

Manchester Anarchist News

No 3



Don't Vote - It Only Encourages Them!

And so it goes on. It's time for the electoral circus again. You get canvassed a month before the elections. Parks get cleaner. The council finally removes the clapped out car in your estate. Somebody is actually seen sweeping the streets. Holes on the roads are filled. How stupid do they really think you are? Think about it...what goes through their heads? "Eh up! Elections time again. Let's make the Plebs think that we're doing summat with their cash! I know, we'll do a handful of the jobs that we've been ignoring for the last three years. They're a bunch of thick layabouts, most of 'em, that'll shut the buggers up."

There are those local poli-

Hey Stupid! What do you mean, you've never met me before? I'm your local councillor. I'm always round here, chatting to you, asking you what you think needs to be done, reporting back on what progress I've made in fulfilling your wishes.

What do you mean? You've never even heard my name before?

R. Swipe...that's me. I'm internationally known in our ward. I'm on my way to London, me. Might even get to the Cabinet. We've all got to begin small.

An Anarchist Alternative

So what should you do? In Manchester Anarchist Group we think that one thing that needs to be done is to stop supporting your own oppressors. These people who decide when your neighbourhood gets cleaned or that your local park gets cemented over are all on salaries and we are the ones paying them. You wouldn't think that we are their bosses. More often than not it seems like we are a fly in the ointment to them. So, as a first step, we recommend that people don't get involved in the electoral process.

If you're not voting, you are not responsible for any of the crap that they drop on you or your neighbourhood. But somebody has got to do what needs to be done. So, the second step is to start building an alternative. Or-

ganise meetings in the neighbourhood. Go to meetings that have already been organised. GET INVOLVED! Instead of thinking, "That's other people's jobs," start thinking and acting for yourself! Defend each other from the bailiffs; put an end to vandalism in parks; make your own speed bumps; paint your own zebra crossings; look for alternatives instead of relying on the wasters at town hall.

Take Control

The third step is to see that even the smallest step gives you back a sense of dignity and control over your own life. The council takes bloody ages to come and collect all of the glass that gets smashed in the park at the weekend. You get together with some others residents from the neighbourhood and decide to do it yourselves. You also decide to have a word with the people smashing the glass. They respond better because it's people from the same background as them asking them to think. It's a success. You decide that there are many other ways you can act together to get the job done. You begin to wonder what that council tax is for anyway. The council starts to panic because your neighbourhood group is getting a lot of favourable coverage in the papers.

The fourth step is to recognise that small steps are not enough and that it is time to take big steps. Giant steps! Once we've tasted a bit of freedom from the crap that we are fed, we're going to want more. This means no more politicians in London telling us what we can and can't do; it means no more politicians in Europe deciding what's in "our" best interests; it means people deciding what needs to be done; what can be done; and doing it. This is anarchism.



Euro Election Con

Time for the European Elections again. Time to be fooled at the ballot box again. Time to let them sucker you into thinking that you have any control over what happens to your miserable little life. Time to give them the power to tax you, to beat you, to imprison you, to steal from you, to order you about, to tell you what you can do, to tell you what you can't do and then to bleat that they are doing it all in the name of democracy.

Rule over the people

"Democracy". It means "The rule of the people". How much do you think you are really in control of your lives? How much money do you pay a year to the government? What do you get in return? Do you get a say in which hospitals should be closed? Can you choose which country we will go to war against? Were you asked whether or not it was OK to stiff the pensioners? Were you consulted about closing off higher education to your children ("Too many oiks are managing to get through the system, we'll have to close the gates, Tony, or else the middle class kids might find themselves on the dole.") Rule of the people? Rule *over* the people is more like it.

Bloody Labour

What makes it really sad is when people buy into it. "I'm going to vote BNP to show the bloody Labour government what I think!" What's the bloody Labour government going to do about *that*? Well, the first thing it will do is to demonise your neighbourhood. You will all be labelled stupid, northern racist scum. The second thing is that all the big investment will avoid your neighbourhood, resulting in a desperation for jobs which means lower salaries and more miserable working condi-

tions. The third thing is that all of the political parties will use your neighbourhood as proof that *they* are needed and the fourth thing is that more people will come and vote for Labour or Tory just to stop the fascists. So, your little protest meant reinforcing the Labour Party's vote, cheaper workers and nobody prepared to listen to your complaints: Result!

Lying Nazis

For those of you who are thinking of voting fascist, think again! Fascism is all based on a big lie. If Tony Bliar is a monster fib-teller, Nick Griffin and his cronies are Gold Medallist bullshitters. They tell you that it's all about immigration; that once the Pakis and the Niggers are out of the country, everything will be just peachy. There will be houses for everyone; jobs for all; money will grow on trees and the White Race will be saved. The fact of the matter is that *capitalism* is what keeps people on the unemployment lines; *capitalism* is what denies people the right to earn their worth; *capitalism* is what makes a house a dream for most people. And capitalism needs cheap and easily manipulated workers. Nobody comes cheaper than a person who has nothing. Nobody is easier to manipulate than somebody who is frightened of everybody. Capitalism needs the immigrant to be frightened of the people in the country and capitalism needs the people to be frightened of the immigrant. Step forward the BNP! They frighten everybody and capitalism gets on with the job in hand.

So what's Nick Griffin's take on capitalism? Well, he's got a nice big farm and a nice big car, so it seems like a fairly safe bet that he's all in favour of it. So why is he drumming up fear and hatred miles away

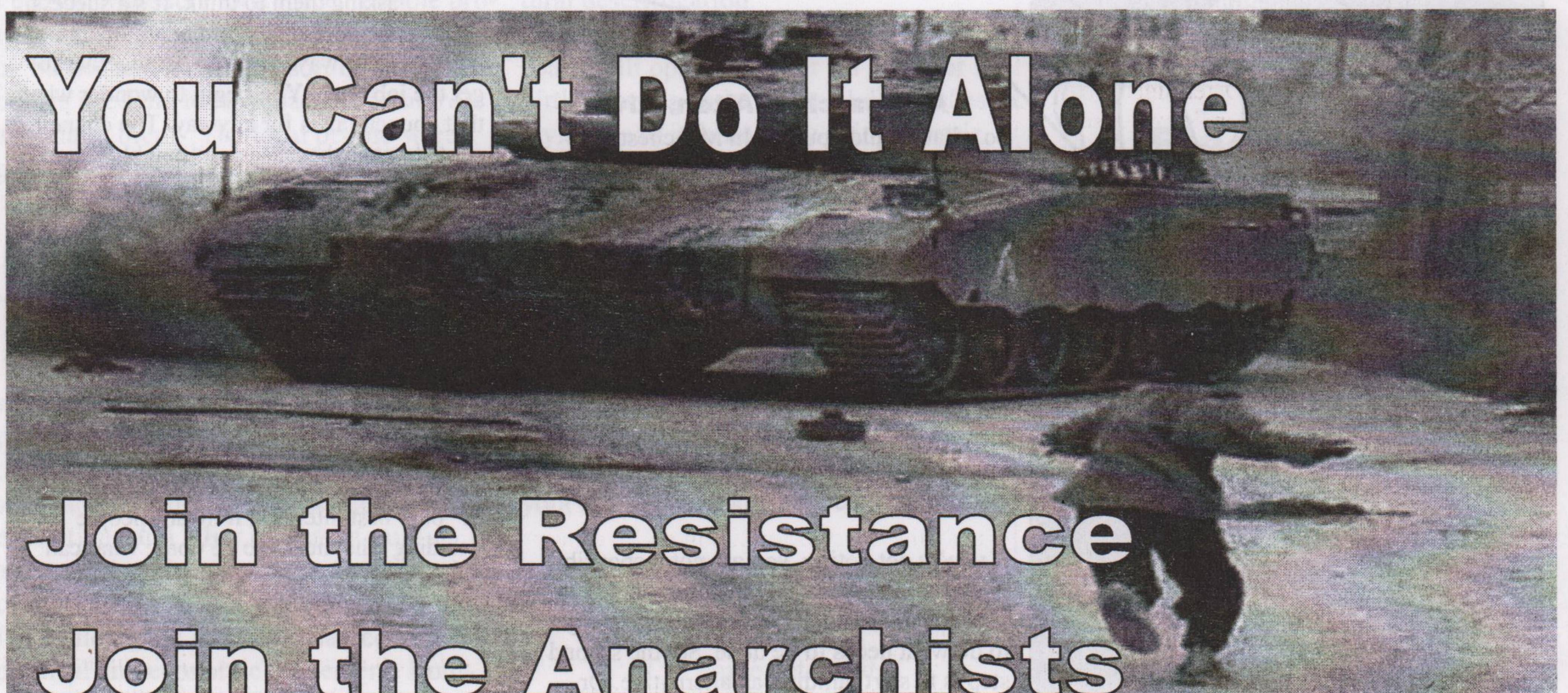
from where he lives? If the answer doesn't jump out at you, go back and read the paragraph before this one. Take a closer look at the people from the BNP who make it through onto the TV or the radio. How many of them are like you? How many of them are exactly the same as every other politician in town?

Thieving Politicians

The fact of the matter is that politicians are all out for their own interests. For some of them it's the kick of being in charge of so many people's lives; for some of them it's the trip of being admired by so many people; for most of them it's the bulging pay packet and the endless expenses form; for all of them it's Power. And they will lie to you, will lie even to *themselves*, to get hold of that power and to keep hold of it.

Anarchists believe that we don't need people to make laws to govern our lives. We believe that we can make our own decisions about what to do; when to do it and how to set about it. We believe that every vote cast at the ballot box is an acceptance that other people have a right to rule over us. We believe that people should stay away from the ballot box and start getting together to look for alternatives. Only then is change going to come.

Anarchists see parties like the BNP as representing a double threat to the working class. As well as treating us like imbecilic thugs who can be brainwashed into believing any old shite, the BNP actively splits the working class into two groups: Brits and non-Brits. It teaches each side to hate the other and ensures that both sides are so busy fighting that they don't realise who the real enemy is. The real enemy doesn't care



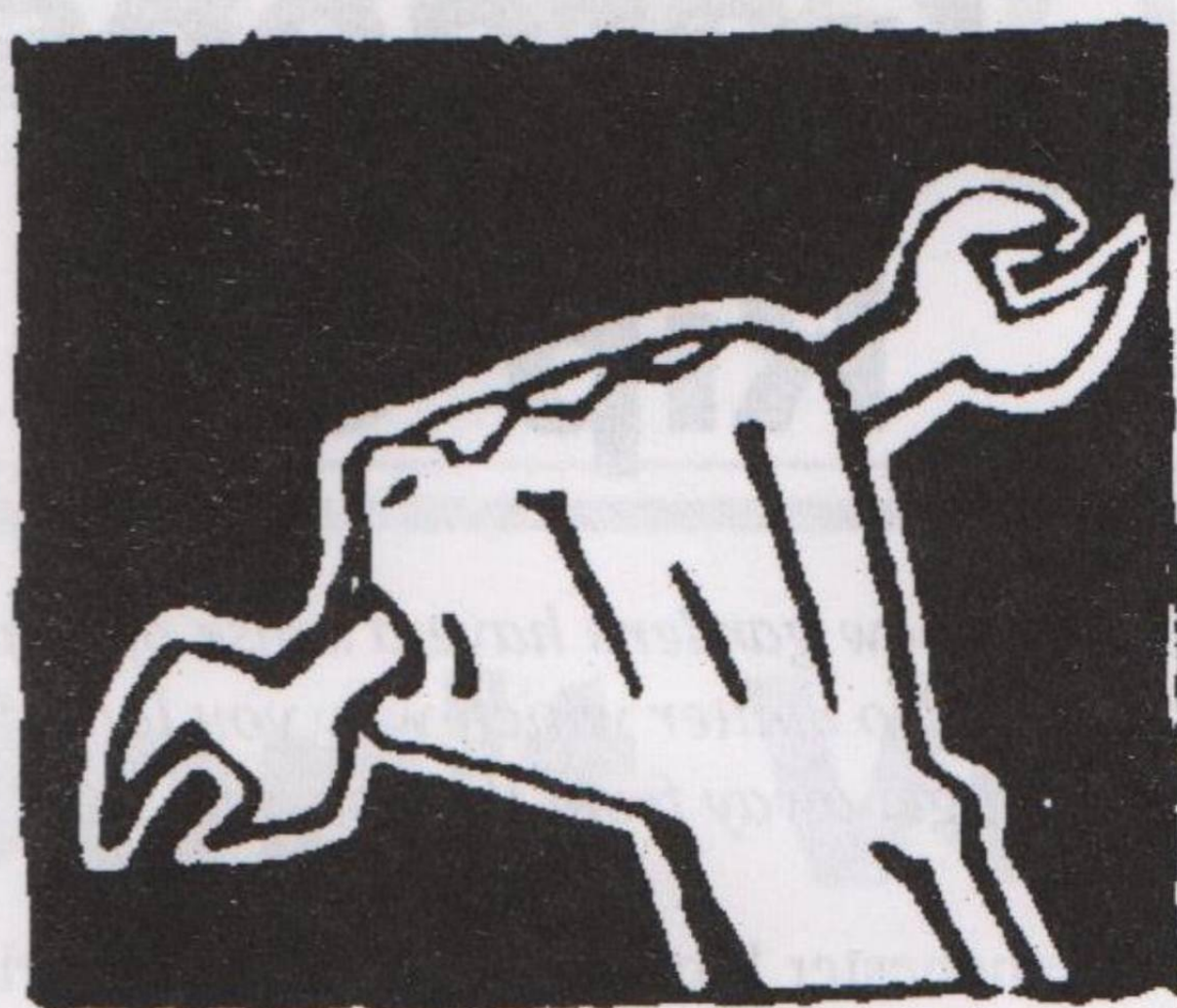
You Can't Do It Alone

Join the Resistance

Join the Anarchists

what colour you are or what god you pray to. The real enemy only wants you to be so confused and angry that you will vote for your own slavery. Tell them to:

STUFF THEIR BALLOT BOXES!



Want to meet us?

We get together every fortnight at the Friend's Meeting House, opposite the Town Hall.

We meet at 7.30 pm.

For info, email:
manchester@af-north.org

Or write to:

Manchester Anarchists
PO Box 127, Oldham OL4 3FE

Anarchism on the Web
Manchester Anarchist
Federation: www.af-north.org

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Electricians Lock Out

case through to the Industrial tribunal. Initially supported by the TGWU, the men have found first hardship pay and now their legal support withdrawn. Determined to carry on, they are fighting their own case. They have received support from Manchester Social Forum who have held meetings and raised funds.

DAF Electrical are typical of many builders in Manchester. The city resembles a construction site, with new buildings, usually high priced apartments and office blocks. Instead of paying the rate for the job, they prefer to hire contract labour and ignore safety regulations. As wages go down, their profits rise and the death rate among building workers escalates.

Manchester is a Labour council. The electricians contacted all the councillors to ask for support. They have been snubbed and ignored. As much of the new building is council sponsored, they are supporting the employers in their attacks on workers on building sites.

Fighting Fund Contact 07813 456 831

If voting changed anything.....it would be illegal!

Councillors are Parasites....

Keeping us interested in voting keeps our attention away from our more urgent need to really change things. Voting once every five years takes our minds off the corruption and extortion that is at the centre of local 'democracy'. The local state is not nicer and cuddlier than the national state (which goes to war, bombs civilians and tortures its prisoners). The local state is made up of a bunch of parasites, given the job of controlling us on behalf of the Government – regardless of its political colour. It is there to pretend we have interests in common with the state, to collect our taxes, and to watch us, monitor us and police us until we pay – and how we pay!

While they debate about bins, potholes and speed cameras, our money goes in its millions, tens of millions; hundreds and hundreds of millions; directly into the pockets of the 30,000 or so local councillors who run the local state.

Just the act of getting elected puts £5,000 a year in the pockets of 'our local representatives'. This goes up to £10,000+ for those in the big cities like Manchester or Bristol. And that's if the councillors do nothing. Sitting on a committee; being an officer on a committee; chairing a committee, all see this figure rise and rise so that many of those elected are pocketing over £20,000 a year of our Council Tax....

Bin Laden = BiNP.....Bin here before...!

Councillors are Nasty bastards.....

These people in local Government are not nicer for being smaller.....they are as much to blame as Blair, Straw, Blunkett, and yes, even Thatcher for the abuses and violence (economic and social, as well as physical) that they carry out.

While they may be happy to blame problems on the national policies of their political masters, if we raise our voices to protest and defend, the truncheon wielding police officer and the magistrate who locks us up are, like as not, our neighbours, paid for out of our Council Tax. They are paid for by us to be the armed wing of the government at the level of the local state - while debates rage about

municipal redecoration and no smoking policies!

Fascists....

These are not the people who are fighting fascism. On the contrary, the BNP are a god-send to them. The local state uses the fascists as the national state uses Bin Laden – to convince we are on the same side and to rally us to support them.

First, we are told to use votes as our anti-fascist action, "...use your democratic right to defeat the enemies of democracy", then the pretence drops, and it's not the vote that counts, but only a vote for *them*, as only "*...a vote for Labour will keep the BNP out*" (NW Labour Party Campaign).

Bin Laden = BiNP in their perverse strategy, they create an environment for fascists to thrive in, then blackmail us into supporting *them* as the only way to fight back....while State terrorists inflict a death toll beyond the

capacity of medieval fundamentalists, and implement policies of racism and division the BNP would never dare publicly to advocate. Fascists might dream of leaving asylum seekers destitute on the streets, or deporting them to their deaths – it is Blair and his Tory cheerleaders who are actually doing it!

The local state and the national state are two cheeks of the same arse. We do not *freely* participate, for if we choose otherwise we are watched, fined and ultimately locked up. Nor are we fooled by the false debate of national versus the 'super-national' state of Europe. We don't care whether Capitalism is blue with red spots, or red with blue spots. The state at all levels is the bully boy enforcer of business, money, the ruling class and its vested interests. 'Democracy' and the cult of voting is the smoke screen they hide behind to do it.

Whoever we vote for, Government wins – Don't participate – agitate!

City for sale



Manchester City council is selling off the family silver, the publicly owned facilities and land to private developers. They are preventing us from using what was ours or are charging us through the nose to do so. They'll probably only stop when they run out of stuff to flog off!

The Free Trade Hall is a prime (site) example. It was built by subscription in the mid 19th century. The site was already historically important as it is where the Peterloo Massacre took place. People protested at their lack of rights, exploitation by bosses and having no sort of a life. The bosses used the local squaddies to murder and maim them. The local people were given the message "don't fuck with the bosses."

Now it's slightly more subtle but their message remains the same.

The Free Trade Hall was built to provide a space to "accommodate meetings of political, religious, literary and other associations and other meetings on public occasions and for public lectures and concerts, exhibitions and other objects of public amusement or instruction." And to make a couple of bob. It was, after all, one of the few buildings in the world named after a political and economic movement. Ironically it was sold to the Manchester Corporation by the Manchester Public Hall Com-

pany in 1921. The corporation bought it to prevent it from being lost to the citizens of Manchester.

Conveniently the deeds committing the building to public use & ownership have been mislaid.

So the council flogged it to private developers who have in turn turned a focus of political and cultural significance worldwide into another pathetic example of cultural desertification.

Barbirolli opened it after it's post war re birth, housing as it did the Halle Orchestra. Dylan made it famous by going electric, it opened punk to the north with the Sex Pistols gigs (original D.I.Y. punk, they were organised by The Buzzcocks) and so on...until the council (in whose trust it was left for all of us) sold it to make yet *another* hotel in another second tier city for *another* bunch of chancers who know the cost of anything but the value of nowt. Nearly 40 years ago they called Bob Dylan Judas. Manchester City Council, where's your 30 pieces of silver?

Next instalment : The Platt Fields Car Park.

People get busy!

Piccadilly Gardens Rip Off

"The new gardens have a sense of emptiness. No matter which way you look, you can't get away from the concrete wall".

Manchester Piccadilly gardens was originally a clay pit. In late 18th century Lord Moseley donated the land to the people of Manchester for public use. An infirmary was built there with landscaped public gardens. Extensive bombing during the war cleared the site of buildings but the gardens survived.

In the 50's and 60's it was a popular space where public events were held and families enjoyed the gardens. Since then the City Council allowed the gardens to decline. Even after Metrolink arrived in 1992, the gardens were left to deliberately deteriorate so the ground (by now potentially a valuable commodity) could be sold.

A public consultation exercise was carried out before the redevelopment began. People were asked to contribute to comment books. 99% of people did not want any building on Piccadilly gardens.

So the City Council went ahead, stole the land of people in Manchester and sold a third of Piccadilly to build the office block 'Piccadilly One'.

The original plans passed for the 'development' included moving the tram lines to make up for the lost garden space and creating horticultural gardens on the site. Unsurprisingly this hasn't happened.

Electricians Locked Out

Last May, electricians working on 1 Piccadilly Gardens, a prestigious office block in Central Manchester, were locked out by their employers. Their crime was to organise a TGWU shop on the site to challenge employer, DAF Electrical. DAF Electrical have ignored Holiday Pay entitlements, Health and Safety Laws and the National Agreement. Instead the men were replaced with agency sub-contractors. The electricians have picketed DAF contracts since then. They have now moved on to the Crown Court. They are fighting their

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