

VERBAL ASSAULT



FREE
No. **12**

OCT./NOV. '84

A SOUTH HANTS ANARCHIST PAPER



MINERS' STRIKE:

FIGHTING TO WIN

Two police horse boxes were also pelted with stones on their way to a pit, and police claim that an industrial police van was used against them.

POLICE today surrounded a jety used to bring in coal and iron ore at the giant Port Talbot steel-works in South Wales, occupied during the night by around 100 striking miners. The men moved in under cover of darkness in a carefully planned operation which they described as a gesture of support for striking dockers.



POLICE scatter as pickets at Rossington turn on the hoses.

SPREAD THE STRUGGLE — PUT THE BOSSES ON THE RUN!

Outside, a police van trying to bring in reinforcements, was rammed and badly damaged by a transit van full of chanting miners.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Verbal Assault number 12. Hopefully, the last 11 issues have generated some enthusiasm in anarchism and a libertarian opposition to this putrid society. We have no intention to carry on producing Verbal Assault, if it merely provides a 'service' to our readers, and look forward to forming a new anarchist group, so that more people can be active as anarchists in Southampton. We suspect that some people in the Southampton area are interested, but have no contact with our readers to find out their views, so now's the time. CONTACT US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN AN ANARCHIST GROUP. DONT LEAVE IT TO THE PROFESSIONALS, 'COS THERE AIN'T ANY. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR APATHY! SEND US A NOTE: BOX A, 4 ONSLOW ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON. (DONT DELAY)

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PRICE WATERHOUSE OCCUPIED

Price Waterhouse, the accountants who stole South Wales NUM funds, and money donated to miners for food and clothes (which they didn't have to) had their Glasgow offices occupied by Clydeside anarchists. In a well organised manouever, they got to the 13th floor and barricaded themselves in behind steel plates they had bolted on. Two large banners were strung up; 'UNEMPLOYED SOLID@RITY' & 'GLASGOW BACKS THE MINERS'. They were in the building from 7:30 am to 4:15 pm before they agreed to let themselves out (police were unable to break in!). This was after extensive negotiations with Price Slaughterhouse and South Wales NUM, regarding pilfered money. (read Black Flag for more details) Nice one comrades!

PLASTIC BULLETS AGAINST MINERS?

Eldon Griffiths, the Tory MP for Bury St Edmunds and police representative for the last 15 years, has threatened that pickets may be dispersed in the future by plastic bullets.

TERRITORIALS USED ON PICKET LINES

Doncaster contacts have the names and numbers of 26 territorial army soldiers who have been masquerading as police on picket lines.

NUCLEAR POWER STATION ATTACKED

At Hartlepool hundreds of miners attacked the nuclear power station. Two tankers were damaged and burning road blocks were set up. There was an almost total lack of news about this successful raid.

STOP PRESS....

Southampton dockers have been given a deadline to accept the management's plans for new work schedules. They are not expected to accept.....

BITTERNE LEISURE CENTRE + SOFT COPS

WADE IN.

The Leisure Centre has been targetted by Southampton council for an onslaught by 'youth workers' because the centre happens to be a gathering place for young people. The fact that meeting people out in the open is seen to be a problem by such scum illustrates their mentality and purpose - they'd rather see people confined within four walls watching TV rather than assembling in 'offensive' groups.

DOCK BRIEF.

Recently, our other local paper, the 'Echo' has been running free advertisements for the ports of Fel stowe and Dover because they have more 'responsible' workforces and more efficient working practices - which simply means that Southampton dockers are expected to knuckle down to every decision of management (even if agreed with by the union) to effectively cut wages and increase the work-load. This is in fact what Southampton dock management are up to as it and the union negotiate over the terms of a plan to - cut wages and increase the work-load.

EXERCISE LIONHEART - WHAT YOU DIDN'T

HEAR.

Six people - civilians - were reported killed by NATO security forces in the massive Operation Lionheart exercise. A soldier was also decapitated by a tank. Not quite the jolly fun and games that the media is billing it as.

.....
"Of course, 1984 both is and isn't 1926. For one thing, the stakes today are infinitely higher: the '30s at least had some street life - the '90s look like having neither streets nor life, if our rulers and their false opposition hav. their way this time round...."

- Taken from 'Miner Conflicts - Major Contradictions' available from B.M. Combustion, London WC1N 3XX.

STOP THE CITY?

. On arrival at Bank station I was shocked to see that the royal exchange was cordoned off, the stock exchange was a definite no-go area for demonstrators and St Pauls was crawling with cops. Definitely not the warmest of receptions.

At about 10.30 a group of about 30 people gathered close to the royal exchange and marched eastwards. By the time the bank of America the group had swollen to about 300 and several windows were being smashed en route. Unfortunately they made the old old mistake of getting trapped in an alleyway. Suddenly - SCREECH - 25 pig vans arrive, cops pour out kicking, punching and arresting. That set the scene for the rest of the day. Any groups that formed were violently broken up. Not much happened after that until about 2.00 when the word got around that everybody should move up to Oxford St. at 2.30.

By the end of the day 470 people had been busted, several windows had been smashed in 'the city' including the Russian bank which the media chose to ignore (probably to connect STC with some communist inspired plot at some later date), fountains in Trafalgar Square were dyed blood red, windows were smashed in Oxford street, and there were also rumors of riots (?) in Notting Hill and rumors of trashing in Soho. In my opinion this STC was yet another spectacular flop but we were asking for trouble, 1000 odd demonstrators v 900 pigs + horses + dogs + vans is not a good match. Another problem that we had was that we were playing them on their home ground, in daylight, within 1 square mile and on one set day. Another drawback was the lack of explanation to the workers in the 'city' although i agree this is very difficult.

If 'Stop the City' is to continue as a proper demonstration and not 'the annual lemmings convention' for members of the libertarian movement, the tactics need drastic alteration. I'd say that it would be better if it became a 'Smash the City' and instead of being in one square mile on one day that it be across the whole of London & take place over a whole month.

By demonstrating in this way not only could people operate in smaller groups (6-12) but they could use the cover of darkness to make good their escape. Another effect would be increased costs for the filth (STC costs about £200,000) also the increased security costs for all potential targets (anyone notice the security guards in all the buildings in Central London on 27th?).

If people are not going to change the whole style of the event and are going to allow it to continue in its present form then i'm afraid . . . i'll have nothing to do with it any more. . . .

This is a view shared by all of the collective. We ^{feel} that it has become merely an anarchist day out in the city, and it should be called off while we have a complete rethink of the aims of such an action.

The government and the bosses wish to divide our class, to weaken our response to their attacks on our living standards - all the better for them to rule and profit from us. So, when prices rise don't blame the miners or dockers - whatever actions any sections of the working class take to defend themselves will lead to the capitalist class taking measures to recoup its losses, which will always be to our detriment. Attacks on the trappings of their wealth like smashing up their Rolls Royces, exclusive clubs, hotels, etc., are a valid response, but are no substitute for the acts of resistance, no matter how small, that we can take in our own daily lives - continuously undermining their power. It can be skiving off work, pilfering from the office or factory, fiddling the timesheet - all the little things that make the day bearable in spite of the boredom. If you're hard up fiddle the dole, or the meter if the bills get a bit steep. Resistance becomes more effective when it moves from an individual to a collective level. Can't afford to buy things? Then get together with others and go mass shoplifting. Tenants can join together and refuse to pay rent until living conditions are improved. Take part in workplace struggles and make contact with other groups of workers to spread the struggle.

If we want a better life for ourselves we're going to have to take what we want without relying on politicians and bosses to rearrange our misery. Our resistance, if it is to become an offensive against the class system that is maintained in the capitalist and so-called 'communist' countries has to spread across national frontiers - the working class has no country. Only then will there be any chance of taking control of our lives and transforming our world according to the needs and desires of all of us.



SOME RESPONSES

As first hand reports of the violence began to emerge from townships in the Vaal Triangle, about 30 miles south of Johannesburg, it became apparent that the explosion resulted almost entirely from black frustration about recent increases in the cost of living.

Dodgers owe strike £200m in rent arrears
MP raided Supermarkets ransacked

Workers at a steel plant have occupied works canteen in a new shift rota introduced to meet an increase in orders.

Cammerell Laird is today seeking a High Court judge's advice in Manchester on how to enforce an injunction which was intended to end a sit-in on two vessels at the company's Birkenhead shipyard.

DESPITE intense policing, the looting of supermarkets has reached epidemic proportions in Brazil. Two more were yesterday ransacked by crowds of hungry shanty-town dwellers, taking nearly 100 the number of food stores looted in and around Rio de Janeiro alone in less than a fortnight.

PIT saboteurs demolished a £250,000 office block by ramming it with a bulldozer yesterday.

Stunned officials from the National Coal Board said the incident, at Thurcroft colliery, near Rotherham, was the biggest act of vandalism in the six-month pit strike.

The ransackings are impressive in their mixture of efficiency and planned austerity measures that will affect them spray the entrance to the city council building concentrates in front of the target.

*The rebels are not breathing
The brutal war
Their luxurious diet
of plums from the bored
Children building lorries
Out of their body spares*

*The common thread
Is the effect of piracy
Obscured by the drama
The hostages have blown up
Crowds marched through the streets
Shouting 'death to the assassins'*

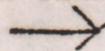
*They want the right to run
Leaders want enormous power
Playing their games
Chatting at the table
Gin and tonic smiles
Bargaining for power
A precarious balance
That eats the souls
of millions*

EXPERIENCE OF

It seems that in our society, birth is no longer seen as a normal physiological function initiated and controlled by the mother's body, but as an illness requiring hospital intervention, sophisticated technological aids and medication. In Britain and in most other western countries, with the notable exception of Holland, the post war years have been ones in which the place of birth has shifted drastically from home to hospital. By 1968 the number of home births was reduced to 38% and 1976 to 2.5%. The government set the target of 100% hospitalisation of births and has now almost reached it. However there are now signs that the number of births taking place at home is on the increase again as people are becoming more aware of their rights.

Why is it important for women to have the choice of when and where they give birth? and what are the differences between giving birth at home or in hospital? I will try to answer all of those questions by describing my own experiences of both hospital and home and comparing both. When I gave birth in hospital I found the whole experience very disempowering. From start to finish I felt like a package which was put on a conveyor belt, checked at various times by different people who took it in turns to process different parts of me, until finally I reached the hospital where I was expected to produce the goods at a certain time, on a certain date, not to inconvenience anyone! The whole experience of birth was seen as being an illness, with women being treated like any other hospital admissions. I felt very much under the control of the hospital with threats of being induced (if I didn't produce on time). During the actual labour pressure to take drugs I didn't need, frequent interruptions when I was trying to relax and concentrate on breathing during contractions. Constriction of movement (not being allowed to walk around because of foetal monitoring procedures) and finally the indignity of giving birth in the 'beetle' position (lying on my back). Having an unnecessary episiotomy (being cut to allow the baby's head to come through) and having to wait around for a doctor to stitch me up (midwives are not allowed to do this although they are perfectly capable of doing it). Having the baby whipped away to be cleaned up, rather than be given straight to me (interrupting the bonding experience / delaying suckling) Having to follow hospital routines, visiting times, having supplementary bottles shoved at me (which the baby did not need) in all a horrific experience! When I had my third child at home in february this year I had a totally different experience. I was completely in control from start to finish. I had my own midwife / G.P. team whom I saw regularly and got to know as friends (continuity of care is important as it "personalises" the whole experience). I did not have to rush into hospital when I went into labour and fill in a lot of administrative forms in the middle of contractions but calmly went through the early stages at home calling the midwife when I thought it was necessary. I didn't feel like a patient but very much like I was preparing for an amazing event. Roger (the father) and I were very much in control, we invited the midwives in, made them cups of tea and I did exactly as I wanted. Between walking, listening to music, taking a warm bath, watching T.V. I managed to stay active and upright as long as possible making the birth easier for me and the baby. I didn't have to wear a ridiculous hospital gown but one of my own dresses (in which I felt very comfortable). Because it was a home birth there was none of the technology which you find in hospitals, instead of a foetal monitoring machine the midwife used the old fashioned listening horn which meant she had to trust her own ears and not a machine! Whereas in hospital I would have felt inhibited at home I squatted and took the position Roger and I had worked out beforehand, to give birth. Perhaps the best part was when my two other children woke up to see their sister's head being crowned and held the baby soon after the birth. Afterwards, instead of being seperated from my family (as happens in hospital) we were all able to relax together and talk in the quiet of our own home. I felt that it had been the most natural thing in the world and one that I had determined for myself.

CHILD BIRTH



I would like to say a bit about how I managed to obtain a "home" birth because it was not easy. It can be a very frustrating, disheartening experience if you are not determined to fight for your rights. When I first discovered I was pregnant and wanted a home birth I went to my G.P. in Winchester to discuss it. He refused to talk about it at all saying that he did not approve of home confinements. He suggested that I try to find another G.P. in the practice to undertake the responsibility. I discovered then that the entire practice had taken an unwritten decision to block all home confinements. I went ahead however armed with the knowledge that I was legally entitled to proper medical provision and to have a home confinement if I wanted to.

My next step was to write to 1). The chairman of the area health authority. 2). The area medical officer. 3). The community health council. 4). The secretary of the family practitioner committee and 5). My local M.P. informing them all that I was giving birth at home. I was subjected soon afterwards to many visits by nursing officers, midwives and hospital administrators all of whom tried to make me feel irresponsible by saying that I was putting my baby's life at risk. I found it hard to counter their intimidation and blackmail but I held out and they finally agreed to assign me to my own personal midwife (and G.P. although this was not recognised officially). Once I had established my rights, the rest was easy. I found friends very supportive also, the home birth book by Marianne Monaco and Vicki Gunor (available at "Books upstairs" 25 Parchment St. Winchester) and the society to support home confinements (c/o Margaret Whyte, 17 Laburnham avenue, Durham) she will send you literature and put you in touch with local enlightened human beings!

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THE WOMENS HEALTH FAIR

On the whole it was run like a "nice ladies day out" with a group of over 50's on the stage giving a demonstration of how to do aerobics! But hold on, don't let's jump the gun, let's start with the poster advertising it. The poster, which incidentally did not mention the Southampton Women and Health group, whose idea the whole thing was, had on it some names of companies at the bottom who had all donated money to the fair. One company, Tyrell & Green, coughed-up only £10:00. Now in my books that adds up to alot of very cheap advertising for them.

Once in the fair I was amazed at how many men were there, not only going round the fair but running the stalls. The point of the fair was to show women that men were not necessary to have as doctors and health specialists, and that women could do a better job since they share the same problems. There was a couple of videos, one on breast cancer and one on birth, both narrated by men! There was also a male shoemaker heavily advertising his hand made shoes, amongst which were men's shoe's, very useful to women I think you'll agree!

However, not all of the fair was a total disaster. The workshops given were very fruitful and no men were allowed into them, which gave alot of women the chance to say what they really felt.

It was the first fair that Southampton has had and let's hope that we have more, preferably smaller, without the unnecessary men there.

P.S. If anyone has any ideas on how to either set up or aquire from the health authorities a Well Woman Center in Hampshire, please write to the contact address at let me know.

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ROMANIAN STATE ORDERS BIRTH RATE RISE.

The Romanian state has ordered an increase of 3 million in the population by 1990. Women will be expected to have 3 or 4 offspring. The legal age of marriage for women has been lowered to 15 and people single at 25 will have to pay another 5% income tax.

Contraception is unavailable and abortion has been the main form of birth control. Now abortions will only be available for serious medical reasons, for women over 43 and for mothers with more than 4 children. Women in their twenties will face compulsory medical check-ups and pregnant women will be screened, with interruption of pregnancy being a matter for state investigation. The state will send infertile women for compulsory treatment and divorce will be made more difficult. These plans were announced on International Womens' Day(!)

A CITY GOING DAFT.

Verbal Assault aims to bring to you, our readers, (and the world at large) a series of interviews with the great (and occasionally the not so great). So in this issue we are pleased to say that the first of these is with one of the greatest, Albert 'God' Blackhead, the leader of the new local council. So now read on.

S.S. (Simple Simon): This will be the first Labour council in eight years, what will its main priorities be?

A.B. (Albert Blackhead): The major priority is to keep Labour in power so that it can, first, keep me happy and secondly to help promote the careers of not only myself but also those careers of the other Labour councillors.

S.S.: Other councils are decentralising and are finding that they are faced with a number of problems. Do you see any need for national co-ordination between Labour councils?

A.B.: One of the things we will be doing is sending a lot of the Labour group to a number of seminars and conferences to have a good time and learn from other Labour councils' mistakes.

S.S.: Within three days of winning power, the council was in controversy over giving support to the miners; will they continue to give support to issues and disputes which are not directly linked to Southampton?

A.B.: Well, if it gets us votes and keeps us (and me, in particular) in power, yes we support

them. However, yes, we do see our role as wider than looking after the council's affairs on a narrow definition.

S.S.: What the hell does that mean?

A.B.: Well, it excludes violence or anything that might get us out of power or change anything at all.

S.S.: Can the Labour council do anything to combat the high level of unemployment in Southampton?

A.B.: Well, it has given lots of us jobs and we will hope to spread the gravy around just like the GLC. We don't intend to have £30,000 golden handshakes - unless of course for me. Otherwise, no - but we will make it look as if we can.

S.S.: What will the new Labour council be doing about housing?

A.B.: In which particular area?

S.S.: Well, do you intend abolishing council rents or stopping the destruction of housing in Swaythling, for instance?

A.B.: Well, we don't intend abolishing council rents - we couldn't do that, you can't oppose the notion of property. As regards house destruction in Swaythling we would oppose it.

S.S.: It's going on at the moment.

A.B.: Yes, as regards employment we are continually striving to ameliorate the situation.

S.S.: The government has a 'hit-list' of Local Authorities which they appear to be attacking; if Southampton is seen as a left-wing council, as no doubt it will, do you think it will be put on the 'hit-list' and forced into confrontation with the government?

A.B.: You must be bloody joking; for a start off there's no such thing as a left-wing council and (interrupted)

S.S.: Albert, you're not in the Young Liberals now!

A.B.: Yeah, well, rats have to do what they have to.

S.S.: If there is a confrontation, do you think we could win?

A.B.: Well, not if it harms my career, we won't; and in any case it takes two to fight and we certainly haven't got any weapons.

S.S.: Won't it also mean that the council must win the support of the local community, and what role do you see the SLP playing in this important process?

A.B.: Er, what's the SLP?

S.S.: Ahem, the Southampton Labour Party.

A.B.: Of course, yes. We have a long-term strategy of decentralising power.

S.S.: Oh, yes, very interesting.

A.B.: Yes, it means that power is decentralised away from the rest to me and it's clear that the Labour Party can play a leading role in that process. It's an opportunity which we can't afford to miss.

S.S.: That's a very interesting remark, but could we pass onto whether Chilworth should become a

CONTINUED OVERLEAF.....



**On the road to
socialism with
the Labour
Party.**

A CITY GOING DAFT (CONT'D)

red-light area or as some moderates have demanded be razed to the ground and the rich eliminated?

A.B.: (Splutter) Er, no.

S.S.: Could you be really honest with us and is life going to be better for anybody in Southampton now we have a Labour council?

A.B.: Elections are about power, not about changing things - but of course life will be better for a few of us...

S.S.: Who?

A.B.: Well, the Labour councillors.

S.S.: It is unlikely, then, that any attempt would be made to physically eliminate the local Tories?

A.B.: (Cough) Definitely not - opposition has a part to play in the democratic process, that of making it look like an alternative, which of course it really isn't. Plus, there is the fear that if the local Tories were attacked by workers, we might be next.

S.S.: Are you then worried about slogans like "Beware, rich bastards" and "Hang the Rich" - or do you regard these as the ravings of a discontented minority?

A.B.: Most certainly not - that's the view of much of the working - class who seem to hate politicians just as much as the rich. We must make sure that such views are restrained and that we, as representatives, preach moderation so that whilst we promise change, nothing is in fact really changed.

S.S.: You must be aware that working - class people don't often vote in local elections and some frankly couldn't give a toss who gets in.

A.B.: Well, thankfully so, they might start attacking the election booths - they seem to realise it's all a farce anyway.

S.S.: Albert, just one final question -

A.B.: Yes?

S.S.: Well, somebody once quoted you as saying that 'first I'm going to be Student Union President, then an M.P., and finally Prime Minister'. That surely can't be true.

A.B.: It isn't true. What I actually said was "First I'm going to be Student Union President, then an M.P., then Prime Minister and finally God."

S.S.: Mm, er, thank you, God.

This interview has not been published with the kind permission of the SOUTHAMPTON LABOUR LEFT LUGGAGE DEPARTMENT ©1985.

'When in 1912, the dockers were on strike, the seamen showed their solidarity by refusing to work the ships. The masters used the clerks to unload the ships and the union pickets were beaten up by the police. They immediately returned to their headquarters at Liberty Hall, got their guns, and quickly marched back. Neither the police nor the scabs offered any resistance after that, proving that only by our armed force can peaceful picketing be carried on!' - MATT KAVANAGH

SPOT THE HYPOCRITE

The ugliest week of his political career was rounded off on Friday lunchtime in the lavatory of the Grand Hotel. He was alone, washing his hands, when a young man walked in. Kinnock paid him no attention. Suddenly the youth swung round and lashed out at him with his foot, a high kick which caught Kinnock a painful blow on the elbow. The shadow education spokesman seized his attacker and pulled him in close. "Then I beat the shit out of him."

When Kinnock rejoined his companions in the bar he told them what had happened. One went back in to check, but the youth had gone. "Apparently there was blood and vomit all over the floor," says Kinnock. A few hours later he boarded a train out of Brighton.

Few could have imagined that two years later, literally to the day, Kinnock would be returning to the same town in triumph, endorsed by an overwhelming majority as Labour's next leader.

He condemned violence, he abhorred violence - and that was what made him different from Margaret Thatcher, he

VIOLENCE

CONDEMNS THE MAN WHO

Mr Kinnock declared to roars of approval that he condemned all sorts of violence, from stone-throwing, personal rights to the "battery charges of the bat, and hooves of truncheons of state violence."

CAPITALIST PUNISHMENT:
IN 1982
660
PEOPLE
WERE
KILLED
IN ACCIDENTS.
AT WORK.



Profitable business is just a throwaway - and the workers are the rubbish.



DUMP THE BOSSES,

AND CHANGE LIFE

THERE'S NO GENEVA CONVENTION IN THE CLASS WAR... SOLIDARITY IS OUR ONLY DEFENCE



VICTORY TO THE HIT SQUADS!