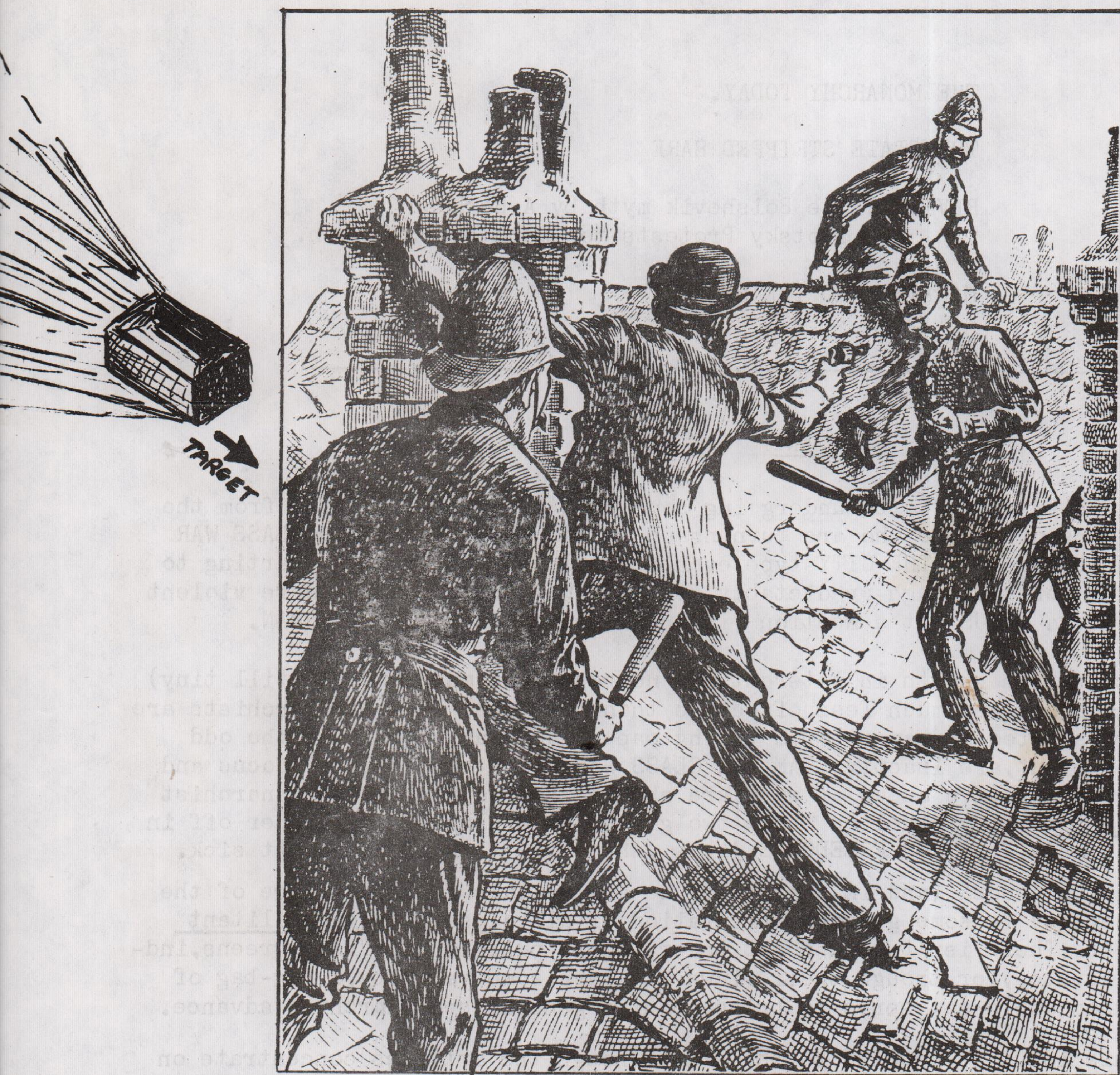
Despite the growth in interest and numbers (the movement is still tiny) the anarchists are much less effective than they need be. Most anarchists are totally isolated and apart from buying papers and taking part in the odd isolated event, are inactive. DAM and CLASS WAR offer some sort of focus and in their respective areas of work are showing the advantages of anarchist organisation. Nevertheless these two groups have slagged each other off in the past, and if we add FREEDOM'S jibes, the whole thing looks a bit sick.

What is needed (and in a hurry, if we are to take full advantage of the new interest) is some general orientation of all class struggle, militant anarchists. There isn't much point in trying to pull in pacifists, greens, individualist etc., for though their views may have some validity, a rag-bag of approaches would not serve to bring about a generalised anarchist advance.

This issue is devoted to the state. Though the articles concentrate on the state as oppression, it should not be construed that the state cannot be destroyed. States are constructed out of human material and ultimately are just as capable of being subverted as any other organisation.

Propaganda of the deed, strikes, sit ins , confrontations on demonstrations, as well as a constant ideological struggle all have a part to play in weakening the state's grip on our lives. The fight against statism of both left and right is an enormous one but if we can get our act together, some sort of start can be made .The time has come to get out of the margins of revolutionary politics and into the mainstream. Do it now! EDUCATE, AGITATE, ORGANISE.

THATS THE WAY TO DO IT !!



A MEMBER OF THE  NARCHIST MILITIA EVENS UP THE ODDS WHEN
ATTACKED BY A MOB OF STATIST THUGS.

ABOVE CRITICISM : THE MONARCHY TODAY

The British Royal family intrudes into our lives constantly. The television and press interminably churn out stories of their lives and doings....the birth of yet another Royal brat, Princess Diana's new hat, the removal of a blackhead from Princess Margaret's bum... Overwhelmingly, what is reported is flattering trivia (less picturesque coverage, such as the Queen Mother's alcoholism, Diana's imbecility, Margaret's nymphomania go unreported). The concept of a divine right to rule may have been constitutionally abandoned years ago but reading the British press, you wouldn't have guessed it.

Why this constant adulation? Why this steady stream of drivel? The existence of the monarchy is not, as some would suppose of slight political consequence. It is a central feature of our governmental system and the maintenance of conservative politics. So much so, the Labour Party dare not criticise the monarchy - to do so would mark a break with Labour's long history of class collaboration. (Note the queues of ex Labour MPs awaiting their turn to be asked to join the House of Lords).

The monarchy is virtually deified by the whole of the British establishment. Even lesser royal figures such as Princess Michael of Kent cannot be tainted. The fact that her father was a member of the counterrevolutionary Freikorps, an early Nazi and an S.S officer had to be white-washed. Prince Charles' wife had to be a virgin which gives her a certain purity (a la Virgin Mary). Also, of course, her virginity would remove any possible "I fucked the future Queen" talk among the idle rich. The purpose of this deification is to put the monarchy above the problems of day to day reality. The House of Commons may be a bear garden in reality but given the dignity it receives through its' association with the monarchy, it is still acceptable. Thatcher's reactionary laws are given added legitimacy through the addition of the Queen's signature and the whole authoritarian structure is strengthened.

The monarchy upholds the system in another way. It symbolises an unchangingness, constancy and stability. The Royal family can trace its' ancestry back over the centuries. Just as the monarchy has remained intact, so must the establishment with which it is the head. The monarchy is



Monday, April 22, 1985

FORWARD WITH BRITAIN

Italian designers say **FRUMPY**



SUNDAY BEST: The Royal couple yesterday.

Our advice to them

SHUTTA



NIGHT OUT: Charles and Diane at the opera.

PRINCESS Diana was accused by the Italians yesterday of dressing like a shopgirl. They thought she should have worn a more daring gown to a night at the opera in Milan. But British designers said it was sour grapes - because she was not wearing anything Italian.

SEE PAGE 3

YA FACE

● DAILY 9 ● NORTH WATERHOUSE 10 ● JOHN BLAKE 15 ● TV 18, 19

ideologically linked to political Conservatism. They share many of the same ideals - 'one nation' (we are all one big happy family, especially at Xmas when the great matriarch talks to us on television), patriotism, private property, inequality of rank and wealth. The monarchy, Conservatism and capitalism reinforce one another, for they each benefit from the continuance of the present social order. The Queen's head is even portrayed on our currency—you cannot get a better indication of the economic function of the monarchy than that!

Now back to the mass media. The Royal Family is often slagged off in the foreign press but there is rarely a hint of criticism over here. The media are all part of the machinery of domination. Just like the Royal Family, they are in the business of social control to maintain inequality - it is natural for the press to glorify the system's most precious asset. Given the constant stream of propaganda, it is not surprising that the monarchy is so popular. We have a long, long way to go.

Hello dear subjects.

My family and I would like to thank you for our 1984-85 salaries which we worked so hard for. I'm just about making ends meet with the £3.9 million you gave me (tax free of course) and Phil appreciates his £186,000 pocket money. Andy's £20,000 certainly helps him to pull the tarts. Expenses are up again - £9m. for the Royal Yacht and £4.7 for the Queen's Flight. And booze costs so much, £36,000 last year. But you all give so generously, which is why we spent £150,000 of your money on garden parties. Ever been invited? We love you, carry on SUCKERS!!



REVIEW OF PUBLIC ORDER LAW

THE WHITE PAPER on public order proposes:

A new power for the police to control the size, location, and duration of static demonstrations and meetings, including pickets and football crowds.

An extension of police powers to impose restrictions on marches if they fear disruption to traffic and shops, or the intimidation of individuals.

A penalty of three months in prison and a £1,000 fine for people organising or inciting the breaking of police conditions for marches or meetings.

Police power to ban specific marches, as well as the present powers for blanket bans and bans on certain types of march.

A new requirement of seven days' notice to police of marches and processions.

A codification of ancient common law offences, with a new offence of riot carrying a maximum 10-year sentence. Lesser offences would be violent disorder (five years); affray (three years); and threatening behaviour.

A new power of arrest and increased penalties for the 1875 law on "watching and

besetting," and a new power of arrest for taking part in a prohibited march.

A tightening of the law on incitement to racial hatred and the possession and distribution of racist literature.

Provision to challenge police conditions on marches or meetings in the courts, and exemption of religious ceremonial and educational marches from the requirement to give advance notice.

Discussion on the possibility of police authorities seeking costs from organisers of events which break police conditions.



BACK TO VICTORIAN VALUES.'

THE STATE STRIPPED BARE

The post war period of British politics has, until recently been dominated by the social-democratic view of the state. The Anarchist and Marxist conceptions of the coercive state were deemed to be at best irrelevant in the era of social welfarism. After all did not the state concentrate most of its' energies and financial resources on non coercive areas? The state 'educated' through a school system, it healed through the National Health Service and it provided jobs and services through the nationalised sector of industry.

There were to be sure, still important areas of state activity which could be subsumed under the umbrella of the military-bureaucratic machine but in post war Britain a plurality of state functions and political processes was the academic order of the day. Both Tory and Labour governments denied vehemently that the state was any longer preoccupied with coercion via the armed forces, police prisons, the judiciary, civil service etc. The radical approach was too limited, far better accept a liberal-democratic consensual approach.

Like a whirlwind, Thatcherism has cast off many of the welfarist trappings of the state and reduced it much more starkly to a weapon of domination. The coercive state gains in strength through every demonstration, riot or strike, whilst health and education budgets are both reduced and privatised.

1.6 In addition to taking into account the riots of 1981 the Government has been concerned to learn the lessons from other recent instances of major public disorder. These include not only the events of Southall, but earlier disturbances such as those at Grunwick's in 1976-77. During the review the most serious disorders have been associated with the 1981 riots and the 1984-85 miners' dispute; but many other public order problems have arisen, as a result of demonstrations by animal rights protesters, the Stop the City campaign, the anti-nuclear movement, the National Front, and the continuing disorder associated with football hooliganism.

From the
white-paper
on Public
Order.

1.10 It must be recognised that once disorder has broken out the problem confronting the police is not a shortage of legal powers but is essentially one of enforcement. The police themselves have made this quite clear, and recognise that their operational tactics need to be reviewed from time to time just as the law has been scrutinised in this review. The 1981 riots led to major changes in the way the police are equipped and trained to deal with public disorder, following the recommendations of Lord Scarman. Similarly in the aftermath of the miners' dispute the police have been keen to ensure that the right lessons are learnt about how to cope with widespread public disorder in the future. Reviews are in hand to see what improvements can be made to police tactics, deployment, equipment and training; and the police service will ensure that the conclusions of those reviews are properly communicated and implemented by all forces.

white-paper
continued.

The Tory government has reinforced the coercive nature of the state on two main fronts, by extending the scope of law, and through a strengthening of police powers and efficiency.

As regards the law, the 1984 Police Act and the proposed legislation as outlined in the 1985 white paper on Public Order, represent the main elements. Though the Police Act was not as tough as the government might have liked having been badly mauled in Parliament, it has shifted the balance of power more firmly into police hands. The police have increased powers of arrest, search, detention fingerprinting etc. The white paper extends the grounds by which the police will be able to control assembly and demonstration. Under the proposed legislation 'public order' grounds for the police being able to ban a march will include fear of a serious public disorder and the serious disruption of traffic and shoppers!! Police officers would be able to issue instructions on the spot - non compliance of which would risk 3 months imprisonment and a £1000 fine for the organisers. Rank and file marchers could be fined up to £400. Riot would be re-defined - where 12 or more people were violent, or threatened violence to people or property, they would risk a ten year prison sentence plus a fine.

The police have not been slow to meet the public order challenges that have been presented to them. To a large extent, especially regarding demonstrations, pickets, etc., policing by consent has been replaced by policing by coercion. The police are far more willing to initiate violence, use snatch squads, resort to the cavalry and use temporary imprisonment to clear the streets. A nationwide training scheme is in operation to give training in riot control techniques and the forces are tooling up for future conflicts. C.S gas is held by 32 police forces and plastic bullets by 12.

Public surveillance has been greatly extended through the use of helicopters, television monitors, bugs, phonetapping etc. In London the police have created yet another intelligence arm to watch over the public. Known as the Central Intelligence Unit, it is run by Scotland Yard's new public order branch, A8, and works closely with the Special Branch. The C.I.U. picks up low level intelligence on the street to observe the degree of community tension, local political activity and the threat of disturbance.

The Special Branch, having overreached itself in the surveillance of non law breaking anti-nuclear activists, has been subject to an inquiry. Whilst the report is a whitewash, no serious investigation of its work was carried out, the aims of the Branch have been made public. The aim of the Branch is to combat subversion which is defined in amazingly broad terms. Subversive activities include those acts "which threaten the safety or wellbeing of the state, and which are intended to undermine or overthrow parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means". By this definition, virtually anyone who is active in radical politics must expect to be the subject of Special Branch attention. Indeed, according to the TIMES (30.5.85) there were in 1974, one million, one hundred thousand names on the index, of which a third were accompanied by files. Now computerised, the list has passed the one and a half million mark.



Thanks to Cathy Massiter, we now know for certain that MI5 routinely infiltrates and observes the activities of the trade unions and organisations like C.N.D. All in all then, we now have a comprehensive system of secret policing at all levels of society. These developments are bad enough but given the concurrent tightening of trade union law, we are now witnessing the birth of a truly authoritarian society.

MICKY
BAKUNIN

SAYS....."

"THE STATE HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE PATRIMONY* (EH?) OF SOME PRIVILEGED CLASS; THE PRIESTLY CLASS, THE NOBILITY, THE BOURGEOISIE — AND FINALLY, WHEN ALL OTHER CLASSES HAVE EXHAUSTED THEMSELVES, THE CLASS OF BUREAUCRACY ENTERS UPON THE STAGE AND THEN THE STATE FALLS, OR RISES, IF YOU PLEASE, TO THE POSITION OF A MACHINE. BUT FOR THE SALVATION OF THE STATE IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT THERE BE SOME PRIVILEGED CLASS INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING ITS EXISTENCE."

* PATRIMONY = "SUGAR DADDY"

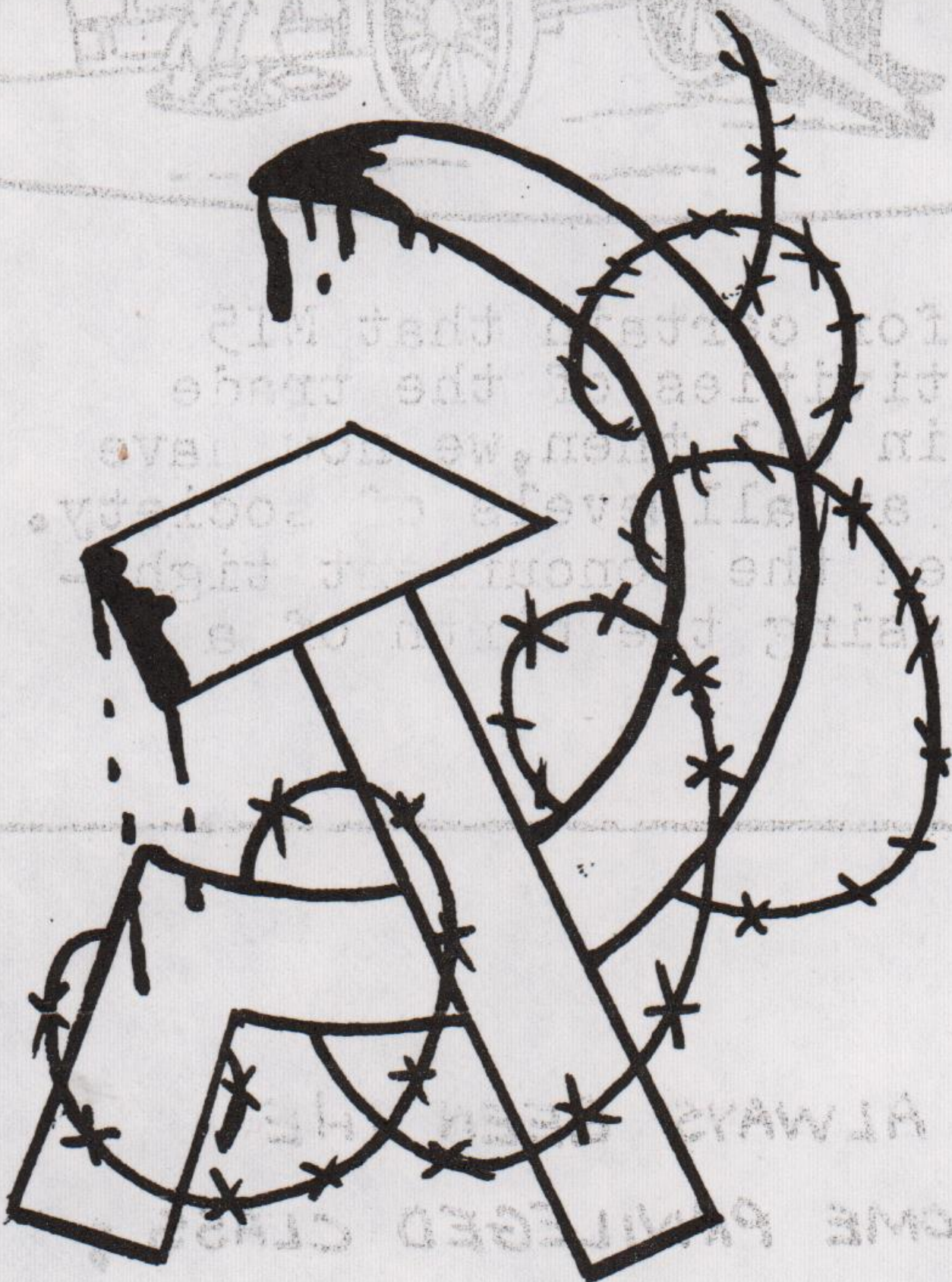
TWO NEW PAMPHLETS

PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE.

«TROTSKY PROTESTS TOO

»
MUCH. by Emma Goldman

40 PENCE



THE BOLSHEVIK MYTH

DIARY 1920 - 22 •extracts•

ALEXANDER BERKMAN

60 pence.

The revolution of 1917 was declared to be a socialist one in which the exploitation of mankind would for evermore be abolished. The left throughout the world was exultant that 'socialism' had finally been achieved.

The revolution was greeted with enthusiasm by all sections of the revolutionary left. Lenin it seemed, had changed into a libertarian and many anarchists were intoxicated with the belief that the new social order had now arrived. So blinded at first were they by the revolution's apparent success, that they could not see or chose to ignore the defects. Both Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman, after their deportation from the U.S.A to Russia in 1919

sided with the revolution. It soon became increasingly apparent that the revolution, rather than extending popular control, was in fact leading to one party dictatorship. All independent initiative and non communist political expression was gradually being eliminated and the secret police operated a policy of repression to enforce centrally directed dictat. Berkman in THE BOLSHEVIK MYTH catalogues the various aspects of the communist tyranny and the anarchist response to it, culminating in the suppression of

the Kronstadt Commune.

The Goldman pamphlet was written in response to Trotsky's pronouncements on the subject of Kronstadt in 1938. Trotsky, who had been one of the most authoritarian of the Bolshevik leaders, was by then reduced to a pathetic impotence. During the Kronstadt events he had personally used his extensive powers over life and death in a quite arbitrary manner, convinced as he was, of his own greatness and superior understanding. Now, in 1938, he was without position and power. He had given his reasons for the degeneration of the Russian revolution, for which he absolved himself of all responsibility. That he had argued for the militarisation of labour, the subordination of the trade unions to the state and the banning of parties and factions was not important, he suggested. Whenever a crisis arose, Trotsky always chose the authoritarian option. The revolution which he did so much to bend to his will finally devoured him in 1940.

Trotskyism has developed a mythology around its founder which elevates him to the level of sainthood. Goldman's pamphlet goes some way to explaining the truth.

**THE TWO PAMPHLETS ARE AVAILABLE FROM
'VIRUS', c/o 84B, WHITECHAPEL HIGH ST. (ANGEL ALLEY)
LONDON E.1.**

MARXISM AND THE STATE

Marxists and Anarchists seem to share rather similar approaches to the question of the state. In reality, however, serious differences exist which allow us to clearly differentiate between the two approaches - the Anarchists will have no truck whatsoever with the state, whilst the Marxists believe, that in specific circumstances, the state can be utilised.

ORIGINS

For the Marxists, the state is primarily an instrument for the maintenance of class rule. The first states, from the Marxist standpoint, were created as social classes appeared, to maintain and ensure the power of the exploiting class. In other words, states as 'legitimately' organised violence, government, bureaucracy, etc., were in their original forms created by the ruling classes as they emerged from a condition of 'primitive communism'. There is some evidence that, on occasion, this may have been the case. The problem is that the earliest states, in a given region often developed in the distant past and there is no way of knowing if states were actually created to preserve the domination of a new class.



It is just as likely that states actually preceded the development of classes. Classless societies may still be 'ranked' in the sense that individuals, families etc. may be awarded leadership roles through their superior abilities or knowledge (e.g. magic). The authority of the highest ranked group could have been reinforced allowing it to effectively form a state. As the Marxist anthropologist, Maurice Bloch has admitted, there are examples of centralised systems with a single head controlling defined territory called states where no obvious dominant classes exist. The African Bemba people, in the nineteenth century, is an example of such a 'classless' state! There is also evidence from central America that in the sixteenth century, states were in the process of being created before the emergence of class divisions. These proto states were, in fact destroyed by the Spanish conquistadors who imposed their own class based system of state control.

This brings us to the second objection to the Marxist theory of the origins of states. Most states in historical times were created as the result of conquest. Countless examples of this type of state creation exist, for example, both the Western allies and the communists created their own preferred form of state as a corollary to the conquest of the Nazi empire. In England, the feudal state was also created by the Norman conquerors, with its own French speaking ruling class. For 200 years or so that language was the preferred tongue in state institutions, including the court, church and the legal system.



Despite Trotsky's tantrums through not being allowed to play, they're all the same really.

AN INSTRUMENT OF CLASS RULE ?

The state is seen from a Marxist perspective as an instrument of class rule. The problem with this formulation is that there are plenty of occasions where the state acts in ways which hinder capitalism and the pursuit of profits. Taxation, laws restricting the length of the working day, trade boycotts of the U.S.S.R etc. are examples of how governments may act in ways which reduce profitability. Sometimes, as in the case of Peru from 1968 to 1975 when the army seized power, a nominally capitalist state can actually expropriate capital, collectivise agriculture and generally upset the capitalist oligarchy. States are essentially national entities whilst a lot of present day monopoly capitalism operates across national boundaries. Thus U.K. based petroleum companies go to great lengths to avoid paying tax in this country which has marginally high tax thresholds. Multinational firms may then, have quite distinct strategies from from states with which they may conflict.

Whereas, between capital and labour the prime relationship is one of economic exploitation, between the state and its citizens, it is one of political domination. Relations based upon hierarchy - domination/submission are just as important as exploitation in British society and the two are not always directly linked. Domination can exist within all forms of social relationship which are unconnected to economic exploitation e.g. families, sexes, friendships. Whereas the capitalist dominates through his relationship to the means of production, the state bureaucrat minister etc. exercises control via a 'mechanism' of domination which is the state.

They do share a common belief in the validity of capitalism but where they may differ, is in how capitalism should be run. The statist tends to take an overview the capitalist a more narrow, profit motivated approach. Thus there may arise from time to time a conflict between the general and the particular.

In Britain there is no clearly demonstrable subservience of the state to capitalism. There is in reality a sort of partnership between the state and capitalism which is to be expected, since generally speaking, the top echelons of both are recruited from the same public school and Oxbridge elite. The community of background, wealth and outlook which is shared by the two sectors of domination helps to cement them in generally agreed partnership but there is no clearly discernable dominator.

WORKERS STATE

Politically speaking the above outlined objections to the Marxist theory of the state are not crucial insofar as both Marxists and Anarchists are opposed to the capitalist state (at least this is so if we ignore the Eurocommunists). The major and most important difference, however, lies in regard to the role of the state after the revolution. The Marxists advocate smashing the capitalist state and replacing it with a workers' state - the dictatorship of the proletariat. From the Marxist standpoint, since the state simply acts as an agent of the ruling class it can be utilised to good effect by the victorious proletariat, so long as the capitalist threat persists. As the last remnants of capitalism disappear, so the argument goes, the state will 'wither away'.

As Bakunin pointed out decades before the Russian Revolution of 1917, this functionalist approach to the state is deeply flawed and ignores the corrupting effects of power. Since the whole of the proletariat cannot feasibly, directly exercise power, some sort of intermediary is necessary. The Bolsheviks disposed of this by identifying the 'correct' wishes of the proletariat with that of the party. Proletarian dictatorship thus becomes party dictatorship. The state in the U.S.S.R., and indeed everywhere else where communist parties have seized power have not withered away. Far from it, the powers of the state have been extended to all areas of life and a state bureaucratic elite/class has entrenched itself in precisely the way that Bakunin predicted it would. Since the state has granted itself so many privileges, why should it diminish its powers?

The state which concentrates enormous powers in its hands must be destroyed and those powers should be dispersed throughout society. It is only with the disintegration of power that genuine emancipation can be achieved.

* M. BLOCH - 'MARXISM AND ANTHROPOLOGY' 1983

** IN EGYPT, JAPAN AND TURKEY, MILITARY GOVERNMENTS 'MODERNISED' THEIR RESPECTIVE ECONOMIES IN THE FACE OF "RULING CLASS" INDIFFERENCE/OPPOSITION.

COMMUNIST LOGIC

As an after-word to the Marxism and the State article, we bring you this marvellous bit of Marxist dialectics. According to Alexander Berkman in his book 'Now and After', 1929, Bukharin had this to say on the question of the 'proletarian dictatorship'.

"Proletarian compulsion in all its forms, beginning with summary execution and ending with compulsory labour is, however paradoxical it may sound, a method of reworking the human material of the capitalistic epoch into communist humanity".

So that's what they mean by a workers' state!!

PLATFORM

1. Capitalism as a deeply exploitative system cannot be reformed. In alliance with the state it creates a social order in which, relatively speaking, the great mass of the population live in poverty.
2. A popular revolution, in which the self consciously libertarian working class destroys the bureaucratic state/capitalist system and creates its own forms of self government, is the only genuine means of achieving emancipation.
3. Consequently, all parties and organisations which appoint themselves as revolutionary vanguards are to be viewed as counterrevolutionary. History is full of examples where such elites have climbed to power on the backs of the working class.
4. The task of revolutionaries is to agitate among the working population to indicate the possibilities and forms of libertarian revolution to aid them in their self emancipation.
5. It is a first principle of anarchism that the future society will be constructed on non authoritarian lines, in which decisions flow from the bottom upwards. Any society not constructed according to the principles of social solidarity, equality, mutual aid and freedom, will give rise to new forms of exploitation.
6. All forms of prejudice based upon national, racial and sexual differences must be rejected.