

PERSONS UNKNOWN



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This pamphlet was written by a small number of people from PERSONS UNKNOWN, the support group for the five anarchists arrested in May/July last year, originally on charges of conspiracy to cause explosions. It traces the development of the case from the sensational reporting of the initial arrests through the police/media build-up of an international "terrorist" conspiracy to their subsequent dropping of the major charges while at the same time attempting to criminalize the political aspects of the case.

We have tried to communicate the effects that the case has had, not only on the defendants - their experiences of arrest, interrogation, imprisonment and endless court hearings - but also on their friends and supporters, many of whom have been the objects of severe police harassment. It is for this reason that we have chosen to write the pamphlet in the form of personal narratives - with events described as far as possible in the words of those who experienced them - supporters and defendants.

We have also attempted to interpret these events in a wider political context. We know that what has happened to us is not unique. Much of what we have experienced over the past year are everyday occurrences for blacks, Irish people and many others. But there is a reluctance amongst the British left to acknowledge many of the features of the State under which we live - or at least to confront and resist its growing repressive machinery. We hope that the descriptions of events contained in the pamphlet, and the conclusions we have drawn, will contribute to a greater awareness of what the State is up to and a greater willingness to fight back.

The trial will begin at the Old Bailey on September 17th. We hope that what we have written will also go some way towards building further support and solidarity for our comrades at that time.

16th. August 1979

THE QUEEN

against

TREVOR DAWTON

solicitor: Brian Raymond
barrister: Helena Kennedy

IRIS MILLS

solicitor: Gareth Pearce
barrister: Jeff Robertson

VINCE STEVENSON

solicitor: James Saunders
barrister: Mike Mansfield

DAFYDD LADD

solicitor: John Dundon
barrister: Stephen Sully

RONAN BENNETT

Defending self (legal advice
from Gareth Pearce)

STEWART CARR

Has dissociated himself from
the other defendants

THE CHARGES

CONSPIRACY TO ROB

Stewart Carr, Trevor Dawton, Iris Mills, Vince Stevenson, Dafydd Ladd and Ronan Bennett on the days between 1st. January 1978 and 24th. May 1978 conspired together with Graham Rua, Michelle Poree and with other persons unknown to rob people in London and elsewhere of cash and firearms.

POSSESSING EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCE

Iris Mills and Ronan Bennett on 24th. May knowingly had in their possession and explosive substance, namely sodium chlorate of the non-fire depressed type, under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that it was not in their possession for a lawful object.

POSSESSING FIREARMS WITHOUT FIREARMS CERTIFICATE, HANDLING STOLEN GOODS

Trevor Dawton and Vince Stevenson possessed and dishonestly received: Supermatic .22 tournament pistol, a Webley .22 pistol, a Browning 7.65.mm. pistol, 2 Arminius .22 pistols and a Smith and Wesson .44 magnum pistol (also possessed a Meyer revolver without the authority of the Defence council)

Iris Mills, Ronan Bennett, Dafydd Ladd possessed and dishonestly received: .22 S.A. target rifle

HANDLING STOLEN GOODS

Iris Mills and Ronan Bennett dishonestly received: a .22 Webley air pistol; a black attaché case.

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"THE LAW SHOULD BE USED AS JUST ANOTHER WEAPON IN THE GOVERNMENT'S ARSENAL, AND IN THIS CASE IT BECOMES LITTLE MORE THAN A PROPAGANDA COVER FOR THE DISPOSAL OF UNWANTED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC"

* BRIGADIER KITSON
(MILITARY ADVISOR TO THE GOVT.) *

INTRODUCTION

The following pages are an attempt to show how the State is using the Persons Unknown case as an exemplar to define its security tactics. We believe that the State's tactics are indicative of what will be its response in future trials of the left and the organised working class. As in the trials of Irish men and women, the State is legitimising the use of criminal procedure to attack political activists.

Despite the fact that the case against the anarchists is ostensibly a criminal prosecution, the conduct of the police, from a judicial and political point of view has revealed the case as an attempt by the State to conduct a major political offensive on the most insubstantial grounds. The difference between a criminal trial and a political one is important, though it might often have less to do with the defendants than with the dictates of the prosecuting authorities. Liberal bourgeois democracy prides itself on the fact that it does not have either 'political' laws or 'political' trials and it therefore cannot have 'political' prisoners. Yet the way the case has been handled, from arrest and court appearances to treatment in prison, it is obvious that these people have been charged not because they may have necessarily broken the law but because they are anarchists and are opposed to the ruling ideology.

In political trials, the real spade work of 'justice' is done outside the courtroom and therefore never answers to the test of law. The State is unable to admit that contradictions exist in society that are antagonistic to the established order - if it did so, it would be admitting the resolution by revolutionary means. Instead, it extends and draws out the whole procedure of criminal law, its prosecution and investigation and brings into play new agencies and forces. Throughout the development of the Persons Unknown case, the prosecuting authorities, the Home Office and other state agencies have acted in such a way that point to the fact that there is a qualitative difference in the administration of the law when politically active defendants are involved. The vetting of the jury is a perfect example of this. The state moves against any serious opposition in such a way as to encircle, isolate it and finally destroy it; two major aspects of this process are propaganda and fear.

By constructing an international terrorist conspiracy from this small and insubstantial case the State creates a false sense of danger. The press helps to focus latent feelings of frustration amongst the population not on the continuing economic crisis but on small groups of armed conspirators or recalcitrant groups of rank and file workers. The description of these left conspiracies is opposed to reality - the reality is the political, military and financial unification of Western Europe since the Second World War - it is here one finds a conspiracy of armed gangs who represent the capitalist nation states of Europe.

These gangs, in order to consolidate their capital and unify themselves, are attempting to perfect an 'anti-terrorist' ideology in order to liquidate any opposition and justify their increasingly repressive measures. New laws are created, new agencies established - Britain signed the European Convention of Terrorism and passed the Suppression of Terrorism Act. Unable to concede that the deepening recession is inherent in the capitalist system, the State chooses to direct its attacks on those whose ideas threaten its very nature. The case of Persons Unknown is a clear illustration of this.

Yard squad hunt for

FOUR terrorists thought to be planning attacks on establishment targets are being hunted throughout Britain.

The gang are believed to have an arsenal of weapons and explosives. It is not thought they have any connection with the IRA but a possible connection with the Bader Meinhof gang has been investigated.

The four are being sought by detectives of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch—C13—who are acting on intelligence gathered over recent months.

Although the Yard will not make any official comment, it is understood it has details of the group and information on likely targets.

Home Secretary Mr Merlyn Rees is being kept closely informed on the search which is receiving top priority.

Extremist

Establishing the facilities of the terrorists before their campaign could be launched is a major success story for the C13 unit.

The anti-terrorist branch, originally the Bomb Squad, was formed to cope with the attacks of the Angry Brigade.

After its huge successes against IRA men sent to bomb and assassinate in Britain, the department—which is under Commander James Neville and supervised by Deputy Assistant Commissioner David Potts—has been

By **RAYMOND RODGERS**

recently concentrating on preventing political terrorist outrages.

Its successes in stopping terrorists entering Britain and thwarting political killings and kidnaps have been kept secret.

During undercover surveillance and infiltration of extremist supporters, detectives picked up whispers of the plans of the wanted group.

The Yard has been in close liaison with German and other authorities in a bid to prevent the emergence of either Bader Meinhof or Red Army style operations in Britain.

terror gang



EVERY GOVERNMENT CARRIES A HEALTH WARNING

UP AGAINST THE LAW-

The legal case & the courts

As anarchists we often dismiss the law, claiming that it has nothing to do with us. But our comrades' arrests, and the subsequent use of the law to criminalize our politics soon reminded us that in our struggle with the State we cannot always choose our battle ground.

Iris and Ronan first appeared at Marylebone Magistrates Court on 27th May 1978. It was a low key occasion compared to the press publicity of the previous couple of days. They were charged that "they conspired with persons unknown to cause by explosive substance, explosions within the United Kingdom of a nature likely to endanger life or cause serious injury to property." Bail was opposed and they were remanded to Brixton. DET. SUPT. PETER BRADBURY of the Anti Terrorist Squad told the court that the case would have to be referred to the Attorney General and (for the first of many times over the next six months) that it would be at least two months until Committal proceedings. The pair were handcuffed - Ronan protested about it to no avail. But security arrangements were light compared with what was to follow.

At Marylebone on June 5th. Iris, Ronan and Taff appeared in the dock, handcuffed to and surrounded by plainclothes men. ATS officers and Special Branch mixed with the public and press. For the first time Bradbury outlined the substance of the police allegations - the three belonged to a London based group of "idealistic persons who believe that they should take positive steps to overthrow society" Their arrests had "nipped in the bud" plans to do this by causing explosions. Iris and Ronan had "chemicals and wiring" in their flat. Opposing bail for Taff Bradbury claimed that "all these defendants would commit other offences" if bailed, "only three members of their group are in court and there are others at large with whom they would associate". It would be alleged that Taff had "associated with others". His finger prints had been found in Iris' and Ronan's flat. He also claimed that Taff would abscond, indeed had already made an "attempt to escape from custody".

"Evidence will be of conspiracy with others to cause dangerous explosions. There is evidence of association. There is some documentary evidence. I would prefer not to disclose it at this stage." He claimed that a statement Taff had made had established "a prima facie" case against him.

Taff's solicitor offered two sureties of £1,000 and said Taff was prepared to live with relatives in Bristol, surrender his passport and report daily to the police. The application was turned down on the basis of Bradbury's claims. Ronan again protested at being handcuffed. Iris said, "I want to protest about being held in solitary confinement in Brixton". They were both ignored. Bradbury asked for them to be remanded to LAMBETH Magistrates Court for security reasons - the

journey between prison and court was shorter. As they were taken from the court amid scuffles Taff protested about the security and the remand to Lambeth:

"This is to create a state of paranoia and give the impression we are dangerous".

Outside he was pushed down a flight of stairs - the officers forgetting that he was hand-cuffed to one of them!

A pattern had been set which was to persist at remand hearings for the first three or four months. Everything was overshadowed and justified by the police claims to have found a "bomb factory", broken up an Angry Brigade/Red Brigades style "terror gang"/"anarchist cell", which planned to overthrow "society"/"authority". The reticence about actual evidence as opposed to wide claims, and the lies about matters of fact, (the "chemicals" which turned out to be flour, sugar and weedkiller, the "prima facie" statement which did not exist) - all were to become familiar both to us and - eventually - even the judiciary, though not before the defendants had spent months in prison because of them.

What was not so apparent under the spectacular theatrics of the ATS was the mechanism of bail applications, which was exploited to keep them in prison, even once the insubstantial basis of the case had become apparent.

Under the 1976 Bail Act there are only four valid reasons for refusing bail: - that the defendant will abscond, interfere with witnesses, commit further offences or that its "necessary for their own protection". But in accepting these reasons the court may "consider" a whole range of other factors including "general background", "associations" and "community ties". As we were to see, this allows full weight to the prejudice, class bias and deference to police claims that the bail act is supposed to remove as "reasons" for pre-trial remand - provided they are merely "considered" in relation to the four acceptable reasons.



Had the evidence behind the two reasons invoked on this occasion been tested it would have been obvious what the "reason" for refusing bail really was. The first three of the "valid reasons" were to be consistently manipulated at remand hearings. Ronan Bennett is still in Brixton because of the real reasons.

The other noticeable element in the basic pattern was the heavy security (and brutality) employed. But none of us was anticipating what the move to Lambeth meant in these terms.

Lambeth Court has been used as a special high security court in the past - during the Angry Brigade trials and in important criminal cases. It's the nearest court to Brixton prison; a small detached building in a quiet side street across the road from a large police section house - accommodation for police trainees. On 8th. June large numbers of police were in evidence. The three arrived at high speed in a bullet-proof prison carrier with an armed escort. Once locked in their cells they were not allowed access to their solicitors except for a conversation through a small hole in the door in the presence of police. Everyone entering court was searched, the press were locked in the press box and no-one was allowed to leave the court until the end of the hearing.

The three were handcuffed to police throughout the hearing. Applications to remove the handcuffs, to allow private consultation with solicitors and for bail for Iris were made. Magistrate David Pryce-Jones could see no reason why they shouldn't be handcuffed, given the serious nature of the charge and the background to it. He claimed the interference with consultation was none of his business.

"It's difficult for me to deal with this, it goes on outside the court". Being told by a barrister, "I have experienced great difficulty in getting into this court" he replied, "that confirms the arrangements which have been made for the security of the court are being carried out".

Opposing bail for Iris Bradbury said that in addition to the conspiracy charge Ronan and Iris would be charged in connection with the theft of arms. Two guns had been found and they were searching for another eight. Ladd was 'as yet' unconnected with these charges. Having produced this week's sensational new revelations, he agreed that in relation to previous weeks there had been no made up "explosive devices" in Iris and Ronan's flat, just weedkiller which he believed could be used for making explosives and "other items". Asked what these were he replied that he would "hesitate to expose them". This trick of producing fresh sensational revelations to overshadow the demolition of previous ones was to be worked entirely successfully in the opposition to bail for several months.

Another important factor in the prejudicing of decisions was the heavy police presence in and around the court. The magistrate was told that the three were part of a large group of idealists who would endeavor to carry out the defendants' escape. Consistently magistrates were to claim that the security arrangements, the restrictions and late on the beating were, if not necessary, at any rate not under their jurisdiction. In this way they steadily handed over control of the court process to the police, the body prosecuting. The policeman who told one of us several weeks later, "we're in charge of this court" did not exaggerate all that much.

Pryce-Jones accepted that Iris would abscond, commit other offences, interfere with witnesses and "impede enquiries in other ways". The high security convoy returned to Brixton - the defendants managing to wave to us.

Every week after that security grew tighter. On 15th June the court was kept closed until 10 minutes before the hearing and an arbitrary rule was introduced refusing the right to stand, thus restricting the number of the public to the eight or so seats. Only a written applic-

ation from the journalists present to the magistrate secured the entry of an "Irish Times" reporter once the door had been locked. Another application to remove the defendants handcuffs was made. Magistrate Maurice Guymor replied that it was "at the discretion of those responsible". Bradbury repeated his claim of associates at large and that were there to be an attack on the court, the handcuffs would impede escape. The magistrate said he didn't wish to interfere since that would render the authorities "very vulnerable". He renewed custody without hearing reasons, and when it was suggested that he should, he replied (wrongly) that the nature of the charge was sufficient. As Taff's solicitor was attempting to speak the defendants were hustled out, cutting the proceedings short. As they left one called out that Iris should be moved out of solitary at Brixton.

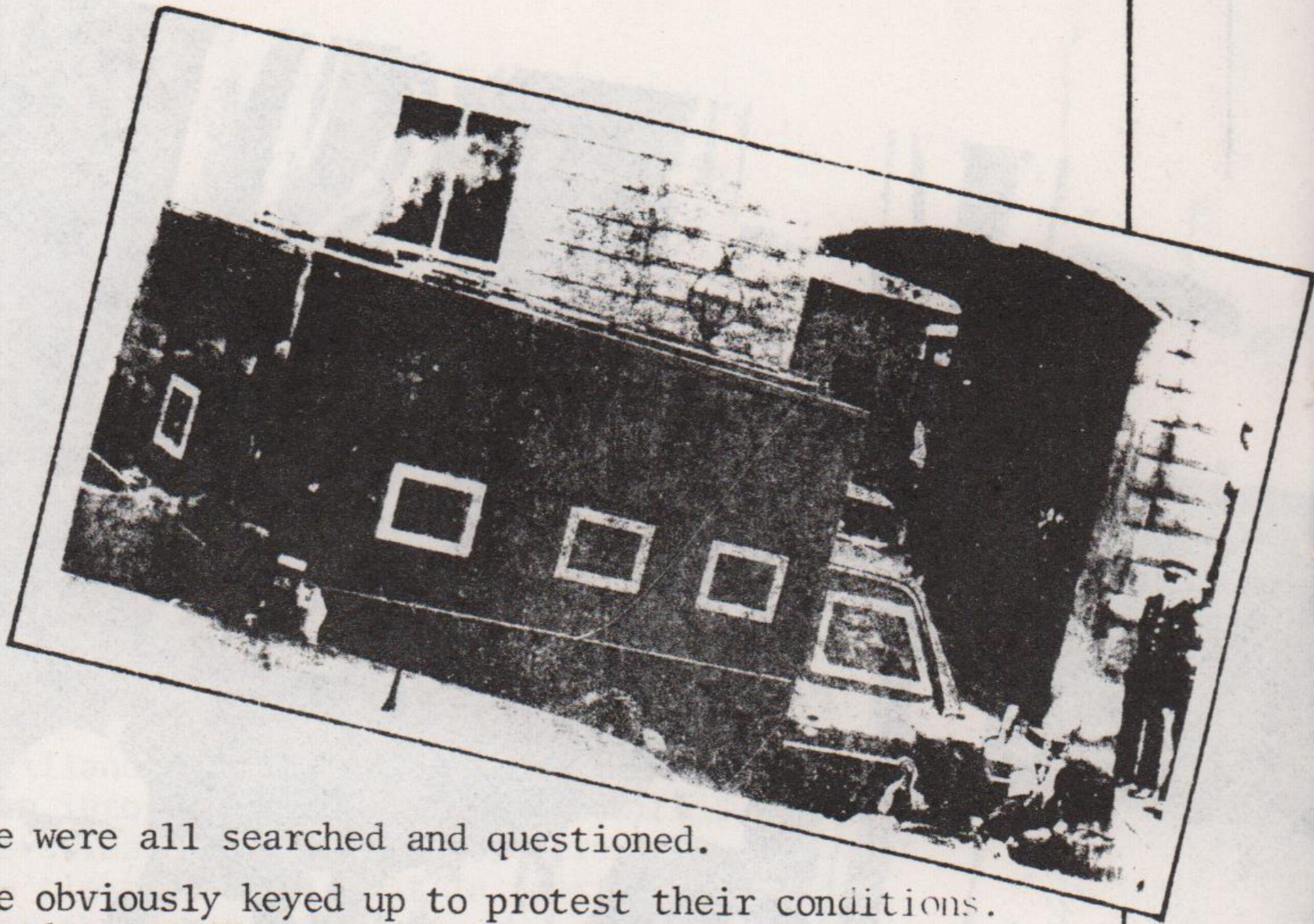
On June 21st. Stewart Carr was remanded at Marylebone, also charged with conspiring to cause explosions. At Lambeth the next day there were large numbers of ATS and Special Branch inside the court, outside in cars and in the section house across the street.

The defendants turned their backs on the court in protest at the handcuffing and Iris' prison conditions. For some of us it was the first time we had come face to face. Opposing an application to remove the handcuffs Bradbury said that inquiries might take another two months, that further offences had come to light and that it was quite possible that "further charges would be made the following week". He said: "as a human being" he agreed with the arguments for removal of handcuffs, but "as a policeman" he could not agree with anything that might lead to the death or injury of his officers. He said that enquiries had revealed an agreement by "the group" to arrange an escape if anyone was captured. This didn't seem to satisfy the magistrate who directed that the issue of the handcuffs should be referred to the Commissioner of Police.

The following week the handcuffs had been removed but instead there were seven officers in the dock with the four defendants. It now transpired that it would be three or four weeks before further charges would be added - but there would probably be I.D. parades in connection with robberies. On 6th. July the court wasn't opened until much later than usual and the key to the press box had been lost. Vince had been arrested two days earlier and Trevor was arrested the following day. They both appeared at Marylebone on July 10th., when £10,000 bail for Trevor was turned down. Security there was relatively light, as it had been previously. Some of us were followed from court, however, something which became a regular occurrence.

On this occasion the carrier taking Vince and Trevor to court had hit a mercedes with diplomatic plates. The journeys to and from court had become a matter of great concern to the defendants. The carriers and escort travelled at dangerously high speeds with orders to vary the route and stop for nothing. Clearly the Traffic Division police had been given the full "armed attack" story by the ATS. That Thursday the carrier hit the gatepost on the way into court and trashed a parked police motor cycle on the way out. When entering and leaving court officers with sub machine guns were stationed in the section house recreation room windows across the road. There were many more police in evidence, including uniformed officers with hip holsters



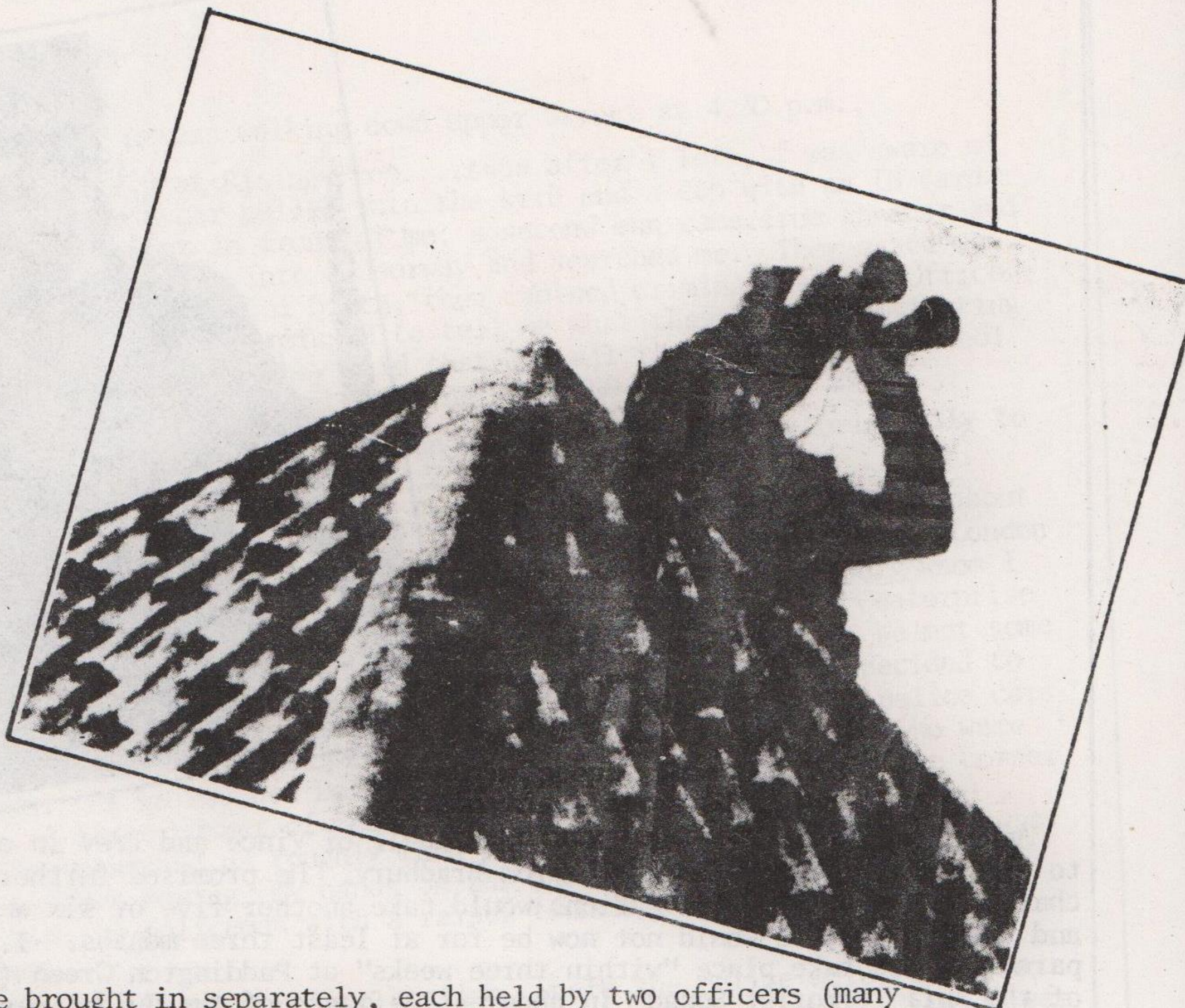


and guns. Going in we were all searched and questioned.

The defendants were obviously keyed up to protest their conditions. As their names were read out Taff corrected the mispronunciation of his name, Ronan waved at the magistrate and there were various shouts and noises. As the hearing began Ronan began stamping his feet. The police moved in to physically restrain him and provoked a violent struggle in the dock which spread in seconds as the others reacted to the efforts to subdue them. They were finally dragged struggling to the cells, Ronan shouting out, "we are your dissidents". Iris, under the greatest strain at Brixton, was seen to be in tears. After some time they were brought back one at a time....meanwhile, the men were given a beating. They turned their backs on the court - Vince, white faced and with a swollen mouth shouted that the hearing was a circus. Ronan again stamped his feet. After he'd been taken out the police positioned themselves behind the rest of the defendants. Trevor addressed the court throughout his appearance. He began, "I protest against the treatment of Iris Mills, being kept in virtual solitary confinement. It is obviously an attempt by the State to politically break her." He went on to say he was sick of the treatment he was receiving, "I want to protest about the disgusting treatment. I am fed up of being surrounded by this scum." He demanded to see a doctor. We shouted back kn solidarity. Gathering outside to see the carrier away it looked as if the defendants were waving until we realised they were shouting that they had been handcuffed behind their backs.

Security was heavier after this. In addition, two other high security cases were brought into court (one involving the attempted kidnap of the Libyan ambassador). Bradbury attempted to have the defendants' shoes removed during the hearing and was only prevented by the refusal of the Lambeth Station Inspector (in charge of court security) to have anything to do with it. Armed police were stationed on the roof of the courthouse, there were sharp shooters with binoculars on the roof of the section house and council offices in the street.

We were harrassed outside the court - searches, questioning and identity checks were carried out. One of us was arrested and charged with obstruction for protesting about this, and subsequently fined £60. Only five of us were allowed into the court. There were large numbers of police in court and one armed officer stood behind the dock. The



defendants were brought in separately, each held by two officers (many wearing leather gloves in anticipation of violence). Violent struggles ensued as they all turned their backs on the court and shouted demands for Iris to be given association in prison. Vince received particularly heavy treatment. Bail applications were made and refused for Taff and Trev on the usual grounds. Bradbury revealed that there was evidence of an explosion in the East End earlier in the year. Questioned, he said that he would produce a witness "who had heard a bang". It was said for Trevor that he would live with his parents, with whom he had close ties. Magistrate Ralph Lowrie commented that they couldn't be that close since he was on legal aid.

Iris shouted, "I want to protest about my friends being beaten up by the terrorist squad last week." She was told this wasn't the place to make a protest. She replied, "Where is?". Afterwards people were followed from court and attempts made to eavesdrop on conversations.

On 27th. July cars were prevented from parking in the street. Police in paramilitary blue jerseys with hip holsters and T.D. (traffic division) insignia were present. We were never able to establish whether this was further security for the journeys to court (in which case why were these officers stationed in the courtroom) or whether this was a disguise for a special squad like C.11. **(Criminal Intelligence)** Several Special Branch were present but there was a bit less physical restraint of the defendants. They were allowed to sit on their own with an officer behind. Further charges had finally been brought. For Iris and Ronan dishonestly handling an air pistol and a target rifle and illegal possession of the target rifle. For Taff dishonestly handling and possession of the same target rifle. For Trev and Vince dishonest handling and illegal possession of the guns and ammunition allegedly found in the raid when Trev was arrested. For Stewart four armed robberies of cash and two of guns.



Applications for bail were made on behalf of Vince and Trev in order to try and get more information from Bradbury. He promised further charges, said that investigations would take another five or six weeks and that Committals would not now be for at least three months. I.D. parades would take place "within three weeks" at Paddington Green (HQ of the Anti Terrorist Squad) in apparent defiance of the Guidelines on parades. These state that ID Parades should take place at the nearest convenient police station or at the prison if security is a consideration. The long journey to Paddington Green (according to Bradbury the most convenient station for the ATS) was presumably an "acceptable" security risk.

▲ Asked about the supposed explosions, Bradbury said that they were "the ones they would have carried out", though he didn't know exactly what they had in mind. He now described the substantive act as "to overthrow society by means of explosions and other means." He claimed that "there will be" evidence to link Vince with the scene of an explosion. Pressed for details it turned out that this was a "test explosion" and it was hoped that I.D. parades would identify a person who had apologised after to neighbours! Asked where, he was unable to say: "I have 24 officers working on this case. Its impossible to keep track of what's happening every day". He said one of his most serious objections to bail was that if Vince was freed he would attempt to secure the release of the others.

"The Group", he claimed, had been attempting to arm themselves so that they could in the future disrupt public services - that is, attack public buildings and prominent people. When asked for details he replied, "Unfortunately....well, fortunately....there have been no explosions." Again, with details of the alleged robberies, he was unable to help.

Around this time the raids up and down the country petered out. The police clearly felt that they had established their case. Bradbury told the court on 13th. July that an interim report had gone to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). On 27th a DPP counsel was present at the

request of the defence to tell the court why it was taking so long to proceed with Committals. The magistrate had mildly urged him to speed things up.

So this account of the police case given by Bradbury marked the culmination of the "conspiracy theory" that had been developed by the ATS and exposed dramatically its shallow foundations. We heard rumours that there was intense dissatisfaction on the prosecution side about how much had been revealed by Bradbury, and a few weeks later he was replaced by Det. Inspector John McClellan. Overall, however, the police had been able to use the hearings as they wanted. Though the basis of their conspiracy claims had been challenged, they were still raggedly intact, and had been sufficient to ensure the refusal of bail, so that the defendants wouldn't "impede enquiries", as Bradbury put it. The ATS had been able to successfully exploit the initial press interest in the case by feeding out sensational claims. When they had started the case they had been in a situation of little work in the face of questions about the need for their existence. With the eruption of the Middle East conflict in London they now had more work and publicity than they knew how to handle.

It became clear the following week that not only the prosecution had been annoyed by the previous week's cross-examination. No application for bail had been made and an attempt to put further questions to the police was turned down by the magistrate, Pryce-Jones: "the only issue before me is the question of bail - why should I give you the opportunity to question any officer?"

Little further information was to come out until the defence was able to present arguments that circumstances had altered sufficiently to reconsider previous refusals of bail. So it didn't become apparent to us then that behind the scenes the management of the prosecution case had been transferred to the DPP's office. Our attention was mostly fixed on the intensification of security at court.

On August 3rd. there were fewer visible police outside the court but many were wearing bullet proof vests and the road had been closed. Two Special Branch loitered at the end of the street pretending to be council workmen and we were filmed by other members of the Special Branch. Press and public were let in one at a time at intervals to be searched. Inside the six were allowed in the dock together but eleven uniformed police stood shoulder to shoulder in a semi-circle between the dock and the public gallery, making it impossible to see what was happening. In front of the gallery sat nine ATS officers. Afterwards supporters were made to stand 20 yards from where the carrier emerged.

On August 10th. the two people accused of the hand grenade attack on the Iraqi ambassador appeared for the first time (one of them, Khouloud Moghrabi was in Brixton with Iris). All cars entering the street were stopped and the drivers questioned. The Special Patrol Group were present in force and pedestrians were kept out of the street. Everyone then entering the road was questioned. One man of arab appearance was searched and questioned for a quarter of an hour and then taken away by the SPG.

The press were once again interested in Lambeth - not the people remanded there but the security arrangements. Several published

photographs as graphic illustrations of the "breakdown in 'law and order'" and the measures necessary to deal with the "international terrorist menace".

The following week a large security exercise was mounted, with the press interest in mind, in conjunction with the "gun search" at Brixton prison - a device to justify the intensification of the regime there. On the grounds that "the gun" might have been smuggled to court, gun sniffer dogs were taken all over the building-- all part of "the usual security procedure where high risk prisoners are involved" (police spokesman in the Guardian, 18.8.78). The bags of people outside the court were searched and "Traffic Division" police lined the sides of the court.

On 24th August there was another carrier accident and two supporters were arrested and threatened with the PTA over an unpaid fine. The following week, Fahad Mihi, accused of taking part in the Mayfair El Al attack appeared at Lambeth. The street was totally blocked off and people were searched by the SPG before being allowed to enter. Half of us were turned away. Once inside court, people were searched again. Several journalists were also deliberately turned away and there were empty places in the press box. The return journey to Brixton was made in two separate armed convoys.

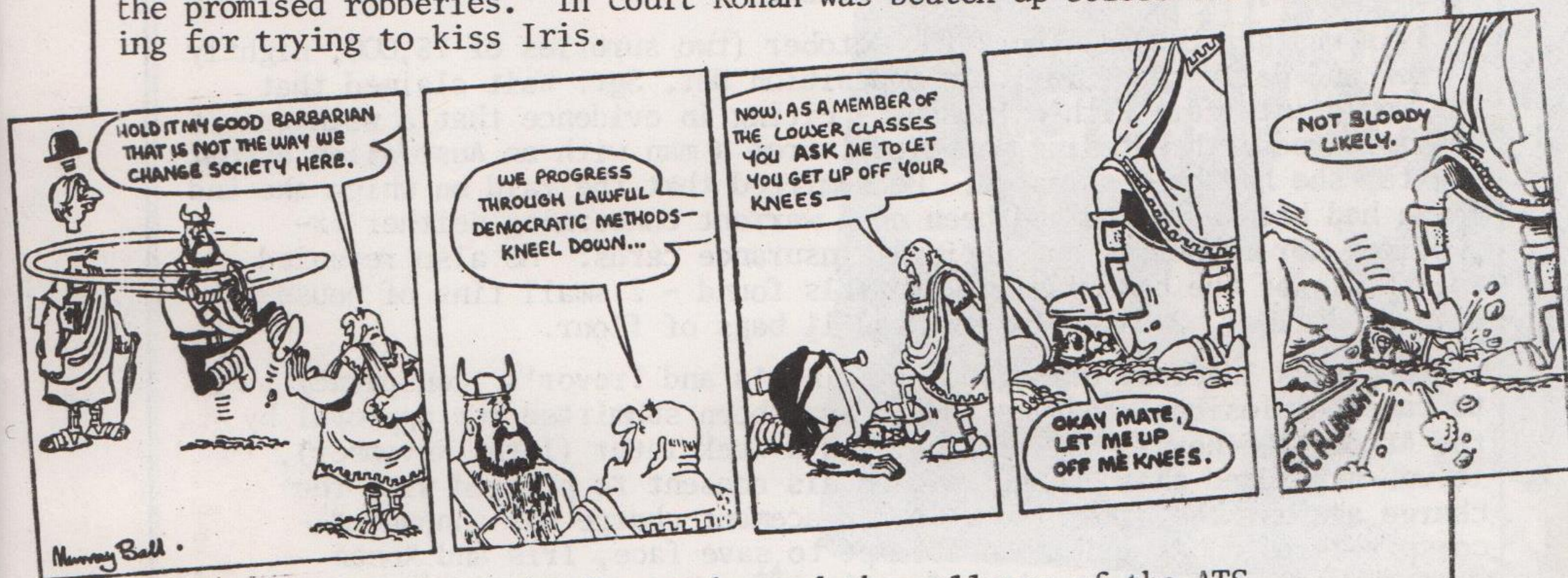


Hearings were by now totally under siege conditions - each weekly extension of security measures an exercise in the preparation of Lambeth as a maximum security court for the future, the realistic needs of security having long since been overtaken. Such mileage as could be extracted from the position of power this gave the police was not overlooked. On September 15th. police searching James Saunders (Vince's solicitor) read through the confidential defence notes in his briefcase. Asked to give a clear direction to the police about this blatant abuse of privilege, the magistrate said, "the search is the duty of the police and you shouldn't bring confidential papers to court if you object." Saunders afterwards said:

"For centuries it has been established that the instructions of a client to his or her solicitor are absolutely privileged. The magistrate today has sought to overrule this position by affording access, to the very squad of police who are prosecuting, to these absolutely privileged papers.... I see this as a clear example of the use of a pretence of security to sabotage a defence case."

Another legal precedent was set that week - this time in favour of the defence. ID parades took place at Paddington Green. Defence lawyers who'd put a set of collectively agreed demands to the police con-

cerning how they were to be held were granted access to the statements made by the police witnesses. This enabled them to challenge the holding of many parades where the description clearly did not match the defendants. The police were reportedly behind this precedent in face of DPP opposition - apparently being anxious to re-establish the status of ID parade evidence after the doubts cast on it in recent years. The result of the parades was negative from the prosecution point of view - three of the defendants were picked out but none in connection with the promised robberies. In court Ronan was beaten up before the hearing for trying to kiss Iris.



With the failure of the ID parades and the collapse of the ATS claims that actual robbery charges would be brought, bail applications were renewed. On 29th. September Vince and Trevor made applications and the new prosecution tack was aired in opposing them. McClellan made much of his "1,000 pages of evidence". "The Group" had conspired to commit explosions and a number of armed robberies for cash and arms, using false identities and deposit accounts and safe houses, he claimed. In the absence of any explosions or armed robberies the prosecution now proposed to concentrate on the latter three items and the juggling of a vast mass of evidence of "association" (against a background of political beliefs). A tortuous example was provided in court. McClellan admitted that the evidence against Vince was "difficult to describe". He went on to explain that Vince's fingerprints had been found on a newspaper - at the location where the "test explosion" had occurred. They were on a copy of the Hackney Gazette and in this issue was an advert for a workshop to hire. McClellan claimed that this workshop had been hired under a false name to provide a location for a bomb factory. In response to questions it transpired that no bombs or forensic evidence of any kind had been discovered at the workshop....but the fingerprints were apparently "evidence" that Vince had been "associated" with the "setting up" of a "bomb factory"(!)

Both Vince and Trevor offered £20,000 sureties and offers of accommodation with people prepared to stand guarantor for them. Vince was turned down but to our delight Trevor was granted bail on condition that he live with his parents, observe a nightly curfew (10.00 - 6.00) and report daily to the police. The deciding factor between the two of them was evidently the respectability of Trevor's home background. Vince, furious, shouted, "Fucking class justice. If I was in the liberal party I'd be out now."

He was dragged from the court and beaten up in the cells by several police.

Further applications ran along similar lines and failed or succeeded on a largely hit or miss basis. The class bias became obvious, much weight being attached to "community ties" (status in bourgeois terms), "background" (conformity and lifestyle), work records (regularity) and in Ronan's case, nationality "associations".

Iris was granted bail on 26th. October (two sureties of £5,000, nightly curfew and daily reporting). In opposition Det. Sgt. Wait claimed that she would interfere with witnesses - citing in evidence that a witness had received a threatening phone call from a man with an Australian accent - after she had been arrested. He admitted that the raid on which she and Ronan had been arrested had been on a warrant concerning neither explosives nor robberies but national insurance cards! He also revealed the nature of the bomb making materials found - 2 small tins of household weedkiller, 2 bags of sugar and 1½ bags of flour.

Two weeks later it emerged that Vince's and Trevor's 'conspiracy to cause explosions' charges hadn't even been submitted for approval by the Attorney General, Sam Silkin. And a week later (16th. November), it was announced that he had refused his consent to proceed with the charge against the other four. A replacement charge was announced - conspiracy to rob - and in an attempt to save face, Iris and Ronan were charged with 'possession of explosive substances' and 'dishonestly handling a black imitation leather briefcase'.

The ATS's initial conspiracy theory was now thoroughly exploded. It seemed a massive victory - but it contained the seeds of the prosecution's future strategy. Without the evidence to back so overtly political a charge, the case was to be 'depoliticised', while at the same time retaining the political beliefs of the defendants - the hard core of the allegations against them - as an undefined (and thus more 'threatening') presence behind the evidence of association - as the factor that would turn "association" into "conspiracy". The big advantage of depoliticisation - of the reduction of the case to one of "criminal activity", was the certainty that this would drastically cut away potential support from a revolutionary left divided hopelessly by the legal/illegal dead end.

The State's use of conspiracy law in political cases has grown increasingly sophisticated since its return during the sixties as a key weapon in the armoury of legal attack. Its principal advantages are:

- a) Its open-endedness. A conspiracy is merely an agreement between two or more persons to do something illegal or something legal by illegal means. This can mean, or encompass, anything.
- b) The relaxation of normal rules of evidence to allow evidence of lifestyle, belief, associations, etc. This enables almost anything to be introduced as background evidence, but principally evidence of belief (books found at your house, for example).

The classic conspiracy trial involves a series of initial raids, isolation of those arrested in prison, the gathering of low key information. Tension is deliberately created, some 'hard' evidence is produced and the core of the "evidence" against those arrested becomes the proof that the defendants know each other and are radical, set within a range of in-

ferences and insinuations. Where this model has been tied to an actual event - The Angry Brigade bombing or the IRA campaign - it has been entirely successful. But the State has learned the hard way that for it to be successful where such obvious public 'background' is lacking, the political debate in court must be as far as possible eliminated by a process of criminalisation and legalism which must commence with the basic charges. Open moral or political debate must be prevented in court and so the case is left enmeshed in ambiguity and prejudice.

After a couple of unsuccessful applications, Vince was granted bail on December 11th. (£16,000 sureties, curfew and daily reporting). Ronan, however, has been consistently refused. On 23rd. November magistrate R.K. Cook gave as his principal reason, "a lack of community ties", that his recent work record was in casual labour, he had no job to go to and would thus have to go on the dole (rather less expensive than remand in prison, in fact).

Again, on 14th. December: "from what I hear of this case the defendant is the sort of person who would abscond"! An application to Judge in Chambers offering increased sureties, a job and accommodation also failed. It became clear that the refusal to grant him bail was linked to the ATS attitude to him in particular. An ATS sergeant told one of the defence lawyers that they were determined to get Ronan and Taff "at any cost".

Committals were finally set for December 21st. - seven months after the first arrests. After the dropping of the 'conspiracy to cause explosions' charge there had been an almost imperceptible loosening of security. (Intermittently, however - on December 6th. an attempt was made to strip search Iris before allowing her in. She refused) This relaxation was more noticeable at Committals; the flak jackets had gone, the guns were once again out of sight, there were no restrictions on entry or standing in the gallery, searching was perfunctory. The uniformed police on duty were overheard asking the ATS pointed questioned about the dropped charges.





Since the defence had opted for short Committals rather than a full run through of the prosecution case, we just heard a speech by the DPP representative, Barry McGirl. According to him the defendants were "self-confessed anarchists":

"The prosecution case is that they were members of a London based gang whose objective was to bring about a radical change in society. They needed cash for accommodation and false identities and they needed firearms."

He alleged that between "15th. January 1977 and 5th. May 1978", "the group" had conspired to rob a number of supermarkets and betting shops in London and a number of people who had advertised guns for sale. He claimed that lists of regional crime squad headquarters, Atomic Energy Commission and Prisons Department offices had been found - these, he alleged, were the 'hit lists'. He claimed that cars had been hired and Building Society accounts opened under false names and alleged it was in connection with robberies. He claimed false documents had been found. Evidence of association, including fingerprints, would be produced, he said. The only direct evidence of robberies was against Stewart Carr - this consisted of "substantial admissions", "amounting to a confession", he'd allegedly made. No details were given. Otherwise it was impossible to say whether any other defendant had taken part in any specific robberies.

The 800 (reduced from 1,000) pages of evidence and 380 exhibits were on hand (throughout the hearing the police seemed to be having difficulty producing the right one on cue!). Lists of witnesses to be called and of exhibits were produced and agreed. As required, prosecution ID witnesses had to confirm their statements. These revealed that various defendants had been picked out as having hired vehicles and a lock-up garage and taken driving lessons using false names. Ronan was picked out as having apologised to neighbours after the so-called 'test explosion'. The six were remanded for trial. Bail was renewed till then for those who already had it.

A bail application was made on behalf of Taff. Opposing, McGirl alleged that his "lack of close ties with his country" and connections with West Germany made it likely he would abscond. For Taff, it was argued that the lack of close ties with Britain and West German connections were natural since he'd been brought up there - but that since

he'd been deported from there in 1977 and banned from returning this was irrelevant. A medical report was produced recommending his release on the grounds of his chronic eneteritis. McGirl brought up an "escape attempt" he had made while in custody. This turned out to consist in his having broken away from police for a few steps when his enteritis had made it necessary for him to be taken to the Royal Free Hospital shortly after his arrest.

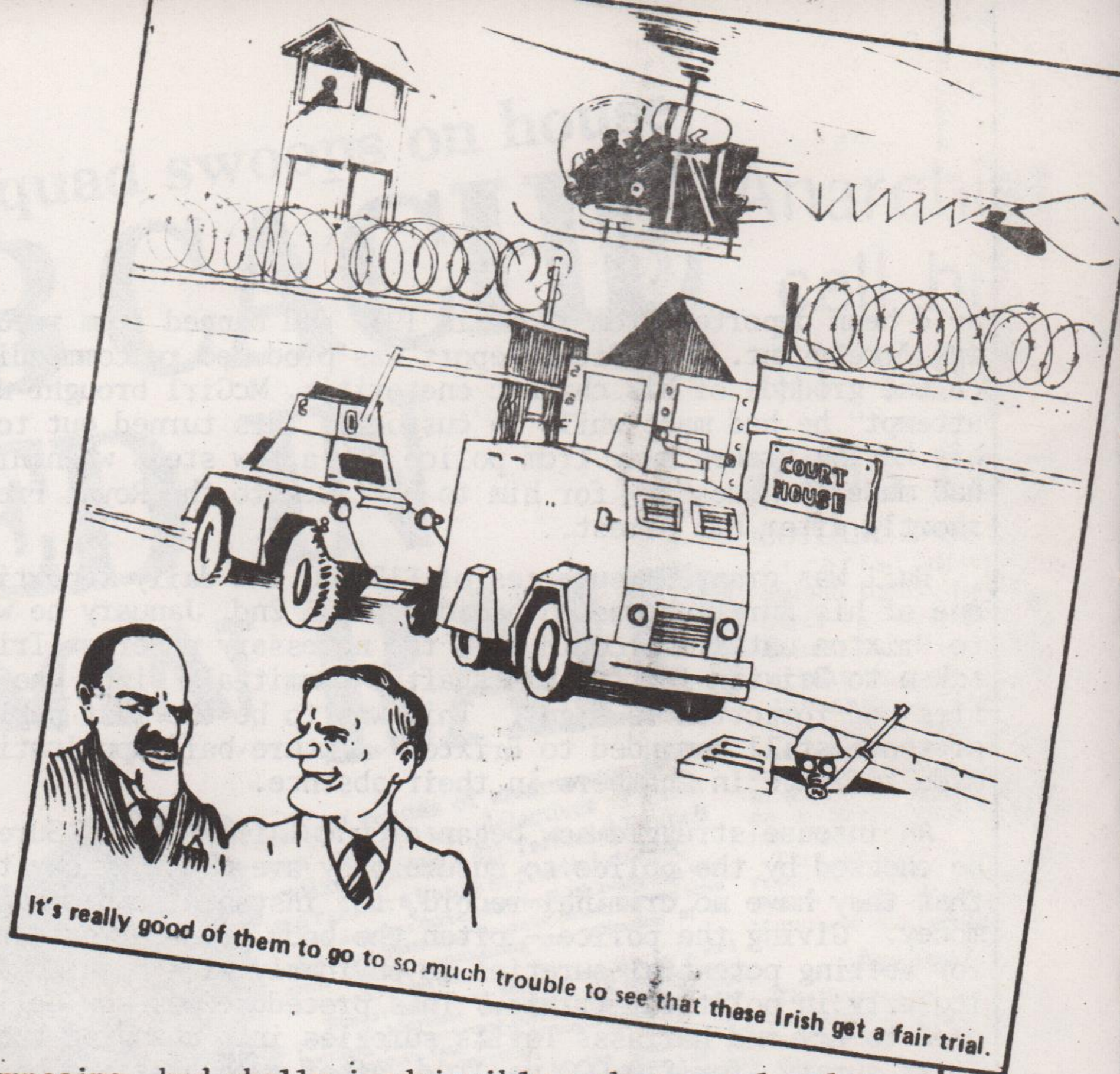
Bail was granted (sureties of £17,000 and daily reporting) but since one of his sureties was on holiday until 2nd. January he was returned to Brixton until she could sign the necessary papers. (Iris was also taken to Brixton for two hours after committals since one of her sureties had forgotten to sign). This was to be the last public appearance of those still remanded to Brixton - future bail applications being made to Judge in Chambers in their absence.

An intense struggle now began around Taff's bail. Sureties have to be checked by the police to ensure they are who they say they are (and that they have no criminal record, for instance) and can produce the money. Giving the police - often the body prosecuting - responsibility for vetting potential sureties is obviously wide open to abuses, particularly in political trials. This procedure was now deliberately used to try and harrass Taff's sureties into changing their minds. His first surety, for £10,000 was told after much hassling on her part and two visits from ATS officers who questioned her threateningly, that she was not acceptable since she had previously stood £200 bail for someone who had absconded.

The second surety returned from holiday to be told initially that she was acceptable. However, on January 7th. she and her husband had four visits from the ATS. They told her that they had no intention of letting Taff out on bail - though asked for legal grounds they declined to reply. Then they turned to her husband, telling him that "Ladd and Bennett were the dangerous ones" and were likely to jump bail. If Taff were released he would continue his terrorist plans to bomb, and shoot innocent citizens. He was a bomb throwing monster who should be locked up for ever. When this tack did not appear to be working, he tried another, "Don't you think its significant that both the sureties are women?...Why is your wife standing bail?...What is her relationship to Ladd?...Don't you have any control over your wife?" This continued until the man was deeply disturbed. The ATS finally left saying that she wasn't an acceptable surety anyway. Though she continued to stand by her decision to stand surety it was in the face of initial opposition from her husband.

After several weeks a replacement was found for the first surety. The police at once arranged to interview her at home. She arranged to have Taff's solicitor present. Abandoning their previous threats and insinuations, they merely explained at length why Taff ought not to be released. She too was told that she would not be approved. They were told that it would be settled in court. On March 1st. the only objection they could produce was that she did not have "sufficient knowledge of the defendant". Taff was released the same day, ten weeks after he had been granted bail.

Ronan remains inside. On March 23rd. recoder George Shindler refused



bail. McClellan, in opposing, had wholly inadmissibly under normal rules of evidence mentioned that Ronan had a conviction for attempting to escape from Long Kesh. He didn't waste the court's time with the fact that this was Ronan's only previous conviction, having been acquitted of the charges on which he had been held in Long Kesh, and that his sentence had been a £10 fine suspended for two years! The mention of Long Kesh hung over the rest of the hearing. An "attempt to escape" when first arrested last May was added. Under questioning McClellan agreed that this had consisted in pulling away from officers holding his arms, complaining that he was being hurt. The six officers around him had at once jumped on him.

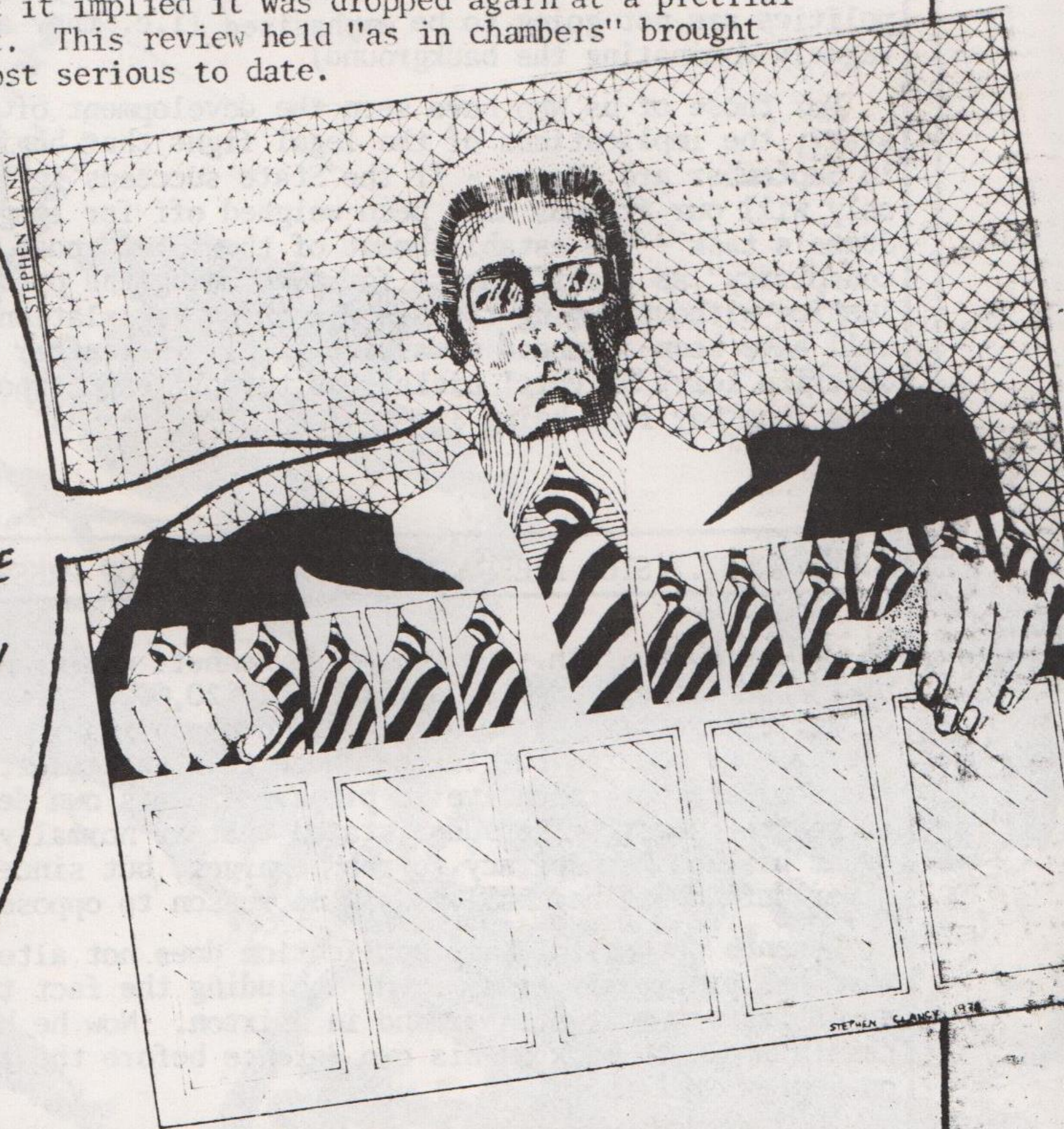
Ronan's barrister went through the other defendants' cases, showing in each case that Ronan had a stronger case for bail. But the mention of Northern Ireland had swept away all reason. In each case Shindler asked just one question:- Did the defendants have "Irish connections"?.... Needless to say, they didn't. Finally he turned to McClellan and asked if there was "an Irish connection" to this case. McClellan replied that he supposed you could call it that. Without further ado Shindler said, "That is what worries me. I have looked at his antecedents. He was brought up in Ireland. We have to be realistic about these things--there are associations and there are dangers - we cannot have him disappearing over the water", whereupon he refused bail. As Ronan's barrister pointed out, the implication of his decision is that any Irish person charged with an offence in this country would be refused bail. It is obvious that this is not a long step from applying the 'Emergency Standards' developed in Northern Ireland to anyone with "connections", to rationalising the process by introducing similar emergency legislation here, or by extending the criteria of 'special cases' as is being at-

tempted in this case. State trials like this one provide opportunities to test the limits of existing legislation while acclimatising 'public opinion' to the 'objective need' (the emergency) demanding the extension of State control through the courts.

Various trial dates in September have been set (currently 17th. at the Old Bailey) and the indictment has been served. This reworded some charges (most importantly, in an attempt to give tangibility to the prosecution claims of 'associates at large', two names, Graham Rua and Michelle Poree, have been added into the conspiracy charge.) Stewart Carr's robbery charges were dropped (so much for the 'substantial admissions') and a mysterious new charge added for all six-- "conspiracy to defraud people by robbing them". This, a brand new charge made possible by the 1977 Criminal Law Act but never before used, clearly indicated prosecution uncertainties about the strength of their case. But before we could find out what it implied it was dropped again at a pretrial review on 10th. August. This review held "as in chambers" brought another shock - the most serious to date.

"THE
GENERAL PRINCIPLE
THAT JURIES
SHOULD BE
RANDOMLY
SELECTED IS
IMPORTANT, BUT
NOT AT THE
EXPENSE OF THE
PROPER
ADMINISTRATION
OF JUSTICE"

—
WILLIAM
WHITELAW.
HOME
SECRETARY.



The prosecution brought an application for the jury panel to be vetted. This is as far as is known the first application for a jury to be vetted under the Guidelines issued by Attorney General Sam Silkin after the ABC Official Secrets Trial. These admitted that the practice had been used 25 times since August 1975. The guidelines lay down

three levels of vetting - Criminal Records Office (CRO) records, Special Branch records and local C.I.D "criminal intelligence" records. This is the first time all three levels are to be used. In addition it transpired that discreet enquiries were to be permissible by local C.I.D. among the associates of potential jurors.

Official reasons for jury vetting are to "safeguard the proper administration of justice" in cases of sufficient importance or seriousness where jurors "may be susceptible to improper pressure on may, because of extreme political beliefs, be biased against either the prosecution of the defence."

This is obviously complete rubbish. Packing the jury is the last desperate act of the State to railroad through a political conspiracy trial. It clearly indicates the seriousness with which the prosecution are pursuing that aim. The defendants were described in the application as "self-styled AN-ARCHISTS" (Sic). Plans to "kidnap members of the Royal Family" and "Blow up nuclear power stations" were mentioned.

The application having been granted, it was then stated by the prosecution that the trial to be conducted was a 'criminal one' - the politics are not going to be emphasised (i.e. they are to be left vaguely dominating the background)

For those of us who have seen the development of this case from the start, the implications of the legal fight that begins at the Old Bailey in September are clear: - If the State succeeds in this prosecution, not only will our friends have been weighed off for long stretches, but the State's task - the establishment of the all-purpose criteria "terrorist conspiracy" as justification for abandoning the pretense of bourgeois justice without having to pass draconian legislation through parliament, will have been advanced a massive step. Thereafter when newspapers describe lorry drivers' pickets as terrorists bent on anarchy, it will be a long way from being laughable.

STOP PRESS....STOP PRESS....STOP PRESS....STOP PRESS

On Thursday, 16th. August, Ronan Bennett was granted bail by an Old Bailey Judge on sureties of £20,000. After months of Barristers trying, Ronan did his own application and succeeded. He pointed out to the Judge that the conditions at Brixton were not conducive to preparing one's own defence.... to say the least! The Judge stated that he normally did not grant bail on "conspiracy to rob" charges, but since all the other defendants had bail he saw no reason to oppose it!

Ronan's successful bail application does not alter anything that has previously transpired, including the fact that he has spent fifteen months on remand in Brixton. Now he has less than a month to work on his own defence before the trial begins on September 17th.

THE STATE SHOWS ITSELF- Raids and Harassment

Within a week of Iris' and Ronan's arrest we began to hear of raids on anarchist households. The first, in East London, occurred on 31 May. Police arrived at 6.00.a.m. and the occupants were questioned, but no-one was arrested or taken away. S, who lived next door, was asked for proof of identity - illegal since she was not being arrested - then taken to the local police station "to help with enquiries". Her possessions were taken and put into an unsealed bag - again illegal - and she was put in a cell. During the two hours she was held she was questioned closely about her association with the defendants and other possible contacts in the anarchist movement, including being asked to identify photographs. She was also asked about her own political beliefs and activities. This was a pattern of questioning that was to recur in most of the subsequent raids.

In the month that followed a total of about thirty raids were carried out, mostly in North and East London but a few in other parts of the country - Swansea, Huddersfield and Bristol. The targets ranged from well-known anarchists to other left activists, feminists and even a worker for the ABC campaign. A few of the early raids were reported in Time Out on 16th. June:

"In one of the raids, in Highbury, police battered the door with a sledge-hammer without giving the occupants a chance to



open it. Ironically, in attacking the door in this fashion, they jammed it and it took them nearly a quarter of an hour to get in. They removed three photo albums....C, whose home it was, told Time Out, 'After we got the door open they came running in - and that was after they'd been standing on the doorstep for about ten minutes! Mainly they wanted us to identify people in the photo albums but their search was very thorough - they even took up the floorboards.'

In another, in Finsbury Park, police showed the occupants an imaginative chart they had drawn up of Anarchism in Britain, detailing the different roles people had to play in the 'group of idealists' described in court by the police.

A third raid involved the questioning of a spanish anarchist"

In this last raid the spanish comrade spent two hours relating his war-time experiences in the french resistance against the german occupation! In another particularly zealous operation police charged into a crowded gaming club and proceeded to have a punch-up with the bouncers, who thought they were being attacked by criminals; its former occupants, the Centro Iberico (headquarters of the spanish libertarian movement in London) had left over two years ago!

In some raids houses were stripped from top to bottom, under the pretence of looking for arms and explosives....in others police took away literature, photographs, personal mail, address books and notebooks. On two occasions they also took typewriters. All the raids took place in the early morning and most were carried out by large numbers of police in a series of different unmarked cars.

J and A, two members of the support group, were raided on the morning of June 21st. This is J's account of what happened:

"The house was raided at 6.10. this morning. There were 20 - 25 Anti Terrorist Squad officers headed by D-I Stephenson, two Special Branch officers and two dogs. The police had a warrant to search the house but it wasn't in anyone's name. They were looking for materials 'likely to be used in the making of explosives'.

They came in and asked who was living in the house; there were only two of us, A and me. A was in bed. They woke her up, then asked us basic questions like date and place of birth. I asked to be present in the rooms they searched in fact I was only there for one room as I was taken upstairs. A and I were separated for about an hour. During this time the police, led by Stephenson, asked me a lot of questions: 'How long have you been an anarchist? How long have you known A? What do you think of her? Do you have friends in common? Do you know Taff, Iris or Ronan? What do you think of Taff? What do you think of violence? How do anarchists persuade people to change society? What do you think of the charges? Were you surprised by the arrests? Are you a political anarchist or an active anarchist? Which of these would you classify Taff as?' (they suggested he was an 'active' anarchist), 'How did you get involved in the anarchist movement? Do you know what A is up to?' (If I didn't, then I was a silly girl).

CHRONOLOGY OF RAIDS

- 31.5.78 Two houses in East London. Dustbins and garden searched. Occupants questioned about associates and shown photographs. One woman taken to police station for questioning.
- 4.6.78 Swansea. Supporters of "Socialist Challenge" questioned
- 6.6.78 Hornsey, London. Two people questioned
- 7.6.78 Huddersfield. Anarchist household raided and people questioned about associations.
- 6.6.78 - 15.6.78 Highbury, London. Door battered down with sledgehammer. Floorboards ripped up. Photograph albums removed. Questions about photos and association.
- Finsbury Park, London. Occupants shown chart on British anarchism. One person charged with possession of dope.
- Hornsey, London. Spanish anarchist questioned about his political activity, including part played in french war-time resistance!
- Hackney, London. One house raided for third time. Plus several others, full details not known.
- 16.6.78 Swansea
- 21.6.78 Kentish Town, London. 20-30 ATS, Special Branch and SPG plus dogs. Search warrant for explosives. Literature, address lists and typewriter removed. Questions on association and political activity. One woman taken to Paddington Green for questioning
- 23.6.78 Bow, London. Raid on former address of ABC Campaign worker.
- Hampstead, London. Raid on gaming club, formerly Centro Iberico. Punch-up with bouncers.
- 26.7.78 Bristol. Two raids, one on a barrister. In the second police wearing flak jackets burst in with drawn guns. German officer present.
- 6.10.78 Nottingham. Large number of armed police - ATS & local CID. Police entered with drawn guns. Two anarchist sympathizers taken for questioning. Questions on association and attitude to armed revolutionary struggle.
- 8.1.79 Hastings. Anarchist twice threatened with 5 years under PTA for withholding information.

They questioned me about my place of birth, parents, work, where I had lived, my income, what I had been involved in and whether I had written anything for Anarchist papers. They also asked me if I was a 'man-hater'.

They looked through all my address books, photographs and correspondence; they were interested in correspondence I had had with someone in Japan. They asked me how well I knew Crispin Aubrey because I had his phone number.

I continually asked about A but Stephenson said that she was being taken to Paddington Green. They said they were arresting her and that she was being taken in for questioning about explosions. They took her off in a police van.

After they had questioned me for about half an hour I got very angry and demanded that they go. In the end I walked out of the room and went downstairs. From downstairs they took an Olivetti typewriter. I asked a number of times for a receipt but Stephenson said it wasn't common practice. In the end he said he would type one out, which he did. When the police had left I could find no trace of this --- I can only conclude that they had taken it with them. They also took away a carrier bag of literature and notes, mainly men's group stuff and a list of women in ARM (Association of Radical Midwives).

The police finally left at about 8.45.a.m."

A adds:

"I asked to see the search warrant. Why had they come? What were they looking for? One casually said they were looking for Germans. Another said guns. No German officers as far as I could see. They said they were CID; no names were given apart from Stephenson, who seemed to be in charge....I engaged in casual conversation with Stephenson: Why had the three people been arrested? Why all this fuss?...

Meanwhile the search was going on. J came downstairs saying to me, 'they say they've come for you'. Stephenson became more formal, took me out of the room and declared that I was arrested and would be taken to Paddington Green. I asked what I was being arrested for, stated that arrest for questioning was illegal and that I wouldn't answer any questions, wouldn't go to the police station....Stephenson implied that I would be charged later and I was taken to Paddington Green.

Four officers were present during the questioning, one taking notes, Stephenson asking the questions. At first I refused to answer any questions until I was advised by a solicitor; for three quarters of an hour I just sat there. Stephenson said, 'We've got ways of making you talk....'

Eventually I answered a number of questions. I did not make a statement. I did not sign anything."

The Anti Terrorist Squad (see Box), the Special Branch and dogs were a common feature of the raids. In some they were joined by the Special Patrol Group and on at least two occasions by German officers. On the Bristol raid and one which occurred later in Nottingham police burst into the houses with drawn guns.

Over the same period it became common for friends, family and associates of the defendants to find themselves followed to and from support group meetings or remand hearings. Rising Free, a libertarian bookshop in North London and a meeting place for local anarchists, was watched consistently over a two-week period.

Typically this shadowing had all the ingredients of a bad detective novel - trench coats, dodging round corners, leaping on and off tube carriages. Looking back it seems quite a laugh, but at the time it was pretty unerving for those of us who experienced it - not knowing whether or when they might next pounce. The events of 'D-Day' - Vince's arrest on the way to a support group meeting on 4 July - seemed to justify this fear and was perhaps the culminating point in the build-up of paranoia. No-one knew who would be next....

But once a pattern began to emerge from the raids and other forms of harassment, and as the prosecution evidence - or rather, lack of it - became apparent from the weekly remand hearings, it became clearer what the police were up to.

We concluded that from the point of view of the State these exercises had three purposes:-

- * To provide the specialist police squads with practice in the type of field exercises that will clearly become more common.
- * to intimidate actual and potential left-wing activists from taking part in any activity seen as threatening to the State. In this case, more specifically to try and isolate the six defendants both politically and personally from their friends and supporters, so as to weaken their resistance and facilitate their conviction.
- * to provide an opportunity for gathering low level information on political activities, contact networks and so on - remember the chart on the Anarchist movement produced on one of the raids.



THE ANTI-TERRORIST SQUAD

The Anti-Terrorist Squad was developed from the Bomb Squad, which itself was formed from the team set up to co-ordinate investigations into the Angry Brigade after the bombing of Robert Carr's house. After the trials this team was put on a permanent footing (strength 15) and moved from Barnet, Carr's local police station, to Scotland Yard. Under pressure of the IRA campaign, the need to reorganise "C" (crime) department and the political prestige of Anti-terrorist activity and Ideology in the EEC, the squad was reorganised and expanded (strength in 1973 was 100 and in 1975, 300). In 1976 it became the Anti-Terrorist Branch (C.13), a separate branch within "C" Department, "to emphasise its responsibility for dealing with all terrorist activity" (Robert Mark). But once the IRA campaign was over it had very little work. Most of 1976-77 was spent in "an intensive period of internal training....to ensure that sufficient officers were equipped to deal with terrorist offences." It's strength was dropped from 300 to 30, but this is not as dramatic as it sounds - many of the 300 were "on loan" from provincial forces for the IRA campaign and merely returned to them - having been trained in Anti-Terrorist Branch methods and "terrorist conspiracy" ideology.

The ATS is part of the Metropolitan Police Force; hence it is only responsible for investigations in the London area. However, it is frequently called in on outside cases and is in close contact with provincial forces, the RUC, foreign anti-terrorist police and local bomb squads set up around particular cases (for example, Surrey 1974 after the Guildford Pub bombings). The Squad also works in conjunction with the Special Branch (despite rivalry), the Special Patrol Group and the complex of reorganised and coordinated detective squads, for example C.11 (Criminal Intelligence) and C.7 (Technical Equipment Branch, including explosives and forensic liaison officers and surveillance specialists). It is often difficult to separate the ATS's essentially co-ordinative function from that of these other branches and groups.

The ATS is a prestige squad (except in periods like 1976-77) and has been the springboard to dramatic promotion for some of its officers. It recruits mainly from C.11, Special Branch and the Robbery Squads. It has been known to be involved with other squads in the use of Agents Provocateurs (e.g. the Andy Ellesmore case with the Flying Squad in 1973, and a case as late as 1977 with the Special Branch, quoted by Brian Rose Smith), but since it normally becomes involved after events have taken place, it generally concentrates on the alternative strategy of putting together "conspiracy" trials after arrests (i.e. collecting information on those arrested and collating 'damaging' links). It is heavily reliant in this on publicity, which it manipulates to some effect. It has had a mixed rate of success - the high conviction rate in IRA cases is as much due to the hysteria generated by the campaign as to the ATS's efforts. However, it has refined the "political conspiracy" technique considerably since the unwieldy "Stoke Newington 8" model.

Equally important is the ATS role as a testing area for methods and equipment and its role as a "pressure group" on behalf of "terrorist conspiracy" theory via. lecturing etc. In Robert Mark and David McNee the Squad has found commissioners willing to allow the full development of this role. "Emergency Planning" is another activity engaged in, via the preparation of publicity weapons, for example the film "Time of Terror" which gives a guide to spotting terrorists, "young....keep to themselves....women often act as couriers....like to live near the underground....may not work regularly....often visit pubs but don't drink excessively....pay for goods in cash." It also develops security techniques and exercises, as seen in "Operation D-Day".

The Squad has its own branch tie incorporating a bomb motif. It is based at New Scotland Yard and Paddington Green police station, site of the first Angry Brigade Bomb (10th. Anniversary next May 22nd.) You can wish them a happy anniversary on 01-230 2717 (incident room).

Following Vince's arrest, police activity became less intense, though low-level harassment continued, especially around the weekly remand hearings. Several members of the support group were arrested on minor charges outside the court, including the following incident described in a PU press statement:-

"After last week's remand hearing (24 August), Janet & Annette, two members of the support group, were arrested and held at Kennington Police Station. As the four people allowed into the court were leaving, Janet was arrested by SPG officers and somewhat roughly taken to Kennington Police Station. Asking what was going on, she was told "You know what's going on." and later "There's a warrant for your arrest to do with assaulting an officer at Horseferry Road Magistrates Court."

Not until she got to the station was she asked for her name and address, and by this time she was so annoyed that she refused to give them and persisted until the desk sergeant said he'd had enough and would charge her under the PTA unless she complied. At this she gave her name and address and noticed a remarkable change in the atmosphere. An officer addressed her in German and got a blank look.....It became clear that they'd arrested the wrong person!

Meanwhile back at the court, the wrongful arrest had already been established. Other support group members had tried to use the public 'phone box outside the court but were turned away by SPG officers. One of them approached Annette and asked her name. After checking with his radio he said there was a warrant out for her arrest....and she was taken to Kennington Police Station.

She was strip-searched and her belongings removed and examined. After some delay she was told that her arrest might have to do with an unpaid fine but that "there could very well be a warrant under the PTA as you're a security risk".



Just keeping an eye on young terrorists

Once the police had established that it was Annette that they wanted, Janet was released, the police expressing their hope that she understood how these "mistakes" occur. Annette was informed that a solicitor had been to the station (though had not been allowed to see her and that she "might" be released when they had checked with the German Embassy. About an hour later the fine was paid and she was released - the warrant under the PTA was not mentioned again."

As the press statement pointed out, this was a clear case of harrassment of people simply for being involved in the support group. Despite police claims not to know what was going on, it is clear that they did have a warrant and the fine being several months old they would have to have it sworn in specially. No attempt was made to serve it on Annette at home - she was picked up outside a court hearing she was evidently expected to attend. They knew roughly what she looked like - it is to be assumed that Janet was picked up in error as she looks not unlike her. Janet was threatened with detention under the PTA simply for refusing to cooperate - and Annette was left for several hours in a state of uncertainty as to whether or not she was to be held under the PTA. This in itself highlights the repressive nature of this Act. Annette was strip-searched - wholly unnecessary in the case of an unpaid fine, her property was taken away from her and searched in her absence



and one item (a letter) removed. Yet a visit from a lawyer and the payment of the outstanding fine were enough to secure her release as if the PTA had never been mentioned at all. It is clear that this harrassment would never have occurred had she not been a member of Persons Unknown - it is doubtful whether the unpaid fine would have been so rigorously pursued at all!"

And it was not just in London that supporters were harrassed and intimidated. The PTA was used as a threat against another comrade in Hastings, during a raid in January 1979. Police informed him that they knew 'for certain' that he knew some of the defendants and had visited at least one of them in Brixton. When he denied this he was threatened with five years under the PTA for withholding information.

Both Liverpool and Manchester support groups had their Persons Unknown mail opened and one Liverpool supporter was stopped and searched by plain clothes police on the street within minutes of telling a local

radio reporter of his whereabouts - a further example of media/police cooperation?

One very significant - and frightening - factor to emerge from the continuing harrassment was the extremely close links that the British ATS have with their West German counterparts. This was first brought home to us right at the beginning when some German comrades were raided within six hours of their address being found during a raid in London. Failing to find one of them at home, police from the criminal department had turned up at her work-place and her job is seriously threatened as a result. Then there was the presence of German officers on two of the British raids. And in September 1978 a German woman had her mail confiscated in connection with charges under the Terrorist Conspiracy Law following receipt of Persons Unknown literature. The decision of the Hamburg court reads:

DECISION

In the preliminary proceedings against: UNKNOWN
Because of the suspected violation of 129a StGB
(Terrorist Conspiracy Law)
the judge at the Municipal Court, Hamburg, Dr. Lau, decides:

1. Confirmation that all letters and other mail addressed to Frau P, poste restante, Post Office, Hamburg 13, have been confiscated by PP Hamburg 13.
2. Further, all letters to Frau P arriving at Post Office, Hamburg 13 are to be confiscated until 28.9.78.
3. Frau P is to be informed of this decision at the end of the period of confiscation (our underlining).
4. The Public Prosecution Office is authorised to open the confiscated letters.

REASONS

Preliminary proceedings against UNKNOWN have shown good cause to suspect that a letter has been sent, or will be sent shortly, to Frau P at Poste Restante, Hamburg 13, which contains useful information about bomb attacks in England and Germany, especially attacks directed against the British Rhine Army. This information will be very useful in preliminary proceedings.

Several German visitors to the defendants were stopped and questioned while in Britain. HE, on his way back to Germany, was detained at Gatwick by eight police officers:-

"The details of my return ticket had been taken when I arrived and I had the impression that the police were expecting me. I had to undress and was strip searched including the searching of my anus. Everything I had with me, including a map of the town and my cigarette papers, were held up to the light and examined thoroughly.

Two police officers took my passport and disappeared into another room. When they returned I stepped towards them to receive it. At

that moment the two pigs, who stood shoulder to shoulder, jumped apart to reveal a third officer who took my photograph.

They tried to question me about where I had stayed and what I had done in London, but my plane was due to leave and there wasn't much time. In the end I was driven to the plane with blue lights flashing, just catching it."



ARMED London policeman, complete with bullet-proof jacket, on duty outside the El Al Airline office in Regent Street yesterday.

At Heathrow airport, the army has deployed troops, tanks and armoured cars. And yesterday airports took a new step in establishing police-military control. Read about it on Page 3.

By this time, harrassment of supporters had slackened off considerably, but one later raid, in Nottingham in October, perhaps showed a 1st ditch attempt to round up a bit more evidence before committals on December 21st.

RS and MK were staying at R's parents house when they were raided on 6th. October.

"At about 6.00.a.m. about 30 police, armed with shotguns, hand guns and riot sticks surrounded the house.

Major FS, awakened by the doorbell, answered the door to several armed police wearing flak jackets and hip holsters. Forced against the wall he was told that the police had warrants for the arrest of his son and his son's friend. Other police immediately began to swamp the house. Six of them, with guns drawn, burst into the room occupied by R and M. R, after hearing scuffles and running feet on the landing, believed the house to be under attack from intruders and drew a butcher's knife from under the bed to protect himself and his friend. On recognizing the intruders as police officers, he gave up the knife and he and M were overpowered and hand-cuffed with their arms behind their backs. Half naked they were dragged to a waiting van and taken under arrest to Beeston police station.

R asked the police, "What would have happened if I'd slashed out with the knife?" and one of them answered, 'Oh, you'd be dead, both of you.' I said, 'but we haven't done anything wrong' and one policeman said, 'you know how it goes, son - it's perfectly legal you know'. I said to them, 'until the last second I didn't know you were police. I could have killed one of you thinking you were attacking us'. They replied, 'it would have been good for public outrage'. I took this to mean good police propaganda. I commented, 'You'll be arresting kids and shoplifters with guns next', and one of them said, 'If I do a five day week I will carry a gun on three of them.'

R and M were questioned at 10.a.m. by Sittingbourne CID and the ATS. Until this time both had been kept handcuffed and locked in separate cells. Neither had been told of the reasons for their arrest. Questioned separately they were told that they had been arrested in connection with a murder in Tonbridge Wells and the theft of firearms. Asked by R what evidence they had to justify the issue of the warrant, Sittingbourne CID replied, "Your name was mentioned". M was told, "You're an acquaintance of a known anarchist called A who is communicating with six anarchists awaiting trial in Brixton prison. You'd be surprised how much we know about you - a lot more than you think."

During both interviews no caution was given, though random notes were taken. The questioning was mainly concerned with their opinion of armed revolutionary struggle. It was suggested that all anarchists lean towards violence, even though some profess non-violent change. Finally both were told that no charges were contemplated - and were released at 4.30. that afternoon.

After their release M commented, "It is my opinion that R and I were arrested because of our known anarchist sympathies. It is plainly obvious to both of us that the warrant to search for firearms was merely

an excuse to gather further information on our personal associates, etc. Why else should letters and addresses be confiscated and not returned?"

R added, "On the grounds of our names being mentioned and our knowing a particular person our lives and the lives of my parents were put at risk - so were the lives of the police!"

An outraged Ms. L.S. said after the raid: "they turned the place upside down, but what can one do about it?" Major S, who joined the army aged 14 and is still a serving soldier after 39 years, made no comment....



Scotland Yard moves into the era of modern crime technology. This photograph shows a police TV team getting ready to film a London demonstration so that the participants can be identified and their faces filed

THE MEDIA

"THE PRESS, PROPERLY HANDLED, IS POTENTIALLY ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S STRONGEST WEAPONS"

Army Land Operations Manual

Most of this pamphlet deals with the more obvious machinery of State repression.- the police, the courts and the prisons. In this section we deal with a more subtle, but equally powerful weapon.

Over the past decade there has been a changing relationship between the State security services (police, army, etc.) and the media. This change has been a consciously thought out one with a view to effective media management - to change the informal contacts between, say, police and individual journalists to a tightly controlled method of passing 'information' for publication.

"The truth is that the police are trying to stop any exchange of information between individual policemen and journalists except through official channels, a move towards a flow of controlled information only from the police to the press, and....a move towardsa police state."

(John Ponder, Evening Standard Reporter, after his acquittal for dishonestly handling three police photographs and refusing to reveal his police contact).

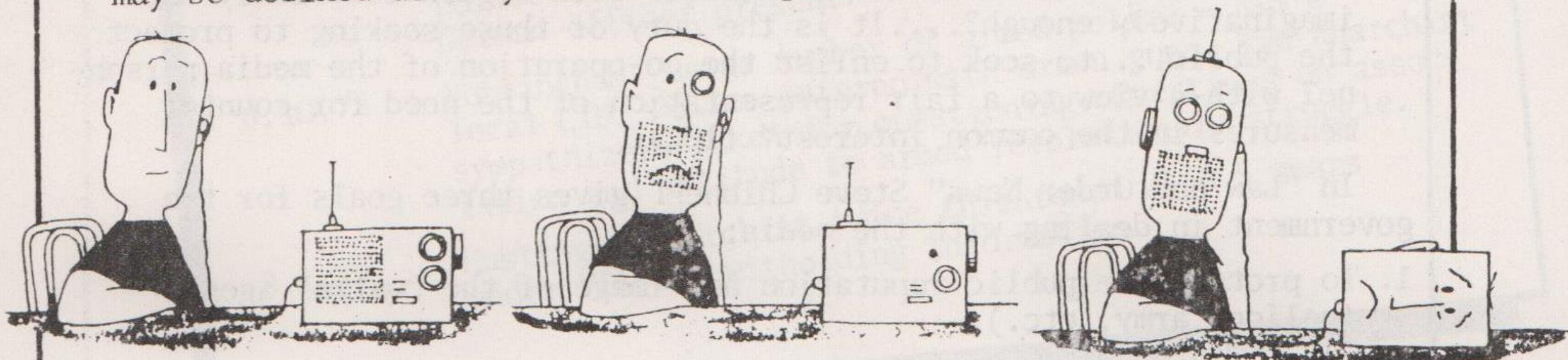
The reason for this move towards complete media management is that the voluntary cooperation which has existed between the media and government agencies in this country is no longer enough in the face of growing resistance to the present ruling regime.

In May 1975 the Institute for the Study of Conflict brought out a report entitled, "New Dimensions of Security in Europe" (which became the guidelines for the NATO Security Council). They put it this way:

"In America and elsewhere there was a sharp decline in the reverence traditionally awarded to authority whether in the form of institutions or of political leaders."

They place this decline as beginning in 1968 and go on to state,

"In this new prevailing climate, subversion flourished.... revolutionary agitation in penal institutions (especially the United States but also in Northern Ireland); the systematic discrediting of penal process, and the fostering the notion that ordinary crimes committed for alleged political objectives turn the perpetrator when captured into a 'political prisoner', whose plight will be ascribed to victimisation by a corrupt government and so forth.... subversion may be defined as a systematic attempt to undermine society."



So the legitimate struggle of people to better their conditions becomes 'subversion' and must be criminalized. 'Terrorism' is defined as "an extreme form of subversion."

It is important for the ruling regime to now justify counter-measures against the various forms of resistance springing up or continuing. The Institute for the Study of Conflict is worried enough about Britain to state:

"The three countries in Western Europe that are most directly threatened by political terrorism are the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain.

Britain would become more vulnerable if a hostile base, in the shape of a 'Peoples Republic' in Ireland, should emerge on its doorstep" - (memories of the black propaganda of a United Ireland becoming a soviet satellite!)

The justification of counter-revolutionary measures is one of the main aims of psychological warfare - and the best medium to disseminate government black propaganda is the mass media.

"It is only necessary to stress once again that wars of subversion and counter subversion are fought, in the last resort, in the minds of the people...."(Kitson - full references are given at end)

"The solution can only be in mobilising public opinion against every kind of terrorist in their own country" (Clutterbuck)

"Every kind of terrorist" being all those who resist in one form or another as, for example, in West Germany the word "terrorist" includes anti-nuclear demonstrators, squatters, and those who say Baader-Meinhof 'group' and not 'gang'. The ISC is a bit more specific:

"It is all the more important that the majority of the population, many of whom are apolitical, should be made aware of activities in their midst, not with the object of forming groups of vigilantes and sponsoring witch-hunts, but for promoting a favourable climate of opinion in which the politically active moderates among them may work to defeat extremist activities in trade unions, parliamentary assemblies and other institutions."

.....a clear indication to those who believe that they can change the system from within that the counter-measures used against armed resistance will also be used against them once 'a favourable climate' has been created. The ruling regime can only establish such a 'climate' by planned psychological warfare: The government "must promote its own cause.... by disseminating its view of the situation, and this involves a carefully planned and coordinated campaign....psychological operations" (Kitson).

"Has the case for counter-measures been argued forcefully and imaginatively enough?....It is the duty of those seeking to protect the public....to seek to enlist the co-operation of the media personnel with a view to a fair representation of the need for counter measures in the common interest" (ISC).

In "Law and Order News" Steve Chibnell gives three goals for the government in dealing with the media:

1. To protect the public reputation and image of the control agency (police, army, etc.)
2. To directly facilitate the work of the control agency in controlling

and apprehending deviants.

3. To promote the particular aims, ideologies and interest of the control agency.

Efficient use of the media was always one of Robert Mark's concerns: "police/public relations are not governed by the truth necessarily. They are governed by the appearance of the truth." (in *The Listener*, 25.8.66), and as clear instructions to the media in 1975,

"we expect them to believe us when we tell them the truth....There is such a degree of confidence between Fleet Street and the Metropolitan Police Force that you almost make a journalist uncomfortable if he disbelieves you."

In 1971 Mark issued new guidelines giving certain officers more autonomy in their dealings with the press and radio. One of the first 'uses' of the new policy was a press conference held by Bomb Squad chiefs after the Angry Brigade trial in which, among other things, they told reporters that the defendants "were all guilty".

The Institute for Conflict Studies realises that effective use of the media is not as simple as it might first appear:

"Psychological warfare techniques always have to be chosen for the intended audience. Arguments about the immorality of violence that will be readily accepted by the bulk of the British or West German public may have no effect on the recruitment pools of terrorists operating in a Catholic ghetto like the Ardoyne in Belfast or the community of migrant workers in Frankfurt. At this level the authorities will need, for instance, to expose rivalries and corruption in the terrorist leadership."

They realise that where repression is greatest the feelings of the people who are daily brutally repressed have to be played upon with more subtle tactics than the normal crass propaganda, which we may laugh off without thinking how they are working on us.

The ISC then goes on to suggest how it envisages this media management being organised.

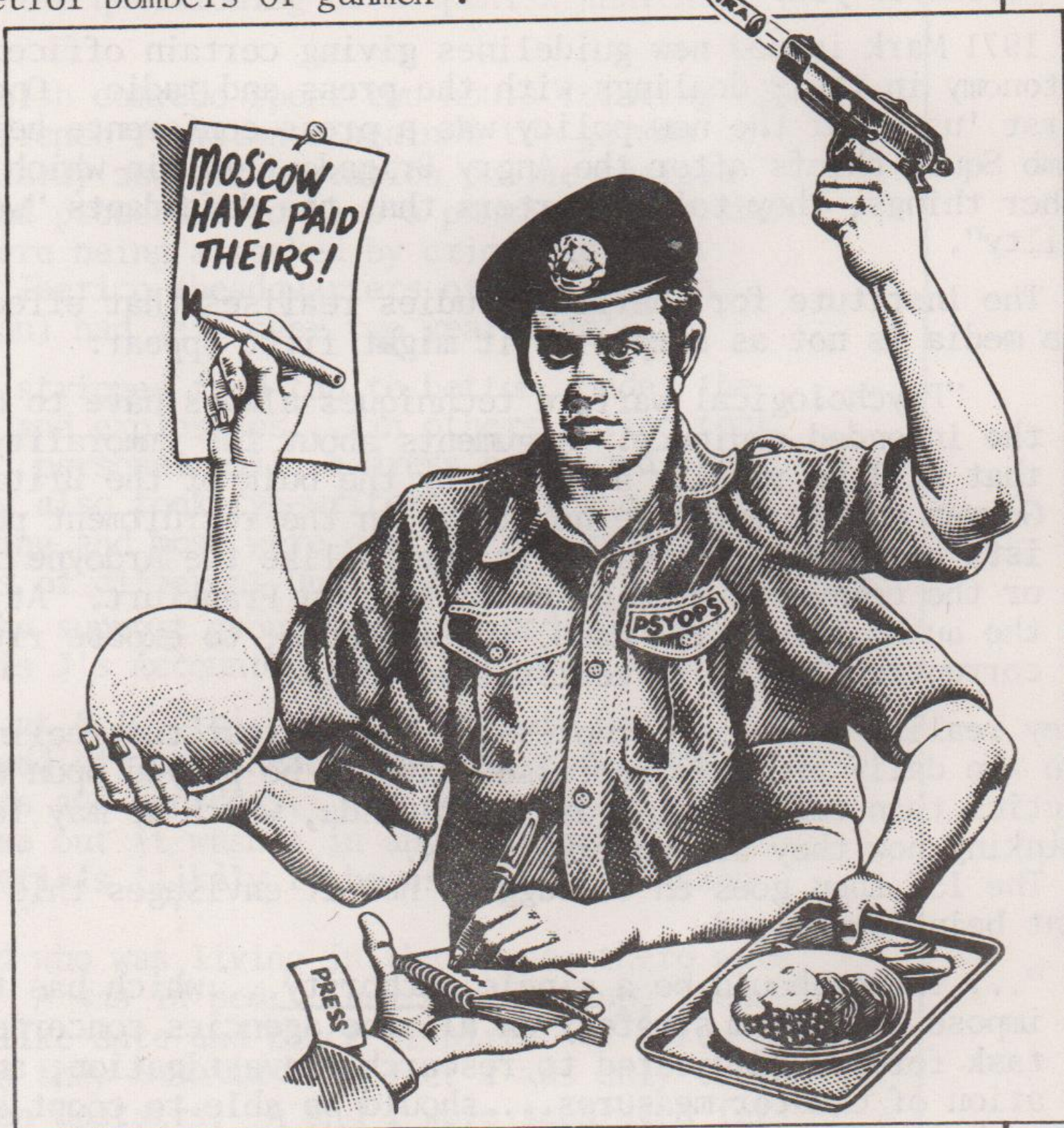
"....there should be a single authority....which has the power to impose an agreed strategy on all the agencies concerned....a national task force....dedicated to research, investigation, and the co-ordination of counter measures....should be able to coopt specialists such as psychologists, linguists, locksmiths, clergymen, political analysts, media people, etc."

As mentioned earlier they consider Britain and occupied Ireland as on a near war footing; they are talking about implementing this strategy now, as was done in West Germany during the Schleyer kidnapping. In case no-one has yet cottoned on to who they are recommending as the single authority"the army combines the range of skills and the practical experience of Northern Ireland....a new joint police/army 'fire brigade' is needed."

The British Army at the beginning of 1976 had over 40 press officers in occupied Ireland, the Royal Ulster Constabulary 12 and the government another 20 civil servants briefed to deal with the media.

"When the British press prints an account of an incident as if it were an established fact, and it is clear that the reporter himself was not on the spot, it is a 99% certainty that it is the army's version that is being given". (Simon Hoggart, Guardian reporter on Ireland)

According to Chibnall, "Eamon McCann has documented cases in which soldiers have shot Irish civilians who they have mistaken for terrorists, and shown that in these cases the army press office has invariably described the victims as petrol bombers or gunmen".



The army used the Daily Express to discredit a Sunday Times exposé of sensory deprivation treatment in Ireland by issuing a statement saying that the Sunday Times informant had been beaten up by the IRA. And the Daily Mirror helped in justifying the shooting of a Polish born freelance photographer by running an army 'leak' that the IRA had hired communist gunmen.

This type of black propaganda has been developed and refined over the years. In 1968 a start was made to discredit protest movements. In October of that year The Times issued a 'leaked' story about a 'take-over, on military lines, of such institutions as the Bank of England, Lloyd's, the Stock Exchange, Ministry of Defence, major communication centres and even Scotland Yard itself.'"

Borrell and Cashinella, both Times reporters, wrote in "Crime in Britain Today" that after the Times story broke the Home Secretary

at the time, James Callaghan, called a secret meeting of newspaper editors and proprietors.

"At this gathering in the Home Office he privately voiced his fears that 'something' could well happen on the 28th. October.... At the same time, Sir John Waldron called a meeting at Scotland Yard of senior Fleet Street editorial executives and spoke freely, but privately, of his fears....It was essential, politically, that an 'anti-demonstration feeling' should be fired in the public imagination. It was felt necessary that public opinion should be against the demonstration, with all its hidden threats....

The Special Branch then hatched up their own plot. They decided to 'leak' their fears to the press and allow the situation to snowball. Public antipathy would do the rest....It was a clear case of the media being manipulated by the Special Branch...."

The State security forces are also interested in suppressing information on acts of resistance, as in the early Angry Brigade bombings and more

'I've always assumed the official line is we put the army's version first and then any other.'
- BBC TV news sub-editor



recently during the Schleyer kidnapping, which was a news blackout on a European level.

"It is up to responsible liberal democratic governments to co-operate, so far as they are able, to deny the terrorist the most powerful of all contemporary propaganda weapons....Western governments should seek the cooperation of the media in denying sensational or exaggerated publicity to terrorists and in avoiding glamorisation or condonation of their crimes"

(Paul Wilkinson in a lead article in the Sunday Times, 27.8.78)

"We should be able to rely on the public spirit of journalists and T.V. people to stay away until the police say all is well again"

(Conservative MP, Rhodes Boyson)

Where reporters break the code of silence on events or criticism against the State security forces they are "frozen out", i.e., denied access to information which is the lifeblood of any journalist. This has now been institutionalised by the issue of press cards by the police to "approved" journalists, and recognizing only those press cards as valid.

Recent examples of media manipulation of resistance struggles include, in addition to the Persons Unknown case, the arrest and deportation of Astrid Proll, the IRA bombings (especially the famous white car) and the various stories fed to the press since the assassination of Airey Neave.

The way in which the 'suppression of information' technique has worked can be seen with the "law and Order" television series, which was an extremely relevant criticism of police, courts and prisons:

"The BBC yesterday refused to comment on its refusal to allow the export of its controversial drama series, Law and Order.... Scotland Yard threatened to withdraw facilities for filming unless it was allowed to veto the result....managing director of BBC television said last week that there were no plans to repeat the series in Britain" (Guardian, 25.6.79)

A direct result of this series and other friction between journalists and security forces has been the contract between the BBC and the Metropolitan Police Force, "Procedural Arrangements with the Metropolitan Police" (see Box). The ITV has now also concluded such a contract. The censorship previously rigidly adhered to, only for Irish resistance news has now, as planned, spread to the mainland.

We have tried to show that the State has been giving a lot of thought to psychological warfare and is beginning to implement these ideas both in Britain and on a European level. It is for us not to laugh at and deride the press, radio and television, but to realise the cumulative effect of years of manipulative news coverage both on the population as a whole and on all of us as individuals....In what context have you used the word, 'terrorist'???

With all this in mind it is easier to guess at the real facts behind the press build-up to the Persons Unknown arrests.

Policing The News

The BBC and London's police have an agreement which could prevent the broadcast of material 'which the Metropolitan Police does not wish broadcast'. Below, extracts from the 1978/79 minutes of the BBC's News and Current Affairs weekly meetings reveal how the pact was arranged.

The trouble started after 'Law and Order'...

Director of News and Current Affairs (DNCA) Dick Francis said that while this series was not the direct concern of members of the meeting it raised important questions about 'faction', the documentary approach to drama which in turn could have repercussions for the BBC's documentary programme makers. He wondered, for instance, whether the first episode of 'Law and Order' might sour journalistic relations with Scotland Yard, and particularly Department A10 (the section concerned with complaints and police behaviour and corruption). Some newsmen had expressed their concern at the lack of co-operation since the arrival of the new Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and the new Director of Information. (11.4.78)

Dick Francis was right...

Desmond Wilcox said he was worried to the point of being alarmed at a form of contract now being put in front of BBC programme staff by the Metropolitan Police before any facilities were offered. This form of contract sought to impose upon the BBC an undertaking to provide pre-transmission viewings and not to broadcast material obtained in consequence of access afforded 'which the Metropolitan Police does not wish broadcast'. (11.7.78)

The problem intensified...

The Director of News and Current Affairs referred to the previous week's discussion and said that Desmond Wilcox in his capacity as the Executive Producer of a programme that had effectively been denied facilities by the Metropolitan Police (by its insistence on a contract) had written to Mr Peter Nievens to say that he regarded the new form of contract as unacceptable. (18.7.78)

Efforts were made to settle the quarrel...

The Director of News and Current Affairs said that, following the Director General's meeting with the Commissioner, he, DNCA, would be meeting Peter Nievens, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, during the following week. He did

not want to prejudice the outcome of the meeting, but would certainly be making it clear that the BBC had no intention of entering into any form of written contract. (8.8.78)

But the police were insistent...

The Director of News and Current Affairs drew attention to the letter from Mr Peter Nievens, dated 27 October 1978, previously circulated to members of the meeting. The letter set out an elaborate procedure for future relations between the BBC and the Police, which he, DNCA, thought would establish an altogether too formal system. Some of the points made were reasonable... but the full procedure set out by Mr Nievens, which included explicit provisions for an appeal to the Board or to the Director-General, were unacceptable. (28.11.78)

And the BBC capitulated...

PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE METROPOLITAN POLICE

1 These points are only for cases which the Metropolitan Police consider delicate, affecting privacy, 'sub judice', national security and such areas. They are not for news items or straightforward current affairs features on police work—eg the opening of new police stations, the introduction of new vehicles and equipment, etc.

2 When embarking on a potentially sensitive programme, a BBC producer would meet with some body from 'P' Department to talk over the subject and the area the BBC wished to portray, as well as the facilities they considered necessary to do this. The programme would be defined as clearly as is possible at this stage. Afterwards, the BBC producer would send a letter to the Metropolitan Police setting out what had been agreed.

3 The Metropolitan Police would then agree the letter's contents and acknowledge that it covered the necessary points.

4 The Metropolitan Police would be kept informed of any subsequent change of plan and, if necessary, a further meeting would be convened to agree any alterations. Similar talks would be held between the Police and the BBC to sort out any disagreement.

5 It would be open to the Metropolitan Police to write to the BBC outlining anything they thought went against an agreement between them. The BBC would then look into the matter and report their findings to the Metropolitan Police.

6 If the Police were not satisfied, they could register a formal complaint with the BBC's Director-General.

TIME OUT-15.6.79

Anti-terrorist squad swoops on house BOMB CACHE SEIZED IN LONDON RAID

Anarchist cell hit in Yard arms raid

SCOTLAND YARD anti-terrorist detectives claimed today they had struck a major blow against an anarchist cell planning attacks on establishment targets.

The claim comes after a man was arrested and arms and ammunition were seized in a raid by armed officers on a North London house last night.

The officers found four revolvers, two automatic pistols and hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

Arsenal

The house had been under observation in a long-running investigation into a terrorist group.

The arrested man, who is English, is expected to be charged during the weekend. The Yard's anti-terrorist unit is looking for several terrorists who have formed a London-based group which is believed to have a "small arsenal" of weapons.

Hundreds of rounds of ammunition have been seized by detectives from Scotland Yard's Anti-Terrorist Branch in a raid on a house in North London.

One man was taken away from the house and was today being questioned by senior detectives who have spent months investigating the formation of an alleged anarchist cell.

Similar raids have been carried out by armed police at addresses throughout the London area. Scotland Yard have not revealed the exact location of last night's raid but they confirmed that a man was helping their inquiries.

The guns discovered in the operation are understood to include four revolvers and two automatic pistols. They were packed together with a large quantity of ammunition in a large suitcase.

Police fingerprint men and forensic scientists were called to the house to carry out a close examination and the guns were taken away for study by firearms experts. It is understood that the latest Anti-Terrorist Branch inquiry does not relate to the IRA although some evidence has been found that an anarchist group could be receiving assistance from terrorists in Ireland and on the continent.

The men in iron masks

These "knights in armour" are crusaders (1963-style) against violent crime. Iron masks, like those pictured above, and armoured waistcoats, are being issued to the police at Munich, West Germany.

They will be worn when the police have to deal with criminals known to be armed and dangerous.

Bomb charge man 'an idealist'

A HOLLOWAY man facing bomb charges was member of an "idealistic group planning to overthrow society," it was alleged this week.

Edward Ladd, aged 28, of 10, Holloway, appeared at Magistrates Court, where others, charged of conspiring to cause explosions, were being remanded and bailed.

books on spying and terrorism, shouted: "This is to create a paranoic state and show we are dangerous."

Detective Superintendent Peter Bradbury, of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist squad, said: "the group consisted of idealistic persons who believe that they should take positive steps to overthrow society."

"We believe all these defendants would commit other offences if they were granted bail."

"Only three members of their group are in court and there are others at large with whom they would associate. It is my contention that their activities have been nipped in the bud by these arrests."

He said it would be alleged that Ladd, who was making his first appearance in court, had associated with others. Ladd's fingerprints, he claimed, were

found in a flat where the others were arrested.

He had made an attempt to escape from custody before and would not turn up in court at a later date.

The Superintendent said he could not accept bail even on strictest condition.

Mr David Carter, representing Ladd, said he would live in Bristol and report twice daily to police if granted bail. Two sureties of £1000 would be given and Ladd's passport would be surrendered.

The two other defendants, at the hearing, where reporting restrictions were lifted, were 30, and Ronan

"Bomb Material seized in hunt for Anarchists" (Daily Telegraph)
and "Yard in Hunt for more Bombers" (Evening News)
were the headlines that caught my eye on May 25, 1978. On careful reading of the articles it seems as if the original author was the same but that each individual reporter had chopped it around to make it look like an independent, 'well-informed' article. The reporters had obviously willingly accepted without a hint of question the "facts" as they were fed to them.

"Bomb-making equipment was seized..." (Daily Telegraph)
"Associates of the couple...are being watched by police around the clock." (Evening News)

No question as to whether the "associates" had done anything illegal. In a police story that says two people had been arrested for something, the police can then with impunity declare that they are watching others - never mind the legality. It creates a nice atmosphere: world-wide conspiracy, hordes of police watching hoards of revolutionaries - we are in the middle of a war, thank god for our protectors in blue. War justifies all.

The next day the build-up continued:

"I knew girl at 'bomb-flat' - Actress" (Daily Express)
"Actress in 'bomb-bedsit' shock" (Sun)

So it was a bomb factory...

"Couple held in anti-terror raid" (Daily Mail)

"Hunt for terror targets" (Daily Mirror)

So they are terrorists...

Psychologically it must begin to have an effect; with the emotional words bomb and terror being used often, enough people will continue to believe that something is up - there is an enemy - a nice coup by a specialist police unit: the Anti-Terrorist Squad.

While the anarchist scene was running around trying to gather its wits and to work out who is, or even who the pigs define as associates of the two who seem to be the only guinea pigs so far in a police exercise of creating hysteria, the obliging media came out on May 27 with even more horror stories after appropriate dramatic new flashes on the radio and television the night before:

"Hunt for car full of bombs" (Sun)

"And detectives were also searching for a bomb factory..."

Police hunt for booby-trap car...Anti-Terrorist police were last night scouring London for a car they believe could kill...

It may be booby-trapped with a bomb...Police warned anyone spotting it not to go near it and not to touch it."

"Bomb car hunt in London" (Daily Telegraph)

And so on...

Suitably impressed, worried about you and your dearests safety? Fear not, Scotland Yard knows all about it and has warned you; so follow their instructions and you will have a peaceful existence. The two inside must be a right nasty pair to have a car like that. Who needs a jury when we have the obliging media to objectively assess the facts that are handed out by Scotland Yard?

The objectivity of the media becomes apparent when this bomb car is found "dumped": no bombs, no killing car, just an ordinary car.



The only news came in the Guardian (3.6) - a little paragraph entitled "Wanted car found dumped".

On June 5, 1978 I learn that there is a "Man on Bomb Plot charge (Guardian) and "Terror Squad detain man in raid on flat" (Daily Telegraph). So another person is raided and held, the plot thickens and the barrage of press has created this plot. It is logical that the Evening Standard reports the same:

"Arrests 'foil blast plan'"

Quotes from the court hearing referred to in the article can be found elsewhere in this pamphlet, including the infamous "idealistic persons who believe that they should take positive steps to overthrow society."

The papers the next day referred to the attacks by the police on the three appearing in court with suitable state subjectivity:

"Bomb charge two dragged shouting from the dock" (Daily Telegraph)

"Anarchist plot court in uproar" (daily Express)

"Bomb case three dragged from dock" (Morning Star)

The constant linking of the emotional words bomb and plot to the case establishes an automatic connection, so that if you hear the names mentioned you will think "those are the bombers/plotters."

This trend continues. On June 9, I read:

"Bomb pair face more charges" (Guardian)

"Couple accused of plot face other charges" (Daily Telegraph)

"Bomb charge man 'an idealist'" (Islington Gazette)

Bombers/plotters/idealists - they're all the same if you ask me...

A breath of slightly freshened air came with the Guardian on June 16:

"Handcuffs in dock" with "tight security...each defendant handcuffed to a policeman...Mr. Guymer, the magistrate, said it was at the discretion of those responsible...A reporter from the Irish Times gained access only after other journalists had made a written application to the magistrate."

But even then I realised that that was defensive; the Guardian may have reported on the various outrages but they never commented, let alone criticized the actions of the police and the court.

Then, all goes quiet...the police have saved society presumably from the destruction of civilisation as we know it when a little paragraph in the Guardian on June 21 informs the public that a "Forth person was charged with conspiracy to cause explosions."

"Alleged terrorists get support" (Guardian) caught my eye on June 28 and I began to wonder at the build-up of these words: bombers/plotters/idealists/terrorists and how the images have been planted in my mind. What do I connect with them? An article reporting on the support for

these people is ignored by the use of the word "terrorist", although it seems a mere case of the reporter expressing sympathy but not realising the effects of his words.



MILAN NEWSPAPER CHIEF FEELS
ITALY'S NEW RESISTANCE

The Daily Mail on July 6 brings out the more obvious but at the same time effective psychological warfare news:

"Yard Squad Hunt for Terror Gang" and begins "Four terrorists thought to be planning attacks on establishment targets are being hunted throughout Britain..."

A lovely dramatic scene setting, but with what relevance has the story suddenly appeared?

"...but a possible connection with the Baader Meinhoff gang has been investigated."

Terrorist linked with terrorist... a European connection? Naturally...

It has become so serious that "Home Secretary Merlyn Rees is being kept closely informed on the search which is receiving top priority." So despite what is produced in court (infact very little) something must be up because people at the top are kept "closely informed".

"The Yard has been in close liason with German and other authorities..."

So this "international conspiracy" is being fought on an international level and Western Democracy looks like it has been saved for another day.

On July 7, we read:

"Gun Haul Seized in London " (Evening Standard) with "an anarchist group could be receiving assistance from terrorists in Ireland and on the Continent."

"Anarchist cell hit in Yard Arms Raid" (Evening News)

After that, there is complete silence in the press with only the Anarchist press, Time Out, Newline and PNS attempting the expose the militarisation

of the state security court and the crumbling of the case. The majority of the left press seemed to have swallowed the propaganda campaign launched by the straight press and they kept a silence to match their confusion.

When the "Conspiracy to Cause Explosions" charge was dropped and bail was granted, no one was interested in the sensational stupidities of the police. A few papers did mention the crumbling of the case by the failure of the much vaunted I.D. parades.

Obviously, from the first arrests, the press acted as a vanguard in propagating the prosecution offensive and creating an atmosphere of fear and paranoia. By impressing upon the public the dangerous and violent nature of the people suspected, the press, directed by the police, tried to turn any anti-state feelings the public might have had into a feeling of fear for those people, those bombers/plotters/idealists/terrorists/anarchists.

The "case" has been effectively planted in the minds of anyone who reads the papers, with all of its sensational accounts; the collapse of the case has been left out. Come September 17, what price a fair trial?

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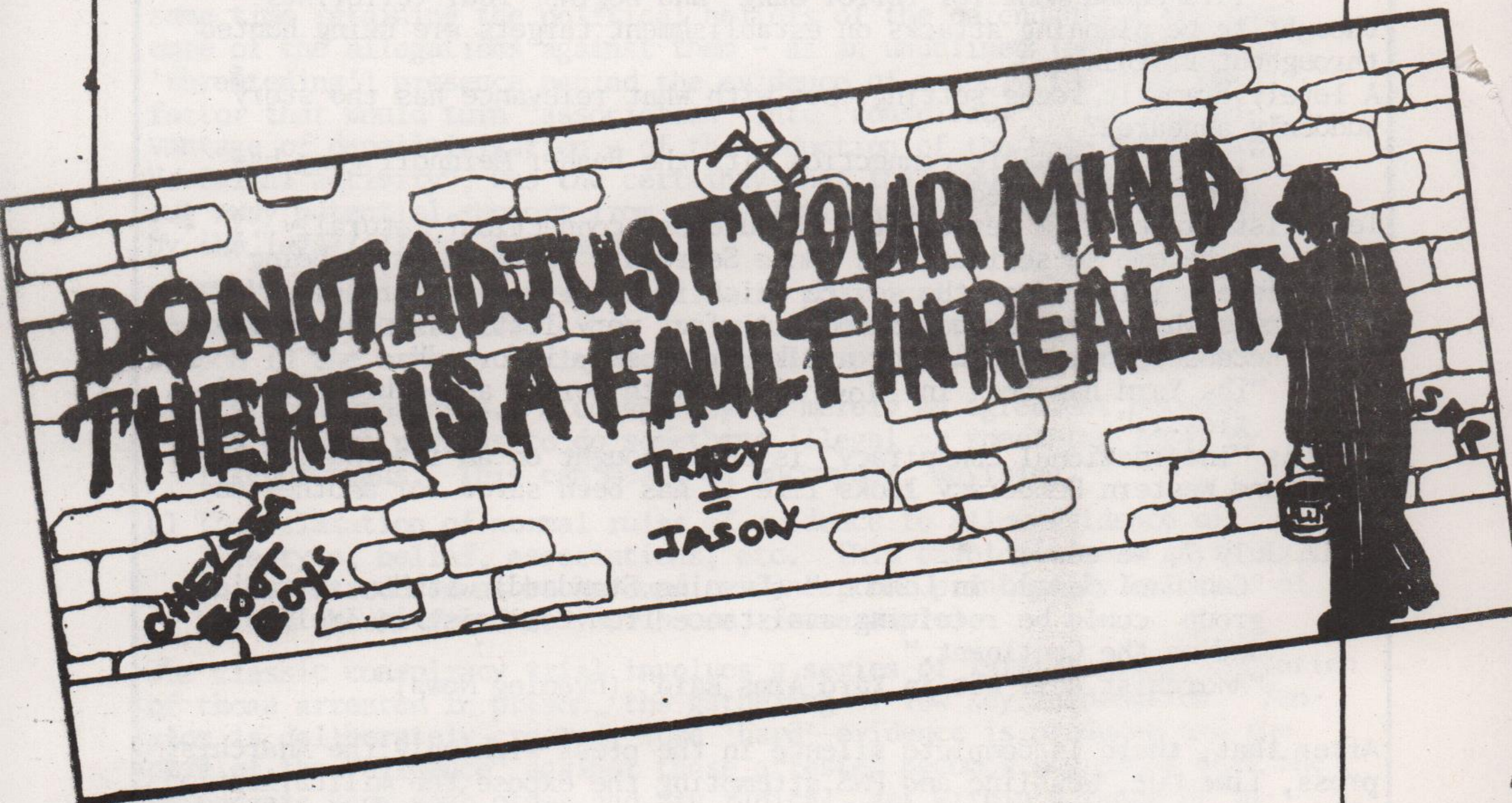
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IN EUROPE



INTO THE UNKNOWN-

The Support Campaign



The Beginning

The first I heard about it all was when I walked into work on May 26th. and a mate thrust the Daily Mail in front of me and said, "I see your mob have been nicked". I'm always getting my leg pulled about my politics. However, this time I read the news with some shock as I recognized Iris and Ronan as fellow anarchists, though I'd met them only a couple of times before. I couldn't believe it, and quickly phoned around my friends to find out the truth; but everyone was shocked like me. In fact the paper said they were searching for more people - who, for god's sake? I didn't believe this until Taff was nicked on 2nd. June. This was becoming really serious - I'd seen Taff around quite a lot - people began to get a bit frightened now. Where would it stop?

There was only one way to protect ourselves and that was to organise a defence group and publicise the situation to counter the hysterical crap in the papers.

Getting Persons Unknown off the Ground

Five or six of us who felt the same called a private meeting. We tried to overcome the atmosphere of paranoia being created, deciding that we had nothing to 'defend', but rather that we would be a support group, supporting each other, supporting the comrades arrested and supporting our libertarian ideas and activities which were being attacked. We resolved to go to the remand hearings at Lambeth Magistrates Court to show our solidarity with Iris, Ronan and Taff. This took some

courage as we found the place crawling with armed pigs and we were all searched.

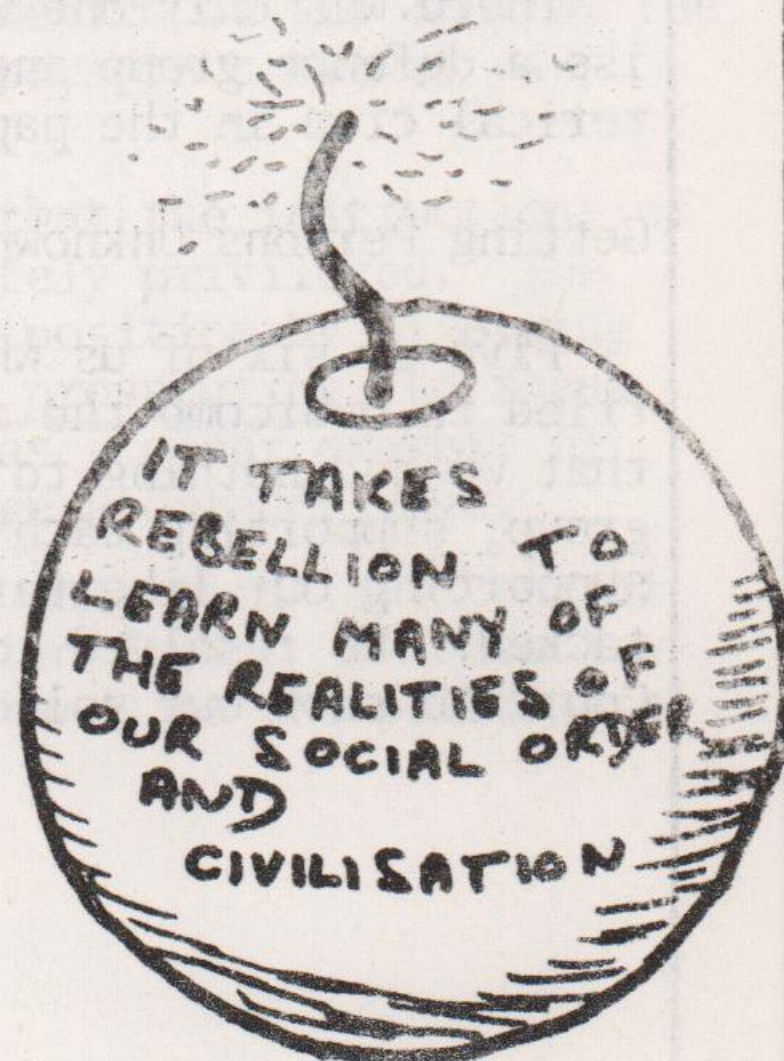
Faced with such State activity we felt very intimidated and were afraid to meet (conspiracy?), afraid to talk over the phone, and began hiding or destroying our address books. This situation could only be overcome by calling on more people to join us. After the statement about "idealistic persons who would take positive steps to overthrow society" the blatantly political nature of the affair became obvious and support began to grow. As those arrested had "conspired with persons unknown" that's what we decided to call ourselves! For to be honest, we were proud to be working together, conspiring to make a better world.

We began to sort out what was going on, publish a press statement for Fleet Street, the left press and the Anarchist papers and groups. We also had to arrange legal defence, collect money for and visit our imprisoned comrades. We had a hell of a lot to do.

The next blow came when we heard that Stuart Carr, someone I didn't know, had been arrested outside London. He'd been held incommunicado for five days before coming to court. So now there were four. Meanwhile there was news of raids against anarchists all round the country, this was looking like a virtual declaration of war by the ATS.

We published advice on how to cope with this threat, your rights if arrested, etc, and support groups began to spring up in many parts of the country turning anger and fear into resistance. The Manchester group, for example, waylaid Merlin Rees (Home Secretary) and demanded he release the prisoners. Meanwhile two of us in London were raided and threatened. We publicised this through our weekly press statement and continued to visit court. We also held a picket of Brixton prison shouting encouragement to our friends and all the other prisoners too. Later, because of Iris' prison conditions, women in London organised their own picket also. We compiled all the information on raids, court appearances etc. and tried to involve the solicitors in our Legal Group. We set up other specific groups: Publications; Press Group; and Fundraising; and were developing an effective organised campaign. We were using Rising Free bookshop as a sort of centre/office, as Vince, a full-time worker there, was active in the support group.

I went on holiday at the beginning of July, and it was only when I returned that I learned about D-Day.....



D-DAY, July 4th. 1978

It began when one of us was walking down Upper Street at 4.30.p.m.,

"I called in briefly at Rising Free....soon after I left, I was aware of being followed. Then a car pulled into the kerb and a cop with an ID card stepped onto the pavement in front of me; a second man came from the car and joined him. They pushed me into a doorway and searched me. They asked my name, address, age and place of birth, then radioed Criminal Records Office (CRO) to check me out. They refused to tell me what they were investigating or why they had stopped me. They said that for all they knew I was wanted! After establishing my address and checking with CRO they let me go."

A Persons Unknown meeting had been arranged for that evening - originally to be held at Centerprise.

"At 6.30. I set off to meet other people going to the meeting....At about 7.25 a group of about six of us, including Vince, set off on the North London Line for Dalston. There had been two people watching us at Highbury whom I now know to be ATS officers. As we left Dalston to walk towards Centerprise we were followed and people were watching us from all directions. We met some other people who told us the meeting place had been changed. We decided to split up and go different ways and I set off with Vince. Unmarked police cars were passing us all the time and men were standing aimlessly around who were obviously cops. As we reached Dalston market five cars came round the corner in formation. A large number of men jumped out and threw us against some railings. They searched us roughly then put us in two separate cars. I was made to sit without moving, my hands on the back of the seat in front of me. It was 7.45.p.m. A policeman with a raised truncheon sat beside me for the entire journey.

We were taken to Dalston police station, where the police were told that it was "D-Day" and that they should take us to Paddington Green. Dalston was the local Headquarters for the operation, but it appeared that this might have been a fuck-up as some of the police seemed totally ignorant of what they were supposed to be doing."

When the two were taken from the cars at Paddington Green, what appeared to be an anti-sniper exercise was gone through - one officer got out and gave the all-clear before they were taken into the station. The whole operation was obviously being used as some sort of active exercise by the ATS.

"At Paddington Vince and I were stripped and searched and that's the last I saw of him. My property was taken and I was placed in a cell. At 10.00.p.m. I was taken to see a doctor and given a brief examination." (This is a requirement under the PTA - Bradbury was later to deny that they had been held under the Act.)

"I was labelled 'X' and Vince 'Y', a standard practice to keep friends and relatives unaware of where you're being held. The police said they were going to search my address and asked if I wanted to accompany them. I said I didn't. Later I found they had taken some letters and a broken typewriter.

I was left alone in a cell until the morning, when I was given some breakfast. At about 11.30 I was taken for questioning, mainly about my politics. After a few answers one of the cops commented, 'Ah! then you are left of the Labour party!'"....At about 12.30 I was allowed to see a lawyer and told I could leave."

From comments Vince had heard on the police radio when they had been picked up in Hackney, it is clear that the whole support group was under surveillance. After the meeting another member was stopped, searched and CRO'd. The implications of the whole operation gradually became evident. The ATS had clearly planned to make the arrest at Centerprise, probably with the object of breaking up the meeting, identifying all the supporters and attempting to terrorise us. The change of meeting place had obviously confused them and they were forced to move in earlier.

I was particularly upset about Vince's arrest as he was an old friend of mine. Trevor was arrested three days later, allegedly with a suitcase of guns. So now there were six. In response twenty of us picketed the ATS headquarters at Paddington Green and I think our campaign was having some effect at this time and helped to prevent more arrests. With blanket 'conspiracy' charges virtually anyone could have been roped in.

Campaigning

Although the number of raids decreased, surveillance, mail interception and bugging of phones continued and groups outside London faced harassment. The security at Lambeth was stepped up.

Most of us were fairly inexperienced in the ways of campaigning against courts, prisons and the police, but we were learning fast. We'd grown to about 20-25 supporters active in some way, and as we began to understand the system we faced the early paranoia and confusion eased.

We began to discuss some of the issues on our minds. For example, as revolutionaries we all refuse to be judged by the State, and this is why we never at any stage claimed the defendants were either 'innocent' or 'guilty'. But we had to fight a legalistic battle for the sake of the defendants who had no wish to be martyrs. It became obvious that we, as a support group, had to develop our own independent existence to be really effective.

Initially we had made demands such as 'Scrap conspiracy laws, the PTA and the ATS', 'Free the Anarchists' but these were, to say the least, unrealistic; and anyway, why make demands of the State? So our aims shifted to:

- * legal support and welfare of the defendants
- * exposing what was happening, especially the ATS and their use of conspiracy laws and the PTA
- * analysing the motives behind the State's activity and likely future trends.

By this time we were quite a well-known and respected campaign, but were unable to get much positive support or action outside the anarchist and libertarian movements, which responded very well. The most sympathetic seemed to be those who shared some of our experiences - the ABC Official Secrets campaign, Friends of Astrid Proll, Irish republican groups and others involved in opposition to legal and police repression. At the same time we realised that the Left was mostly uninterested in the ATS activities, preferring to concentrate on Nazi groups, and for this reason we leafletted the Brixton Anti-Nazi carnival with a leaflet called 'What about State Fascism?', and 30-40 people joined us to demonstrate outside the prison that day.

We had to put a lot of pressure to get anything in the Left press (with the notable exceptions of Time Out, Newsline, Peoples News Service and some community papers). Anarchist papers and groups took up the case fully. Need I add that our efforts to interest the National press were by this time a total waste of energy.

We increased our production of badges, leaflets and posters, and organised jumble sales and concerts to raise money. Graffiti was important as well. We also held public meetings in London and spoke



at others organised by local support groups in a dozen other towns. I myself spoke about 'State Security' at a meeting with Robin Cook MP held by Liverpool Persons Unknown. We began to publish an internal bulletin for supporters around the country.

Groups were publishing their own material and organising fund-raising activities and concerts. This gave us all courage in London and also showed the pigs that they had failed to intimidate the Anarchist movement. Meanwhile news of our case was reaching concerned groups abroad and in five or six countries Anarchists organised solidarity protests outside British Embassies and Tourist Offices.

The routine work and meetings took up most of our time and the lack of money and a proper office were always problems, ones that we never resolved. The group settled at around twelve members by September and we even had a little time to eat and laugh together during our Sunday 'work-ins'. Too much pressure drives you up the wall sometimes!

At this time I was answering the mail daily, helping to do press statements and sometimes going to court Thursday mornings. I was visiting Ronan in prison once a week, which was important as we wished to involve the prisoners and their opinions in the campaign, and break down the isolation of being inside.

In a letter to us from prison, Ronan wrote:

"....As to what the group should define itself as, I have only one stipulation - that I be supported as an anarchist, and that no attempts be made to play down my anarchism.

.....I see our arrests as not simply an attack on the anarchist movement but an attack on the left in general. If they can get away with this, the position of the left versus the State will be greatly weakened. Solidarity, not sectarianism, will be what sees a successful campaign through."

The prisoners themselves were discussing the forthcoming trial and the campaign, and for a number of reasons Stuart Carr in a letter to us, disassociated himself from Persons Unknown and the other five defendants. This caused confusion both within the group and to our supporters, but was precipitated both by political differences and different legal situations, making a collective defence possible only for the five.

Bail and Committals

The court was the focus of our activity as the ATS case began to be shifted and weakened under pressure from the defence. A massive 'terrorist conspiracy with bombs' had become robberies and we renewed our campaigning for bail. To our surprise and joy Trevor was released on September 28th, but had to live outside London with his parents so couldn't join us. We felt that Iris' situation was the most urgent so began to publicise this particularly. Incredibly enough she was freed on October 26th. and joined us straight away, full of energy.

Around this time surveillance of our meetings increased and one comrade had his car broken into and the address pages of his diary ripped out. I myself was arrested at Lambeth for scrawling Anarchist signs on the court door - c'est la vie, c'est la guerre! We rushed around to get sureties for the other defendants and Vince was at last freed on December 11th. I was glad to see him again and he joined us and resumed work at Rising Free.

Some of the problems which we'd sorted out earlier now came to the fore again - the independence of Persons Unknown from the legal defence, combining reformist and revolutionary politics, relationships within the group. But we laid these aside in the need to organise publicity around the committals on December 21st.

The Committal date was altered three times, which undermined our plans, but in the week leading up to it we leafleted the five London prisons every day with a special leaflet supporting the struggles of all prisoners against the prison system. This was enthusiastically received by the vast majority of visitos, and even solicitors and social workers, many of whom took the leaflets inside to show the prisoners. I felt this was the most constructive action we had taken. However, the next day's 'national demonstration' in London was a disaster, and depressed us all. It was our own fault for lack of publicity and planning, but was rescued a little by a group of people going down to Fleet Street and occupying the office of the Chief Editor of the Daily Telegraph (an especially nauseating source of propaganda against us).

Taff was granted bail on 21st, but due to ATS intimidation of sureties didn't get out of Brixton until March 1st. By this time we were all frankly exhausted. This, combined with the lack of the remand hearings to focus on, led to less regular meetings and we failed to campaign effectively against the blatant victimisation of Ronan. His mother had twice come over at great expense from Belfast as surety, but to no avail. Both she and Ronan were disheartened, and so were we.

On top of this, interest in the case ceased in the Left and capitalist press, and it was hard to maintain our London-based group over the seven or eight months to trial as members involved themselves in other activities. The defendants began to meet regularly to prepare their defence, and five or six of us decided to produce this pamphlet. It wasn't until the trial loomed up a month or two away that we came together as a whole group once more.

Some Conclusions about our Campaign

Facing such a well organised and equipped enemy as the armed police, the legal and prison systems and the capitalist press has been no easy task. We have been attacked from all sides.

On our part, we have had many strengths and weaknesses. We have given a great deal of support to the arrested comrades, financial, legal, while in prison and also taking the onus off them as individuals, making it a collective fight back. We have undoubtedly had minor influence over the course of events, inside and outside court.

We have alerted the Anarchist movement and the libertarian left to some extent, to the nature of the ATS and its attack, but the job of publicising the case to people in general has proved too vast for us. The capitalist press put a police line, sensationalise or, like the Left, ignore what is happening, and there do not yet exist enough widely-read libertarian papers to counterbalance this. The local support groups aid greatly such a campaign, but our information and literature from London hasn't really been good enough - for example, we've never produced a short general leaflet for mass distribution.

The criminalisation of political activity affects the Left, but they have little instinct for opposing the increased militarisation of the State, and are generally reformist and stuck in the legal/illegal rut anyway. Independent groups and campaigns who share our anti-authoritarian ideas or our experiences at the hands of the law have been a support all along.

Activity has to be complemented by discussion about what is being done to have the best effect. Difficult problems such as reform vs. revolution, whether to pander to journalists, whether to take direct action (like the George Davis campaign) have to be resolved, and not by default. At the same time, the ways in which we organise and our relationships always need to be improved, so as to be efficient and also sensitive to each other. After the initial months of crisis which brought us all together, personal and political differences became apparent. There was a need to resolve these and develop a collective identity for Persons Unknown. Because of the complexities of the case and the constant new developments we often had difficulty in sharing accurate information effectively. Likewise with the many and differing tasks which were being done, it is hard to involve new people in the campaign unless there is a clear collective spirit.

To oppose the British State requires organisation, resources and understanding of what you are doing. A specific campaign can only do so much but can only be successful if we have the means to influence people and a base for revolutionary ideas and activities - local Anarchist groups, prisoners' support groups, papers, centres, etc. These have to be created now. The only defence against the State, and totalitarianism all over the world, is a growing, increasingly organised, libertarian resistance. We hope to continue to contribute to that.

We wish to recognise the work done by all the support groups, individuals and papers who've aided the campaign.

THE REALITY-

Survival in Prison

One of the worst things about being a prisoner on remand is the psychological anxiety caused by waiting for one's future to be determined. As anarchists, we don't accept the State's definition of legality and illegality but because the ultimate result is dependent on the trial, all of us are compelled to go along with the whole humiliating charade of pleading and defending our innocence and putting our lives on parade. I wish I had the courage to go into court and tell them that I don't accept that they have any legal, moral and especially political right to put anyone into the position of the accused and that I don't accept their right to 'administer justice'. But the 10 to 15 year prison sentence which would be the likely outcome of such behaviour reminds us that although they don't have the right to put us on trial, they have the power to do so...

INTERROGATION

When each of us was arrested, we were taken to Paddington Green Police Station, the headquarters of the Anti-Terrorist Squad. Paddington is a modern, obtrusive, multi-storied building off the Edgware Road. There is an underground tunnel from Paddington to Liverpool Street that is used for mail and security purposes. (What a convenient place to get rid of "undesirables" when it finally comes to that...) Upon arrival, we were put into cells then taken to a room for questioning that was even smaller than a cell. The whole atmosphere of the questioning room is designed to intimidate and frighten people. The white-walled cubicle contains a desk

I THINK,
THEREFORE
I AM...



...IN JAIL

and 4 chairs; at least three officers, sometimes more, were present for the questioning which consisted mainly of the police asking us questions about our politics. Initially, they refused us access to any lawyers, sometimes they got heavy, threatened us, and told us lies about ourselves. We were held for two to three days before being charged and taken to Brixton except Stuart Carr who was held incommunicado for 5 days (no one knew he had been arrested) and Vince Stevenson who was held for 6 days before being charged. Due to the fact that Vince was snatched from the street on his way to a Support Group meeting, friends immediately contacted a solicitor who was not allowed to see Vince until the third day. Vince was subjected to a mild form of torture when he was in Paddington - the light was on in his cell all night and he was consistently woken up and threatened. For the six days he was held, he was unable to even wash his face, and he was taken on only two five-minute walks handcuffed to an ATS officer.

In Northern Ireland, even more intense methods of sleep deprivation are used regularly along with other methods of both psychological and physical torture (such as hooding and beatings, etc.) in an attempt to break the victim. A lot of research (generally financed by the CIA) is carried out by the State in order to perfect sophisticated methods of interrogation. Due to unsatisfactory results, the State resorts to brutal physical force to obtain admissions (which are generally false, made under duress) and verballing, a process by which police write up interviews with the accused, inserting false statements aimed at making the victim appear guilty. Thus, when at the trial the accused states that he did not say these things and that the police are liars, his past record is brought up before the jury. When this is done, it is the police's words against the defendant's, and the jury is generally biased and tends to believe the police, thus incriminating the defendant. Despite the Royal Commission's allegations that the law favours the accused (right to silence, etc.) it is obvious that



the police have a hundred ways of fixing things that can incriminate the defendant - such as torturing to obtain "confessions", the planting of evidence, verballing, etc. Although the Robbery Squad and other branches of the police force have come under legal attack recently for such corruption, it is obvious that they will continue to use such methods in order to put more people in prison.

CATEGORY 'A' CLASSIFICATION

The initial procedure of being put into prison is shocking, especially for those who have never been there before. One is taken to reception, told to strip and to give the officers all of one's possessions; then one receives a prison number and 'browns', a prison uniform. One is then taken to a cell. We were all classified as Category A prisoners which meant that we were to be subjected to a stricter regime and tighter security than other prisoners. Category A is a security classification applied to those whose possible escape is claimed, by the authorities, to be highly dangerous to the public, the police or the security of the State. This was applied to us because of our politics. At Brixton, the men were put into the A security wing with about 40 other men whose charges ranged from conspiracy to armed robbery, murder and large scale theft. For Iris, being Category A meant being put in an isolated wing all on her own with no association with any male prisoner. She was one of the rare cases of a woman being held in Brixton, a men's prison; she was in solitary confinement until Astrid Proll and Khoulood Moghrabi were remanded there 3 months later.

Remand prisoners are allowed one visit a day and a specific quantity of food, fags, money which visitors generally bring in. We all looked forward to visits as it gave us our only contact with what was going on outside. Yet often the prison authorities tried to confuse things which in the long run would only wind us up more - the thing is to try not to let it show as we weren't going to give an inch to those sadistic bastards. Often visitors would come and be turned away for no reason, or they would be told we had already had a visit. Being Category A meant the police vetted all the visitors. If friends were refused, no excuse was given. All visits were conducted in a small room holding 4 tables and guards were always within hearing distance. The biggest problem was getting political literature. Depending on the screws' moods, political literature was often refused or censored in the mail with no explanation given. When we complained to the governor, a few things were let through but the whole procedure was absurd and illogical - it was obvious what they were trying to do... Letters often disappeared or were not accounted for and once a letter from the Support Group was not let through because Persons Unknown is not an identifiable person!

On two occasions Ronan was put into solitary confinement or 'on the block', once for refusing to change his cell after he had just decorated it, another time for telling the screw to fuck off because he told Ronan not to wave at his solicitor through the window. When Trevor joined in Ronan's protests on the first occasion, he also was put on the block. When a remand prisoner is put into solitary confinement, he is not allowed

A DAY IN THE (NON) LIFE OF A PRISONER

Prison:

BRIXTON

Status:

REMAND

Category Classification:

A SECURITY

Cell:

8' X 12'

Contents:

1 bed (set in concrete), 1 chair
1 table, 1 pisspost, 1 triangular
stand for washing bowl, 1 mirror
made of thin metal (no moveable
objects with sharp edges permitted)

7.00 - 7.30: slop out
7.30 - 9.00: fetch breakfast, eat in cell, locked up
9.00 - 9.30: slop out
9.30 - 10.00: exercise in caged area*
10.00 - 10.30: clean out cells
10.30 - 11.30: banged up (association, depending on landing)
11.30 - 1.15: dinner in cell, banged up
1.15 - 1.30: unlocked, slop out
1.30 - 2.00: exercise
2.00 - 4.30: association (banged up in cells or on landing,
depending on rota)
4.30: banged up for the night (at weekends 3.30)
6.30: slop out individually

* exercise time and association time rotate every day between the two landings of Cat.A prisoners so that there are never more than 20 men unlocked at one time.

Association time:

Around 4 hours per day

Exercise time:

Up to 1 hour per day

Visits:

One per day, 15 minutes

Cell searches:

Every two weeks

Food:

90% carbohydrate (one orange every Sunday)

Cost of food for each prisoner: £3.71 per week

Cost of food for each prison guard dog: approx. £8 per week

Cost to the State to keep someone in prison: £112 per week

Amount spent on each prisoner for medical care: £15 per year

The Prison Authorities "want to reintroduce (sic) CONTROL
UNITS for anarchists and subversives".

any food from the outside, he is denied all association with the other prisoners and he cannot have a radio in his cell. Ronan was put through this disgusting treatment twice for two-week periods each for the most petty reasons by the screws.

WOMEN AS CATEGORY A IN BRIXTON

Iris's conditions at Brixton were quite different from the men's. From the beginning of her imprisonment in May, 1978, she had been singled out for the harshest treatment and the most obvious harrassment the prison authorities could invent. When she was first imprisoned, she was denied visits completely, even with her Mother. When visits were finally granted, there were at least two screws listening closely to her conversations and censoring her if she even mentioned her conditions. She was strip searched before and after each visit - a humiliating treatment that was reserved only for women. Eventually, after many protests by her co-defendants, the Support Group and herself about being held in solitary confinement, she was granted three concessions. Firstly, she was allowed to watch television 2 hours a day in lieu of association; secondly, she was able to write to Ronan and he to her, although they had to pay postage even though it was within the same institution; and thirdly, she was granted one 15 minute a week visit with Ronan on the basis of common law husband-wife.

When Khouloud Moghrabi was remanded to Brixton in August, Iris could no longer watch television but was allowed association with Khouloud which was difficult considering Khouloud couldn't speak English. When Astrid Proll was brought in in September, the three women were not allowed to associate together at the same time. Below is a letter Iris wrote to the Support Group describing the absurd treatment:

Dear Friends,

...As far as being 'a trois' (referring to the two other women) it doesn't really work out like that I fear! We three very dangerous women are not allowed out of our cells together. Don't ask me



why when 7 Cat. 'A' men are allowed to associate. They must have made up a new set of rules for us. We are all complaining about it.

It seems that I get less association the more people there are! When I was by myself I was unlocked for a further two hours in the evening to watch television, so I was 'out' for about 8 hours a day, though it was pretty pointless as I had no one to talk to.

When Khouloud came they stopped the television - so we got 6 hours a day. Now there is someone else here I've got about 3 hours! I just hope no one else comes or they might as well throw away the key.

As far as I'm concerned, conditions have got worse. They seem to have taken it into their heads that I have become a dangerous person - I don't know why. I'm really living a Jekyll and Hyde existence. I know I am a quiet kind of person yet they treat me like a homicidal maniac. For example, I'm not allowed my knitting or my typewriter in my cell, they say I might use them against them as dangerous weapons. It's quite ridiculous - I'm only allowed to associate in my association period and as that has been cut down so drastically, I have no time hardly to do them. I would still like to try to get to Holloway - I really don't see how I can be any worse off.



MAIL-BAG SOWING AT THE SCRUBS.



A SCREW, SCREWING.

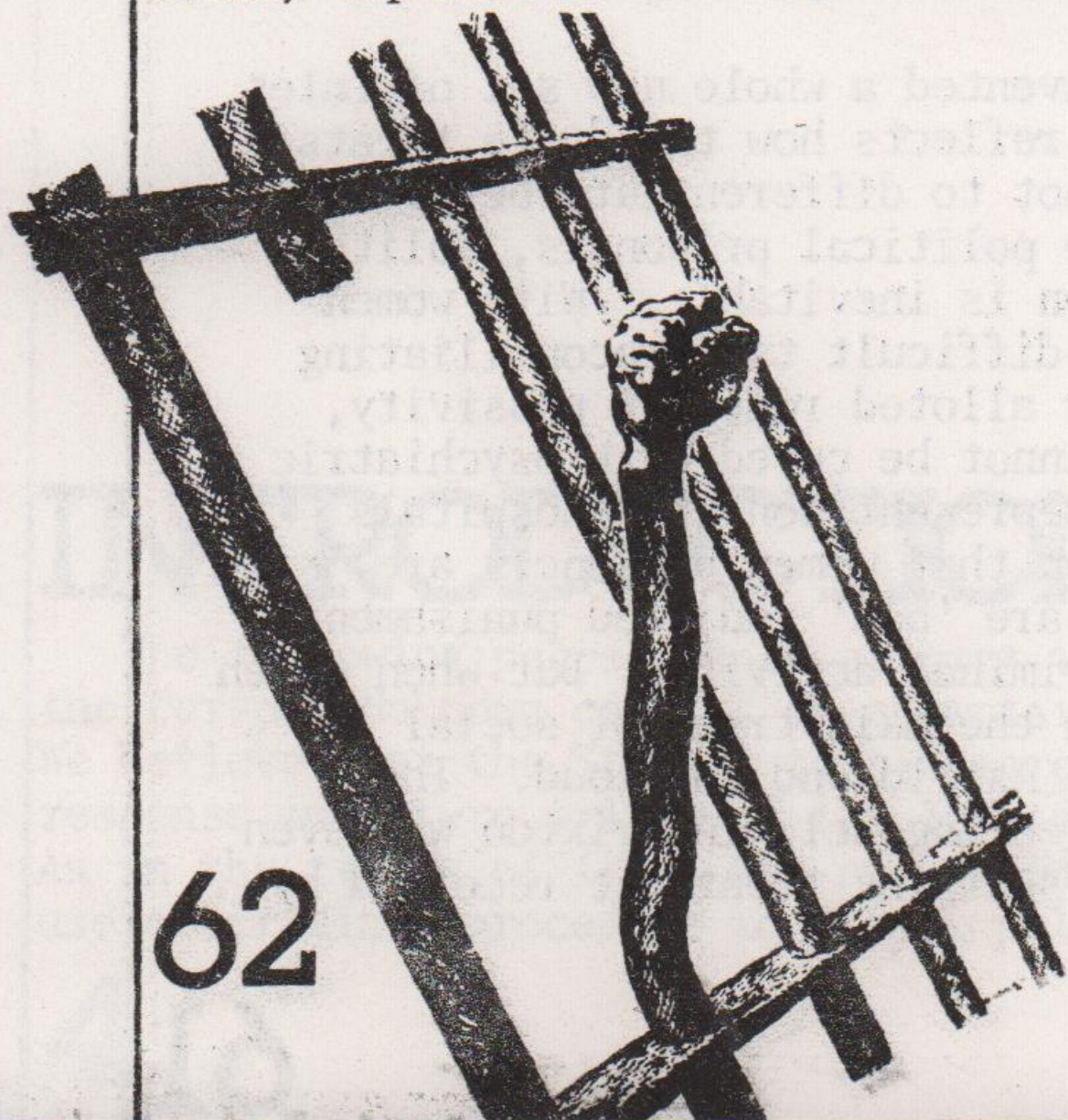
The fact that the prison authorities invented a whole new set of rules for the three women being held in Brixton reflects how the State treats political prisoners - although it claims not to differentiate between political and social prisoners. With male political prisoners, solitary confinement and Category 'A' classification is inevitable. With women political prisoners, the State has a more difficult time reconciling the fact that women don't live up to their allotted roles of passivity, nor that they have done something which cannot be cured with psychiatric help. Women's prisons in Britain mainly represent confined hospitals with psychiatric facilities; the conception that women prisoners are 'sick' and need treatment whereas male prisoners are 'bad' and need punishment reflects the sexist way the State views criminal activity. But when women become politicized, they are isolated from the mainstream of social prisoners - as shown in the cases of Iris, Astrid and Khouloud. The treatment that these three women got while being held in Brixton was even more degrading and humiliating than the disgusting treatment received by the male prisoners.

DECATEGORIZATION

In January, the remaining two in Brixton, Taff and Ronan, were 'decategorised' - they were moved from the high security wing they had been held for 9 months to 'A' wing of Brixton. The move was in line to 'de-emphasize' the political nature of the charges (while retaining the defendants political beliefs as the heart of the prosecution case) but it could equally represent an attempt to isolate them from the top security prisoners so as to avoid any further development of solidarity.

In 'A' wing, paradoxically, the conditions deteriorated. Taff was finally released on bail and Ronan was left having to share a cell, thus leaving him little privacy to prepare his own defense. The conditions outside the Category 'A' remand section are known to be unbearably overcrowded and for the 8 months Ronan must spend in these conditions before being tried is obviously detrimental to his health, both physically and psychologically. By the time the case is heard, Ronan will have been in prison for almost 18 months - an incredibly long time for any one to be held as a remand prisoner.

From the beginning of his internment, there has been constant harassment over books, reading materials, etc. Publications by Amnesty International were refused on unknown grounds and it was only after protests by Amnesty to the Home Secretary that Ronan was allowed to receive them. His mail has been withheld, including a CND calendar from the Chairman, Bruce Kent. When Ronan protested about a chess book being withheld and told it would have to go through an educational source, he was put on punishment and his defense papers were refused for up to ten days. He has been refused visits with some people and even visits with his solicitor have been cancelled due to 'mistakes' by the prison authorities, resulting in difficulties in preparing his case. Although he was allowed to use a typewriter as a Cat. 'A' prisoner, he is not allowed to use it anymore on the grounds that if he has it in his possession it may be stolen from him! On visits, one feels like an object on a production line - a long table separates visitors from prisoners, and the noisy atmosphere makes it virtually impossible to carry on a reasonable conversation. And for 15 minutes!



Some of the filthy conditions for remand prisoners:

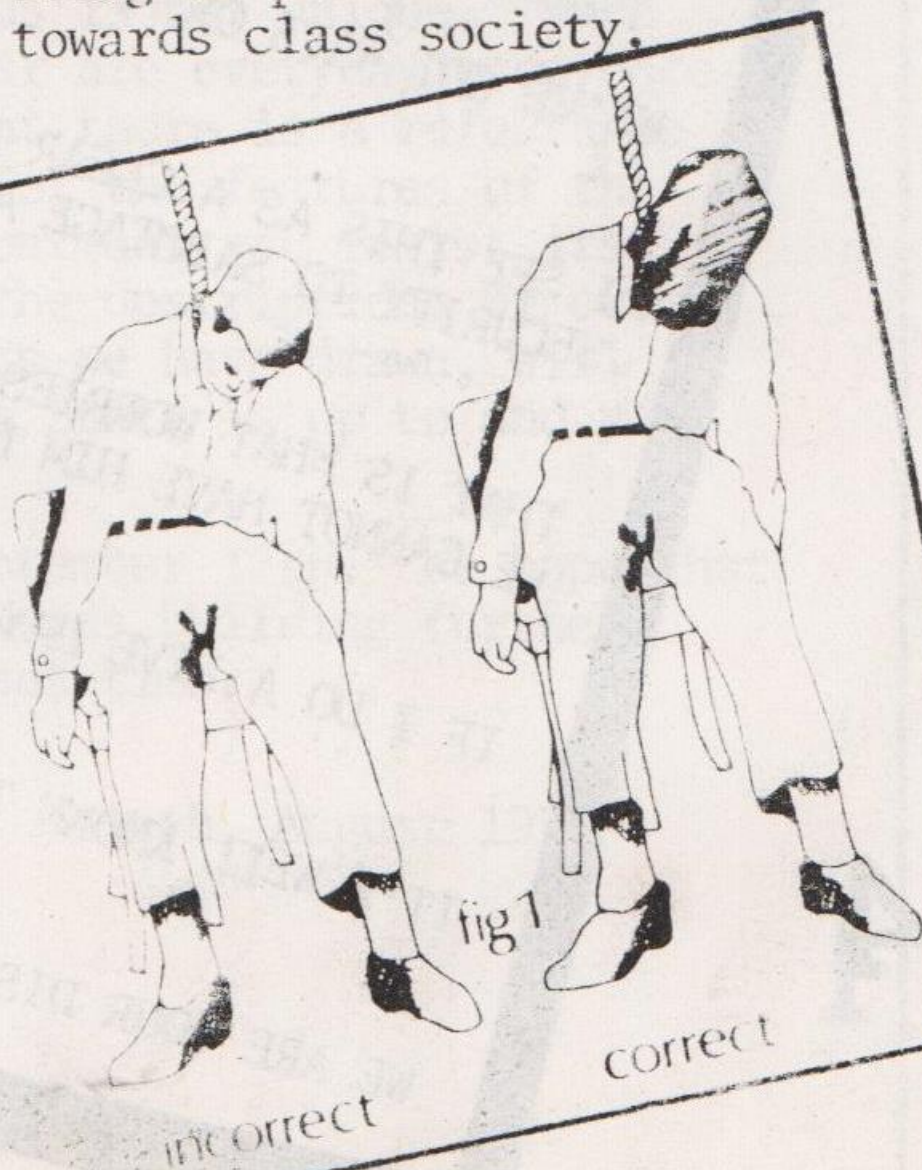
- there are two toilets for use by 80 men
- there are five showers for use by 150 men (resulting in 2 showers at best per week, generally with cold water)
- the statutory one hour exercise per day is limited to periods varying from 30 to 45 minutes.
- prisoners are locked up for at least 22 hours per day (the 2 free hours designed for association are taken up with visits, exercise, slop out)
- there is no proper work, educational or recreational facilities so that a prisoner spends his time being bored, unconstructive as the thought of his forthcoming trial eats away at his sense of balance.

THE TRIPS TO COURT

Until the committals on December 21st., we had to appear at Lambeth Magistrates Court every Thursday. This meant being taken downstairs at Brixton and put into a special police carrier. Each of us was locked into a small cubicle where there was nothing to hold on to. The van moves very fast and is accompanied by several speeding police cars, sirens on, threatening atmosphere. The small windows inside the carrier were darkened and thus it was virtually impossible to see out; the erratic driving threw us against the walls and made us completely defenseless and frightened about being injured if the van tipped over. Apparently there have been several accidents in the past involving prison carriers where prisoners have been hurt. Although we all complained and our solicitors brought it up in court no one authority would take responsibility. After the sickening journey in the van, we were handcuffed from the van to the court and dragged by ATS thugs to the cells beneath the court. On several occasions, especially after we protested in court about our treatment, we were handcuffed (hands at back) in the van the whole way back to Brixton. Not only being terribly uncomfortable, we were absolutely defenseless should the van be involved in an accident. After over six months of the tedious, dangerous rides in the prison carrier, we were glad the court appearances had stopped and we look forward to when this whole business is over...

After the initial shock of being arrested wears off, the degrading situation of the ultimate powerlessness of being in prison makes us even more aware of the anger and hatred we feel towards class society.

H M PRISONS
Rules & Regulations for
the guidance of Prisoners
wishing to hang
themselves in their cells.



Can you identify the Quotes?

Now, just to see if you've read the pamphlet properly,
Who said.....?

UNFORTUNATELY.....WELL, FORTUNATELY, THERE HAVE BEEN NO
EXPLOSIONS

THIS IS TO CREATE A STATE OF PARANOIA AND GIVE THE IMPRESSION
WE ARE DANGEROUS

I AM FED UP OF BEING SURROUNDED BY THIS SCUM

ARE YOU A POLITICAL ANARCHIST OR AN ACTIVE ANARCHIST?

AS A HUMAN BEING.....(BUT) AS A POLICEMAN

SO YOU WOULD CALL YOURSELF LEFT OF THE LABOUR PARTY?

WE'VE GOT WAYS OF MAKING YOU TALK

I SEE THIS AS A CLEAR EXAMPLE OF THE USE OF A PRETENCE OF
SECURITY TO SABOTAGE A DEFENCE CASE

THAT IS WHAT WORRIES ME.....HE WAS BROUGHT UP IN IRELAND.....
WE CANNOT HAVE HIM DISAPPEARING OVER THE WATER

IF I DO A FIVE DAY WEEK I WILL CARRY A GUN ON THREE OF THEM

IT'S WELL KNOWN THAT EVERYONE IN KILBURN SUPPORTS THE IRA

WE ARE YOUR DISSIDENTS



**You don't possess me
Don't impress me
Just upset my mind
Can't instruct me or conduct me
Just use up my time**