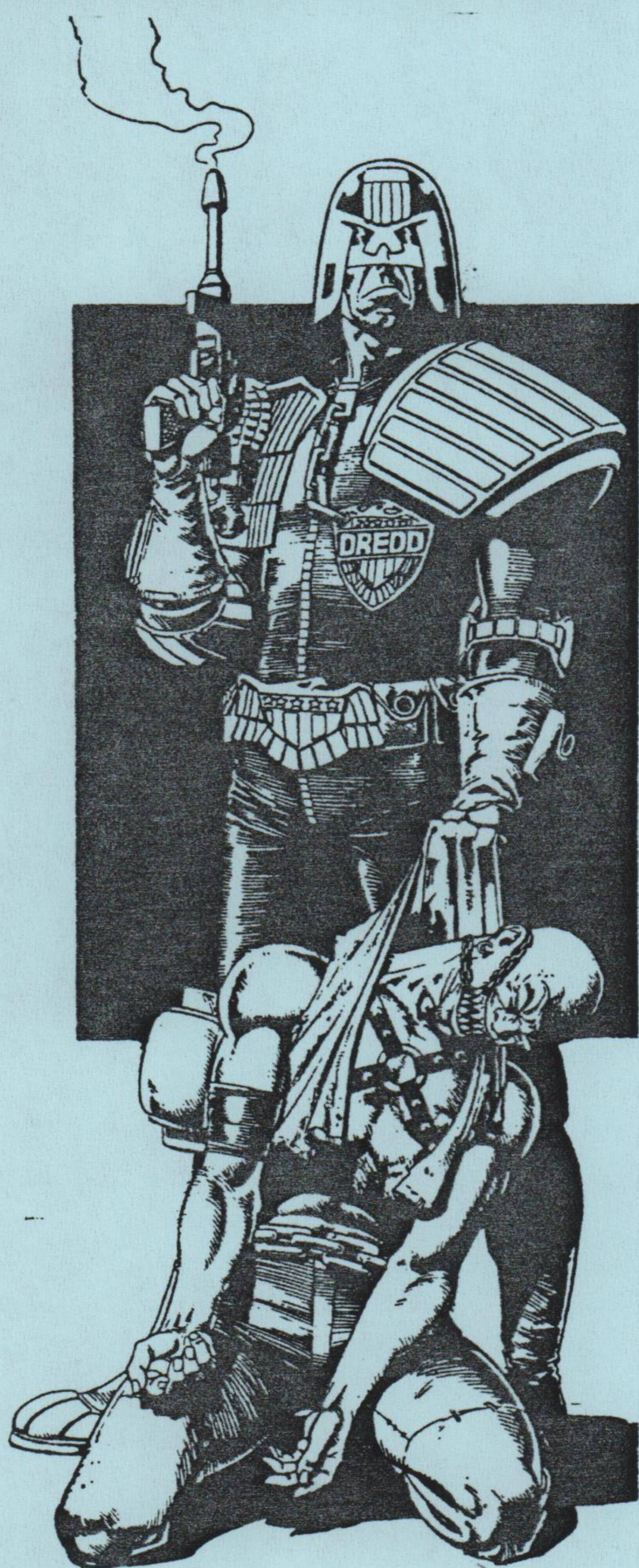


Antidote

no.2 Free/donation

April 1994



JUDGE, JURY AND EXECUTIONER

*Whose side
is the law
really on?*

The Magazine of The Aylesbury Anarchist-Communist
Federation

The law is a strange beast when it comes to its treatment of the working class. A recent poll revealed that only 16% of the population disagreed with the statement that "There is one law for the rich and one for the poor." (Guardian, 17/9/93). Examples of this readily spring to mind; but the law also has other peculiarities which highlight its true role as a tool of the capitalist system. If you stick protest posters on government property its called "Criminal Damage", whereas if the government force you from your home and then demolish it, its called "A Transport Policy". If a man kills his wife or girlfriend after she taunts him about her affairs then he is likely to walk free. If a woman kills her husband or boyfriend after a prolonged period of documented physical/emotional and/or sexual violence then she is a cold blooded killer who is locked away for as long as possible.

So while capitalism is still in place the law will continue to put business interests before environmental and community concerns, it will continue to

hand out rough justice to those it wishes to subjugate (women, blacks and gays) and it will continue to try and divide the working class in order to weaken our attempts to make this world a better place to live in.



Sleep easy tonight

Old Bill

P.S. Remember, violent crime is a rarity and is usually committed by the state.

P.P.S. If you want to guarantee your copy of Antidote then send us an SAE (with a donation if possible) and we'll send it hot off the press.

Aylesbury ACF
P.O.Box 406
Aylesbury
BUCKS
HP21 8LS

SUING THE POLICE

A growing number of people are now suing the police for damages in court instead of making a complaint against the police. Two reasons for this are (1) if you are successful you get financial compensation (cash) and (2) people are realising that taking out a complaint against the police rarely succeeds.

Have you been a victim of police misconduct and want to know if you can take them to court? This article gives you an idea about whether you can take the matter further and what you should do next.

Obviously your chances of succeeding in suing the police are better if you have witnesses supporting your claims and any other evidence to back up your case. It may be difficult to win if it is just your word against theirs.

WHAT CAN I SUE FOR?

Most people want to sue the police because they have been wrongly arrested, assaulted by the police or prosecuted for something they didn't do. Here are some things you should know about these types of action :-

WRONGFUL ARREST

Unlawful arrest and detention is called false imprisonment. The police must justify any arrest and detention, so if you think the police have acted outside their powers it is worthwhile getting further advice. False imprisonment can happen on the street, in your home, in a police vehicle and of course at the police station - in fact any place where the police control your freedom.

ASSAULT

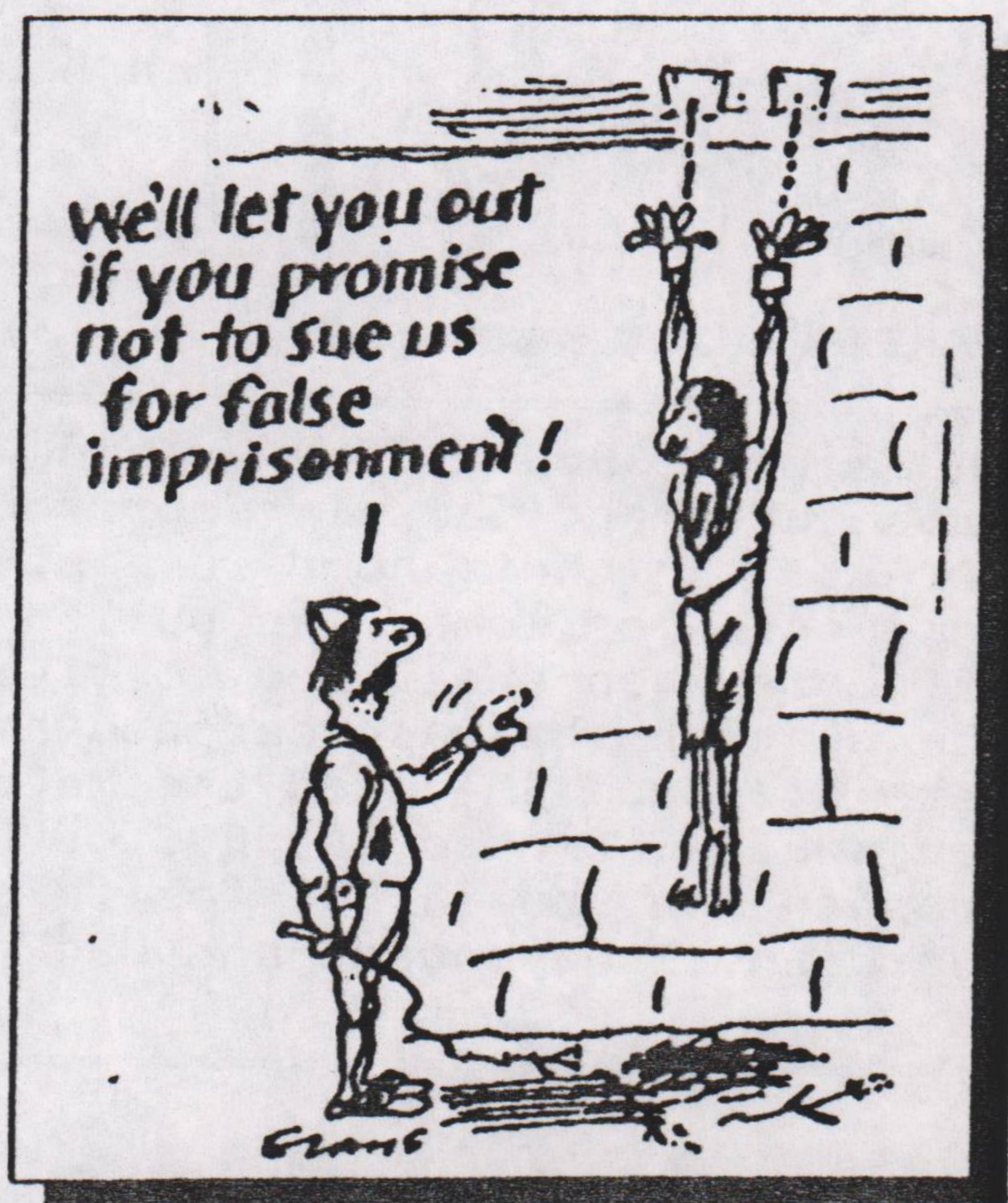
This is much wider than many people think. You are assaulted as soon as someone touches you without a lawful reason to do so, and when they put you in fear of violence. Of course, it includes being punched and kicked and being subjected to illegal body searches. If you are assaulted by the police it is important to see a doctor (at casualty or your GP) straight away and for the injuries to be noted. You should also take photos of any injuries, if possible.

PROSECUTED FOR SOMETHING I DIDN'T DO

This is called malicious prosecution. You have to prove that the police had no reasonable cause to prosecute you and that they had a 'wrongful motive' in doing so. You also usually have to win your case, which means either (a) any charges were dropped before the case went to court, or (b) you accepted a bind-over at court before the case starts, or (c) you were acquitted (found innocent) in court.

OTHER COMPLAINTS

You can also sue the police for negligence, trespass to land and goods, and a few other civil wrongs. It may also be possible to make a police complaint about some misconduct about which you cannot sue. If you feel any of these apply to you, you should talk to a solicitor or advice or law centre.



WHAT KIND OF A COURT CASE WILL IT BE?

Suing the police takes place in the normal civil courts such as the County Courts or High Courts. It's similar to other kinds of civil cases except that there can be jury (as well as a judge) in cases for false imprisonment and malicious prosecution. You are suing the police for compensation for the wrongs done to you. It may, though, take two or three years for the matter to get to court. It is unlikely that any police officer will be punished as a result. For this to happen you would also have to take a complaint out against the police officer(s) through the Police Complaints Authority. Again speak to a solicitor, advice or law centre, before you do this.

HOW MUCH COULD I WIN?

It is very difficult to say because IF the case goes as far as the court, it is up to the jury to decide. However, in a large number of cases the police pay up before the case goes to court, as they realise they probably won't win. Either way, some awards can be for thousands of pounds (see below). For the year 93/94 the Metropolitan Police set aside 8.9 million pounds to cover the cost of compensation payments and associated legal fees for alleged cases of misconduct by the police. (Time Out issue 1184)

CASE ONE



A black community activist accepted 50,000 and costs (believed to be around 70,000), to settle his action, out of court, for false imprisonment, assault and battery and malicious prosecution, from the Metropolitan Police. It is one of the largest settlements and resulted from a police raid on a restaurant and community centre in Notting Hill, west London in May 1988. During the raid the man was kept face-down on the floor for 20 minutes with two policemen sitting on his back and another with his foot on his head. (Guardian & Independent 13/10/92)

CASE TWO

In January 1989 a 73 year old woman was assaulted, maliciously prosecuted and falsely imprisoned by the police after her husband was arrested at their home in east London following a minor traffic accident. The woman was pulled to the ground and held down by three officers when she tried to give her husband his diabetes tablets. At the station she was searched and charged with assault but the charges were dropped. She sued the Metropolitan Police in a civil action and her award included 20,000 for the assault, 15,000 for malicious prosecution and 15,000 for false imprisonment. (Reported in the Guardian, Independent and Hackney Gazette. Feb/Mar. '92)

WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF SUING THE POLICE?

Legal Aid is normally available for these cases if you are not working, or on a very low income. Legal Aid usually gives you an insurance against paying the legal costs of the police if you lose. Law Centres who do this kind of work may do so for free if you cannot get legal aid. If you lose your case and are not legally aided you will probably have to pay your legal costs which can be quite high. (The rules regarding Legal Aid have changed recently, check you entitlement before going ahead with proceedings).

HOW LONG HAVE I GOT TO START A CASE?

Three years for assault resulting in personal injury, six years for everything else, but, of course you should start as soon as possible.

WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

You should write down the facts of the incident as soon as possible, including as much detail as you can about the officers involved. You should see a doctor if you have any injuries. Speak to a firm of solicitors, but TRY to use ones that specialise in this type of work. Local community groups, Law Centres or Citizens Advice Bureaux should be able to help you with names of good solicitors, or at least tell you someone who can.

AND FINALLY.....

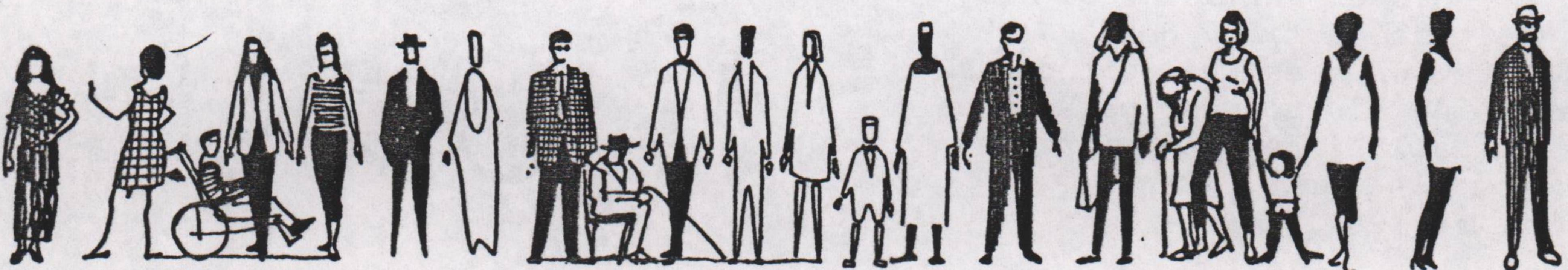
The above information was taken virtually word for word from a leaflet produced by the Hackney Law Centre and Haringey's Solidarity Groups. Copies of this leaflet can be obtained by contacting them at :-

Haringey's Solidarity Groups
P.O. Box 2401
LONDON
N8

Other useful addresses include :-

Liberty (NCCL)
21 Tabard Street
LONDON
SE1

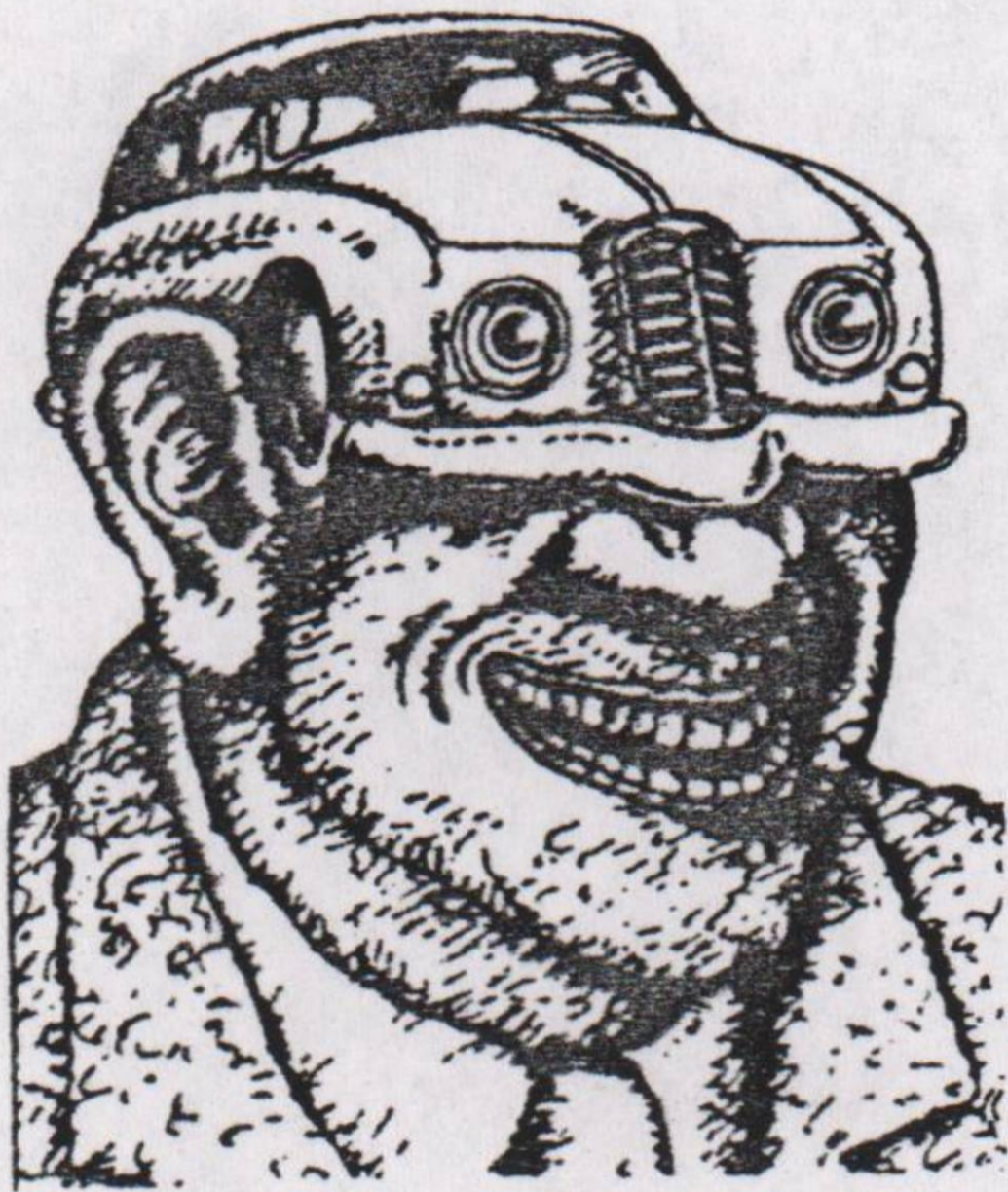
Law Centres Federation
Duchess House
18/19 Warren Street
LONDON
W1P 5DB



In Brief

IT COULD NEVER HAPPEN HERE?

The residents of Whitefield, Manchester (Estate Agents :- "Wonderfully convenient for the M62") were rather pleased when they found out they were entitled to double glazing grants due to the noise of the motorway. They were less pleased when they soon afterwards discovered their houses were to be demolished in order to widen the said motorway to 14 lanes. (Guardian 14/12/1993)



TOYTOWN AYLESBURY

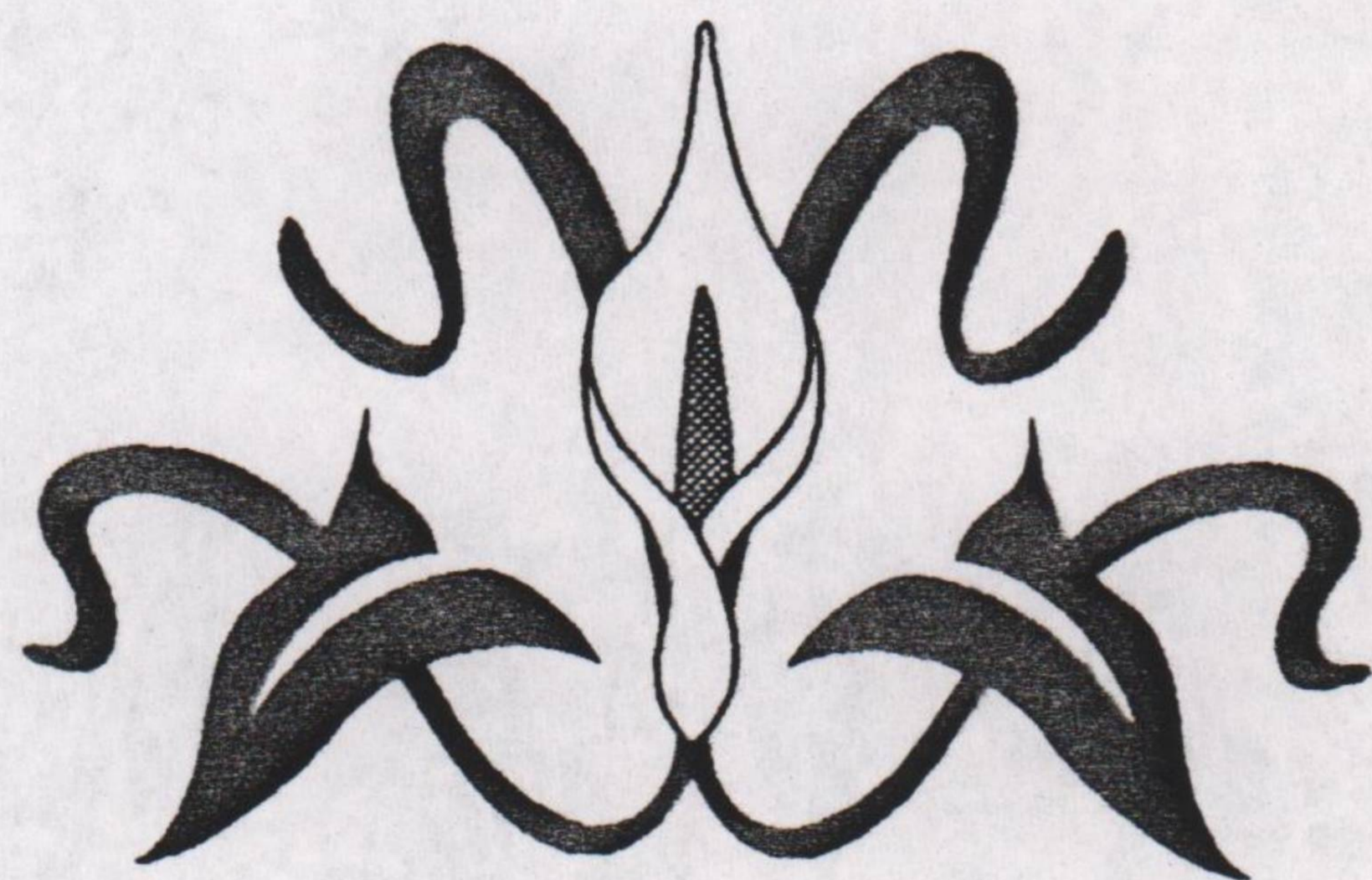
The Police have never been famous for seeing the funny side of things, so when Stephen Reeves called Sargeant Alan Clarke (didn't he play for Leeds?) "Officer Big Ears", it came as no suprise to learn that the humourless copper promptly nicked him. The courts took their usual view over such dispicable offences and bound over our luckless hero to the tune of fifty quid. Next time Stephen sees this officious prat doing his rounds, perhaps he should call him a wanker and get his money's worth. (Bucks Advertiser 28/1/1994)

DIAL MURDER-LINE

The Bucks Herald seems to have found a new niche in the phone line market. During the trial of Paul Rene Ferguson for the murder of Martin Ingram, the Herald offered twice daily bulletins from Reading Crown Court to keep its enthralled readers up to date. Perhaps our long serving newspaper should simply re-name itself 'The Bucks', as it seems more than willing to stoop to any level in order to make them. (Bucks Herald 16/12/1993)

THE NEW PRIME-MINISTER?

A poll of Teletext viewers was undertaken in March 1994 asking who they thought should take over the Prime-Ministers job if John Major resigned. 36 said Michael Howard, 54 said Kenneth Clarke, 140 Michael Portillo and 333 Michael Heseltine. The winner however, with a whopping 1,586 votes, was Mr Blobby. This seems to agree with our opinion that it doesnt matter what faceless blob of a party man you put in the driving seat, you're still going to get the same shitty system. (Teletext p354, March 1994)



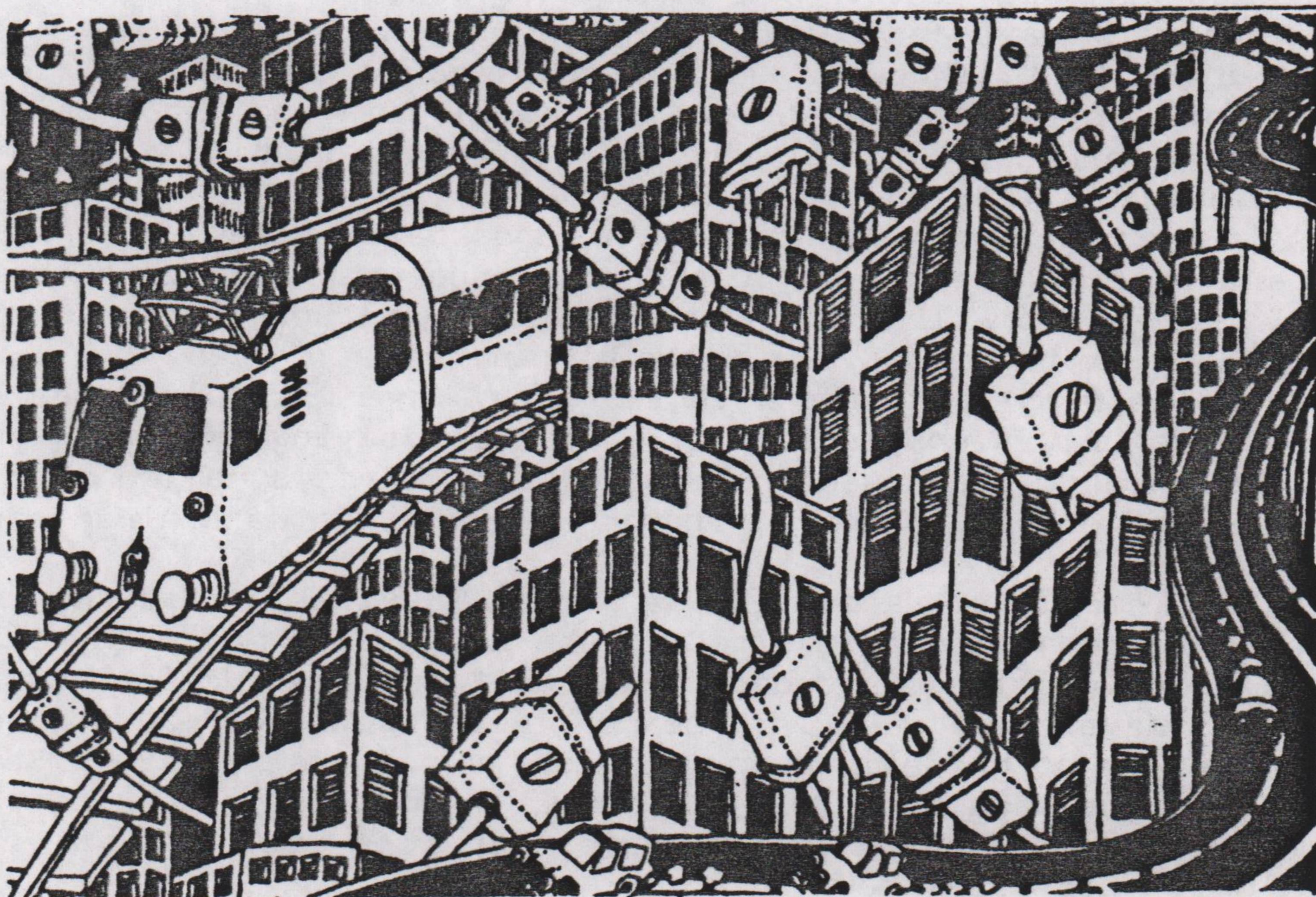
AYLESBURY 1 DEPT OF ROADS 0
(Half-Time Score)

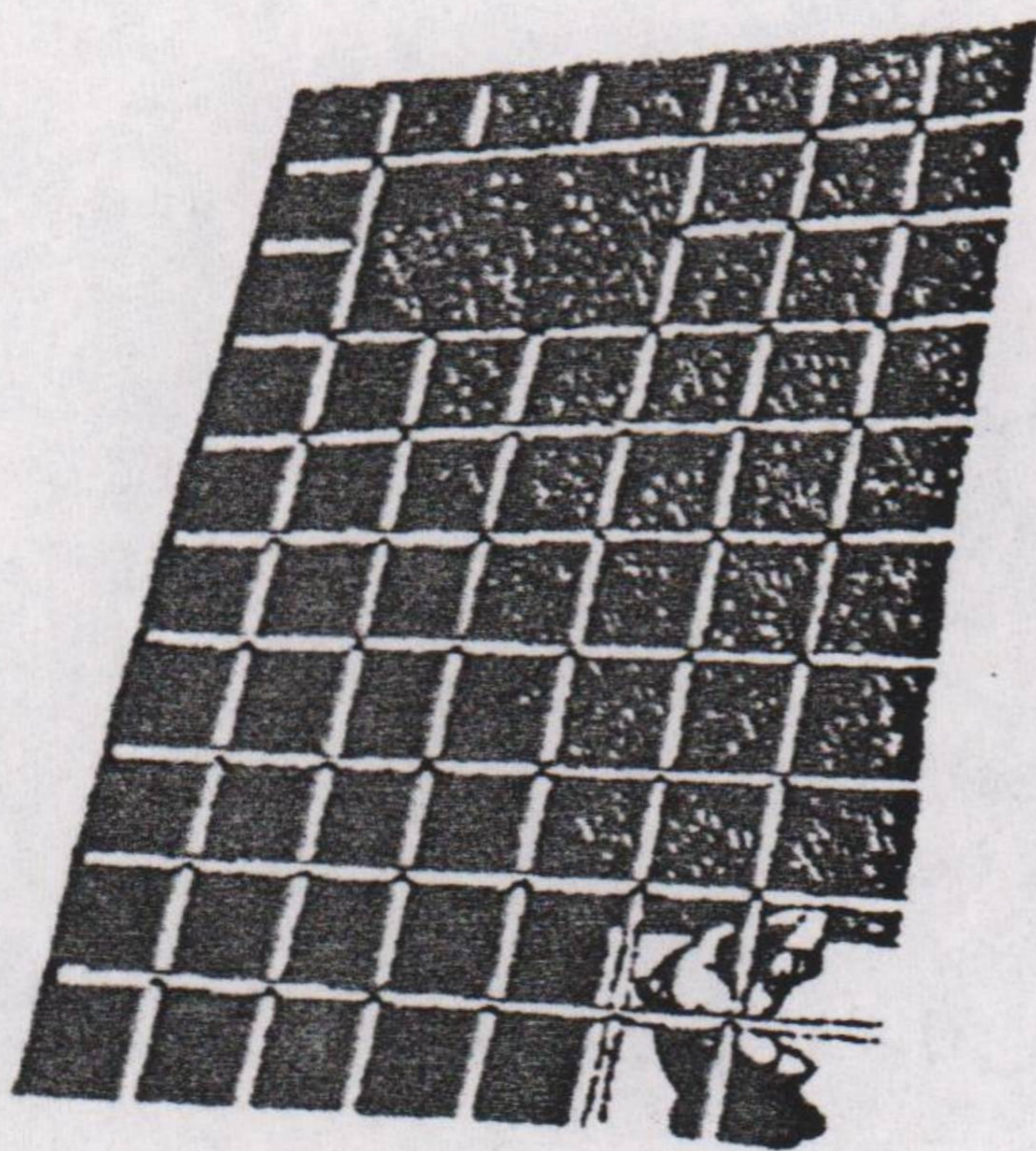
It would appear from the recent climbdown by the Dept of Transport that there is little to worry about as far as plans for a noise polluting, environment damaging, lung choking motorway around Aylesbury were concerned. A hearty cheer for the letter writers and petitioners, (we signed them in case you were wondering), who were so vocal in their opposition to the governments attempt to steam-roller public opinion. However, we wont be suprised to find that when the smoke has cleared, another road building plan will have suddenly risen from the ashes.

The Road lobby are still going strong and will continue to pressurise the government of the day to tarmac the rest of the UK. Other battles are still going on around the country, with the DoT bulldozing people out of their homes and communities.

The lessons of the M25 and the recent studies into the health of residents living near busy roads are lost on those who are supposed to act on our behalf. More roads do not cure congestion, (traffic or chest complaints), and are therefore unnecessary. What will really ease our problems is a policy that will get freight off our roads and people onto decent public transport. Mr John Major (remember him?) states that, "our role is not to tell transport operators what services to provide, or people where and how to travel". Nice sentiments, but by depriving the public sector of adequate resources he is already telling us to 'use your cars', and businesses to 'use your heavy goods vehicles'. What real choice do we have?

So before we sit back in our easy chairs and vegetate in front of the goggle-box, spare a thought for those communities whose struggle continues. The battle for Aylesbury may be over, but the war still rages elsewhere.





Emma Humphreys is 26 and has been in jail for 9 years. She was convicted of murdering her boyfriend who had subjected her to six months of beatings and sexual abuse.

On February 25th 1985, Emma was sat at home waiting for her boyfriend to return. Due to an incident earlier that day she felt that there was likely to be trouble and had cut her wrists in order to perhaps divert his anger away from her and shock him into not beating her. As soon as he arrived she panicked, thinking what she

had just done might have the opposite effect, so she hid the knife and covered up her wrists. She prayed that he would just go to sleep and leave her alone, and listened as he undressed and then lay down beside her wearing just a shirt. She knew that the silence that followed was the build up to another attack and closing her eyes she grabbed the knife and stabbed him.

At the trial Emma was too traumatised to give evidence about her boyfriends abuse and the events that led up to that night, and even now finds it awkward to reveal her experiences which sadly must be told in order to publicise and win support for her case.

Emma's childhood can be summarised by an alcoholic mother, a violent stepfather, a succession of foster parents/childrens homes (eleven in all) and disinterested relatives. By the age of twelve she was regularly cutting her wrists and by the age of thirteen, prostitution was providing an escape from a miserable home and school life. At the age of sixteen, whilst living in dreadful accommodation, she returned to prostitution and eventually decided that the first man she met who was clean, respectful and had his own money, she would go home with. The man she met was Trevor Armitage.

Trevor Armitage was 33 years old, possessive and of a violent temperament. He already had two convictions, one for assault and another for grievous bodily harm. When he announced that he was in love with Emma she didn't know what to think. She'd never had a boyfriend before and had never met a man who said 'I love you'. When his possessiveness got too much she decided to leave and he hit her.

With the logic that is common among people who've experienced (or witnessed) domestic violence in their childhood, Emma thought, "this guy cares about me. I'm better off here than moving into a flat because he obviously cares about me". She decided to stay.

Trevors insecurity continued to fuel his possessiveness and he would follow her and interrogate her about her work. She was not attracted to him and he found it impossible to reconcile this with her job as a prostitute. Whenever he wanted sex he would rape her.

In the days leading up to the 25th February, Emma was gang-raped by a group of men. Trevor was unsympathetic, and after staying away for a short while Emma returned to the house only to have the windows nailed shut and the telephone removed and locked in Trevors car. He was determined not to let her leave.

In this intolerable situation it was almost inevitable that something had to give. Unfortunately it resulted in the death of a man whom, Emma herself says, "definitely didn't deserve to die" and the incarceration of a woman who was never really given a chance. Being sentenced as a juvenile means that there is no guidelines for when she should be released. Stand that sort of sentence against those handed out to men for murdering their wives/girlfriends, and I think you'll agree that it's time Emma was freed in order to build her life anew.

Emma's case is one of many that has been taken up by Justice For Women, a campaign organisation trying to change the law on domestic violence and obtain the release of women who have killed violent partners.

Its of interest to the Aylesbury ACF, not only because the legal system has once again imprisoned a victim of violence; but also because it highlights how the law under capitalism brutalises ordinary people and limits their freedom and ability to decide their own future.

The oppression of domestic violence is sexist in origin and crosses all national, cultural and class boundaries. In a society that glorifies and promotes competition, power, violence and control, its almost inevitable and the various weapons of capitalism are brought to bear in order to maintain it.

The Welfare State (i) assists by making it almost impossible, economically, for single women to raise children on their own. If the woman is under 18 then she is treated as a child. Because of Emma's age she would simply have been told to return to her family, despite the fact that it would have been clearly impossible.

The Police lend a hand by not taking the situation seriously (ii). They often view domestic violence as something private rather than a criminal act. Considering Emma's job as a prostitute I can hardly see her contacting the police for any assistance.

The Courts, if the case ever gets that far, rarely give assistance. Men who persistantly try to intimidate their partners into not testifying are continually released. Some women don't actually want to see their partners locked away (iii), all they want is an end to the violence. The courts however fail to acknowledge this fact. No effort is made to try and find a solution to the problem, its either lock him up or let him loose to do the same again.

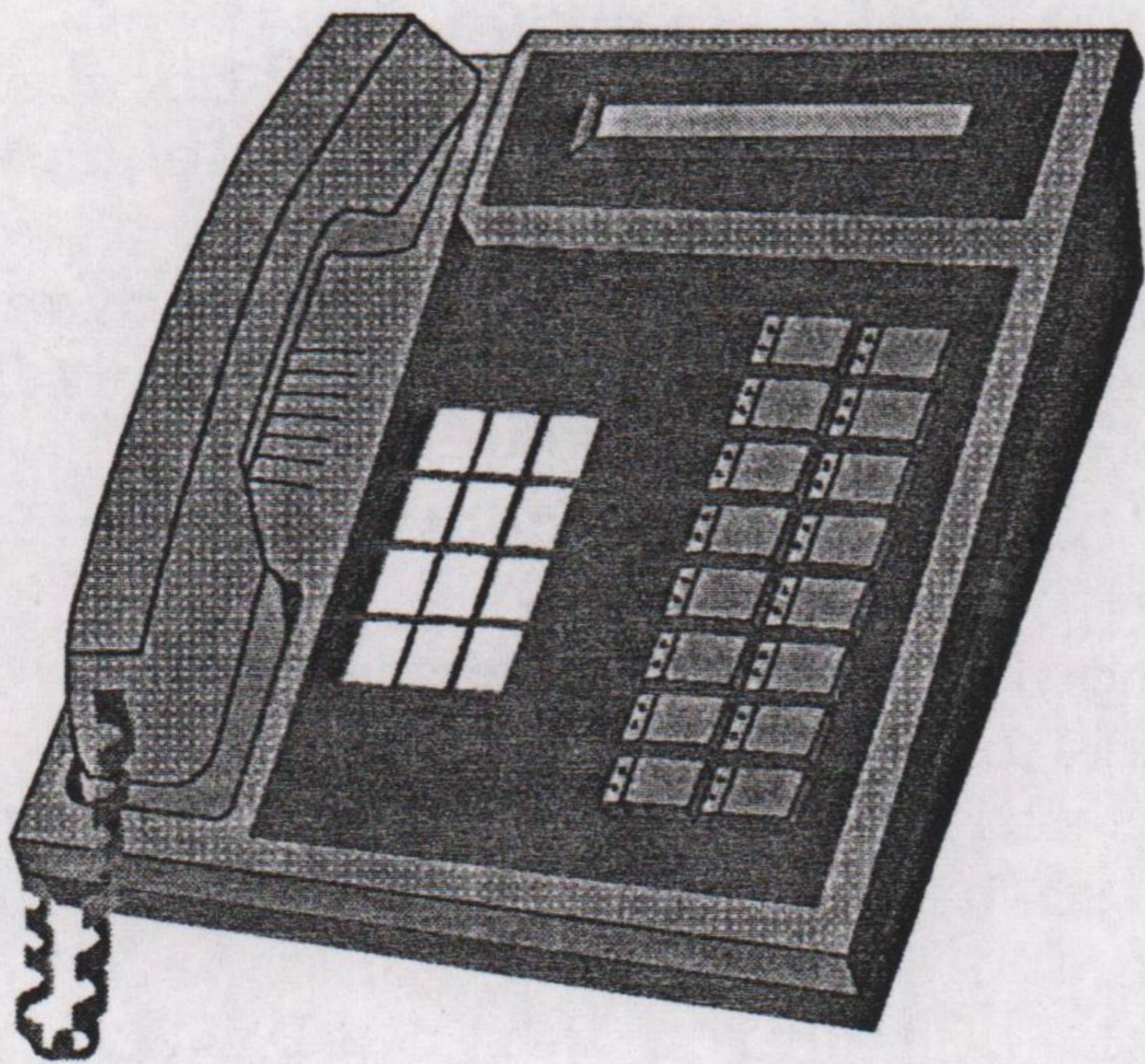
Aside from the violence inflicted by Trevor Armitage, Emma suffered at the hands of a system which has no interest in the welfare of its citizens. Money will always be the deciding factor, even if it means that the individual will suffer. The one incident that particularly sticks in our throats is the time Emma tried to stay with a foster parent that she liked. The Social Services refused to pay for this arrangement, and the foster parent, already a single mother with another baby on the way, couldn't afford to keep her.

There are many other aspects to this case that we could explore, but for the sake of clarity we will stick to the subject of domestic violence. If we, as a class, are ever to rid ourselves of this scourge then we must begin to combat the desire to control one another. This desire is not a natural force, but one that has been drilled into us from birth, through schools, politicians and the media. Whilst we continue to oppress each other we are distracted from the real source of our unhappiness. Unfortunately this will probably take some time, even those who are committed to a society of equality find themselves victims of their upbringing at one point or another. For the here and now we must support those who are trying to escape from domestic violence, and if possible help those who are trying to change their behaviour.

Although far from an exhaustive list we include below the addresses of some organisations who may be able to help the victims and perpetrators of violence in the home. Other organisations can be found around the country, giving support and advice, and if neccessary a safe place to stay until they are ready to face the future again. (A larger list is available by writing to the ACF at our PO Box).

In the meantime, spare a thought for Emma for whom there was no choice. If you support her cause then drop her a line or send her a postcard. We'll be happy to send them on to her.

-
- i. Only in existence for 48 years and they're already starting to dismantle it.
 - ii. The first Police Force to recognise domestic violence as a criminal assault were the West Yorkshire Police Force in 1989!
 - iii. Would you want to send someone you loved into one of our wonderful prisons?



HELP **LINES**

Childline

Childline Freepost 1111
London
N1 0BR
Tel :- 0800 1111

Childline is the free, national helpline for children and young people in trouble or danger. It is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Letters do not require a stamp and telephone calls are free and will not show up on the telephone bill.

Justice for Women

55 Rathcole Gardens
London
N8 9NE
Tel :- 081 340 3699

As mentioned in the preceding article. Please call the above number for details of regional offices.

Refuge

PO Box 855
London
W4 4JF
Tel :- 081 995 4430
(24hr National Crisis Line)

Refuge is the worlds first womens refuge and provides emergency accommodation and support for women and children escapind domestic violence, The crisis line gives both practical help and emotional support.

Southall Black Sisters

52 Norwood Road
Southall
Middlesex
Tel :- 081 571 9595

Advice centre for women facing domestic violence and other problems. The group is also gathering information on battered women who have been imprisoned on murder charges.

Rape Crisis

London Helpline
Tel :- 071 837 1600 (24hrs)

The Everyman Centre

30A Brixton Road
Kennington
London
SW9 6BU
Tel :- 071 793 0255
(Counselling Helpline)

An agency which offers a range of sevicees including a helpline, counselling and group work for men who wish to stop their violent behaviour.

Don't forget that the Citizens Advice Bureauxs, The Samaritans, and other such organisations can provide details of local helplines /organisations. You may also find details in the phone book.

SOME THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ANTIDOTE

Antidote is written by a few activists living in the Aylesbury area. We don't have much time to do it all as we're also trying to hold down jobs, raise kids, attend night classes etc. Thankfully we get our printing done for nothing (on the night shift) although there's a chance that that might end soon. We don't print on recycled paper because our companies don't buy any and therefore there's none to nick.

DO WE NEED ANY HELP?

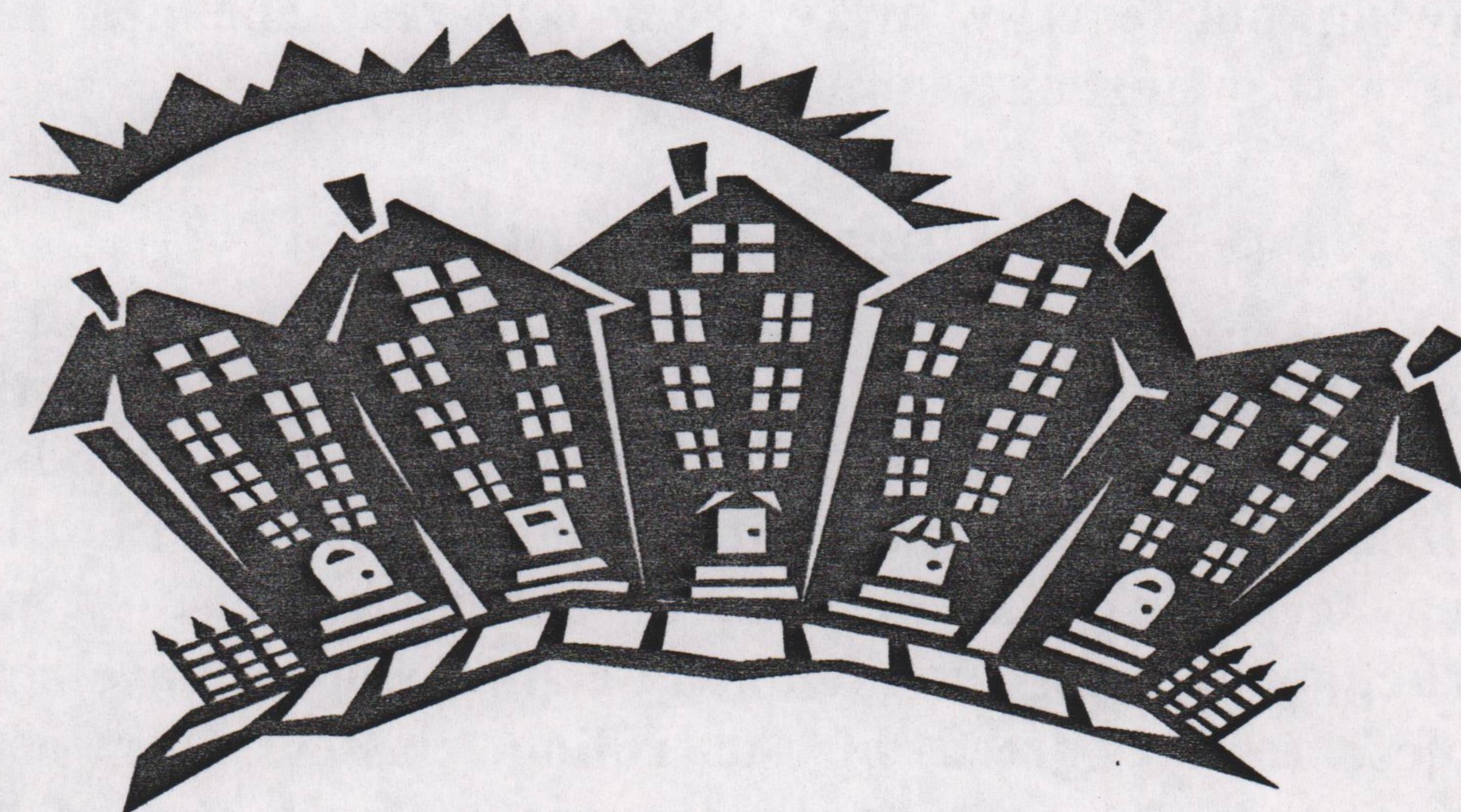
To be brutally honest, yes. If you spot any cartoons, graphics, articles that you think we might be interested in then please send them to us. Self penned articles of course would be most welcome (we'll type them out if necessary) but even a postcard or short note telling us what you think would be appreciated. Another way of helping us out would be to photocopy this magazine and hand it out to your friends, family or to strangers at gigs, parties or on the street.

ANYTHING ELSE?

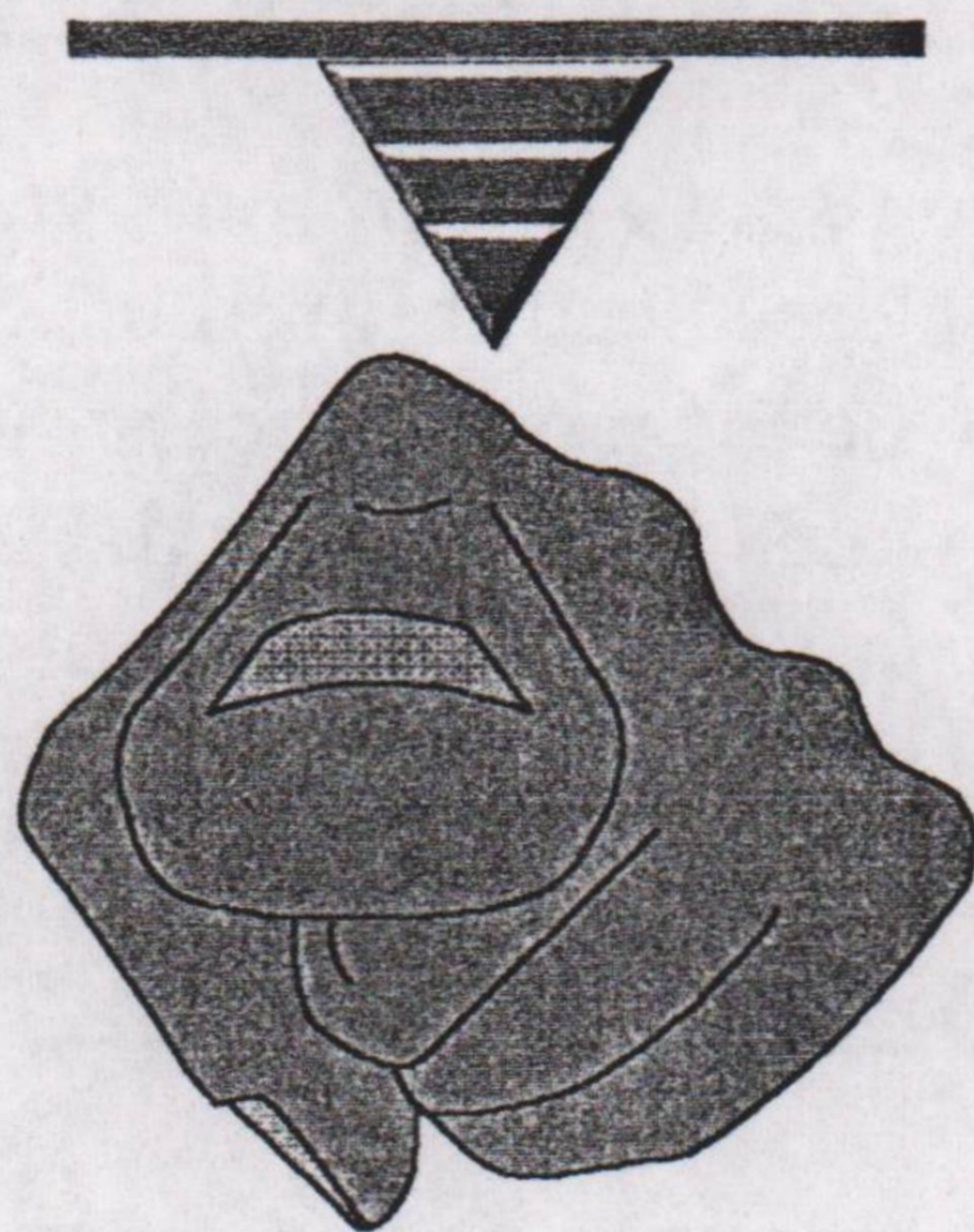
Just to say 'get active'. The world is not going to change if we don't get off our arses and do something. The bosses, politicians and ruling classes are not going to do it for us, so we've got to be prepared to do it ourselves. You don't have to be a member of the ACF to be an Anarchist and you don't have to be an Anarchist to understand that the system is wrong.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Aylesbury ACF



WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?



The BNP. The voice of the working class. The party that fights in our corner. The party who are so concerned with our welfare that they fuck up any chance of us working together to fight against the dismantling of the welfare state or the health service, or anything else our class has fought for and won. Instead they create divisions among us, drawing our energy away from our real enemies and turning it against one another.

Unemployment

Unemployment didn't start with immigration. Even in the 18th century we can find instances of poor people sending their kids to Sunday school with a penny each week in order to pay for their classmates funeral. Throughout history, and particularly during the lifetime of capitalism, we have been subject to the greed of the ruling classes. Our poor employment prospects today are due to the fact that the bastards with the money refuse to pay a decent wage.

Housing

The housing shortage is a myth. There are under 150,000 homeless people in this country and over 800,000 empty properties. (Ever wondered who owns those properties?) Whilst people were crying out for somewhere to live, the big building companies and developers were building office blocks because they couldn't make enough money out of us. The rich guys who ran those companies didn't suffer when the market crashed though. 'Farm out the work to the family businesses and the self-employed and then don't pay them. When the developer goes bust with massive debts it's the working class who get clobbered.

Brown Nose Party

While the BNP wait to get their hands on the reins of power, they will continue to suck up to the white working class, giving bland promises of how wonderful life would be for us if they were in control. In reality they are only interested in taking over. Should they ever achieve that aim then their promises will be forgotten. Resources destined for our hospitals and schools will be redirected to the police and army in order to maintain their power. Resistance of any sort will be met with brutal force, workers objecting to poor pay and unsafe conditions will be persecuted, medical staff who complain about lack of funds will be harassed and silenced.

All in all, the future under a National Socialist regime will be a bleak one for our friends, families and future generations. The BNP have nothing to offer us except capitalism in its worst form. It's time to make your decision. I'm with the working class, whose side are you on?

THE AIMS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE

1. The Anarchist - Communist Federation is an organisation of revolutionary class struggle anarchists. We aim for the abolition of all hierarchy, and work for the creation of a world-wide classless society: anarchist communism.
2. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. But inequality and exploitation are also expressed in terms of race, gender, sexuality, age, health and ability, and in these ways one section of the working class oppresses another. This divides us, causing a lack of class unity in struggle that benefits the ruling class. Oppressed groups are strengthened by autonomous action which challenges social and economic power relationships. To achieve our goal we must relinquish power over each other on a personal as well as a political level.
3. We believe that fighting racism and sexism is as important as other aspects of the class struggle. Anarchist - Communism cannot be achieved while sexism and racism still exist. In order to be effective in their struggle against their oppression both within society and within the working class, women and black people may at times need to organise independently. However, this should be as working class women and black people as cross-class movements hide real class differences and achieve little for them. Full emancipation cannot be achieved without the abolition of capitalism.
4. We are opposed to the ideology of national liberation movements which claims that there is some common interest between native bosses and the working class in face of foreign domination. We do support working class struggles against racism, genocide, ethnocide and political and economic colonialism. We oppose the creation of any new ruling class. We reject all forms of nationalism, as this only serves to redefine divisions in the international working class. The working class has no country and national boundaries must be eliminated. We seek to build an anarchist international to work with other libertarian revolutionaries throughout the world.
5. As well as exploiting and oppressing the majority of people, Capitalism threatens the world through war and the destruction of the environment.
6. It is not possible to abolish Capitalism without a revolution, which will arise out of class conflict. The ruling class must be completely overthrown to achieve anarchist communism. Because the ruling class will not relinquish power without the use of armed force, this will be a time of violence as well as liberation.
7. Unions by their very nature cannot be the vehicles for the revolutionary transformation of society. They have to be accepted by Capitalism in order to function and so cannot play a part in its overthrow. Trades unions divide the working class (between employed and unemployed trade and craft, skilled and unskilled, etc). Even syndicalist unions are constrained by the fundamental nature of unionism. The union has to be able to control its membership in order to make deals with management. Their aim, through negotiation, is to achieve a fairer form of exploitation of the workforce. The interests of leaders and

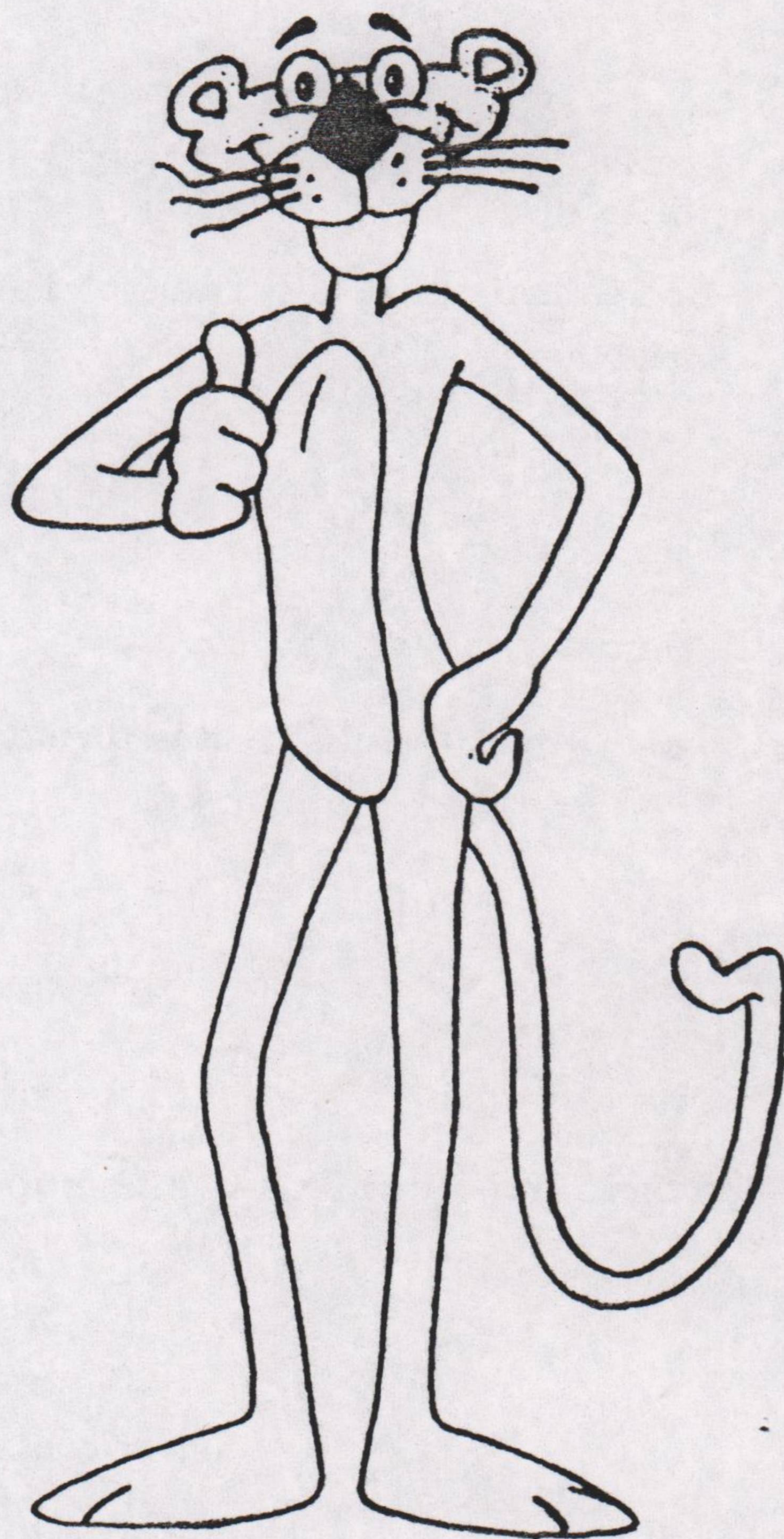
ANARCHIST-COMMUNIST FEDERATION

representatives will always be different from ours. The boss class is our enemy, and while we must fight for better conditions from it, we have to realise that reforms we may achieve today may be taken away tomorrow. Our ultimate aim must be the complete abolition of wage slavery. Working within the unions can never achieve this. However, we do not argue for people to leave unions until they are made irrelevant by the revolutionary event. The union is a common point of departure for many workers. Rank and file initiatives may strengthen us in the battle for anarchist communism. What's important is that we organise ourselves collectively, arguing for workers to control struggles themselves.

8 Genuine liberation can only come about through the revolutionary self activity of the working class on a mass scale. An anarchist communist society means not only co-operation between equals, but active involvement in the shaping and creating of that society during and after the revolution. In times of upheaval and struggle, people will need to create their own revolutionary organisations controlled by everyone in them. These autonomous organisations will be outside the control of political parties, and within them we will learn many important lessons of self activity.

9 As anarchists we organise in all areas of life to try to advance the revolutionary process. We believe a strong anarchist organisation is necessary to help us to this end. Unlike other so-called socialists or communists we do not want power or control for our organisation. We recognise that the revolution can only be carried out directly by the working class. However,

the revolution must be preceded by organisations able to convince people of the anarchist communist alternative and method. We participate in struggle as anarchist communists and organise on a federative basis. We reject sectarianism and work for a united revolutionary anarchist movement.



*Aylesbury ACF
P.O. Box 406
Aylesbury
BUCKS
HP21 8LS*

USEFUL CONTACTS

COUNTER INFORMATION
Pigeon hole CI
c/o 11 Forth Street
Edinburgh
EH1

Quarterley news-sheet of national and international revolt and resistance

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP
84b Whitechapel High Street
London
E1 7QX

Bookshop with a wide variety of Anarchist/Revolutionary publications
Send an SAE for list

AK PRESS
3 Balmoral Place
Stirling
FK8 2RD

Mail order Anarchist publications

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS
London ABC
c/o 121 Railton Road
London
SE24

Providing publicity and support for class struggle/Anarchist prisoners

LONDON GREENPEACE
c/o 5 Caledonian Road
London
N1 9DX

Ecological Anarchist collective, infamous for their campaigns against
McDonalds and the IMF/World Bank

