Computer Networks and Anarchy

Communication using computers is possible because information may be transferred between two computers using a variety of methods: a physical wire, the telephone, or even radio waves. To get from a computer in Glasgow to one in California, a message is sent from one computer to another, then to a third, and so on, until it reaches its destination (to cross the Atlantic Ocean, two computers communicate via a satellite, or possibly a fibre optic cable). The next time the computer at the destination is used, the message from Glasgow is waiting and can be saved on the computer's disk, printed out, or a reply sent.

These "networks" of computers have proliferated in the past twenty years; many of them are connected to form the biggest network, called the Internet. The Internet connects at least ten million people around the world. The growth and operation of these networks act as one of the most significant examples of a functioning anarchy. There is no centralised control; you join the network by cooperating with the nearest computer site already on it, which will forward all messages for you. Although governments sponsor and indirectly run the parts of the Internet which transfer a high volume of information, many networks are completely independent. For instance, Fidonet is a worldwide network of home computers run by computer hobbyists, and the European Counter Network is a network of activists in Europe.

One of the most popular ways to use the networks is to send messages to a particular person or organisation; this is called "electronic mail". An important point is that it costs no more than a phone call to the nearest computer to do this, even though the message could be destined for California. Also, the message is sent after you have finished typing it, typically at a rate of page a second, so slow typing doesn't cost you more. On the Internet, such a message could take as little as half an hour to reach California, allowing a reply within an hour. The message could contain an article from a magazine produced by computer, which could be printed out and distributed locally. There is great potential for keeping in touch and working together. Many anarchist/libertarian organisations can be contacted by electronic mail: the IWW, WSA, Love and Rage, the Autonome Forum, Infoshops, the Anarchist Communist Federation, the German FAU, the SAC, and anarchists in the U.S.A., Europe, Russia, Japan and elsewhere.

Users of the computer networks maintain a strong tradition of the free exchange of information. This can be traced to links between the counterculture and those involved in the early development of computers. There is a vast amount of information available on a wide range of subjects - not only concerned with computers. Much of this is generated by discussion groups centred around "Bulletin Board Systems", or BBSes. With BBSes, anyone who wishes can join a discussion group by sending messages to a specific computer which sends the message to everyone else, thus simulating a real discussion. The Internet currently has several discussion groups on anarchism, anarchosyndicalism and anarchist activism.

Access

The information available is stored on particular computers' disks and can be accessed by several methods. Nowadays, text, pictures and even sound can be transferred. There are several computer archives of anarchist material, including the Fast Breeder BBS in London, Love and Rage, and Spunk Press. The last two can be contacted on the Internet. Love and Rage distribute their bulletin as electronic messages. The Spunk Press archive currently has over 400 articles from publications such as Here and Now, Libertarian Labor Review, Counter Information, Wind Chill Factor, Warrior, Mother Anarchy, works by Emma Goldman, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and articles from the Glasgow group and others around the world. A current project is to add back issues of 'Anarchy, a Journal of Desire Armed' to the archive. Any magazine produced by computer desktop publishing (DTP) on a PC or Apple computer can be added to the archive without the effort of retyping the contents.

Spunk Press is run by a collective of members in the U.S., U.K., Sweden, Holland, Italy and elsewhere, using electronic mail to discuss, coordinate and develop the archive.

Is all this secure? It isn't difficult for governments to monitor messages, though there is a vast amount of traffic and methods of encrypting messages have been developed which make it almost impossible for eavesdroppers to read them.

There maybe someone in your group who has free access to the Internet through work or study. In this case, they can act as the Internet contact for the group. Otherwise, what do you need? A computer, a modem - which is used to transmit messages via telephone - and a 'service provider', an organisation that allows you to connect to the Internet. The service provider usually supplies you with the software for your computer and instructions on how to connect and use the Internet. Computers are still not as straightforward to use as they could be, though things are improving, so it is best to find someone who has already done this. How much does it cost? The service providers should charge less than 10 pounds a month - shop around. Telephone bills depend on how much you use the system, the speed of your modem (the faster the cheaper) and whether your nearest computer is local or long distance. You can continue to use your computer for DTP and other purposes, too.

Good books on computer networking include "The Whole Internet User's Guide & Catalog," by Ed Krol, published by O'Reilly & Associates, and "EcoLinking: Everyone's guide to online environmental information," by Don Ritter, from PeachPit Press, 2414 Sixth St., Berkeley, CA 94710. There is lots of free information about the Internet itself, once you are connected. If you have material for Spunk Press, contact them c/o the Glasgow Anarchists. Once you get on the Internet, send a message to Spunk Press and the Glasgow group at their electronic mail addresses:

spunk.@lysator.liu.se and
cllv13@ccsun.strath.ac.uk respectively.

Don't forget that computer communication is an addition to meeting people, using the telephone and writing letters, not a substitute!

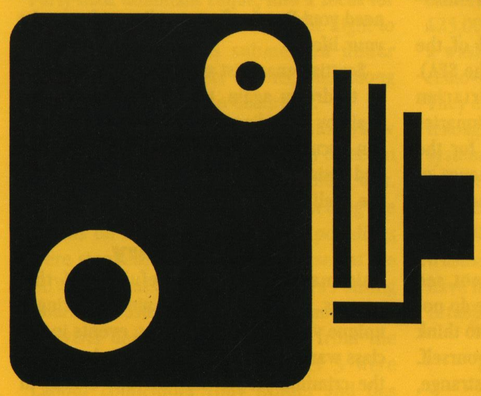
SCOTTISH ANARCHIST

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
Big Brother in Glasgow ● Unemployed occupy Edinburgh Centre ● Looking back at Timex ● The Scottish Financial Mafia ● Our History ● *and much more*

Number 1 *£1.00*

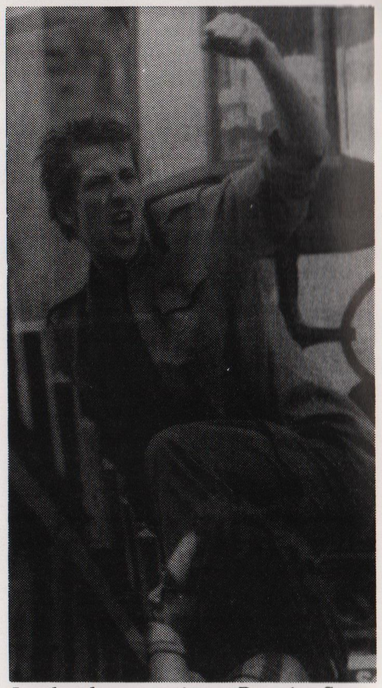
CAUTION

YOU ARE ALWAYS BEING



MONITORED

Contents



London demonstration at Downing Street gates against the Criminal Justice Bill. Cover illustration: Angry Artworks

editorial

WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF Scottish Anarchist. We hope you will enjoy it.

Scottish Anarchist is the journal of the Scottish Federation of Anarchists (the SFA). The SFA unites anarchists, libertarian socialists and autonomous revolutionaries across this fair nation. It does this for the express aim of increasing the influence of anarchist ideas and ideals in the class struggle.

So what can the SFA do for you? Exactly what the name suggests. We do not see ourselves as a new set of leaders. We do not want you to follow us. We want you to think for yourself, feel for yourself, act for yourself.

These ideas may come across as strange, even unusual? Too long have the twin evils of labourism and its "radical" wean Bolshevism dominated working class political life. Both are ideologies, seeking new sheep for old shepherds. Both want to be our leaders. Let us, however, fight them and their arrogance. Let us *arrange ourselves*. Some day our laughter with be stronger than the voices they strangle today. We aim to make that day arrive sooner, not later.

But this does not mean we do not want to win hearts and minds. Far from it. We in the SFA want to encourage, support and *influence* the spirit of revolt, the class struggle. We want to be free, but we can only be truly free in a free world. To get that we need you! But the first step lies with you. Its *your* life.

Scottish anarchist and the SFA aim to help us to dream again, to fight again, to hope again by providing forums through which we can discuss, talk, think and *act*. By organising and resisting we can build the new world in the shell of the old.

Revolutionary

This magazine will, hopefully, aid this process. Scottish Anarchist aims to bring a unique viewpoint to all issues; events in the class war, like Timex or the struggle against the criminal justice bill; current trends in capital, the state, technology, politics; anarchist and working class history, both in Scotland and elsewhere on the planet; to name just a few.

But why a unique viewpoint? Because it is *revolutionary*, something rare in the state capitalist dominated left.

We aim to be an innovative and, more importantly, an interesting read. Too long have socialist ideas been written in the lyrics of the past. For some, time stopped in 1917. But we do not aim to force reality into or to place ourselves upon the procustean bed of ideology nor experience the dreams of those who do and watch them turn into the nightmare of state capitalism. We must and will sing anew and write the songs of the new world we carry in our hearts in a new language, the language of tomorrow.

And this tomorrow? **Anarchy**, a free society of free and equal individuals, who have liberated themselves from the authority and existence of state, capital and church and who control their own fates. Such is our aim, our vision. A vision that inspires our actions today, for anarchism is not a thing of the future, but of the present. It is not a matter of "demands", but of living. Something we can forget while surviving under capitalism.

enjoy

Iain MacSaorsa

"Freedom without Socialism is privilege and injustice
Socialism without Freedom is slavery and brutality"
Michael Bakunin

Needless to say, we will welcome articles, letters, graphics, whatever, from any source. Send letters, articles to :-

Scottish Anarchist
c/o Glasgow Anarchist Group
PO Box 1008, Glasgow G42 8AA

SCOTTISH ANARCHIST

THE BARRICADES OF BROUGHTON

THE ONCE-FAMILIAR WOODEN DOORS are Derried now 'neath steel, sheets of steel shaped and bolted on by blacksmiths who refused all and any payment. "Our donation to the Centre", said they. ***Solidarity lives.***

But the doors are open twixt noon and four every day bar Sunday, and the Centre is inhabited around the clock, seven days a week. Within opening hours a busy vegan cafe, famously cheap and substantial, is the hub of Centre activity and behind the chatting diners poster-festooned walls advertise gigs, meetings and actions, while the skirting tables sag beneath the mass of flyers and brochures explaining anti-VAT on Fuel, Criminally Injustice Bill, Stop the Fascists, community arts, homelessness, hunt sabs, gay rights, claimants rights, women's issues, Poll Tax arrears, AIDS, Parks for the People...

Above the cafe the pine-beamed mezzanine floor is being transformed into a snug reference library and reading room, while next door the Centre office advises callers, who phone or drop in, on benefit rights. There's a well-equipped children's playroom and a basement darkroom.

Upstairs, one end of the large hall is carpeted with defenders' sleeping bags while the other end is a mass of art and craft odds-and-ends with which the Creative Resource Network makes the puppets and props for its street theatre. The door of the small room opposite bears a hand-drawn sign - 'Cheap Claes Shoap'.

The atmosphere is busy, cheery and sociable. No-one gets paid. Anyone can get involved. But when the doors are locked and blocked and the Centre quietens down, ears are cocked and nerves steeled for the baying of the bailiffs and the grunting of the pigs.

New Readers Start Here

"The creatures looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again, but already it was impossible to say which was which."

George Orwell, Animal Farm.

Conceived in 1981 as a left-Labour response to mass-unemployment, and funded by the Regional Council, the Edinburgh Unemployed Workers Centre (EUWC) was founded as a charitable trust and started life in the basement of the Edinburgh Trades council building.

> ***"We're going to lock them out, we're going to stay here 24 hours a day. If the police and the sheriff officers come, we will not let them in."***
> *Angela, Centre volunteer, STV Reporting Scotland.*

In the mid-80's it moved to larger temporary premises off the city's High St.. There it became something more than a printing press, computers and a meeting room, evolving, despite the reticence of the Party-hack dominant clique, into a focus for independent unwaged activists. The Right to Work campaign was submerged under Claimants Union direct actions, then along came the anti-Workfare Campaign.

By the time the Centre moved into its new permanent premises in Broughton Street in 1989 the Poll Tax fight was well under way. By 1990 the Labour Council was setting the bailiffs on the refuseniks. All the poindings were stopped, many by pickets based at the EUWC. By that time 4 of the Centre's 7-strong Board of Trustees were unwaged, unaffiliated activists democratically elected from the Centre's Users Group. The other 3 were Labour councillors Tony Kinder and Des Loughney, and Jim Milne, boss of Labour-controlled Dalkeith Unemployed Workers Centre. [Loughney, for his sins, was and is also secretary of Edinburgh Trades Council., Powerful enemies indeed.]

These Labour and trade union bureaucrats had lost control. Their response was swift. During the night of 1/2 February 1992 the 3 Labour Party trustees simply, and unilaterally, changed the Centre's locks one night and locked 4 trustees, the users group and the public, **out**. The now-deserted building resonated solely to the rhythm of the basement printing press, operated by the paid worker George Wilson, churning out reams of Labour Party literature, exploiting charitable tax status.

The locked-out organised in a donated room across the road in the Gay Centre and in March '92, in a splendid piece of direct action, smashed open the Centre's door and re-occupied the building, opening it again to the unwaged and homeless.

Councillor Kinder's lucrative printing contract was left hanging. But even Labour politicians are not averse to a bit of direct action, it seems, especially when their wallets are threatened. Shortly after the Centre's liberation, one cold, dark March Sunday morning, Labour trustee Jim Milne and ex-Centre worker George Wilson, backed verbally by Councillors Kinder and Loughney, broke back in and removed the printing press, 6 Applemac computers, a process camera, enlargers... in short they took away £25,000 of the Trust's equipment, including a washing machine for the homeless. They removed the accounts and minutes books. They even pinched the donations tin and the teabags, and smashed the emergency lighting system, just for the hell of it. The councillor-trustees then used their clout to freeze the Centre's £10,000 bank account and stop its mail. Repeated attempts by the independent trustees to have the assets judicially returned have been consistently denied legal aid. The Establishment closes ranks.

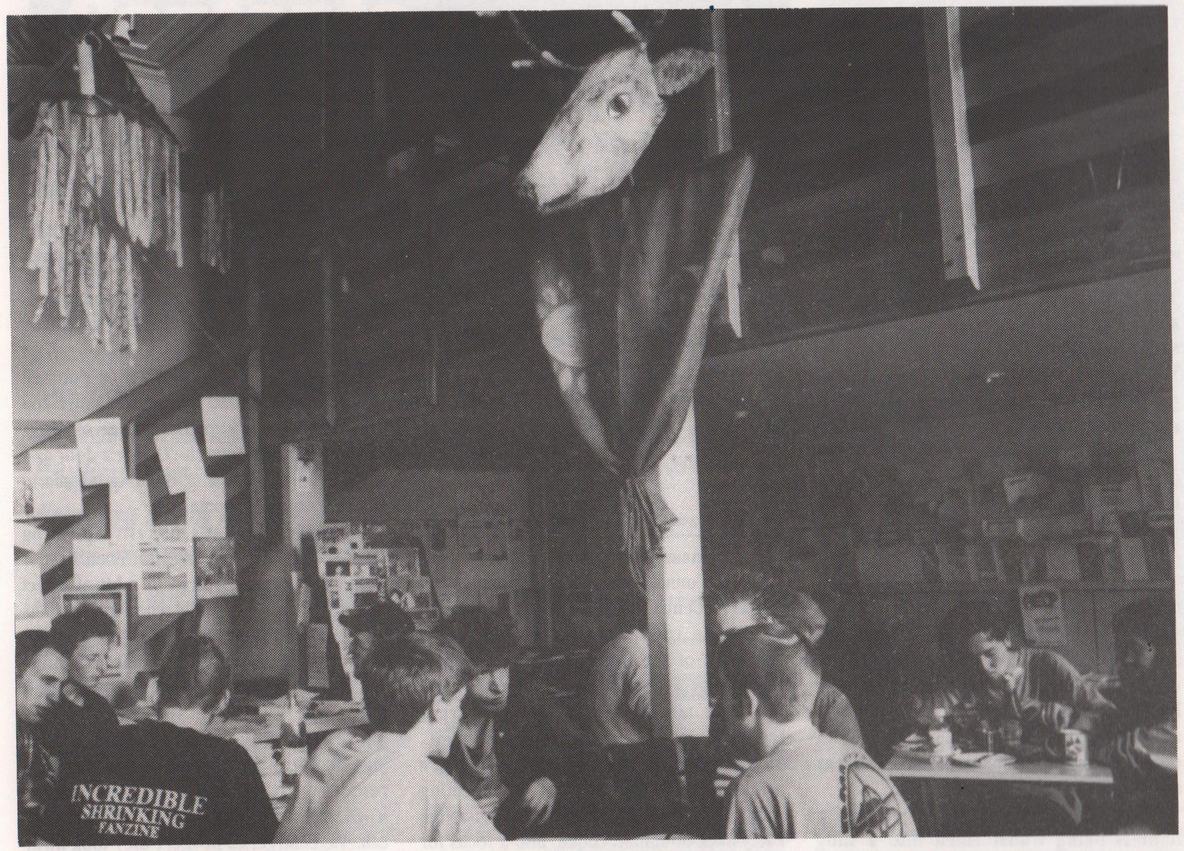
The Centre Fights On

"It's getting up the nose of the Council, the fact that we're unfunded, but still here and still running."

Maggie, Centre volunteer, STV Reporting Scotland.

Custodians now of a stripped building, with no equipment, no funding and no bank account, the Centre users decided to fight on. Money was raised by using the upstairs hall as an increasingly popular gig venue with live bands appearing from all over Britain. Room space was rented out to community and other groups. The bills could be paid,

SCOTTISH ANARCHIST



but hostile eyes were watching. The Council's attempt to strangle the life out of the self-managed centre had failed. A new tactic was tried.

In February 1993 the Region's Social Work Committee - the Centre's landlords - suddenly remembered that they had 'inadvertently left out' an all-important clause in the lease, a clause which disallowed fund-raising activities in the Centre without their permission. The bills piled up.

Both renegade trustees Loughney and Kinder were members of the Social Work Committee. The centre's lease had only just over a year to go. They sat back and waited.

In February 1994 a social work inspectorate visited the building, ostensibly to 'see if any repairs needed done'. Party Hacks then produced a hostile report, signed by the social work director, recommending the Centre's closure. Amid a welter of media publicity the users' group smashed the phoney report to pieces, proving it to be totally false and deliberately contrived. Nonetheless, the report was adopted by the Council who immediately started eviction proceedings. For obvious reasons, the 4 independent trustees chose to obey the injunctions and quit the premises, but not before putting all Trust property into the sympathetic stewardship of the local community council who are requesting that a new lease be granted to them, so that the Centre volunteers can be kept in situ, carrying on their sterling community work. The Edinburgh Unemployed Workers Centre is no more. Now it's simply 'the Centre'. The Labour Council is entrenched in its bitter hostility. 'Get out' they yell. 'Get stuffed' reply the volunteer defenders.

Power and Control

The whole issue is, of course, about power and control. The attempted destruction of Edinburgh's autonomous, volunteer-run centre is part of an iworld-wide attack on such self-managed social centres by the state, national or local. The Centre recently received a letter of support from Spain, telling of such attacks against autonomous centres in Bilbao and Zaragoza. Similar letters have arrived from London, while a recent visitor to the Centre described the resistance to evictions mounted by squatted centres in his native Netherlands. Meanwhile in Italy dozens of self-managed social centres, such as the renowned Leoncavallo in Milan, continue their activity despite state harassment. Grey Orwellian drabness and conformity is the order of the day.

International support has been more than on paper. So far, two months into the sit-in, folk from Holland, Canada, USA, Australia, and Germany have turned up and got involved, widening the definition of 'community centre'. More help is needed though. Operating a 24 hour, 7 day shift system is demanding and we need more people to get involved, in any way.

The Centre must remain open, and self-managed ●

Riddley Walker

The Centre, 103 Broughton Street, Edinburgh EH1. Tel. 031 557 0718.

— STOP PRESS —

On September 16 Edinburgh Sheriff Court issued an eviction order against the Trustees of the Unemployed Workers Centre, despite the fact that the Majority Trustees had left the premises in mid-June.

The Region will now apply for interdicts against those who are defending the Centre. Help is needed. *Get involved.*

The Pollok Free State

In Glasgow Pollok Free State has been established in opposition to the half begun M77 that is due to tear apart Pollok Estate. The Pollok Estate was intended by its donor for the use of the "citizens of Glasgow" but now, despite a huge amount of objections at the public enquiry stage, that right is to be denied them.

The £79 million M77 plan is typical of the unthinking attitude to transport and environment that prevails amongst those in power. The presenting of rational arguments from a huge number of community groups has not stopped their crazy roads road plans so now the remaining rational argument of physical opposition is being used.

The defiant protest of local Colin McLeod who spent ten days up a tree that was due to be cut down drew others to the current site of the Earth First! (Anti-M77) Camp. The vast majority of camp members are from Glasgow and their wee vision of an anarchist society has been receiving constant and generous donations and support from neighbouring housing estates.

The Earth First! camp is an open group that holds a public camp meeting every Wednesday at 7.30pm. The camp has achieved amazing architectural feats; building the houses, totem poles, creating stone carvings. The gravel from the road has been taken and scattered into the words "NO M77" on the exposed earth of the road foundations.

The camp occupants have been working hard to create publicity, raise money and live together collectively under the pressurised circumstances of living in a space which anyone can walk into and is due to be destroyed. On the 24th of September they marched from the centre of Glasgow to the "Free State" in protest at one more bit of environmental suicide.

Contact 041 636 1924 / 041 887 8990 for more information on whats happening ●

C. Berry

Editors note :
"Auto-struggles : The developing war against the road monster" is an important and interesting discussion on the anti-roads struggles going on in England. Its in issue 3 of Aufheben, £2 from Aufheben, c/o Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 2GY.

McLibel 2

The McLibel 2 are activists who are being sued by the giant McDonalds Hamburgers Ltd. for telling the truth.

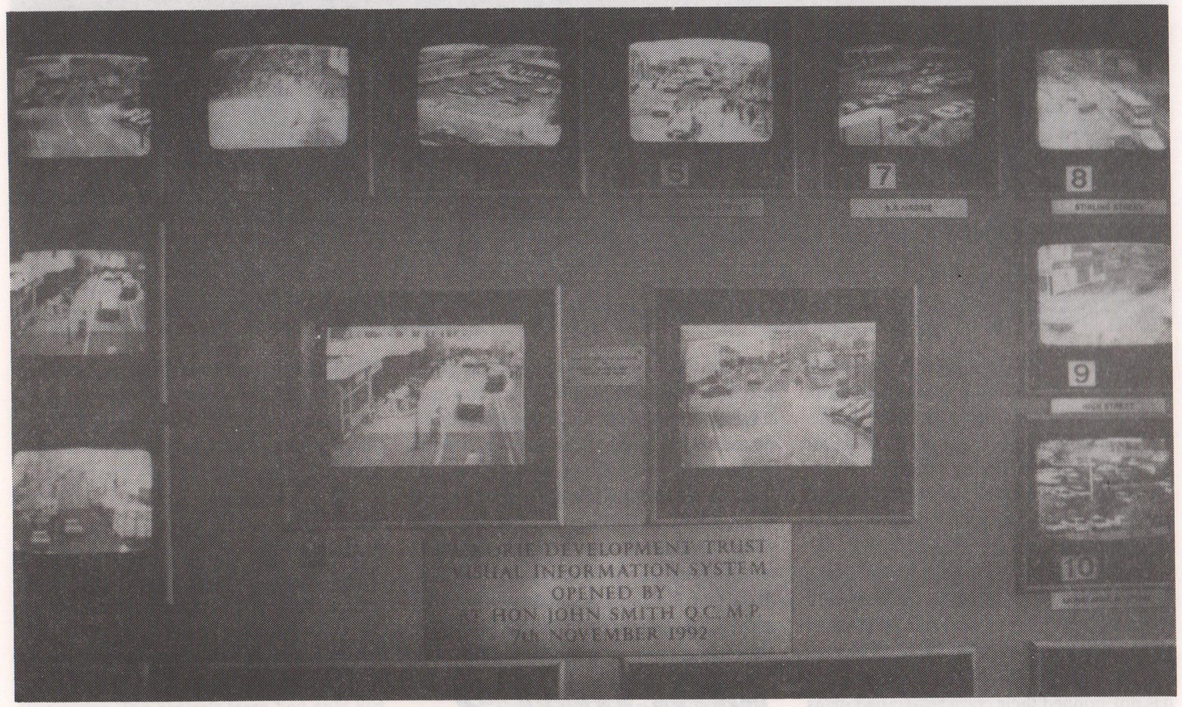
They distributed leaflets describing business practices of McDonalds in Central America i.e. evicting peasants from land to feed cattle for their so called restaurants in the USA and the environmental impact of such a policy, and for this a multi-million pound international corporation has seen fit to drag them through the courts. Not only have they been kept from enjoying a normal life by these bullying tactics but they have been told they cannot bring expert witnesses into court to back up their case.

Now this may not seem a big deal to you, it may be an issue you care nothing about, but to me the issue is more than the environmental one which was the concern of the McLibel 2. It is the way that a multinational aided by the state is being allowed to attack basic freedom of speech. So help stamp out bullying now - buy a kebab, buy chips, buy pakora, buy a pizza but don't buy a McDonalds. Help stamp out bullying today.

● *Worldwide Anti-McDonalds Day, Sunday 16th October*

ORWELL'S 1984. GLASGOW'S 1994?

Closed Circuit Television in Glasgow



What is it?

By the end of this year four square miles of the city centre will be under constant 24 hour surveillance. An area from Glasgow Cross to Charing Cross will be dotted with 32 cameras. These will produce over 5000 hours of footage each week of Glaswegians going about their everyday lives. The cameras will be monitored by specially trained disabled civilians from a bank of screens at Stewart Street Police Station.

What will it cost?

The estimated cost of the project for installation and the first three years of running costs is 1 million pounds.

Who is funding it?

Half of the money is coming from private businesses in the city centre through voluntary donations. The rest is coming from the public sector - Strathclyde Regional Council and Glasgow District Council.

What is it for?

"The Cameras have been installed to protect valuable businesses" Glasgow Chief SuperIntendent Gordon Carmicheal. Daily Record 14/1/94

"The Cameras are not there to spy on people but to protect people" Strathclyde Regional Councillor James Jennings. Scotsman 16/7/93

"The Cameras do not just make sense. It makes business sense." Caroline Durkan Glasgow Development Agency (GDA). Herald 9/12/93

Although there is confusion whether the cameras are to protect property or people, the main stated aim of the project is to deter crime in the city centre and to make it *"a safer place for shoppers and shop owners, families, women and other law abiding citizens"* Strathclyde Chief Constable Leslie Sharp. Herald 22/10/93

It will also be used to deter soliciting and to film kerb crawlers (Glaswegian 19/8/93).

It is clear that the police have complete power to use and abuse the technology as they wish. The films could be used for any purpose whatsoever, from filming public leafleting to filming people on marches and demonstrations. Once the technology is in place it can be used for whatever the police want.

How long will video footage be kept?

According to Caroline Durkan of the Glasgow Development Agency, *"footage will be retained for one month then wiped unless required for evidence for information"* Herald 9/12/93

This is obviously vague and open to interpretation and abuse by the police.

Who will have access to and control of video footage?

"Recorded tapes will be the property of the chief constable and will be used only be Strathclyde Police to deter and detect criminals" Caroline Durkan (GDA). Herald 9/12/93

The above statement was enough to convince doubting Strathclyde Regional Councillors that the video cameras would not be an abuse of civil liberties. Such unlimited powers should obviously because for concern, not confidence, in the system. A U.S. Lawyer quoted in the Scotsman 31/8/93 states "the person who controls the technology controls the use made of it"

Background

Since the mid 1980's there has been a rapid growth in English towns and cities installing closed circuit television systems. In 1986 Bournemouth installed video cameras along its seafront and claimed that in its first year of use the bill for vandalism dropped from £220,000 to £36,000 (Scotsman 31/8/93).

Newcastle installed a £400,000 system and claimed there was a 13% reduction in crime in the first two months of operation (Guardian 13/5/93).

Hexham installed a video system and claimed there was a *"significant reduction in crime by 97% in areas covered by cameras"* (Scotsman 30/11/93).

Kings Lynn in the Midlands (of England) installed cameras and claimed that thefts from cars dropped by 97% and car crimes in general by 91% (Guardian 31/8/93).

These statistics appear impressive and have led to many Scottish towns installing or planning to install camera systems. The most publicised case is Airdrie where it is claimed crime fell by 75% in its first six months of operation (Scotsman 31/8/93).

Other Scottish towns such as East Kilbride, Bathgate and Kirkcaldy have installed cameras and more schemes are being planned from Dumfries to Inverness. It is against this backdrop of a growing "camera culture" that Glasgow is planning the biggest, most sophisticated and most expensive system yet to be put into operation in any "British" town or city.

The British Security Industry Association (BSIA) say there are around 200 000 closed circuit television systems in the country and that the BSIA firms that supplied them did business worth 57 million in 1992 (Guardian, 13/5/93). It is now Big Business protecting Big Business in "Britain". It is hardly surprising so much effort is being put into convincing us video cameras are a cure all for crime. But are they really?

Arguments for and against Closed Circuit Television

Deterrent

The major argument used in favour of the cameras is that they deter crime. They may deter certain categories of crime but they do not deter neither the drunken nor the determined "criminal". The person who commits a crime when drunk is likely to do it anyway. A person determined to commit a crime will just go to greater lengths to avoid being caught. Carole Euart, from the Scottish Council of Civil Liberties (SCCL), stated *"people have been watched by cameras for many years in banks and building societies, but armed robberies haven't declined. This proves cameras are not necessarily a deterrent - they won't change peoples fundamental behaviour"* (Glaswegian 13/1/94).

Detection

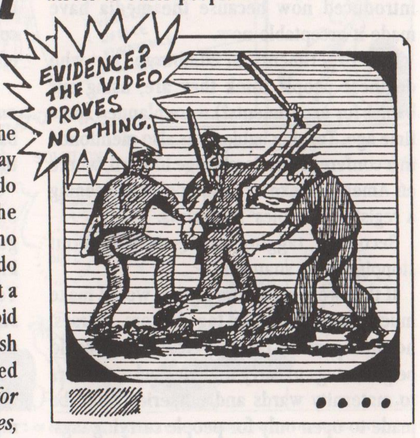
Another argument used is that even if people do commit a crime they are far more likely to be caught and therefore found "guilty" and "punished". This is probably true, although people determined to commit a crime are likely to adopt more sophisticated methods to hide their identity in an area they know is covered by cameras. However, unless every street in every town has a camera they are more likely to go to an area not covered by cameras.

Displacement

Figures show that crime does not simply disappear into thin air. Instead it reappears somewhere else. In Airdrie although crime fell in the town centre *"the number of serious crimes for the division as a whole went up from 113 to 135"* (Scotland on Sunday,12/12/93). In Hexham, although crime in the area covered by the cameras fell by 17% elsewhere in Hexham it rose by 12% (Scotsman,30/11/93). In the Herald (11/8/93) an editor of a Glasgow community newspaper asks:

"Is it acceptable to the business community and municipal mediocrities in George Square who have not built a house in 14 years that as long as robbery and violence are confined to the schemes then all is well?"

The main argument against cameras whatever the statistics show is that "people should not be observed by institutions of the state as they go about their everyday business (Carole Euart, SCCL, Glaswegian 13/1/94). This is the main objection that we as anarchists should put across to other people ●



HANDS OFF OUR BABIES!!!

Ministers and hospital managers have finally came clean. For the first time, they've admitted publicly that they want to tag babies with barcodes the moment they're born. Every newspaper in the country has said what a wonderful idea this is. So have politicians from all the main parties. Selected babies have already been barcoded in Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary.

Both the Murdoch press and the few titles still owned by his competitors have taken the same line. Some woman dressed as a nurse stole a baby in Nottingham. Therefore all babies should be tagged and coded. Otherwise it could happen again.

At least one paper published a picture of a mother kissing the barcoded foot of her day-old baby. The implication is that mothers who don't allow their babies to be tagged like items in a supermarket aren't good mothers.

This kind of nonsense is, of course, the stock-in-trade of advertisers, people trying to trick us into buying something or voting for them.

Let's be clear about two things.

Firstly, tagging babies has been in the pipeline for months.

It's not a response to anything which has happened in the past few days. To say otherwise is to tell a complete lie. It is being introduced now because the media have made it acceptable now.

The 'experiments' in Edinburgh (just who do these people think they are, using our babies for experiments?) were planned some time ago. Tagging babies was also mentioned in a conference in Cambridge in April, where an American 'expert' also spoke of keeping a register of babies' footprints.

Secondly, tagging babies is not about stopping baby snatchers.

If that were really the goal, it would make much more sense to tag doctors, nurses, hospital porters, fathers, etc. Or they could be given tags to carry in their pockets. Doors to maternity wards and nurseries could be made to open only for people carrying tags.

Many government buildings use a similar system already. Who'd expect the Ministry of Defence, for example, to let strangers into the building, resting assured that no-one could take anything because all secret documents had tags sellotaped on? Obviously any whistleblower or spy could just cut the tag off. And any serious baby snatcher could do exactly the same.

You might argue that alarms could be set to sound as soon as someone tried to cut off a tag. But if you still think these people are doing it for our benefit, just ask yourself:

Why Barcodes

Surely snatching one baby is as bad as snatching any other baby. Or is a nurse going to punch in the number of any baby who's being taken home legitimately, so the alarm won't go off when it's taken out by its real mother. Meanwhile a baby being snatched, not having been checked through, would set all the bells ringing. No, this isn't it: the nurse could just cut the tag off herself when the baby's ready to go home, saving all those costs on training, but with exactly the same effect.

In that case, all tags could be the same, and there'd be no need for individual barcodes. It seems we're just not being told the truth.....

Quite a few politicians have said 'No expense should be spared' in guaranteeing baby security. That's the kind of thing politicians like to say. You'd hardly expect them to say 'Baby snatching must be got down to an acceptable level.'

On the other hand, a sceptic might think the whole point is for the Tories to give some more money to their friends in the private security industry. After all, they've given entire prisons to firms like Group 4, in return for Italian-style donations to party funds.

But for once this doesn't seem to be it. A baby-tag costs about 10p. Introducing them in a big hospital like Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary will cost "thousands of pounds". For a maternity hospital, or a security company, that's peanuts.

And yet the authorities do seem very anxious to tag and barcode our babies.

Why?

Well let's just consider what else has been decided or 'considered' in the past year or so.

1) After being dropped three years ago, electronic tagging of offenders is coming back. Whereas in previous 'experiments' tags had to be plugged into the phone, now they can send messages to private security guards over the airwaves.
In a move closely connected to rightwing Tory propaganda about the 'underclass', The Sunday Times has called for the tagging of "far fewer than 1% of the population" (i.e. less than half a million people). A pilot scheme begins in Manchester in January 1995. (In Tennessee, tags are already fitted to truanting schoolchildren).
2) Home Secretary Michael Howard has considered having fingerprints taken from everyone. Another plan is to fingerprint Britain's 32 million motorists and to include prints on driving licences. The database would be run by a private company. Police chiefs are confident the plan will be in place by 1996.
3) Transport Secretary John MacGregor has called for all cars to be fitted with a 'black box.' Cars would be tracked by satellite, and drivers would be charged according to which roads they drive on and for how long. (A version of this system is already in place in Oslo).
Companies like GEC are hoping to employ technologies first used to track tanks during the Gulf War of 1991. To sweeten the pill, and to make more profit, motorists will be sold info services at the same time. The system will be tested next spring, and is due to come into force in 1998.
4) Child benefit and pension books are due to be replaced by swipe cards in 1997, and benefit books will disappear altogether in 1999. Already pension books have been barcoded in parts of London.
It seems likely that eventually all benefits will be paid into bank accounts. Post offices will be run in the interests of private banks, and many will just be shut down.
5) The police are increasingly using DNA testing and some senior officers have called for the forcible testing of all adult males. (No date on this one yet, but this year's Criminal Justice Bill will allow DNA testing for all offenses the police record).
6) City shopping centres are now routinely scanned by 24-hour video cameras. This information was first released to a wide audience at the time of the James Bulger murder. The implication was that anyone who objected to the general trend didn't care about toddlers being butchered.
7) Soon TV viewers may have to pay for each specific programme they watch. They'll buy decoder cards for the Saturday match during the week. Already people using cloned cards can have their reception turned off individually by Sky.
8) Britain's chief film censor, who thinks childhood is an 'outdated concept', wants compulsory ID cards to be issued to all children. The pretext is to 'control access' to videos, fireworks, alcohol, cigarettes, etc.

Baby tagging fits very well into this list of developments. In every case, the authorities tell us it's for our own good.

We all know that the government only protects people to the extent that it's good for Business. Health Department officials are little more than agents of the huge drug companies; and their colleagues in the Ministry of Defence are little more than agents of the arms manufacturers. Transport bureaucrats give millions to construction companies and increasingly to security and electronics companies too. In short, it's there to keep us in 'acceptable levels' of poverty and disease, and to force most of us to work for the rich. They don't care about our babies being stolen any more than they care about our houses being broken into, or deaths caused by tobacco. They like it when working class people turn on each other and we live in fear. Nor would things be different if any other party were in power. Even if everything were nationalised we'd just be exploited directly by state bureaucrats rather than by the directors and bankers who currently tell them what to do.

Recent calls to abolish benefits for single mothers show us that the ruling parasites feel strong. They're on the march. More and more information is being kept on more and more people.

The mass media discourage us from looking beyond the next few months. But if we do, we see lines of information being established which are increasingly two-way or 'interactive.'Surveillance, or keeping track of people,leads directly to control. The reason they want to tag babies is because it's easiest to start with them. It's got nothing to do with stopping them being snatched.

We'll say it straight.

Over the next 5 to 15 years, the rulers hope to keep tabs on us all by electromagnetic means. Corresponding types of direct surveillance would be horrific.The only thing that can stop this is Revolution. Against this World Society of Exploitation ●

Some Opponents of Technofascism,
Central Scotland, July, 1994

Extract from "Health Service Wildcat"
by Donald Roo*um and Victoria N. Furmurry
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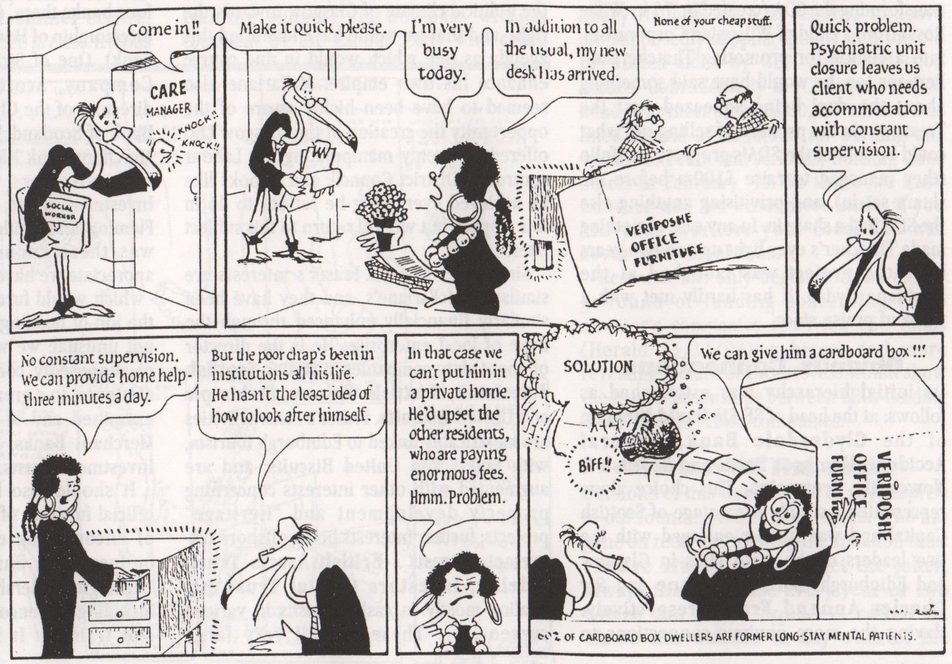


FLUSHING OUT THE SCOTTISH FINANCIAL MAFIA

The shady case of the Glasgow Development Agency

by Billy Clark

The aim here is to examine in some detail an organisation called Scottish Enterprise (SE) which was invented in 1988 by Bill Hughes, at the time a CBI boss and advisor to the Thatcher government, now the director of Grampian Holdings. SE is the parent body of 14 local Enterprise Companies (LECs) and by looking in detail at one of these, the Glasgow Development Agency (GDA), we shall see that it represents a gathering of powerful business/financial alliances. The information provided here aims to inform our understanding of the forces in operation here, how they function and in whose interest.

When Hughes proposed the SE system, he bypassed the then Secretary of State for Scotland, Malcolm Rifkind, going straight to Mrs. Thatcher. This unusual tactic was adopted because after the disastrous fall in the Scottish Tory vote in the '87 elections, the Scottish Office was blamed for resisting the new economic culture through the Scottish Development Agency (SDA). Unable to conceive that her policies alienated the Scottish electorate, Thatcher was already mulling over plans to scapegoat and abolish the SDA when Hughes opportunistically knocked on her door. We cannot fully reconstruct their conversation, but perhaps Hughes promised to set things to rights by transforming the SDA (created in '75 by Willie Ross) from a child of Wilsonian Corporatism, into a vehicle for promoting Thatcherism . Perhaps too, he would have said something about the deal being squeezed past the Treasury via the promise of selling off, what could be sold of the SDA's property portfolio (they managed to raise £100m before the slump set in), and privitising anything else the SDA had a share in. In any case something made Thatcher's eyes light up and two years later the project was launched at the Dunblane Hydro. It has hardly met with a word of praise since.

Obvious Connections

Its initial hierarchy was established as follows: at the head of SE **Sir David Nickson** of the **Clydesdale Bank, General Accident, Hambros Bank and Scottish & Newcastle Breweries.** This choice alone represented a sizable percentage of Scottish Capital and was further enlarged with the two leaders of the main LECs in Glasgow and Edinburgh: **Lord McFarlane** and **Sir Charles Annand Fraser** respectively. Having the more obvious connections to Nickson, McFarlane is the director of some fifty or so companies, the main ones being **The Clydesdale Bank, General Accident, The American Trust, Clansman, Edinburgh Fund Managers and United Distillers/Guiness plc**. His other companies concentrate on the construction and fitting out of offices from their painting right down to the packaging the furniture comes in, its transportation, and adhesive labels, the lot basically: if you work in an office, go the the bank then go for a drink, McFarlane's interests are well served. Politically we can locate him on the Authoritarian Right, he funds **British United Industries** (a somewhat secretive channel for funding right-wing political projects), and of course the Conservative Party, General Accident alone donates around £50,000 a year.

In the light of this it is clear that McFarlane would readily be attracted by a steering role in an organisation devoted to manipulating the political climate of Glasgow towards the right, and that he would have identified this agenda as one which would in due course enhance his own empire. McFarlane also seemed to have been highly aware of the opportunity the creation of the Glasgow LEC offered in openly manipulating the Labour controlled District Council: and it looks like he achieved everything he set out to do in this respect, but we will return to this subject later.

Sir Charles Annand Fraser's interests are similar to McFarlane's, and they have been similarly financially enhanced through the hype of local enterprise. He is the director of about sixty companies including **Scottish Television, Scottish Widows, Stakis plc** and **United Biscuits**. Fraser's main activities are inextricably linked to Edinburgh tourism, with Stakis and United Biscuits, and are augmented with other interests concerning property development and "Heritage" projects; further interests being offshore tax-exempted trusts (**British Assets Trust, Fidelity, Investors Capital Trust** etc) dealing mostly in cash deposits in various currencies . These are all very large companies if not monopolising their fields, certainly dominating them, Scottish Widows alone makes profits of £1,000m and is the second biggest Company in Scotland. So here we have two rich, highly important and influential men, who would feel insulted if we did not describe them as motivated solely by personal gain and the pursuit of wealth, at the head of the Glasgow Development Agency (GDA) and Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise Ltd. (LEEL). The question is why? The other question - as ever - is where is all the money going?

A Communal Slush Fund

But there are more than just two men running the Scottish Financial Mafia, the LECs as an adjunct to the process of profiteering seems to be acting as a communal slush fund for a fair cross section of Scottish capitalism. If we were to examine the other directors of even one each of McFarlane and Fraser's main companies we would see that they are connected to almost the entire spectrum of the nonparliamentary right who control finance, investment and industry in Scotland. To identify just the Banking interests alone: McFarlane and SE boss Sir David Nickson as we have already seen represent The Clydesdale Bank and General Accident. General Accident's other directors include the directors of the Royal Bank of Scotland, the TSB and the Ottoman Bank so we have four banks there, (five if we count Nickson's directorship of Hambros which is a Merchant bank). One of Sir Charles Annand Fraser's Company, Scottish Widows, contains directors of the Clydesdale Bank, The Royal Bank of Scotland, The Bank of Scotland and Merchant Bank Kleinwort Benson, together with directors of the main Scottish Investment Trusts, Murray Johnstone, Jardine Fleming and Baille Gifford. Undoubtedly it was these connections - and you will appreciate we have just skimmed the surface - which would further recommend them for the job of heading a LEC. Such alliances are not unusual: we would find similar groups of supposedly competing banks always in existence, to a greater or lesser extent, if we examined any of the top Clearing Banks, Merchant Banks, Insurance Companies or Investment Trusts.

It should also be pointed out that the official function of an LEC is defined as that of encouraging enterprise by providing business with financial or other forms of "strategic leadership and tactical support" including the encouragement of investment and training. It has never been openly advanced in their own publicity material that they have, a now somewhat anachronistic, "Thatcherite" mission, nor what that might entail. Their involvement in local politics is usually defined, if at all, in terms of unsubstantiated boasts or buzzwords such as "job creation" and "inward investment". Each of the LECs have a budget of upwards of £55m, while the total SE expenditure was put at £449m for the last financial year. While the overall initial popular perception of this was that the money is given to deserving cases, SE have made it clear that they do not think their role is to "bail out bankrupt companies". (Herald 1/5/93). They are however hell-bent on spending money on themselves.

They Like To Say Yes!

Now let us focus on the Glasgow LEC, the Glasgow Development Agency (GDA). McFarlane recently departed his post handing it over to **Forbes McPherson** (the director of the **TSB, Glasgow Cultural Enterprises, Hill Samuel Bank** (a Merchant bank subsidiary of the TSB), The Scottish **Metropolitan Property Co**. and **Scottish Mutual Assurance**). Under his leadership the GDA has funded several "new operations", the main ones, indeed the onlyones, include aiding **Abbey National Life** in occupying the building that BP vacated when they removed their operation elsewhere (to be awarded £260,357 by Forth Valley Enterprise, whose directors include Edward Ferguson of BP Chemicals). The GDA has also funded "second round investments", passing funds to **Direct Line Insurance** (a subsidiary of the Royal Bank of Scotland), **Provincial Insurance, British Airways, Barclays Stockbrokers, The Norwich Union and the Army Personnel Centre,** most of which as we shall see are old friends to Bill Hughes. The GDA's 92/93 Accounts and Report gives us an interesting insight into how they arrived at these decisions: "**Other location marketing activities include . . . participation in complementary events such as the Scottish Financial Enterprise dinner in London** ." Some readers may have already come to the conclusion that for a business to relocate in Glasgow it will most likely have closed its operation somewhere else, obviously resulting in staff dismissals, and such is the case with the examples cited above: the Army Pay Centre for example relocating from Ashton-under-Lyne with all the workers being sacked. If we examine the pattern of funding we would see that the financial institutions received funds on the pretext of training. This too is somewhat misleading given that virtually all of the large financial institutions have been heavily fined by their regulatory bodies for failing to properly train their staff and engaging in professional misconduct (thus precipitating the massive private pensions swindle); including of course Abbey National Life and the Norwich Union (who suspended their entire pensions sales staff as part of their re-training).

So here we have an insight into the process of how the GDA works, which could be roughly summarised as follows: (1) You go to a free lunch in London with a group of people who are stockbrokers, bankers and insurance men. (2) They tell you what to do. (3) You give them lots of money. (4) They sack a lot of their workforce.

A Nice Line In...

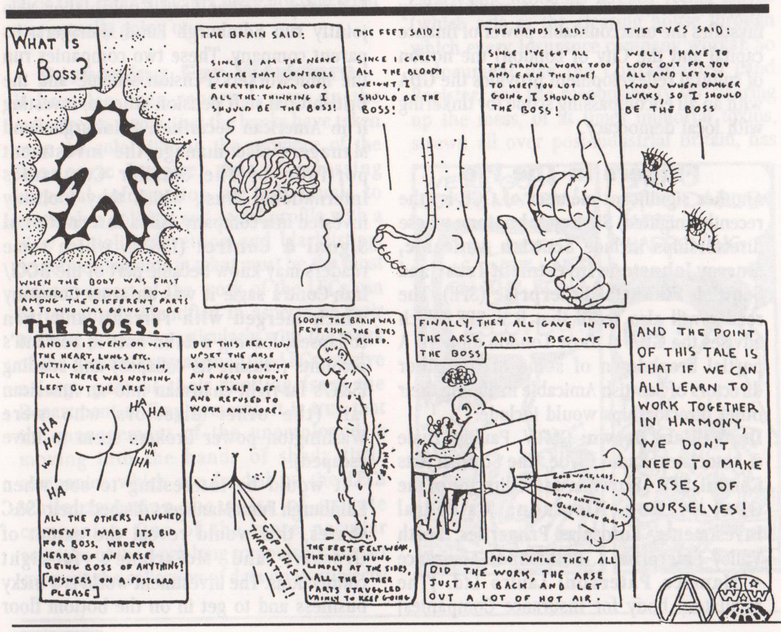
The decision to award £250,000 to **Direct Line Insurance** (again taken from the GDA training budget) did not pass without comment by the Labour Party who called for an enquiry into the matter. By the reactionary nature of the enquiry they demanded, it could be easily argued that they either completely fail to understand the reality of the function of the GDA or are unwilling to concede their own role in it. Their posture of outrage seems solely fuelled by the fact that Direct Line gained a high public profile as one of the fastest growing companies in the UK, with one of the highest paid directors, Peter Wood, who receives a yearly salary of £6m. The Labour Party are happy with SE as a whole, and they have to be, because their argument that Directline should fund themselves rather than dip into pork barrel, while being morally inspiring in an abstract way, directly intertwines with the process of Labour Party patronage, as we shall see below. One could also say the same concerning the fuss made over the fact that a great deal of the LECs, all of them it would seem, have been awarding funds to companies owned by members of the LECs. Direct Line is not run by anyone on the GDA, it is though run by someone on Dumfries and Galloway Enterprise: its chairman, Sir Michael Herries (also of Scottish Widows and one of Sir Charles Fraser's Investment Companies).

Although the GDA claim (Glasgow Herald 11/11/93) that "**no directors or connected persons had a material interest in any contract** [issued by the GDA]" they add the paradoxical rejoinder that "**this does not mean, however, that there were no financial contracts involving companies with directoral links**". Sadly they declined to provide any further information, but what they are most likely concealing is the fact that Scottish Mutual Assurance, Forbes McPherson's company, is a subsidiary of the Abbey National, who as referred to above are supposedly slipping quietly into the old BP offices aided by GDA funds and good wishes. Coincidentally BP Chemicals had to hand over most of the £260,357 when it was fined a total of £230,000 for burning one worker to death and seriously burning three others in February '92. **So there we have another use for enterprise cash: if you kill your workers your local LEC will cover your legal fees.**

Research has only begun into the merry-go-round of funding concerning LEC's director's companies receiving LEC funds (Herald 11/11/93); a bigger and more revealing picture of this process would show the inter-relationships between LECs funding other LEC directors companies.

Return Of The Joker

But none of this would come as any surprise to our founding father Bill Hughes. Who has gone on record as viewing the situation thus: **"You're always going to get the joker, always that one case every year or two where the Fraud Squad is called in. That's unavoidable in any walk of life**



today ... If we are going to have top-quality people serving on LEC boards I would be surprised if they weren't trying to help their own businesses. Gosh they're giving up their time for nothing and that's good news".

That kind of talk cuts both ways of course: as was mentioned above Hughes runs a company called **Grampian Holdings** which is engaged in such diverse activities as transport bulk tippers, plant hire equipment, sporting goods and pharmaceuticals, its institutional shareholders are **Murray Johnstone:** 4.08%, **Scottish Widows:** 4.89%, **Barclays Bank:** 4.3%, **Standard Life:** 3.48%, **Scottish Amicable:** 3.52%, **National Westminster Bank:** 3.09%, **Abbey Life:** (a subsidiary of Abbey National) 3.27% and Scottish Mutual Insurance: 3.55%, the bulk of whom we have already encountered above as the recipients of GDA funding. Another director of Grampian Holdings is **Professor Donald Mackay** who last year took over from Sir David Nickson as the overall head of Scottish Enterprise. Professor Mackay (an advisor to six Secretaries of State for Scotland, and whose other Company **Pieda** has been receiving SE money from the start) has his work cut out for him, with an investigation by the EC Commission's Co-ordination of Fraud Prevention Unit (Glasgow Herald 10/7/93), the result of an adverse audit of SE accounts in relation to their disposal of European Social Fund Money (money designed to help the poor),resulting in the present Commons Select Committee on Scottish Affairs enquiry into the operation of all the Enterprise agencies.

It will be interesting to see if the Commons enquiry touches upon the GDA's secret allocation of £500,000 to another of the UK's fastest growing companies, Peel Holdings. This is something of a farcical tale of **Peel Holdings** claiming that it had negotiated a contractual claim on a plot of land in Cambuslang Glasgow (which incidentally is highly polluted) during the old days of the SDA. They made their claim known when the GDA paradoxically offered the same land to a very peculiar company called Superstadia (run by a man facing racketeering charges in the USA). The money was given to Peel so they would give up their "rights" to the land; but because of the secrecy of the transaction the nature of these were never fully established. Peel itself is based in Manchester and run by a millionaire property speculator, some local Councillors and individuals from the local Manchester Development/Enterprise companies. On a similar theme, and unfortunately for our righteously indignant Labour Party, the enquiry could also touch on one of their more sensitive points, namely an old SDA loan to a property company run by some Monklands District Councillors which was unaccountably written off. The Labour Party calls for investigation into quangos has already reached points of transcendental absurdity with ousted Glasgow City Council Leader Jean McFadden going into print railing on about their lack of accountability, without disclosing that she herself is on the board of the GDA, as was her predecessor Pat Lally, and as is STUC "supremo" Campbell Christie .

Turning back to Forbes McPherson, the reader will recall that he is a member of a company called Glasgow Cultural Enterprises (GCE). This was set up in 1990 during the "Year of Culture " to profit from and administrate (including the spending of a £1m Council subsidy) the recently built Royal Concert Hall, (a similar deal being struck with the other main Glasgow concert venue, the SECC). Similar to the GDA, GCE is made up of an alliance of Labour Councillors and top

The world of banking and high finance has long interpenetrated with that of the Secret Service...

Businessmen and aptly demonstrates the willingness (some would say complicity) of the Labour Council to embrace the privatisation of its amenities indicative of the transfer of power integral to the GDA's right-wing agenda. The celebrations of a new Glasgow in 1990 directly coincided with the launch of the GDA, which from its onset completely took over the Council's budget and responsibilities regarding the "redevelopment" of the City, largely on the pretext that they would encourage "culture and tourism". In regard to their Thatcherite crusade (inasmuch as that word merely mystifies the unaccountable power of finance capital and the City of London) the notion of cultural redevelopment provides the GDA with an all encompassing scope for tinkering with local democracy.

Fingers In The Pie

Another significant member of GCE is (the recently knighted) **Sir Ray Johnstone** whose directorships include **Scottish Amicable, Murray Johnstone Investment Trust**, and **Scottish Financial Enterprise** (SFE). The reader will also recall that it is SFE which advises the GDA at those London dinners. A partial breakdown of some of the other directors of Scottish Amicable including their other directorships would include:

Dr. William Brown: GMTV, Pauline Hyde & Associates, Radio Clyde, The Scottish Arts Council, STV. [Brown is an ex-director of the GDA] • **Roy Nicolson:** Cathedral Investments, Eurosalas Properties, Forth Valley Enterprise, J. Rothschilds Assurance • **Maurice Paterson:** Lautro Ltd. [The regulatory body for Insurance Companies] • **Thomas Johnston:** Bank of Scotland, Science Projects (Scotland) • **Ronald Miller:** Dawson International, Christian Salvesen, Securities Trust of Scotland • **Peter Jamieson:** Robert Fleming Holdings, Jardine Fleming Group (Bermuda), Kleinwort Overseas Investment Trust • **Bernard Solomans:** Allied Provincial, Edinburgh Fund Managers Investment Trust, The London Stock Exchange, Scottish Financial Enterprise.

Through Ray Johnstone we can see an intimate picture of the relationship between SFE, GCE, and the LECs not to mention Cultural funding bodies, the media and a range of Investment Trusts and Financial Institutions. One other, now ex-director of SFE is **Angus Grossart** whose companies **Noble Grossart** (Scotland's first merchant Bank), **Alexander & Alexander, American Trust, Scottish Investment Trust, Scottish Television, The Royal Bank of Scotland, Edinburgh Fund Managers, Hewden Stuart and Murray International Holdings**; make Grossart one of the most influential men in Scotland: Alexander & Alexander is the world's second biggest insurance broker, and has recently(more or less) taken over the running of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary Trust, imposing ludicrous conditions on the ancillary staff who started a strike in protest. And here we have the crux of the matter: if you have a conflict of interest, because it is they who make their money through people making private provision for theses things, through private pensions, health care insurance and so forth, add to that the unaccountability of a quango and we can see the LECs as a key instrument in basic covert right-wing operations. We can connect Angus up with Norman McFarlane through The American Trust which they both run (interestingly along with **Aims of Industry** member Lord Goold); they also jointly run Edinburgh Fund Managers, its parent company. These two companies run the mineworkers Pension scheme and the British Coal staff pension scheme, investing it in American securities. Edinburgh Fund Managers also manage the investment portfolio of The Smaller Companies International Trust, which they foolishly invested in a company called **International Signal & Control** (IS&C), which some readers may know became part of the BCCI/Iran-Contra saga: it was an arms Company which merged with Ferranti and then collapsed, leaving a £1bn hole in Ferranti's accounts (causing its collapse) and sending IS&C's far-right chairman into an American jail (the other directors who were Washington power brokers seem to have escaped).

It would be interesting to see when Edinburgh Fund Managers ditched their IS&C shares, this would reveal the extent of Grossart and McFarlane's far-right connections. The investment world is a tricky business and to get in on the bottom floor

one must engage in what can only be termed espionage. The world of banking and high finance has long interpenetrated with that of the Secret Service and the sharing of intelligence forms the basis of how UK interests are protected and advanced.

Far Right Connection

The far-right connections seem to abound here, going back to Forbes McPherson, our GDA leader shares his seats on the board of the TSB and Hill Samuel with Sir Richard Lloyd of the **Ditchley Foundation** and various arms companies. The Ditchley Foundation is based at Ditchley Park and **"is a conference centre...used for private VIP meetings guarded by Special Branch and MI5. It was used by the ISC** [Institute for the study of Conflict] **as a conference centre from 1972 onwards; the ISC Council minutes of 21/1/72 mention an ISC conference on Ireland that was held under conditions of extreme secrecy. Ditchley park is closely linked to the Bilderberg Group, 14 of whose members sit on the centre's board of Governors."** (Lobster no.26 page 16). Lloyd has been on the Council of management of the Ditchley Foundation since 1974, and he also sat in on the mid-seventies Wilson Committee's attempts to curb the unaccountable power of the financial world, so Forbes keeps some interesting company.

The question of whether the LECs are underwriting the expenses of the larger businesses and financial institutions is hardly open to debate . It is hard to see what the waste of time and money represented by the Commons tinkering enquiry into it will achieve, a fine perhaps, some government funds returning to the Treasury, one or two resignations? Already there has been a few resignations from within the LECs on the basis that some directors were not told what was actually going on.

Screening For Workfare

It has also been reported, even in the mainstream media, that the banks have taken over the role hitherto the province of the **Economic League**: that of amassing personal information on individuals to establish a political and social profile with a view to political vetting and blacklisting. Secretive elements in what must be the most sinister aspect of the work of the LECs can be tentatively identified in aspects of their training projects, particularly with the work of the Restart Programme (the LECs receive a large part of their funding from the Department of Employment). It is true that the management of the unemployed is moving into the hands of shady little companies which are funded by the LECs while assuming the guise of private companies. One of the more peculiar activities of the week-long compulsory Restart course is the collection of data on its subjects: they are asked to write a CV as an exercise and these are collected (typed out by persons unknown) and never returned to the individual, there are also several personality assessment questionnaires which are again assiduously collected. All "long-term" unemployed individuals have to endure these courses or suffer the withdrawal of their benefit. Amounting to little more than pencil sharpening and clock watching, the courses offer a golden opportunity to gather all manner of intelligence on "troublemakers". They are also staffed at a higher level by people fresh from training in the US on the Workfare system,the model for future Government policy.

The Natwest Bank has also become the owner of the Contaminated Land Register, which lists thousands of polluted sites throughout the UK. Prior to the last election the Government did promise that this would be published and made public, but they reneged on this and now a company or individual has to pay the Natwest (after a suitable vetting no doubt) to find out what lies beneath the surface of a prospective development or an existing one. The LECs are also supposedly responsible for clearing up polluted sites of, for example ex-steel mills such as Ravenscraig. This is (at times literally) something of a minefield in social, economic and political terms, particularly since the property and construction industries (the two biggest clients of the Banks and Insurance companies) are in such a slump. There are massive interests being protected here: in the US a new report estimates that the insurance Companies will have to reserve $260bn in additional funds to meet their exposure to environmental and asbestos claims over the next 15 years (Financial Times 13/4/94). And it is much the same in the UK, only made worse by the partially cataclysmic problems already facing Lloyds (which acts as the clearing house through which every Insurance company works). So a document like the Contaminated Land Register, and the responsibility for clearing up the mess, of at times immortal toxins, strewn all over post-industrial Britain, has to be put into safe hands or better still in nobodies hands, in the Natwest's bomb proof bunker.

Starship Enterprise

The concept of Enterprise and Enterprise Zones are, on a wider scale, at the core of how the World Bank and the IMF function as the premier development agencies. Both draw on top executives from the main European and American Banks, and of course function as a wing of Western, mainly US, foreign policy; largely free from legislative, judicial constraints and popular influence, they are increasingly the principal agents in forcing governments to **"devalue their currency, privatise their industries, open their doors to foreign investment, freeze wages, raise food prices, slash social services and implement Bank-sanction population programmes."** (Covert Action No 39, p28).

With a Government as intertwined with the financial Institutions as we have in the UK, what is done in the name of development by the World Bank and the IMF is not restricted to the "Third World" but is continually modified into local variants for home application. Professor Donald MacKay, the new SE leader made his name as a consultant by winning a $1m Economic consultancy from the World Bank . Firmly in the neo-conservative monetarist camp, he believes that **"the only way public spending can be cut in any meaningful way would be a through a major shake up of the social security system including a rethink about the principle of universal benefits"**. (Scotsman 12/1/93) It was Bill Hughes' experimental contribution to this, in the form of the creation of SE, which would have really made Mrs. Thatcher's eyes light up. Back in '88 when she gave him the go-ahead Hughes must have felt like Yul Brenner in the Magnificent Seven, gathering up institutional investors in his own Company and his CBI chums and riding into town, the difference being that the Bandits terrorising the locals are indistinguishable from their new found protectors ●

TIMEX

Labour and Trade Unionism at its best

The day after the strike was called, I was on the picket line with an RCG member, whose uncle was on the strike committee. As an active anarchist with limited resources and comrades, you can't pick and choose who you'll work with, but I must give this activist all due credit for the amount of support he gave me when I was trying to push for real working class action.

I was actively involved in workers' representation at my own place or work, and held elected positions within the TGWU from shop steward to member of the Regional Committee for Scotland (Textiles). Therefore I was well aware of the internal corruption and sterility of the trade union movement.

I must explain that the majority of trade unions conduct themselves in the same manner: structures and voting rights may differ but the end result is always to act on the instructions from the top or the National Executive Committee. Branch and workers' committees are virtually nonexistent as are true representatives of workers' demands, particularly in time of conflict or struggle with bosses, and as such all actions or decisions are directed or made for workers in struggle by full time officials (highly paid in comparison to working people). These officials are strictly held to the official trade union line (pensions and bribes assured). Strike committees are set up as a means of control over workers in struggle.

The NUM differs in this situation. The full time officer will always be present at these meetings to ensure that no abnormal lines of action are taken by workers acting on their own initiative.

The difference at Timex was that although the picket line and demos were attended to token union officials, MPs and other parasites who required a high profile and used such struggles to gain this, the majority of support for the Timex workers came from the established left wing parties: SWP, Militant and a combination of Communists (Stalinists), with anarchists on the fringe of these, but Timex workers approved of this and any other support in the struggle to beat the bosses.

It was anarchist initiative to set up the Timex support group network, which in turn upset the official trade union line, as these groups would be able to a certain extent to act autonomously. The fact that trade unionism of a lefty persuasion tried to control them completely (and failed), was due to activist work being done directly with Timex workers on the picket line.

Catalyst

When the official trade union movement realised that the support groups could act as a catalyst drawing waged and unwaged workers together, they used a carrot to entice the idiots of the SWP and Militant into giving them (the union) critical support; this was done by the STUC and later the TUC. Conferences were hastily convened to discuss the Timex situation, meeting after meeting was called to further discuss what had already been discussed, this is the format that trade unionism uses to bury workers struggle. Endless meetings and discussions but no decisions for any real action. The SWP/Militant members wasted all their energy lobbying useless talking shops, while strikers on the picket line were becoming more disillusioned with their union's approach and more angry at the fact that nothing was being discussed with them directly.

Report backs were given to strikers on a weekly basis in a small yard across from the picket line, but again it was only trade union rhetoric, diluted information from AEEU officials at the bottom of the union pecking order. I would regularly ask strikers what actions were being planned but no one ever knew. It soon became apparent that the strike was being undermined at a national level, between the National Executive of the AEEU and the Timex bosses, with even the strike committee being fed secondary information. The workers on the picket line were only fed gossip from individual members of the strike committee and the majority of this information was bullshit.

...strikers on the picket line were becoming more disillusioned with their union's approach...

The main priority of the strike committee was to control the support groups' action. Strike committee members attended the initial support group meetings in Dundee to gain assurance that support group members would act on the directive of the strike committee only, and not independently. Assurance was given by the majority of support group members SWPers, Militant, CP of Scotland, Labour activists etc, the fate of autonomous support groups was sealed by an inbred trust in the trade union movement (STUC/TUC), acting on behalf of the strikers.

The betrayal of the strike was apparent as early as March/April 93, 8 weeks into the strike, support groups were being set up throughout the country, in consultation and with full support of workers on the picket line. At this time the strike committee in Dundee felt so confident in the fact that the SWP/Militant would give them the full support and compliance, that they decided to stop sending a committee member to support group meetings to update the groups on actions begin taken. Strikers were misinformed or not informed at all on negotiations taking place on their behalf. Marches and rallies were held in obscure parks or places of no importance, contact between strikers and other workers was deliberately ignored.

For example, a major industrial estate was bypassed as a route for a march and rally in favour of a country park, a major housing scheme next to the Timex factory was ignored, no leaflets or local work was done to encourage local people to take up the strikers' cause, and all this time the AEEU National Executive was trying to undermine the strike by using the law against mass picketing, (Gavin Laird, General Secretary AEEU: "These people should stay at home and mind their own business.") quoted from the national press the day after Timex strikers and their supporters successfully stopped scab buses from entering the Timex factory.

Isolation

The official trade union movement was using all its energy to isolate the Timex strikers. Local marches and demos in April and May

were well attended but the tired old left wing mentality of giving critical support to the official defenders of the working class was more apparent than ever. For reference to this see the front pages of Socialist Worker/Militant etc. At this time the national press had a field day, reporting real working class action on the 17th May as "Battlefield Timex", and "Scenes not seen since Orgreave", and again with national union figures condemning the support for Timex strikes as "far left trouble makers", out for their own gains, a clear example of corrupt trade unionism acting hand in glove with a corrupt media, and coercing with corrupt bosses.

This conduct by union officials angered striking workers on the picket line, mass support by workers and mass action was what they were asking for, not union leaders or labour politicians condemning actions to save their jobs. The strikers themselves forced the first all Scottish shop stewards' meeting, in the history of the STUC.

Real Feelings

This was an opportunity for workers representatives to express the real feelings of waged workers from a broad spectrum of Scottish industry, on Sunday 13th June the meeting was convened in Dundee under the auspices of the STUC, full time officers from all unions were present but were not invited to speak or address the meeting (apart from John Kydd Snr, local negotiator for the strikers) all applause at this meeting was given to speeches calling for real action (A Scottish strike), the STUC deputy secretary (Campbell Christie was late and missed the meeting) was forced by the mood of the meeting to state that "some form of action will be taken/called."

(January 94 and the strikers were still waiting for the promised Scottish-wide action, the strike was over.) Even at support group meetings in Dundee from 1st July, SWP and Militant did not believe that nothing would come out of the Scottish stewards meetings.

The SWP/Militant members of the Dundee support group continually asked the support group secretary to write to the strike committee and the STUC to reconvene another stewards meeting, but their bleating came to nothing. The STUC could never allow another meeting, the call for solidarity was too strong, and this was one thing the trade union movement did not want. Negotiations at a national level between the National Executive of the AEEU and the Timex bosses continued but no real report back was given to strikers from the first week in July to the 9th of August, when a further march and rally was called, again a country park, again union rhetoric, the STUC placated their "left" wing allies in the SWP etc, by organising a "major" rally on the 21st of August, a "major" dose of union crap.

Women and men who remained on the picket line were so disillusioned at the conduct of the union officials that when a mass meeting was called to put forward a settlement proposal for the strike in the Maryat Hall, Dundee 1st week in September, Jimmy Airlie and the Scottish executive of the AEEU were shouted off the stage with cried of scab for their actions and had to abandon the meeting. This was the time for real working class action but how could real revolutionary politics be introduced to galvanise and break the strikers' trust in the official trade union movement?

The local full time officer, through the strike committee, smothered this avenue. At this time the split in the strike committee was apparent to all who regularly manned the picket line. The union continued its high-powered, high-profile talks, but by October/November the strikers were thoroughly demoralised by the betrayals of the whole trade union movement that even manning the picket line had to be supplemented by activists on a day to day basis.

Media

The national press and media, sensing the workers' spirit had been broken, called for an end to this "bitter" dispute, so Calkled leaked information on talks at the highest level (Olsen and his negotiators) went to press on a daily basis, this was how the Timex strikers received their information, again the betrayal of the strikers by trade unionism was so blatant that workers passing the picket line on their way to their own jobs in the industrial estate close to the Timex factory bowed their heads or scurried past, some even took a half mile detour to avoid being reminded that these fellow workers had stood united for 10 months fighting for their jobs and conditions and against the lecherous will of a multinational boss, only to be abused and sold out by their own trade union.

The media, local and national, did their job well, in the last two months of the strike support had dwindled, marches and rallies were poorly attended, the "left" wing groups were looking for another cause to champion in their role as the vanguard of the working class. The AEEU threatened strikers with expulsion from the union if they did not comply with the final settlement (solution) they had negotiated. Redundancy followed, and another 342 trade union members signed on the dole ●

Obituary... *in the hope that the labour and trade unions' time will come and all the more sweeter will their destruction be for the countless numbers of betrayals to their class.*

Spain and its Relevance Today

by Iain MacSaorsa

"If instead of condemning that experience [of collaboration], the movement continues to look for excuses for it, the same course will be repeated in the future...exceptional circumstances will again put...anarchism on [its] knees before the state" Juan Gomaz Casas, Anarchist Organisation: The History of the FAI, page 251.

Introduction

Spain, in the 1930's, had the largest anarchist movement in the world. At the start of the Spanish "Civil" war, over one and one half million workers and peasants were members of the C.N.T.(the National Confederation of Labour), an anarchosyndicalist union federation, and 30,000 were members of the F.A.I. (the Anarchist Federation of Iberia). The total population of Spain at this time was 24 million. The anarchist movement was larger, more dynamic and more influential than the corresponding Marxist organisations (the U.G.T. union federation, the Socialist Party, etc). Since 1868, the history of the Spanish Labour and revolutionary movement was dominated by anarchism, a situation unique to Spain in many respects.

Therefore, considering this, the need to understand and know the events of Spain is essential. Firstly, to learn from the activities of our comrades, to learn from their mistakes and, secondly, to find and apply what is still relevant from their history to OUR activities and political programme/agenda. Thirdly, to discuss some basis ideas of anarchism, with reference to actual events, which should be clear in people's heads.

Hopefully comrades will find this article useful. Needless to say far more could be written on the subject of Spain. This is one view point and should be seen as an aid for the discussion, for further reading and debate and as an indication of what anarchism and anarchists are capable of doing.

The Start of the Civil War/ Revolution

When the Generals revolted against the republic on July the 19th 1936, the government was paralysed. The only resistance to the fascists came from the working class, first and foremost from those sections organised in the C.N.T. and F.A.I.. While the government tried to negotiate with the fascists, offering them spaces in the cabinet at one point, the C.N.T. (and to a lesser degree the radical sections of the U.G.T.) constantly urged people to organise for a general strike, arm themselves and directly resist the coup.

When the army did start its uprising, it was met on the streets with the heroism and initiative of the members of the C.N.T. ("Cenetistas") who went on the offensive. It was the C.N.T./F.A.I. which lead the resistance to the Generals. The members of the U.G.T. followed behind, while the politicians did nothing (as usual). It should be noted that U.G.T. unions in areas where the C.N.T. was strong were totally reformist. In areas where the C.N.T. was organised, but smaller, the U.G.T. was forced to be more radical under the influence of C.N.T. activities and the fear that their members would join the more militant (and effective and modern) organisation. After the resistance of the 19th of July, the Generals' coup had been defeated in TWO THIRDS of Spain.

It is clear that as the cenetistas fought and died on the barricades they would not be risking their lives for some poxy republic. They unleased the most profound social revolution in the history of the world (so far at least...).

The Revolution

In the heady days after the 19th of July (people burning money was a common sight in the streets of Barcelona, for example) the initiative and power truly rested in the hands of the rank and file members of the C.N.T. and F.A.I. No positive directives came from the C.N.T. committees (who were to busy doing other things as we shall see later). It was ordinary people, under the influence of Faistas (members of the F.A.I.) and C.N.T. militants no doubt, who, after defeating the uprising, got production, distribution and consumption started again (under more egalitarian arrangements of course) as well as organising, and volunteering (in their thousands) to join the militias which were to be sent to free those parts of Spain under Franco. In every possible way, the working class of Spain were creating by their own actions a new world based on their own ideas of social justice and freedom (ideas inspired, of course, by anarchism and anarchosyndicalism).

The full extent of this revolution cannot be covered here. All that can be done is highlight a few points of special interest and hope that these will give some indication of the breadth of these events and encourage people to read a few of the books listed below.

All industry in Catalonia was placed either under workers self-management OR workers control (that is, either totally taking over ALL aspects of management, in the first case, or, in the second, controlling the old management). There was, of course, a direct relationship between the size and influence of the C.N.T. and the number and internal nature of the collectives formed. Workers in the U.G.T. were generally inspired to action by the practical example of the C.N.T.

In some cases whole town and regional economies were transformed into federations of collectives. The example of Alcoy (population 45 000) can be given as a typical example:

"Everything was controlled by the syndicates. But it must not therefore be assumed that everything was decided by a few higher bureaucratic committees without consulting the rank and file members of the union. Here libertarian democracy was practised. As in the C.N.T. there was a reciprocal double structure; from the grass roots at the base....upwards, and in the other direction a reciprocal influence from the federation of these same local units at all levels downwards. from the source back to the source." (Gaston Leval, quoted in "The Anarchist Collectives", Ed Sam Dolgoff, page 105)

It should be noted this was obviously before the counterrevolution got under way and that the organs of the collectives were NOT identical to the corresponding organs of the C.N.T., although they did operate like the C.N.T. did before the Civil War.

In practice, until sabotaged by the state, the collectives proved that ALL aspects of industry and agriculture can be operated better by the workers themselves (using anarchist organisation) than under capitalism.

Collectivisation was not full socialism (although it was definitely socialistic). For example, most collectives kept the use of money (in some form or another) as well as distributing goods according to DEED not NEED (ie, saying that so much labour is "worth" so much and so

retaining value relationships from capitalism). Obviously, food was distributed free in some cases (to the old, sick, etc and militia at the front) but the main rationing schemes were still based on certain (not all) capitalist principles.

As Gaston Leval states, "it was not... true socialisation, but a form of workers neo-capitalism, a self-management straddling capitalism and socialism, which we maintain would not have occurred had the Revolution been able to extend itself fully under the direction of our syndicates" (Gaston Leval, "Collectives in the Spanish Revolution", p227/8).

This should be remembered, as should the last point. In no way can this truly detract from the positive achievements of working class self-management and the anarchist reorganisation of the economy. In general, the collectives created most of the structural framework of an anarchocommunist economy, while, due to the concrete realities of Spain (its isolation economically and politically, the lack of other widespread revolutionary movements in other countries and its agrarian economic base) it could not apply some of the social aspects (abolition of wage labour, money, etc).

The militias sent to fight the war were organised in true anarchist fashion and often defeated better armed, better trained and more numerous detachments of the fascist army. There was no rank, no saluting and no officer class. Everybody was equal. The militias did use ex-officers, but only as advisors. The direction of the war rested in the militia committees, under the control of the front line fighters who could countermand and replace delegates. The militias contained both men and women. Ironically enough, Trotskyites always say how much they approve of the militias and how "democratic" they were, without ever mentioning how Trotsky removed all these features from the Red Army before and during the Russian Civil War.....

When a militia entered a town or village, they did not force the people to join collectives or dictate the form social life would take. All they did was to ensure the population could organise their own lives, as the population saw fit.

On the social front, anarchist organisations created rational schools, a libertarian health service, social centres, and so on. The Mujeres Libres (free women) combated the traditional role of women in Spanish society, empowering thousands both inside and outside the anarchist movement (much to the annoyance of some male anarchists...). The story of the Mujeres Libres would take an article in itself (See the Free Women of Spain by Martha A. Ackelsberg for more information on this very important organisation). This activity on the social front only built on the work started long before the start of the war, for example the unions often funded rational schools, workers centres and so on.

This (very) short summary cannot do justice to the achievements of our comrades in Spain. The booklist in Appendix 1 contains material for those who wish to find out more. It should come as no surprise that anarchism did create the seeds of a new world and that this world operated infinitely better than capitalism (or state socialism). And we must also remember that anarchism can never be created "overnight". Between capitalism and a classless society (full communist anarchism), there will, of necessity, be a "transition" period after a successful insurrection. This period will be marked by the need to create anarchist structures and social relationships (consolidating the revolution) while defending this task (by force, if necessary). Its first step will be to smash the state and ensure a new one is not formed.

The Counterrevolution

The "May Days" of 1937 signified the effective defeat of the Spanish Revolution. The state felt strong enough to crush the power of the working class and remove the last remains of their conquests from the 19th of July. The leaders of the CNT and FAI urged compromise, and so aided the state and the counterrevolution.

So what went wrong? What had allowed the social revolution to be sidetracked and

defeated so quickly. Sad to say, it was the actions of the CNT-FAI and, in particular, the actions of certain "influential militants" (or leaders).

For a revolution to be successful it needs to create organisations which can effectively replace the state and the market, that is to create a widespread libertarian organisation for social and economic decision making through which working class people can start to set their own agendas. Only by doing this can the state and capitalism be effectively smashed. For example, if the state is not smashed, it will continue and get stronger as it will be the only medium for wide scale decision making. This will result in revolutionaries having to work within it, trying to influence it since no other means exist to reach collective decisions.

This problem confronted the leaders of the CNT on the 20th of July. They interpreted the needs of the situation as "either we seize power or we collaborate with political parties" (and so the state) in effect, "anarchist dictatorship" or "democracy". While the rank and file members of the CNT (and other sections of the working class inspired by the CNT) were in the process of constructing a new world, clearly showing in practice that they were in favour of anarchism, the "influential militants" in CNT committees were stabbing them in the back.

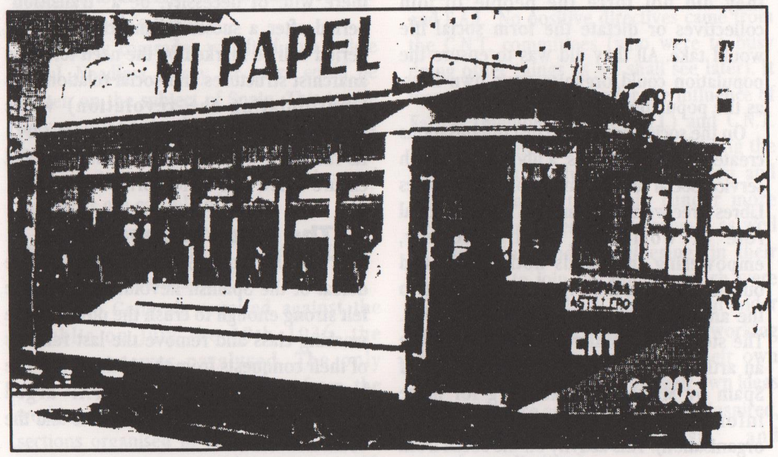
Instead of pursuing anarchist policies (and past CNT policy as indicated from congresses), the committee members started to pursue their own policies. Far from NOT seizing power themselves (as the Trotskyites lament, their definition of "workers power"), the CNT and FAI committee members seized power within their own organisations. Without receiving any mandate from the CNT syndicates they claimed to be delegates from, the leading committees decided off their own backs not to talk of libertarian communism but only of the fight against fascism.

In practice the committees had been separated from the rank and file and their members transformed from delegates into representatives ("leaders" in every sense of the word) who started to make policy decisions on the rank and files behalf, without bothering to consult them.

On the 20th of July, instead of, for example, organising a joint plenum of CNT and UGT syndicate delegates plus delegates from previously unorganised workplaces (mandated by the rank and file) in order to discuss the situation and possibly create a permanent delegate federation to coordinate the revolution and the war against the fascists, the CNT-FAI committees sent a delegation of its members to meet the leader of the Catalan Government.

"The delegation... was intransigent... either Companys [the Catalan president] must accept the creation of a Central Committee [of AntiFascist Militias] as the ruling organisation or the CNT would CONSULT THE RANK AND FILE AND EXPOSE THE REAL SITUATION TO THE WORKERS. Companys backed down." (p216, Durruti the people armed (my emphasis))

This shows clearly the role of the CNT committee members (see also "Towards a Fresh Revolution" by the Friends of Durruti). They used their new found influence in the eyes of Spain to unite with the leaders of other organisations/parties but not the rank and file. This process lead to the creation of the "Central Committee of AntiFascist Militias", in which political parties as well as labour unions were represented. This committee was not made up of mandated delegates, but of representatives of existing organisations, nominated by committees.



Workers self-management in action - the trams were collectivised in Barcelona.

Instead of a genuine federal body (made up of mandated delegates from workplace, militia and neighbourhood assemblies) the C.N.T. created a body which was not accountable to, nor could reflect the ideas of, ordinary working class people expressed in their assemblies. The state and government was not abolished by self-management, only ignored.

This first betrayal of anarchist principles led to all the rest, and so the defeat of the revolution and so the civil war. In the name of "antifascist" unity, the CNT worked with parties and classes which hated both them and the revolution. In the words of Sam Dolgoff *"both before and after July 19th, an unwavering determination to crush the revolutionary movement was the leitmotif behind the policies of the Republican government; irrespective of the party in power" (The Anarchist Collectives, p40)*

It is clear that anti-fascism destroyed the revolution, not fascism. *"Fascism is not something new, some new force of evil opposed to society, but is only the old enemy, Capitalism, under a new and fearful sounding name...AntiFascism is the new slogan by which the working class is being betrayed" (Ethel McDonald, Workers Free Press, Oct 1937)*

To justify their collaboration, the leaders of the CNT-FAI claimed not to collaborate would have lead to a civil war within the civil war. In practice, while paying lip service to the revolution, the communists and republicans attacked the collectives, murdered anarchists, cut supplies to collectivised industries (even WAR industries) and disbanded the anarchist militias after refusing to give them weapons and ammunition (preferring to arm the Civil Guard in the rearguard in order to crush the CNT and so the revolution). By collaborating, a civil war was not avoided. One occurred anyway, with the working class as its victims, as soon as the state felt strong enough. Garcia Oliver (soon to be the first ever "anarchist" minister of justice) stated that collaboration was necessary and that the CNT had "renounc[ed] revolutionary totalitarianism, which would lead to the strangulation of the revolution by anarchist and Confederal [CNT] dictatorship. We had confidence in the word and in the person of a Catalan democrat" Companys (who had in the past jailed anarchists). Which means that only by working with the state, politicians and capitalists can an anarchist revolution be truly libertarian!

The continued existence of the state ensured that economic federalism (ie extending the revolution under the direction

It is clear that anti-fascism destroyed the revolution, not fascism

of the syndicates) could not develop naturally nor be developed far enough in all places. Due to the political compromises of the C.N.T. the tendencies to coordination and mutual aid could not develop. For example, in Barcelona during the first two months of the revolution there were few real attempts at economic federation between industries. While understandable in the circumstances, i.e. the need to get production going again placed federalism down the list of things to do, it did lead to some collectives becoming "collective capitalists" as the market could not be replaced by a integrated social organism. In addition, due to the existence of rich and poor capitalist firms before the revolution, there were rich and poor collectives as well. Since there did not exist the means to coordinate production and distribute goods according to need, attempts at mutual aid were often ad hoc.

This lack of coordination meant that the collectivisation could not develop towards full socialisation (socialism/communism) plus it made equalising any differences between collectives much harder to achieve. It also allowed the state to intervene into the economy and, through its control of credit, control the collectives. The October 1936 Collectivisation Degree (used by the CNT leadership to "legalise" the revolution!) allowed the state a further way to undermine self-management in industry. This Decree distorted and controlled the revolutionary economy, ensuring that it could develop no further and laid the ground work for its degeneration back towards normal capitalism, which state control of credit (and so the collectives) ensured.

Not destroying the state meant that the revolution could never be fully successful economically as politics and economics are bound together so closely. Only under the political conditions of anarchism can its economic conditions flourish and vica versa.

The CNT leaders, from the very start of the revolution, claimed that only by a united ("anti-fascist") front, could fascism be defeated. The leadership gave the rank and file no choice (a fait accompli) and, in addition, members at the front were not consulted (most of the "hard-core" anarchists - ie those who were most against compromise - were there) thus reducing opposition to the leadership's line. This fait accompli was the most extreme example of similar actions which had occurred periodically in the past, ie the committees controlling the union and not the syndicate assemblies. Usually, CNT plenums,congresses and conferences managed to curb this tendency to a large extent. The leadership centrally controlled the organisation, calling plenums at short notice, defining the agenda (which was unheard of in the past) and not distributing information to the union assemblies. The leadership's policy, of "anti-fascism" as opposed to antistate/ anticapitalism and its actions lead to the defeat of the revolution and so the war. As Vernon Richards makes clear:

"[was it] essential, and possible, to collaborate with political parties that is politicians honestly and sincerely, and at a time when power was in the hands of the two workers organisations...

...All the initiative... was in the hands of the workers. The politicians were like generals without armies floundering in a desert of futility. Collaboration with them could not, by any stretch of the imagination, strengthen resistance to Franco. On the contrary, it was clear that collaboration with political parties meant the recreation of governmental institutions and the transferring of initiative from the armed workers to a central body with executive powers" (Vernon Richards' Lessons of the Spanish Revolution, page 42).

This is a very good book and is recommended.

This collaboration gave the state and capitalism a breathing space and time to gather their strength. When the time was right, they counter attacked and destroyed the revolution and their "allies" in the antifascist front, the CNT-FAI. In the space of two months, the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias was abolished and, having no where left to go, the CNT committees sent 4 representatives into the government as ministers. According to Solidaridad Obrera (the CNT paper) this meant that *"the government has stopped being an oppressive force against the working class...with the participation of the CNT, the state and government no longer oppress the people".*

This is a sick joke considering that soon after the state decided to crush the collectives by force and provoked the May Day events (during which the "anarchist" ministers, in effect, sided with the state and in the name of antifascist "unity" called on the working class to stop resistance).

Spain, by the actions of the ordinary members of the CNT-FAI gave anarchism one of its most glorious moments. Unfortunately, it also gave us one of its worse by the actions of certain "influential militants" ●

In part 2, next issue, lessons from the Spanish Revolution and Spanish anarchism.

Books worth reading

Lessons of the Spanish Revolution by Vernon Richards (Freedom Press)
Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution by Jose Peirats (Freedom Press)
The Spanish Anarchists by Murray Bookchin
Collectives in the Spanish Revolution by Gaston Leval (Freedom Press)
Free Women of Spain by Martha A. Ackelsberg
A New World in Our Hearts edited by A. Meltzer
Durruti the People Armed by Abel Paz (Black Rose Books)
Anarchist Organisation : the History of the F.A.I. by Juan Gomaz Casas (Black Rose Books)
Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship by Noam Chomsky
The Spanish Case by J. Romero Maura (contained in Anarchism Today, pages 60-83, edited by James Joll and David E. Apter).
The Practice of direct action : The Barcelona rent strike of 1931 by Nick Rider (from For Anarchism edited by David Goodway
Vision of Fire: Emma Goldman (Edited David Porter)
Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell
The anarchist collectives edited by Sam Dolgoff (Black Rose Books)
Towards a Fresh Revolution by The Friends of Durruti (Drowned Rat)
Spain: Social Revolution, Counter Revolution
Freedom Press (selections from "Spain and the World")
The Writings of Camillo Berneri
Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review
The Spanish Revolution by Burnett Bolloten
The Blood of Spain by Ronald Frazer

All available from AK Distribution

Anarchism in Glasgow

Part 1 — ***Charlie Baird Snr, Mollie Baird, John Taylor Caldwell, Babs Raeside, Jimmy Raeside, 14/8/87***

In August 1987 the Raesides, who had been living in Australia for many years, returned to Glasgow for a visit. This provided a rare opportunity to bring together some surviving members of anarchist groups in Glasgow during the 1940s for a public discussion on the history of that movement and the lesson which can be learned.

JTC: The movement started in Glasgow in a way that's buried in a certain amount of mystery because they haven't been able to research it properly, but after the Paris Commune a number of Frenchmen came to Britain and one of these settled in Glasgow and became the companion of a woman called MacDonald who lived in Crown St.

She had anarchist views and they organised the first anarchism movement in Glasgow working from Crown St. and meeting in the space outside Glasgow Green which is called Jocelyn Sq or Jail Sq. People gathered there every Sunday.

Afterwards there was a lull until we have the Social Democratic Federation (Hyndman's crowd) building up a group in Glasgow; the next stage on the road to anarchism was when the disaffected formed the Socialist League under William Morris. They wanted to be anti-parliamentary but not anarchist.

There was such an influx of anarchists in Glasgow and eventually in 1895 it broke up and the anarchist movement of Glasgow was formed. It had 50 members and met in a place in Holland St. It had a number of speakers: Willie MacDougal was one - and the movement developed from that. From 1900 it was able to invite Kropotkin and Voltairine deClerke to speak in Glasgow and was quite a force up to the start of the 1st World War when it broke up because of the persecutions it had to endure because of its anti-war position.

MB: I knew that Guy (Aldred) had a group in little rooms in Clarendon St...

JTC: Guy Aldred came to Glasgow in 1912... The anarchist movement in London had three elements: one was Stepniak, one was Kropotkin, the other was Bakunin.

Stepniak had shot a policeman in St.Petersburg and fled to London - he belonged to the old Russian Narodniks, who believed in propaganda by deed, in shooting officials and they believed that the State has a social contract with the people and when it fails to fulfil that contract, the common people are in a state of nature and can declare war. That was the beginning of the theory of propaganda by deed in Russia.

The other stream was Kropotkin who believed that we are dominated by the State and he gave a historical analysis of the State and that we should get back to a pre-state condition of a society run by communes.

Freedom Press

But the third person was Bakunin who from a philosophical point of view came through Hegel and he believed that we had to destroy authority. Guy developed that point of view in the Freedom Press, but then felt that they were too theoretical, Sunday afternoon anarchists, so he and another founded a paper called the "Voice of Labour", to carry the fight into the factories.

After 3 or 4 months Guy realised that if you do that it runs along trade-union and amelioration lines; what we need is education - so he formed the Communist Propaganda Groups - these were to educate, the other to agitate.

Now the CPGs were anti-parliamentary. You have to remember the context: the Labour Party was something new, it had been formed to represent trade unions and wasn't sure whether it was going to be a left or liberal party or be an industrial syndicalist organisation as identified with Tom Mann or Daniel De Leon in America. There was a careerist element and Guy fought against payment of members, and this took on the form of an anti-parliamentary faction.

Guy was invited to speak in Glasgow in 1912 by a splendid organisation called the Clarion Scouts. It had all kinds of things to interest young people - camera clubs, bicycle clubs, etc... They formed their first organisation in Glasgow in 1898, I think, and would help any left-wing organisation - they helped the ILP, they helped the anarchists - they were not sectarian.

They invited Guy Aldred to speak in the

Charlie Baird, Molly Baird, Jimmy Raeside, Babs Raeside; summer 1987

Pavilion Theatre in 1912. There were no microphones in those days and the theatre was filled, but he was such a success that he came back again and again, and in the end made Glasgow his native city and formed his own Communist Propaganda Group. He was running "The Spur" which had a good circulation and was well known in the movement.

When the war came Guy went off to jail but his paper was carried on by Rose Witcop, his free-love companion. When he came back after the war, his CPG had folded, because he was really the centrepiece of it.

The Glasgow Anarchists (those who'd formed a group at the time of William Morris) were carrying on: Willie MacDougall was one of them - he'd been jailed too, taken down to Dartmoor. He simply escaped from Dartmoor - he jumped on a bike and cycled home and nobody stopped him. (Only a few years ago, at 86, he was still carrying on his propaganda).

The Russian Revolution

Then came the Russian revolution, which split the group in a dozen ways and introduced a new concept - vanguard communism. There came a conflict between the anti- and pro-parliamentarian communists. Guy was quite in favour of the Russian revolution when it took place and spoke favourably of Lenin, even although he knew him to be a statist.

He thought that, under the conditions in Russia, Lenin was doing all he could do, until he discovered that Lenin and the Bolsheviks were persecuting the anarchists in Russia and when the 2nd Congress of the Communist International took place and Lenin declared distinctly that anti-parliamentarians were not to be allowed in the Communist International. He denounced left-wingism in Britain; he said it was infantile, you must

capture that organisation which has the attention of the working class, the Labour Party, so the Communist Party was founded in 1921 with a programme of capturing the Labour Party and trying to capture parliament.

Opposing that, Guy reconstituted his Propaganda Groups but in time called it the ANTI-PARLIAMENTARIAN Propaganda Groups; he had a paper called The Spur. The new group wanted its own paper, and called it the Red Commune, which had a program of anti-parliamentism.

Guy said , Let's take a leaf out of the book of the Sinn Feiners, who made use of the ballot box in 1918 by standing for every seat they could capture. Guy said "There's what to do, let the workers say, 'We are the disinherited'; let us use their ballot boxes and let us pledge ourselves not to go into parliament but stay in Scotland until there's enough of us to form a quorum. This was his anti-parliamentism. Some of the anarchists in his group and some belonging to the remnants of the William Morris groups opposed this, so the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation was formed with some antagonism. It existed until 1932 when it was taken over by a different faction and faded.

Then came the Spanish Civil War in 1936. Then from nowhere erupted the anarchists who had deserted anti-parliamentism as too dogmatic and too theoretical. They came to the fore again and, under Frank Leech and one or two others, formed the new Anarchist Federation....

So at this point, the Spanish Civil War, Guy had the USM; there was still a APCF under Willie MacDougall; but when the anarchists came on the scene again the anti-pantys (as they called them) and the anarchists joined to fight the Spanish Revolution. They adopted Emma Goldman as a hero, and Guy was opposed to that, because Emma Goldman was at that time promoting culture and literature in America and was doing this with various literati and had forgotten about her anarchism and was now coming back. He opposed that and this caused a great deal of antagonism in the streets of Glasgow - they were tearing each other's hair out, metaphorically. Frank Leech continued his group until he died and then on the scene came Eddie Shaw, Jimmy Raeside...

JTC: Well, I've brought the movement up from the beginning of the century until the time when Charlie and Jimmy were in it. Now they can tell you about it then. I remained in the United Socialist Movement, agitating for some form of unity. Before Guy died we'd long realised we weren't getting it, that we in the movement were only being Guy's supporters, because he was an enormous platform figure and well-known orator, and we in the USM were finally simply his stewards and supporters. (I may say that Guy did a lot of work helping conscientious objectors during the war; he helped Eddie Shaw, the two Dicks.)

Glasgow Anarchist Group

CB: That was an excellent history of the origins of the anarchist movement. To go on from then: Anarchism continued in the form of the old Glasgow Anarchist Group, which was actually from a split in a group called the Marxist Study Group. Two men broke away from that group: Eddie Shaw and Frank Leech.

A little fellow, an ex-miner called Jimmy Kennedy, a man steeped in Marxism used to give excellent lectures on anarchism. Now that may be misleading - Jimmy Kennedy was an anarchist out-and-out although he approached anarchism from a marxist point of view. It was deceptive but they still called themselves the Marxist Study Group.

Shaw and Leech had broke away from them (a clash of personalities or something). Another group was started up calling itself the Glasgow Anarchist Group. I was in prison at the time (so was Jimmy) and don't know exactly what happened but...

MB: Jimmy Dick was also in prison at the time. He had been a member of the Marxist group but Charlie and Jimmy only came into it when the came out of prison. Roger Carr was in prison at the same time, and Eddie Veigh. Fenwick and Carr and Jimmy Dick had been members of the Marxist Group and that was when the split took place and they formed the Anarchist Federation.

Q: So was it really your experiences in prison which made you want to move into the anarchist group?

CB: Since I was 16 I'd been a rebel. I'd a short period in the Communist Party, a short period in the ILP and came out of both disillusioned. I was an anarchist and didn't realise it - politically immature, of course, at that age. I registered as a conscientious objector, went to prison where I met Jimmy, Jimmy Dick, and Denis Glyn, who all became members of the Glasgow Anarchist Group. I knew Eddie Shaw, who was a founder member of the GAG. When we came out of jail, Roger Carr, myself and Denis McGlynn and Jimmy came out and joined the GAG. Do you want to take it from there, Jimmy?

JR: No, I think you're a repository of knowledge of the entire GAG. I keep learning things from Charlie.

CB: The Glasgow Anarchist Group in the 1940s became a very large group, very active. We had meetings at the weekend in Burnbank, Hamilton, Paisley, Glasgow, Edinburgh. It was the Glasgow group who supplied speakers...

MB: It had a big following among the miners in Hamilton and Burnbank...

JTC: The anti-parliamentary movement had laid the foundations...

MB: That's right.

CB: The Glasgow group supplied all these towns with speakers and sold a tremendous amount of anarchist literature and had tremendous meetings in Brunswick St and had a hall too in Wilson St. We had meetings there too; when the weather was inclement we took them into the hall. That must have been one of the most prosperous, lively periods for Freedom Press, on account of the amount of literature we took from them. Later on we might have something more to say about the estrangement between the Glasgow Anarchist Group and Freedom Press, which finally led to the split and final demise of the Glasgow Anarchist Group.

JR: I wasn't too aware of the machinations prior to the split and the fact that, although Charlie was the elected secretary of the group, there were individuals in the Freedom Group who bypassed Charlie and had a sort of liaison with Frank Leech. When this became common knowledge it led to clashes of all kinds...

MB: They talked about "Frank Leech's group", "Eddie Shaw's group". How do you have an anarchist "Charlie Baird" group? - You become an anarchist to do away with that! They allowed these personalities to take over. I mean, even Guy - the very last time I talked to Guy, he talked about Frank Leech's group.

JTC: ...But Frank Leech couldn't speak for toffee apples! It was called his group because he ran three newsagents...

JR: He was the biggest newsagent in Scotland, metaphorically and physically!

JTC: Physically he had been heavyweight champion of his regiment. Another reminiscence which won't add to your theoretical knowledge but will give more biographical colour: Frank Leech joined the APCF when he left the Navy. He had been the heavyweight champion. Bakunin Press had a little gym down in the basement, although they were all pacifists! Benny Lynch

used to go down there. Jenny Patrick (Guy Aldred's companion) says Frank was so indestructible, you couldn't knock him down, but you could knock him out on his feet and he'd still be fighting!

When we had the Free Speech Fight on Glasgow Green the Communist Party tried to take it over and we had a meeting in the City Hall and a fight developed between the anti-parliamentarians and the Communist Party over the domination of the meeting. It came to fisticuffs and the CP were very surprised when they discovered we'd so many pugilists!

MB: I remember that! There weren't membership fees for the APCF. I can tell you a bit about Bakunin Press... They had these wee dances to help to pay the rates, because the rooms were their own and the Communists used to burrow from within (same as now) came to Bakunin House, and it was Willie MacDougall, my father, Jimmy Murray and Frank Leech who had to put them out of Bakunin House.

Splits

CB: It's important for young anarchists to understand why splits took place. Caldy's mentioned a few. Why did the Glasgow anarchists split up? You'd think that anarchists didn't look up to leadership and shouldn't regard any other member of the group as a personality or as a charismatic person. Anarchists should be free of all those things: over-estimating people, getting impressed by their personality.

If you look up to a person with charisma, it's a leadership complex. This is what happened in the Glasgow Anarchist Group. Eddie Shaw was regarded as a great personality and very few could see beyond him. He was a good speaker, a good orator, and he worked hard enough at the group, but Eddie was pro-Freedom Press along with Frank Leech. The group was mainly based on the activities of industrial workers in the factories and shipyards. A tremendous amount of literature was taken into these factories by these comrades.

There came a time when we asked Freedom Press to give us more industrial news in War Commentary. Immediately, Eddie Shaw and Frank Leech ganged up against the idea, so we had a conference - several conferences - with Freedom Press, but no way would Freedom Press give way. As a compromise they allowed us one article in War Commentary and by the time it got into print it had been condensed out of all recognition of the original copy. So this was the beginning of the dry rot in the movement.

It was obvious then that a split had taken place. I knew too that there was a bit of subterfuge on the part of Eddie Shaw, Frank Leech and Freedom Press. (Incidentally, the anarchist movement was known by this time as the Anarchist Federation of Britain. Glasgow was the centre; the secretary of the Glasgow group, who was myself, was the secretary of the AFB.)

For example, I had correspondence with Freedom Press regarding the request for more industrial news in the paper, which we thought was the organ of the anarchist movement as a whole, and I found that Frank Leech was corresponding with Freedom Press regarding Glasgow's business with Freedom - over my head.

I said nothing at the time, but I knew that a split would inevitably happen, but in the interests of the continuation of the movement I didn't tell anybody. Eventually it came out anyway .... I had to come clean and told them that Leech (and Shaw too - he was definitely pro-Freedom Press and against the members who were for the class struggle, the industrial struggle...

MB: Of course, you should set this up right for the people who're here. In the group in London we had Vero Richards, Marie-Louise, Sampson and all that. But they were theoretical...

CB: They were philosophicals...

MB: And intellectuals, But up in Glasgow, and this is why we wanted the page of industrial news, all the members we had up here were industrialists. They were working all over the Clyde and that was why we wanted the news - we felt they were entitled to that because they were putting in the funds - we were sending at least 100 pounds a week to the running of Freedom Press and getting nothing out of it.

CB: I talked about the pro-Freedom Press members of the group. Well, the rest of them weren't anti Freedom Press. We agreed that Freedom Press were doing a good job as far as publications were concerned - anarchist books, pamphlets, leaflets - we realised that the intellectual has a place in the movement, but so too do the workers.

Freedom Press didn't accept that, so the breakaway eventually took place. The strange thing was - there was no intimation of it, Shaw and Leech didn't come and say: Well, we're finished. Everything was going all right and I still had hopes of salvaging the group by speaking to Leech and Shaw. There was no way they were going to compromise. One week they didn't appear at the business meeting and the following Sunday they had a meeting in Maxwell St. They had deserted Brunswick St where they usually had their meetings and - that was the split.

Q: When was that?

JR: It was before the end of the war, because when I came back I wasn't even aware the split had taken place when I was speaking in Maxwell St! I was approached by both Eddie Shaw and Frank Leech who said We hold great meetings in Maxwell St, you'll need to come up. And I did.

MB: What you must realise about the split, is you must come back again to Marie-Louise and Vero Richards getting the jail, because it was all part of the split... We had a very big group, but it's no good kidding ourselves - they weren't all anarchists. They were deserters from the army, the navy, the air force, but there were different lads home on leave getting literature and taking it back and spreading it around.

Sedition

The boys were getting the idea - this was the idea, but they wanted to know more about it... They (Freedom Press) put out a leaflet from Connolly's speech - you know, keep your arms - but prior to this the Trots in London had got the jail also for suggesting it. The first edition of War Commentary afterwards came out with London Anarchists slamming the Trots for getting bourgeois lawyers to defend them. Then Freedom Press put out this leaflet and got the jail for sedition. Charlie's the bloody secretary of the AFB and doesn't know the leaflet's out - he's up speaking at a meeting and liable to get the jail and he doesn't know the thing's printed!

CB: To put that in perspective: it was a leaflet carrying a quote from Jim Connolly. He suggested to the British soldiers during the First World War - "When the war's finished, hang on to your arms, come back and assert yourselves, demand your rights". Well, I agreed with that; I'd never seen it, I didn't know what they were arrested for, I knew it was sedition but apart from that didn't know anything about it So they were setting up a defence committee and the group wanted to know something about why they were arrested... That was the situation in the group.

On to the defense committee. As Mollie pointed out, when the Trotskyists were arrested, War Commentary came out with a front page article lambasting them for employing bourgeois lawyers, but when they were arrested it was the first thing they done - employ bourgeois lawyers. However, we'll let that one go. All these things were mentioned; the cumulative effect was the split. What shocked me was that the majority of the Glasgow group disappeared at that period too; whenever Shaw and all went away they disappeared.

JTC: The group practically ended when Jimmy Raeside and Shaw left it.

CB: Mollie and I, Phil Gordon and Jim Dennis - we carried on. We had big meetings at Wellington St., good meetings. My voice wouldn't stand outdoor speaking - I didn't regard myself as a speaker anyway. Bill Borland went into hospital - he died in Knightswood Hospital - and John Dennis went down to London and he drifted out. And that was the end of it. We were still anarchists...

End of Part 1 • Transcribed in November 1993 from a not-always-clear cassette tape • Slightly abridged • Full and Audio copies can be obtained by contacting the GAG.

review

SEVERELY DEALT WITH

Growing up in Belfast and Glasgow

John Taylor Caldwell is over 80. For the last 60 years he has been an active anti-parliamentarian, a close comrade of the late unorthodox anarchist-communist, Guy Aldred* and more recently a writer and historian recording these times.

Now, encouraged by the publishers, he has turned attention to his own eventful life. The first volume deals with his first 16 years, moving from Dumfries to the hurly burly of Belfast, and a voyage of discovery that led him to Glasgow.

It is remarkable how John has been able to recall his innermost thoughts and cope with recalling the brutality he suffered as a child. He also provides a vivid picture of life, as his family spiralled down the social ladder. The respectable pretensions of his father, insensitive to the misery inflicted on his wife and kids (he fathered 10 by way of three women) are brought into focus, as his employment prospects worsened in Belfast and the standard of housing worsened with each successive move.

It is a life before the 'safety net' of the Welfare State, of poverty, not couched in 'good old days' nostalgia but of subsistence, with the children being dragged down to the level of street urchins. The state's attitude when school beckoned was to treat these working class kids, catholics and protestants, as "outcasts... herded into classrooms, not just to be educated, but to be disciplined, to be tamed. Hence order, silence, unquestioned obedience... made to fear authority". The sadistic recourse to physical punishment commonplace in such 'centres of learning' is described, with some humour in the chapter, "Severely Dealt With".

John remembers, sharing a bed with all his brothers and sisters, lying awake *"...nowadays it would be said that I had a hyperactive mind. It was never still. It burned inside my head like a great flame in a little candle. It illuminated a stream of hazy visions, colourful dreams and profound thoughts"*. The book is amazing in its record of how his mind developed its own philosophy, from a child through to a page boy in the Picture House in Sauchiehall Street.

For those interested in history, we get a view of pre-War xenophobia, the horrors of thousands maimed, and the post war mood that "WAR IS MURDER, WAR IS HELL, NEVER AGAIN" is captured from a child's view into adolescence. At the recent book launch in Glasgow Cross, the actor Kenny Grant read this brilliant chapter on the post-war mood in Glasgow, Anti-militarist with disabled out-of-work soldiers everywhere. In Belfast, the mood was deflected by the revived sectarianism accompanying partition, and in "Rooting out the Fenians" we get a child's view of catholic families being driven out of the east Belfast streets.

After the death of his mother, through domestic violence, John, still tied to his uncaring father, was called over to manage house in Glasgow, where the father fled to. We get a chilling account of Glasgow: *"big city, where the people lived 'up closes' which had stone pipe-clayed stairs with a lavatory on each landing to do three or four more houses. At night many of the closes were occupied by the homeless, some of them addicted to a brew concocted of methylated spirits and an injection of coal gas from the stairhead lighting.*

It was a tough city where many of the side-street dwellers wore cloth caps with razorblades sewn into the cap, and often carried cut-throat razors in case the need arose to cut a few throats. The 'polis' were to be feared: mostly big men who, like the Irish, spoke in amusing malaprops (for instance 'Come on get off', 'If you want to stand there you'd better move along')."

We also hear of a hanging of an unfortunate youth Kean, whose hanging took place at Duke Street Prison, and John imagining him in his cell "beneath the bell's great hammer, having a sentence of the Court pounded into his mind in a last stroke of retribution".

Although many biographies of the period have been written, John Caldwell's book is unique in its experience of brutality and poverty first hand, while recording the path of his conscious development from philosophy to anarchist communism. The book can be obtained for £5.95 from the publishers, Northern Herald, 5 Close Lea, Rastrick, Brighouse HD6 3AR or after requesting a catalogue (send a large SAE) from AK Distribution, 22 Lutton Place, Edinburgh ●

**Come Dungeons Dark, the autobiography of Aldred is published by Luath Press and available through AK for £6.95.*

From an Egoist Window Pane

BY
iconoclast

Shakespeare once said, "nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so". You may say; some things are bad and some good independently of my thinking. This is to say; food is good or bad independent of my stomach. The policeman's baton is good or bad independent of its exercise on my body. The knife is good or bad independent of me, you may say.

Does my thought of the use of the knife not determine for me whether it is good or bad? Does my thought of the use of the knife not determine whether the knife is lethal or of use value. In the hands of an assailant the knife is lethal to my thinking. In the hands of a soldier on the battlefield it has good value. The knife in itself is neither good nor bad but thinking makes it so. The soldier by his passion for patriotism regards the knife, bayonet or bullet indispensable. What does "for patriotism" derive from if not from thinking "rightly or wrongly"; predicates which again are derived from thought. The knife in the hand of a surgeon could be propitious in my way of thinking.

Thought of course is merely one of my qualities. I also have flesh and blood and in consequence I feel pain when a blow is administered. If I am incarcerated for the violation of a law, violence may be exercised upon my person by the lickspittles of the law, in order to get me to reveal the identity of my accomplices. I may feel pain, then my thought comes to my aid. My thought like flesh and blood is mine. The thoughts of the lickspittles are not theirs; they are possessed by them; they are victims of their own creation. So I put my thought to use and bring my obduracy into play or I steer them wrongly. Yes, I tell them a lie. If I was possessed by truth I would have to be disloyal to my friends and pander to my enemies.

The truth is not above me. If I was a lover of truth I would be infatuated by an abstraction. If some truths exist, what do I care? Must I genuflect before them in reverence. A truth which is unpalatable to me will be subdued if I have the power to do so. A truth which is favourable to me I will accept. Economists have convinced me that the capitalist system prevails. I accept that this is a truth but a truth which I want to make an untruth. If I had the power to annihilate this chimerical monster I would not hesitate. For the present I can only gnaw at it like excavating at a mountain with a pick and shovel until I muster sufficient dynamite to blow it out of existence and reach my destination. You, you, and a several thousand times you are the dynamite and detonator which I seek. It is self-interest but a mutual self-interest.

Do you think the powers that be will listen to your moralistic platitudes? They gave you the vote as a red herring. They gave you free speech. But if they can give you it, then they can take it from you. What use is free speech? They only bleat. You have to take it and not grovel for it. You have to assert yourself by action. You fireside philosophers are of no danger to them. You can ramble on about your theories in pub and club and the powers that be only treat you for what you are: Arm chair philosophers who speak like predatory eagles but are in fact barnyard fowls divested of their claws. Poets, subversive music, art, subversive song and ideals are treated with some tolerance as long as they remain idealistic expressions. But when the ideal becomes real it is no longer the ideal. This is what offends the sensitivities of the powers that be. They know the person of action intends to make the ideal real. Serve an ideal if you will so long as you will not transform it into the corporeal. To serve an ideal is to serve not yourself but another outside yourself. I may have an ideal but it is not I and I am not it. Can the ideal be anything but my possession if I am to remain my own master? If the ideal gets above for me to serve then I become a creature of my own creation. I am a possessed man.

Let me ask the question. Are you a singer before you sing? Are you a dancer before you dance? Are you a speaker before you speak? Are you a thinker before you think? If I sing, if I dance, if I speak, if I think, where do these attributes stem from? I pinch myself and feel it, confirming that I'm still alive. Of course they stem from me. Your ideals, your truths are static without your activity.

Can they move as you do? For some, truth is eternal or they seek eternal truth. They cannot see the wood for the trees. They have an optical illusion, they approach truth like approaching the horizon; the more they approach it the further it recedes. Their mission can be fulfilled without travelling afar. It is on their own doorstep, symbolically speaking.

I am not truth, I am more than truth. In modern parlance with a twist of wit I have truth plus "vat". I do not accept absolute determinant thought or absolute truth a la Hegel and his admirers Herren Marx and Engels. I am transitory and leave the absolute behind.

I admire an inventor without reverence. James Watt invented the steam engine and this was subject to a transitory process. The discovery of atmospheric pressure was essential in this process and, incidentally, this process was in transition long before the advent of modern capitalism. This is a truth but it is a truth which has little or no validity for me. It has escaped by grasp.

The capitalist class has wrenched control from those who have constructed it. The state machine as protector sanctions this state of affairs. The state is therefore my enemy and it exists only because of my weakness. So long as I retain my boldness of spirit; my recalcitrance; my obduracy; my intrepidity; my stealth; the state will not be secure. It is not my attributes which are a danger to the state but the multiplication of my attributes should it permeate those of like mind. The state can incarcerate me but it cannot incarcerate a bold union of many.

I have a right arm which I can do many things with so long as it is mine. The state may incarcerate me. They may have my body but they won't have me; they won't have the whole of me; they won't have my mind. If they sever my arm from me they won't have my arm. Once my arm is severed from me it is no longer my arm. All they would have is a stinking corpse which would serve on further purpose. But with an anti-state union in force there would be no accumulation of arm corpses. Unity is strength.

A union of determined beings who won't succumb to any master, mundane or so-called divine, is a force that no agency can vanquish. In 1952 when I was forced to accept her Majesty's hospitality in her house on the hill "Barlinnie" I was asked to lead off a rebellion against a fish diet. The prison warders there knew that I had led off the successful revolt but did nothing. Not because they were afraid of me but because they knew I had the support of many inmates. However to make a false show for the satisfaction of their superiors, eight innocent inmates were singled out for punishment. It was a lesson in unity. Need I say more. However, that is another story.

I am a conscious egoist but not egotistical. I have been asked many times to tell this story. If I told of several escapades this would seem to be egotistical and seeking notoriety. To be egotistical is to be possessed; possessed by vanity. I may want to possess something but not to be possessed by anything. I neither want to be a Mr Somebody or a Mr Nobody but merely a Mr Thisbody to merrily gratify my appetites. I have a digesting stomach, a thinking head and a social heart.

For my digesting stomach I seek and consume wholesome food. For my thinking head I have cultural pursuits and especially acquaint myself with literature and seek rational discussion. For my social heart I have

communion with others and when I love, I can love with a full heart without taking the loved one for any more than the nourishment of my passion. Otherwise my appetites would take control and I would be a servile creature of my own creation.

I could die for a loved one without having any abstract calling but because it gratifies me to do so. If my loved one has pain I feel pain just as inflicting. I am not a prisoner of culture, but I am not a stone or a block of wood. I have emotions. Society is anterior to man, i.e. before man became man. Before man became "human". My emotions are derived from society and are just one of my qualities. Qualities which require nourishment which I procure from society, just as I procure nourishment from food for my digesting stomach.

To serve an ideal is to serve not yourself but another outside yourself. I may have an ideal but it is not I and I am not it. Can the ideal be anything but my possession if I am to remain my own master? If the ideal gets above for me to serve then I become a creature of my own creation. I am a possessed man.

Our existence begins with the most intimate conjunction as we are already living with our mother before we breathe. When we see the light of day, we at once lie on a human breast. We are cradled by our mother and attached by many ties. Society is our state of nature. When we develop, we can enter into a society of our choice, not the one we were involuntary born into. The one I was born into is not to my taste. I therefore seek society anew. It once was wisely said, "the urge to destroy is also a creative urge".

I seek the destruction of capitalist society and envisage the forging of a new society based on unrestrained access to the means of life and the practice of voluntary association replacing the subjugation of men and women individually and collectively by political government or the owners of property.

This form of society is in harmony with conscious egoism, or, if you like, it's in harmony with the aspirations of a conscious egoist such as I. Each individual I am bold enough to say categorically is an egoist. The significance of the matter is whether one is conscious of it or not. The denial of egoism leads to varying degrees of dogma and is kindled to fanaticism more often than not.

Observe that pure angelic face of yon young nun? It is sad; by taking vows she has suppressed her vegetative needs. She has denied herself a natural love life. Her vegetative energy has become sublimated and so she is in love with love, which is an abstraction. To give it some semblance of corporeity she calls it god. She is no egoist, is she? She is serving "gawd". She renounces herself. By her self-renuneration she elevates herself. She is exalted and books herself in advance a reservation in heaven. She may be innocent of it but this is egoism by stealth. But we have to have something to live by. You may say, "what do you believe in?" If you change the pronoun of what to who I could give you my answer.

Before the revelations about Joseph Stalin's atrocities he was the great man of steel. The Russian people thought the sun shone from his posterior. He was their "gawd"... Stalin gives us guns; Stalin gives us butter; Stalin gives us tractors. Poor old Joe must have been working night and day. Was he not pure unselfishness himself? The Russians thought; oh how lovingly he cared for his people. Ah yes, for his people. Call yourself not one of his and you are given a trip to the Siberian saltmines.

All the causes which are presented to me to serve are nothing but abstractions, figments of the imagination. The good cause. God's cause. The cause of humanity. The cause of truth, of the nation, of mankind, of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the cause of "Four Freedoms" and a hundred other causes - read "shadows" for that is what they are. Like "nut" cases, we chase after shadows. The world is an insane asylum but it takes in such a huge space most of us don't notice it. To treat with so many causes would be a laborious task and my time and space is limited so I have been thrown a lifebelt.

As they call in the pub, "time gentlemen please". You are consoled by the allowance of ten minutes drinking time. So there's time and space for one other hollow cause for you to ruminate. The state can call you to the colours to defend the nation. The patriots fall in bloody battle or in the struggle with hunger and want. What does the nation state care about that? For service it pays homage with some meaningless phrases. The patriots have died for the great cause of the nation state. By the manure of their corpses that state comes to its bloom; they have been thrown on the dungheap of history. They have died for an abstraction and the state is the laughing heir. I call that a remunerative kind of egoism. You law abiding fools. You think you are criminals by violating the law. You don't go far enough.

Don't just violate law. Destroy it. If you cut a tree you have to cut it at the root. To cut branch by branch is folly. They only grow again. To destroy the state you must take it by the root and deprive it of its sustenance which is unjustifiable ownership of the means of production. You, You and You with your banding together in your union must disregard the law and take possession. If this is a criminal act, so what? Your violence is called crime. The violence of the state is called law. There is no difference in principle, merely a difference in terminology. Strike while the iron is hot and you will be the laughing heir.

Postscript

The German anarchist Max Stirner advocated a union of conscious egoists. A union which would revere no one or any external or abstract cause. This indubitably expresses antagonism to authority; human or divine. Union means getting together; organisation. In the latter days of the nineteenth century anarcho-syndicalism was in its embryonic development. This is an entity worthy of examination. Stirner is dead. If he were alive, I'm sure he would not quarrel with me. I can envisage many empty heads who would. However, if Stirner was resuscitated he would not be I and I would not be he.

Anarcho-syndicalism is a union of a workforce embracing all workers irrespective of skill. I would say to Stirner "Max, if I multiply two by two the result will be four. If an anarcho-syndicalist mate uses addition and says two and two is four, am I such a lame brain to quarrel with such trivia?"
I am an egoist who can organise with others who will take notice of the signposts directing us to our destination. I can integrate conscious egoism with syndicalism but time and space creates an impediment for me to illuminate. I therefore have to put you in the promised land until I have time and space to give the subject its profound credibility.

Meantime I recommend :
"Syndicalism" by Tom Brown
"Anarcho-syndicalism" by Rudolf Rocker
"Syndicalism and the Cooperative Commonwealth" by Emile Protaud and Emile Pouget ●

These, like The Ego and Its Own, are available from A.K. Distribution.

IRELAND

for a lasting peace with justice

What follows is the statement by the Irish anarchist group, the Workers Solidarity Movement, on the IRA cease-fire and its likely effects on Irish politics.

We welcome the IRA cease-fire. Over the last 25 years over 3,000 people have been killed and 40,000 injured. Thousands have been through or are in still prison. The primary blame for these deaths and all the associated suffering belongs with the British state. No cease-fire has as yet been declared by the British state. Likewise the loyalist paramilitaries have not yet declared a cease-fire, and have killed Catholics and bombed a Sinn Fein office since the IRA ceased their military campaign. In these circumstances the IRA cease-fire alone will not bring peace, much less justice.

As we said of the armed struggle in our position paper on the National question.:

"10. The current tactic of armed struggle as carried out by the republicans is incapable of achieving a solution as it is incapable of delivering a military victory and defeating the British army. In addition the British ruling class cares little for the deaths of individual soldiers in its army.

11. In addition we believe the armed struggle is also faulted as it relies on the actions of a few with the masses left in either a totally passive role, or one limited to providing intelligence and shelter to the few. However it has served to maintain the gains made in the late 60's and early 70's and to protect the nationalist community from some loyalist and state terrorism."

The gun was re-introduced in Northern Irish politics some 25 years ago by the British state and its forces. It is significant that the first death, the first dead solider, the first dead policeman, the first dead child and the first bombing were all at the hands of British or loyalist forces. These forces have yet to lay down their arms. They took them up 25 years ago to smash a peaceful civil rights movement, demonstrating for equal rights between Catholics and Protestants. Reforms have been extracted from the British state since that time. Some aspects of discrimination, most notably around housing have been removed or had their legal basis undermined. Further concessions may have been won in return for the IRA cease-fire, but the legacy of that system of discrimination still remains in the fact that a Catholic is 2.4 times more likely to be unemployed than a Protestant.

Compromise

Some on the left will see the IRA cease-fire as a sell-out. We don't. The politics of nationalism were always going to lead to a compromise with imperialism, it was only those with illusions in the republican's "left turn" that thought otherwise. It has been clear for a decade, even to the republicans, that the armed struggle was going nowhere. Britain could not be defeated militarily, and Sinn Fein could not expand on its vote either in the North or South. With the reaching of a compromise in El Salvador, South Africa and Palestine it became no longer a question of 'if' but one of 'when' such a compromise would be reached here. As such the fact, if not the exact terms, of the current settlement with world capitalism are an integral part of nationalism and the logical conclusion of the republican strategy.

Indeed for several years it seemed that the British government would, for its own selfish reasons, refuse to give an inch, being more interested in a propaganda 'victory' than in peace. However it would seem that the massive City of London bombs and the mortar attacks on Heathrow airport, coming on top of a prolonged military campaign, convinced a majority of the British government to bring the IRA into talks. In the 26 counties Albert Reynolds was eager to seize the mantle of the Taoiseach who brought peace to Ireland. On the day of the cease-fire we were treated to a nauseous broadcast by him telling us how he had made the country safe for the little children.

With the Official Unionist Party begrudgingly welcoming of the cease-fire it would seem that within a short time there will be no significant faction opposing it, with the likely exception of Ian Paisley's extreme right wing Democratic Unionist Party [This is not to discount the possibility of the loyalist death squads murdering more Catholics first to show they have not gone "soft"].

It is far from clear that the British government will fulfil its part of whatever deal has been made. At a minimum these would seem to be early release for political prisoners, amending the 1920 Government of Ireland Act to allow unity if a majority in the 6 counties vote for it and allowing of Sinn Fein into direct discussions. Britain has destroyed the possibility of peace before by refusing to honour commitments. Nevertheless a majority of republicans are aware that the armed struggle cannot inflict a military defeat on Britain, and has become redundant.

Peace process

The "peace process" as it is called, will not deliver a united socialist Ireland, or significant improvements apart from those associated with 'de-militarisation'. In addition it represents a hardening of traditional nationalism, and the goal of getting an alliance of all the nationalists, Finna Fail, SDLP, Sinn Fein and the Catholic church. Its appeal to Protestant workers is no greater than the military campaign (i.e. none) and to date republican statements have focused on the need for a De Klerk type figure to lead the Protestants to compromise. It may well be that James Molyneux, leader of the O.U.P. will come to represent such a figure if the initial days of the cease-fire are anything to go by. This approach should come as no surprise to us, it is the underlying bedrock of nationalism. It is the reason we are anti-imperialists rather than socialist republicans.

The cease-fire will make this argument easier to put to activists in the north who to date have put their trust in republicanism, both because of its left veneer and the need to support 'the boys'. Depending on developments it may also become easier over the next couple of years to begin a more sustained approach to Protestant workers. To date this has been almost impossible due to the fact that loyalist death squads have targeted, attacked and even killed revolutionary socialists and anarchists who attempted to work in their community while maintaining a principled opposition to imperialism.

In this sense the ending of the armed struggle, seen as sectarian by one side and which demobilised the other opens up real possibilities for revolutionary politics. At the same time however the left in general and the anarchist movement in particular, is too weak to make significant gains in the immediate future. If the peace holds, the next few years will be a test of our ability to build a viable alternative to the bosses, north and south. But we are aware that 25 years ago the British state smashed something much more modest than what we propose with armed force. We are also aware that sectarianism was used as the weapon to smash any major manifestation of workers unity in the north, not to mention revolutionary politics. If we are successful in building a revolutionary alternative, then somewhere down the road the state will attempt to unleash the same forces on us. Such an attack can only be defeated by mass mobilisations of tens of thousands and not by the actions of a small armed elite.

What is needed is a revolutionary movement, with consistent anti-imperialist policies, that is composed of workers from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds.

Partition

The ending of the armed struggle cannot simply become part of history. The issue of partition can not be quietly dropped in the interests of winning over Protestant workers. In the short term it would be possible to build workers unity on day to day economic issues without mentioning partition but it would be building on sand. In the past we have seen how instances, some involving very large numbers, of working class unity have been swept away on a tide of bigotry. What is needed is a revolutionary movement, with consistent anti-imperialist policies, that is composed of workers from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds.

This will be the real test for the left of the cease-fire. It is where the cease-fire assumes its international dimension. All over the world the authoritarian left has collapsed due to the inadequacies of its politics. Building revolutionary movement(s) in Ireland now represents the same challenge faced by anarchists everywhere. Our success or failure depends on our ability to convince people of our politics, demonstrate the ability to fight and win, and give people the confidence to change society. This is the process that can lead to a lasting peace with justice ●

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