

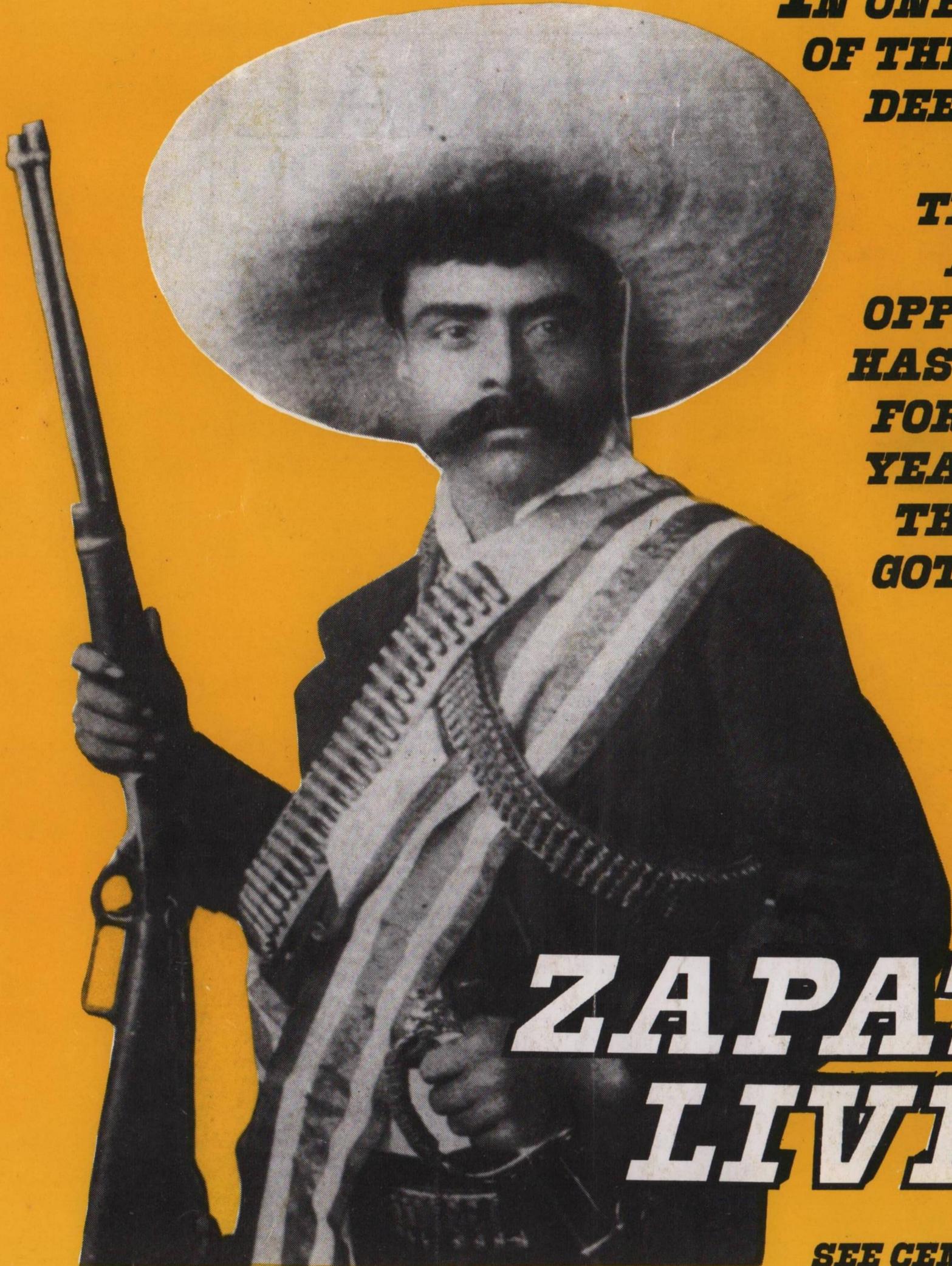
BLACK FLAG

FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE

£1

ISSUE 204 SPRING 1994

***IN ONE CORNER
OF THE WORLD,
DEEP IN THE
JUNGLE,
THE FIGHT
AGAINST
OPPRESSION
HAS GONE ON
FOR NINETY
YEARS. NOW
THEY HAVE
GOT HOLD OF
MODERN
ARMS.***



**ZAPATA
LIVES!**

SEE CENTRE PAGES

**Black Flag
BM Hurricane**

London WC1N 3XX

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- For a social system based on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation – against state control and all forms of government and economic repression. To establish a share in the general prosperity for all – the breaking down of racial, religious, national and sex barriers – and to fight for the life of one world.

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WE'RE BACK

OUR last issue No. 203 - was welcomed back by many old and new friends who feared we might have disappeared forever after a gap of nearly two years. In the meantime our editorial team had been active in many fields of anarchist struggle. Ever-mounting debts forced us to suspension, but if every copy had got paid for we would have been able to survive. We carried on the journal for over twenty years

without a break, let's hope we're able to carry on for another term.

We are still maintaining the policy of 'prisoners free' on the basis that if non-political prisoners don't come to understand the nature of the State when inside, they never will, and those prisoners 'inside for us' deserve solidarity. But we need back-up and pay-up from those 'outside'. We got it for this issue, thanks.

CONTENTS

Tower Hamlets latest Poll Tax suicide	PAGE 3
NUM Statement Anti-Fascism	PAGE 4 PAGE 5
Forty Workers sacked in Nepal Guatemalan Workers need Solidarity	PAGE 7
Chattanooga Workers Fight Racism Nigeria & the Awareness League - Part 2	PAGE 8 PAGE 9
FEATURE - The 1 in 12 Club	PAGES 10 & 11
1 in 12 AFC Anarcho Quiz	PAGE 12
What is Terrorism?	PAGES 13 & 14
Abortion & the National Abortion Campaign	PAGE 15
VIVA ZAPATA!	PAGES 16 & 17
Prisoners News & ABC	PAGES 18 & 19
ANARCHIST HISTORY - The Asturian Uprising	PAGES 20-22
Letters	PAGES 23 & 24
Northern Star RIP	PAGE 24
Nationalism - Comment	PAGE 25
OBITUARIES & REVIEWS	PAGES 26 - 27
Yugoslavia article	PAGE 30
Black Flag Finances	PAGE 31

BEYOND SELF DEFENCE

AS REPORTED in *Black Flag* 203, an Asian teenager, Quddus Ali, was brutally attacked and put in a coma by racists in September last year. Two days after the attack, on 10th September, hundreds attended a vigil at Whitechapel Hospital for him. Towards the end of this vigil, the police started to harass people in their usual racist manner.

The predominantly Asian youth fought back. By the end of the evening, many were injured and nine had been arrested. They were originally charged with Riot, although these charges have now been dropped. However, five have now been charged with Violent

Disorder and Assault On A Police Officer. These young men are guilty of nothing more than defending themselves and their communities from attack. The racist nature of the policing in the area was shown for all to see when 50 Nazi thugs were allowed to rampage through Brick Lane, the heart of the Bengali community, despite heavy police presence. No one has been arrested for this.

Below we reprint a statement from A.Sivanandan:

"ON UNITY:

NOT: A mechanical unity, a top-down unity, a tactical unity.

NOT: The two-faced unity of political

parties who will unite with anyone and anybody that brings them votes - as you have seen in Tower Hamlets.

NOT: The opportunistic unity of trade unions which take up black working class action when it enhances their reputation,

begin to organise and cohere our community.

IT IS: The base from which we take off into our other fights against racism.

IT IS: The line of no retreat. But that is not enough any more. Racism is becoming too

acceptable, fascism is becoming too bold.

IT IS: Time we pushed back the frontiers.

IT IS: Time we denied the fascists the freedom of speech that they deny others, the freedom of assembly that they deny others.

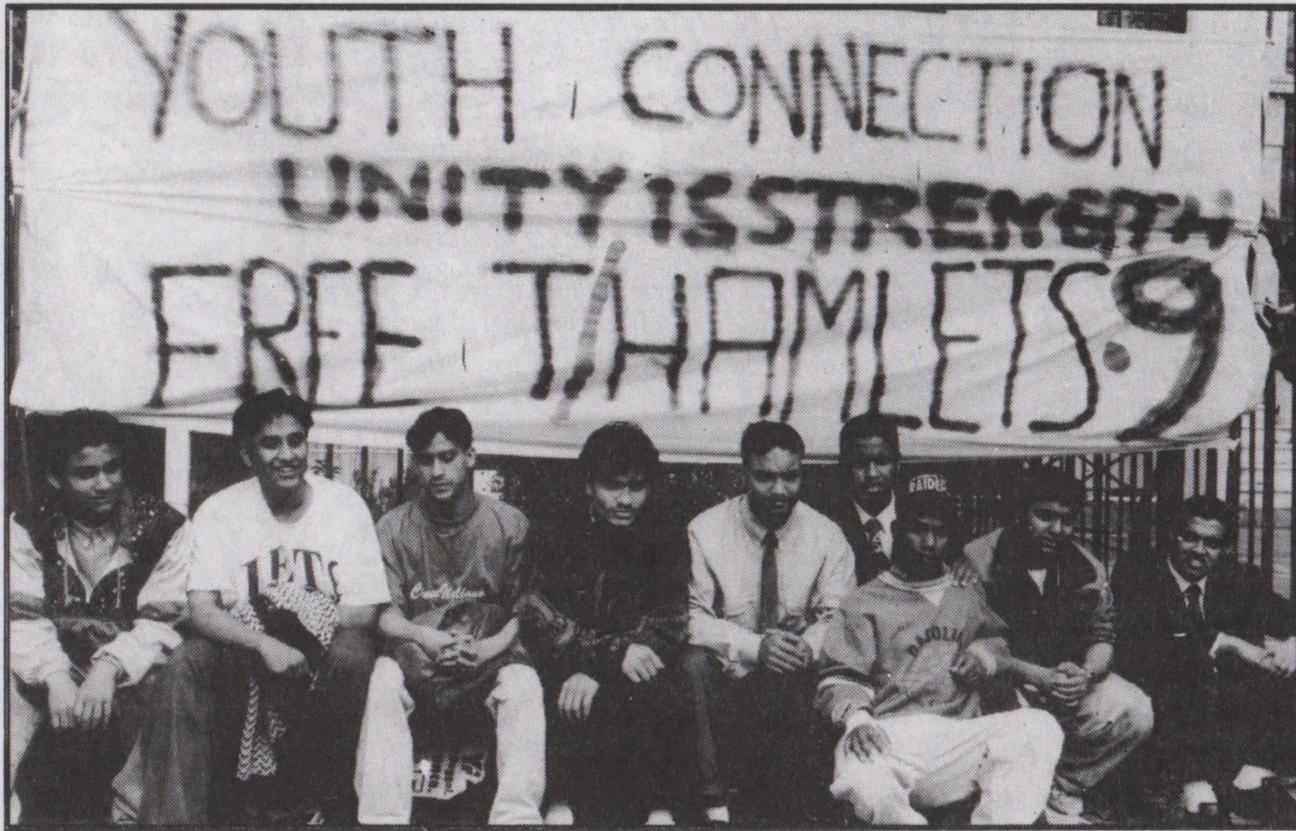
IT IS: Time we drove them out of our communities.

For beyond the freedom of assembly and the freedom of speech there is another

freedom - the first freedom, the freedom to life - and that is the freedom the fascists deny us."

The Tower Hamlets Nine Defence Campaign was set up to demand that the charges are dropped, that police harassment and violence ends and that the racists are arrested. A picket was held on 1st February outside Thames Magistrates Court at which 150 attended. The campaign is now waiting for the court date for the five charged - they will be organising a demonstration. Contact them at:

Tower Hamlets Nine Defence Campaign, PO Box 273, London E7. Tel: 081 548 0099.



but abandon it when it can't - as the GMB has done recently over the year-long strike of Asian women at Brunsalls in Smethwick.

NOT: The subsume-your-anti-racist-struggle to our anti-fascist-struggle unity of our anti-Nazi comrades.

NOT: The you-join-us, we-won't-join-you unity of national black organisations.

NOT: A structural or mechanical unity.

BUT: A unity that grows from a common service to a common cause and is therefore organic, dynamic, and provides the springboard for a movement.

BEYOND SELF-DEFENCE:

IT IS: Around issues of self-defence that we

POLL TAX PRISONER COMMITS SUICIDE

NEIL KENNEDY, a labourer jailed for non-payment of Poll Tax, killed himself in early November last year. He was 35 and from Horden in Surrey. He was found hanged in his cell in Holme House Prison, Cleveland, 3 weeks into a 3-month sentence for non-payment of £250. He was revived but died 16 hours later. Angry relatives say that he was

known to be depressed and should never have been imprisoned. Kennedy offered in court to pay the debt off at £2 a week but the magistrates turned him down. To our knowledge this is the third death directly attributable to the Poll Tax; in 1989 a man killed himself in Kent because he knew he and his family could not afford to pay; in 1990 the police

threw an anti-Poll Tax activist in his fifties down the steps of a court in Coventry. He died of a heart attack.

The Poll Tax goes on killing people quietly - how many more will die once Value Added Tax is introduced on fuel bills? What price our lives?

Source: *Anarchist Black Cross/ 'Taking Liberties'*

BLOODIED BUT UNBOWED

WE REPRINT below an edited version of the statement made for the last mass meeting of the Hatfield Main miners. It shows that even to the bitter end, the miners never lost their defiance and fighting spirit and are still an inspiration to us all.

"The members of the NUM at Hatfield Main Colliery have been in continuous struggle against pit closures since 1983. In the year long strike men from this colliery distinguished themselves as among the most loyal and valiant fighters in Britain. Our efforts were frequently bedevilled by National Coal Board management pursuing a different agenda, one that included ever greater attacks upon union rights and democratic working practices. In resisting this, we fought alongside our comrades who had been victimised in the Kent coal field and struck with them, as well as Frickley and Bentley when they had their disputes.

Despite our agreement to new incentive schemes and multi-skilling, our co-operation was never enough and management persisted in attempts to break the workforce from the union, resulting in Hatfield leading the South Yorkshire coalfield strike of 1990, in which our officials were prosecuted in the High Court. They received damage writs for millions and wall-to-wall injunctions.

With a new manager, the branch attempted to find new relations for the sake of mutual survival, only to be met by a government plan to wipe out 31 of the remaining collieries, including ours and the rest of the Doncaster coalfield. It is to their upmost credit that members of this branch responded to the call for action balloting 75% in favour, with an easy majority among British Coal as well as our contract members. The Hatfield banner together with our wives and children have marched the length and breadth of Britain in protest at the massacre of our collieries. Women from Thorne and Moorends in particular have taken initiatives of the most heroic kind. Our delegates lobbied and picketed union branches of all descriptions in an effort to bring about general strike action, but with the exception of our comrades on the railways and in local government we failed. As miners born and bred of generations of miners, we were not surprised at the inaction of the TUC general council or the leadership of the Labour Party, but our failure to mobilise the rank and file is what finally damned us.

On the production front, despite our men toiling in the most horrendous of conditions, we ended up with an £8 million loss. Despite this, in a few weeks of operation and with renewed efforts the pit was knocking off the debt at a rate of nearly £1/4 million a week. We could have clearly been in a break-even situation by May at the latest; when new well-equipped faces would be waiting and access to over 200 million tonnes of prime reserves would be in sight. Hatfield had fought hard to get out of the power station market and had been successful in establishing new high proceed markets; to be told by the area director that this colliery's markets will be filled by British Coal importing foreign fuel for our own customers is a national scandal.

We reluctantly agree to withdraw from the review procedure, knowing that no pit has ever been spared even in the event of winning the appeal. Under no circumstance do we agree with the closure of this colliery or the loss of our jobs.

We thank our men and their families for the magnificent support and strength of conviction they have given this branch and the union at large. We know that whatever they do, wherever they go, they will keep proud to our heritage, always join the appropriate union, never crossing a picket line of any worker in dispute.

Exhausted and demoralised the present has been taken from us: the past and future however belong to us and we shall guard them jealously. Mr Houghton, John Major, Margaret Thatcher and the rich folk you represent, this moment is yours - you shall never take from us our dignity as workers who have fought for justice and a better world. You may disperse us from this spot, this moment in time, but our conviction shall remain wherever we go and in the generations of post-miners children who follow us."

THE FUTURE IS OURS!

This is the unanimous decision of this branch 27th November 1993.

Signed for **Hatfield Main NUM Branch.**

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORD has reached us that Lambeth isn't the only place where the Government's Jobplan has been sabotaged. Unemployed workers' groups in some parts of the country have been quietly and successfully advising people that they can demand to go home after 2 days on the 5 day course without loss of benefits. If you are due to go on one of these courses, check with your local unemployed workers' group/ claimants' union first.

A GROUP of women who want to bring meaning to the words the "Revolution of Everyday Life" through action, awareness, attitude. Meetings are held regularly. Please contact us through PO Box 1008, GLASGOW, Scotland.

WE HAVE received an appeal for donations from the Glasgow Anarchist Group. The purpose of donations is for a club, "The Solidarity Club", which is planned for meetings, both political and social, a creche and the establishment of a permanent bar. Our comrades would appreciate any money or help. Please make cheques payable to "R.Lynn". Contact address: 151 Gallowgate, Glasgow G1 5AX, Scotland.

ANARCHISTS NEW FAX MACHINE

YOU can now fax the following groups with your news and ideas:

CONTRAFLOW - European Counter Network magazine

56a INFOSHOP - Anarchist bookstore

LONDON ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS - Class struggle prisoners support group

BAD ATTITUDE - Radical women's paper

121 CENTRE - Anarchist bookshop and space: on

071 - 326

-0353

(24 hours)

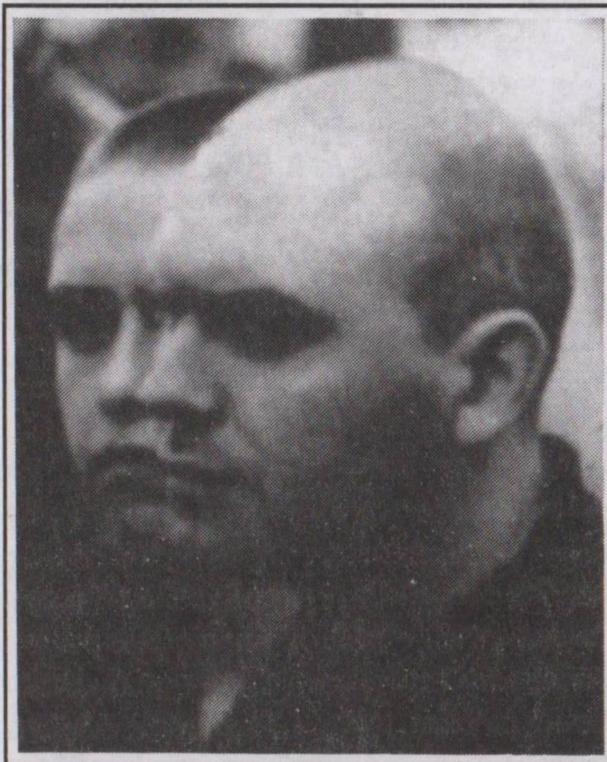
SOME LIKE IT HOT

IAN STUART (Donaldson), leader of fascist rock band Screwdriver and guru to the 'Blood and Honour' Nazi skinhead network (which incidentally gets more orders for T-shirts and badges than it does new recruits) is no longer with us. His soul could well be residing in distant Valhalla alongside Nordic gods of war from...well, *DC Comics*, but bad driver or anti-fascist mechanic? We can only speculate.

On January 15th, a memorial gig was to have taken place in the outskirts of London. Anti-fascists had other ideas and intended, if possible, to make it another "Battle of Waterloo". 'Everyone', it seemed, was out that day: AntiFascist Action, the Anti-Nazi League, Youth (sic) Against Racism In Europe, militant anti-fascists with no particular affiliations. The fash were there: chiefly Nazi skins and the goon squad called Combat 18 (a self-proclaimed 'para-military unit'). To cut a long story short, not a great deal happened as far as confrontation goes. Some boneheads were attacked on a train in East London, others were taken by surprise outside a pub off Carnaby Street in the West End. (some people just don't like fascists seemingly enjoying a pint!)

The gig, which was to be held in Essex, was called off by the landlord of the pub,

which left the boneheads nothing to do but comb their hair and try counting up to seven. We heard reports of infighting and of riot cops having a go at them in a pub near Waterloo Station, as well as a few



Ian Stuart

trapped in a East London pub by anti-fascists earlier in the day. All in all, not a great day out for Odin's stormtroopers.

That said, however, it's time anti-fascists learned a few lessons and try new ways of

operating. OK, it's even harder now than ever to avoid police interest, but calling counter demos, being surrounded by police, or hanging around pubs for hours on end waiting for the "word" whilst attracting nervous attention from the public and publicans alike, is surely a dead end.

Obviously *Black Flag* isn't the place to put down strategies (we'd might as well phone up the cops and fascists to tell them our plans) but anti-fascists need to update our ways of operating.

In May this year, local council elections are going to be held and the fascist British National Party are likely to be standing more candidates. They are now actively building for this in the hope of capitalising on their success of having one councillor elected in Millwall. * While all attempts at countering the blatant lies of the BNP by leaflets etc., are valid, anti-fascists should also be thinking of making things extremely hot for fascist activists.

* Millwall, East London, not to be confused with Millwall Football Club, South East London.



THE VOICE OF REASON

WHAT A complete shambles the Welling demo was. Forty-one people officially injured on our side, lots more slightly hurt and thousands scared to death. And the **Anti-Nazi League** (ANL) top knobs whingeing about how beastly the police are. So what happened?

For weeks before the march top coppers had been announcing that it was to be infiltrated by "Class 1 Extremists". (Did they mean Class War extremists? Do they have a rating system we don't know about like all that IC1, 2 & 3 business? Wouldn't you be ashamed to find you were only a Class 3 Extremist?)

When the police announce that an event is going to be violent they have a habit of

arriving tooled up and in sufficient numbers to make their prediction come true. ANL leaders like Julie Waterson and Paul Holborrow know this. They also know that if you throw those stupid little sticks that ANL placards come on at the filth for long enough they will charge you and break heads with their riot gear.

When the front of the march stopped at the junction of Wickham Lane and Lodge Hill the only people in contact with the police were a few hundred at the front. Everyone else was hemmed into Wickham Lane with walls on both sides. If the Queen Mum was trying to organise a confrontation with the old bill (I admit this is unlikely) even she might have enough street wisdom

not to do it like this. Not unless the police were paying her to set up a potential massacre for them.

So what did the ANL do? First their stewards announced that the police were using gas, then they told people to push forward. Could they not see what might happen if a few thousand people panicked in such a confined space? And what contempt for the poor sods at the front who were to be used as a human battering ram through police lines.

As we all know, the ANL is more or less run by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Any time you pick up Socialist Worker there is always an article about how the old bill are the state's arm of violent social control. I can't believe the ANL thought they were going to get past thousands of riot police to torch the British National Party building. I can't believe that they didn't foresee what would happen.

Continued on Page 6

THE MYSTERY OF THE DISAPPEARING HOSPITAL

ON AUGUST 17th '93, workers at University College Hospital, London, went on strike to stop the closure of the main building. Around 50 nurses and porters came out, planning to continue emergency cover and hoping that more would join. But management had learned of this and banned strikers from the building threatening disciplinary action which helped put off others from joining in.

Support for the strike was lively, with spontaneous marches blocking West End traffic, and police unwilling to take on nurses. Postal workers and other workers refused to cross picket lines, and most ambulance workers refused to remove

Unison were backing the strike with full strike pay and by putting its name to days of action and demos, under pressure from branches around the country looking to UCH for a victory. But this "support" was used to control the strike. The union negotiated away the strike in return for dropping disciplinary action. Eventually, they had to threaten to stop the strike pay to get the workers to accept the deal.

The occupiers wanted to continue, but the branch leadership spread the fear that management would see this as a continuation of the strike and so feared more disciplinary action. Two occupiers were finally allowed to speak at a branch

Action". This generated a lot of publicity, but failed to develop in the way the occupiers hoped. Despite management turning off the power they stuck it out and were taken to court. The bailiffs came less than 48 hours later, with cops and private security, and resistance was merely symbolic.

The cruciform building was now empty, with the loss of 600 hospital beds. A few days later, Virginia Bottomley announced that the UCH was "safe" - that there would still be a casualty department (which wasn't under threat) and a centre for medical research, and she may put some money up as a temporary subsidy, if more cuts are made.

It would be nice to round up all the suspects, with motive and opportunity to kill our hospital. But all trot out the same excuse, "It's the market wot dunnit."

As for the verdicts of the occupiers "we did what we could but everyone else was too apathetic", "we didn't try hard enough", "we have to hit them harder, not wait for the masses", "if we can't get people to fight for a hospital, we can't fight for anything". Even discussing these ideas is tricky when trying somehow to carry on the fight.

An ex-UCH Occupier



patients from the threatened wards.

On September 15th one of the closed wards was occupied by supporters and a couple of strikers. Though planned for a day, more people joined and it took on a life of its own. At first the relationship between strikers and occupiers was confused, some strikers fearing it was just an Socialist Workers Party (SWP) stunt. The occupation had stopped being merely an act of support for the strike, as people tried to find ways of fighting for their own interests, to make it their own struggle. The occupiers asked to speak at a strike committee meeting and were eventually told the committee would come to them.

Instead, the union branch leaders turned up, all SWP and at least one not a striker. They told them how things were to be run, imposed a rota designed to discourage local people and encourage SWP members, destroying the continuity of the occupation.

meeting, where the SWP revealed "only industrial action can win". The occupiers failed to convince the strikers, but at least won some belated recognition and respect. Unfortunately, when they decided to set up their own group to carry on the fight outside, most of the strikers were left firmly in the grip of the union machinery.

The former occupiers, now under the name UCH Community Action Committee, went straight for the Unison head office where they leafleted workers and shouted at the bosses who'd sold out the struggle. They stormed a board meeting at Wellcome, the drug pushers putting up the money, then the head office of University College who were planning to buy the building, then the head of the hospital's office, all in one day.

As the last few wards approached their closure dates, the group decided to occupy again, the night before the TUC "Day of

VOICE OF REASON CONTINUED

Did they really not expect the police to attack the march? Don't these stupid bastards read their own paper?

Higher education colleges had just started their academic year. These are where the SWP recruit most of their members. I think events like this are used by the party (as their members pronounce it, thinking that's how working class people speak) to "blood" new student members like foxhunters do with their children. I mean, if the police batter us after we've only chucked a couple of little sticks at them, they must be fascists, right?

Still, look on the bright side. At least their comrades in Militant didn't offer to grass anybody up this time.

"The Voice Of Reason"

CALL FOR SOLIDARITY

**FORTY WORKERS
DISMISSED ILLEGALLY**

FORTY WORKERS from the Island Jungle Resort in the heart of the Royal Chitwan National Park in southern Nepal were sacked over a dispute last year. Originally, the workers had put forward a 13-point proposal to the management of the resort. The demands were discussed between the local union and the management. Management agreed to implement the demands from 1st January 1993, but later not only were the demands not met, but other working conditions were also worsened.

The union protested against this in a meeting held on 25th March 1993, between management, the local union, the employers' organisation Hotel Association Of Nepal, and the central committee of the Nepal Independent Hotel Workers' Union (the national federation of the local union). The following day five workers who were also union reps were sacked. A strike was called by the workers on the 4th April 1993 in opposition to this sacking.

This resulted in the arrest of the five dismissed union representatives on trumped-up charges. Management also hired a gang of thugs to beat up the other 35 workers on the picket line. The five arrested were later released from police custody and the strike continued. Twenty days later into the strike, the workers were attacked and charged by police and hired gangs. Three union reps - Palat Chaudhary, Resham Thapa and Maya Ram Chaudhary were taken into police custody for four days. Forty one casual workers were freshly employed and management filed a case against 16 union members on false charges of misappropriating and theft of property worth Nrs.461,600.(US\$ 9,300).

The five sacked workers appealed to the Department of Labour. The DOL found in favour of the workers, but resort management ignored the decision. Moreover, the 35 remaining strikers were sacked on the ground of absenteeism.

You are cordially requested to extend

your solidarity and support in whatever way you can - be it financial or moral.

Please write a letter of protest condemning the management's repressive exploitation and demanding immediate reinstatement of the dismissed workers.

Letters of protest:
The Managing Director, Island Jungle Resort, PO Box 2154, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal.
 Tel: 977-1-220162/225615
 Telex: 2409 ALPINE NP
 Fax: 977-1-223814; Attn.Island Jungle Resort

Write a request letter to the Department of Labour to settle the case properly:
The Director General, Department of Labour, Putali Sadak, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Please send a copy of all letters/messages of support/donations to:
The Central Committee, Nepal Independent Workers' Union, (NIHWU-GEFONT), PO Box 160, Patan Gate, Lalitpur, Nepal.
 Tel/Fax: 977-1-411-880.

Source: *Gefont Workers' News Quarterly.*

**GUATEMALAN WORKERS
NEED SOLIDARITY**

WORKERS at the Puerto Barrios plant organised a union in December 1992. The franchise company responded by firing 30 workers on Christmas Day. Now the company wants to derecognise the union as the workers who organised it are no longer employed. The workers are asking for letters to be sent to Coca-cola Corp, with copies to the local manager demanding their reinstatement and back wages, union recognition and a negotiated contract.

Write to: **Roberto Goyzueta, Chairman, Coca-Cola Corp., PO Drawer 1734, Atlanta, GA 30301, USA.**
 Copies to: **James Schutt, INCASA-Km., 61/2 ruta del Atlantico, zona 17, Guatemala, Guatemala.**

Source: *Libertarian Labour review*

**DIRECT ACTION
AGAINST RACISM**

FOR eight hours the black flag flew over the administrative HQ of the University of Paris at Nanterre. On the initiative of students in the CNT (French section of the IWA) the principals' offices were occupied. The aim of the action was to enrol two foreign students denied admission for racist reasons. At first the students tried legal means but when these failed, resorted to good old direct action. They achieved a partial victory, as the students were enrolled elsewhere for different courses.

Source: *Le Combat Syndicaliste*

**THE CHINESE ECONOMIC MIRACLE:
THE REAL PRICE**

ON 5th August 1993, two massive explosions rocked the Shenzhen special economic zone, just across the border from Hong Kong. Fifteen people died and around 150 were injured in the sort of disaster reminiscent of the Industrial Revolution.

Officials admitted that negligence of safety, lack of inspection and monitoring, official corruption and inadequate fire prevention were the major causes.

Shenzhen is one of the special economic zones with low wages and tax breaks set up to lure Western and East Asian companies in search of even greater profits.

Asian Labour Update commented that the high incidence of serious industrial accidents points to the lack of serious planning and enforcement in industrial safety. Another disaster has happened since in Shenzhen, on 19th November, where 81 workers died.

CHATTANOOGA NO-NO

BLACK WORKERS in Chattanooga, Tennessee, are fighting a campaign against the racist and sexist public bus company, CARTA. In 1993, four filed charges of racial and sexual discrimination against the company as part of a multi-level strategy.

Two drivers, James Jones and Ralph Williams, were sacked for resisting racial harassment by managers and complaining about the discriminatory disciplinary policies.

Loita Blackmon was denied promotions in favour of lesser qualified white men, and when she complained she was sexually harassed by Art Barnes, an assistant executive director (and the only black executive), and also by Gale Chambers, local Union president, who said she should be doing "women's work" rather than maintenance. Chambers also conspired with the company to fire another black bus driver, Annette Evans, who has also complained about sexism and denial of seniority in favour of whites.

Politics being what they are, some in the local union are trying to remove Chambers as President over the sexual harassment

charges. But these folks do not want to deal with the core issues of continuing racial and sexual discrimination by the company and within the union. According to "An Open Letter About Racial Discrimination at CARTA" by the "Black Workers Organising Project (BWOP), CARTA is known as "the plantation" among black workers, and "the union is nothing but a sweetheart union...Chambers was made the first black president after the Jones complaint shook up the company."

For years, the company made blacks ride in the back of the bus, even though 70% of passengers are black. CARTA has a long policy of playing black workers against white workers, which the union has failed to challenge.

Knowing that the filing of charges is not enough, the workers and BWOP are waging a public campaign. This comes at a time of heightened racism in Chattanooga, with an epic number of blacks being killed by police. This racism is not going unchallenged. The CARTA busworkers and BWOP have asked the Workers Solidarity Alliance (American IWA affiliate) to help them build a campaign against the company

and the union. The WSA and others are also supporting a movement against police brutality in Chattanooga that has developed.

In an effort to put pressure on CARTA and the union, BWOP "calls upon our fellow and sister workers, the black community and other workers in unions to join us in a campaign to win justice for African-American employees at this company. With your help we can win!"

Here's what you can do:

1. Write letters of protest to both the union and the company:

Gale Chambers, President ATU Local 1212, 1617 Wilcox Blvd, Chattanooga TN37406

Tom Dugan, Executive Director, CARTA, at the same address.

2. Write to NY/NJ WSA for copies of a petition against the racist and sexist practices. **WSA, 339 Lafayette St, Rm.202, NY, NY 10012.** (Also available from *Black Flag* - s.a.e. appreciated)

Workers' solidarity can defeat racism!

Source WSA-IWA.

"THE MOTHERS OF THE DISAPPEARED"



THEY still defiantly gather in the Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires, the Mothers of the Disappeared. They demand to know what happened to their rebel sons and daughters, and the little grandchildren under the State terror that swept the Republic of Argentina under the tyrant generals. President Menem has said sarcastically that he cannot bring the dead back to life, and he has no wish or will to punish the criminal generals and admirals responsible.

Authoritative figures have pooh-poohed the demonstrations that constantly fill the square, saying they must inevitably go away with the passing of time. But yearly they get stronger as younger people join them.

By Mike Harris

IN THE last issue of *Black Flag* we reported on the situation in Nigeria shortly after the termination of the results of the first civilian election since 1985 by the military dictatorship of General Ibrahim Babangida. Much of this update comes directly from our comrades in Nigeria, the revolutionary syndicalist Awareness League (AL)..

After the annulment of the June election, waves of strikes and violence erupted in Nigeria's principal cities. The military increased its repression, with mass arrests and the banning of publications. Babangida promised to hand over power to a civilian government on August 27th and after a delay appointed a wealthy businessman and friend, Ernest Shonekan.

However Babangida did not give in without a fight. According to the AL Babangida enacted Decrees 43 & 48 which banned nearly half of the country's privately owned newspapers and imposed stringent regulations on the remaining ones. Using Decree 59 he suspended the remnants of the 1979 Federal Constitution including provisions on human rights. Detention without trial of scores of human rights activists, left wing politicians, student and labour leaders, critics and perceived opponents of his regime followed.

After Shonekan increased the price of petrol by 700%, the central labour union, the Nigerian Labour Congress, called out its members on indefinite strike to protest against the measure. The country literally ground to a halt. It was in the face of this paralysis that the military, led by General Sani Abacha, Babangida's long-standing associate, sacked Shonekan's team and re-seized power on November 17th, 1993.

"The country can ill-afford another military dictatorship so soon after Babangida's totalitarian rule. No less discomfiting is the new junta's prescription of all forms of human rights...It has also banned meetings and gatherings that have political, ideological undertones. This is clearly a pretext for an imminent clamp-down on human rights activists..and other groups such as ours. In concrete terms Abacha's regime is a continuation of Babangida's dictatorship."

Recognising the closeness of the winner of the June 12th elections (Social

Update on NIGERIA

Democratic Party Chief Abiola) to Babangida, and all the inherent problems associated with elections, the AL nevertheless took a position which was very close to that of the Spanish CNT to the 1936 national elections. The AL joined with others to call for the return of Abiola to the presidency "...despite our own reservations..we are convinced that the worst civilian government is infinitely better than the best military regime. And for us a civilian government offers a minimum condition for the struggle to establish a revolutionary society."

In conclusion, "the Awareness League rejects the return fo the military, in all its ramifications and shall do all it can in collaboration with other activists and labour to resist General Abacha's regime and force it to abdicate like Babangida and Shonekan's government before it. ..We can only ask for continued support and solidarity of all comrades and revolutionaries around the world for the struggle promises to be difficult and long drawn."

WHAT IS THE AWARENESS LEAGUE?

The AL is a membership organisation of about 1000, spread across different parts of Nigeria. The AL was organised on July 6, 1989. The Charter of the Awareness League states that the organisation is "inspired by and committed to the ideals, principles objectives, goals, ends and purposes of ...anarcho-syndicalism."

AT its fifth national conference, celebrated on July 6th 1993, the AL committed itself to a national membership drive, the creation of a well organised and functioning secretariat and office, as well as a national education campaign. The delegates to the conference "agreed... that, unlike in the countries of Europe, America and Latin America, Africa does not possess an anarchist tradition or experience to point at in concrete terms...The League therefore shoulders a historical responsibility in the international anarchist movement."

(Annual Report 1993)

In an effort to help educate Nigerians, and others, about African anarchism, the AL is in the process of writing a book on the subject, *Africa and the Anarchist Struggle* (due out June 1994).

The Awareness League asks comrades the world over for financial help in their publishing efforts. Please send International Money orders or UK Bank cheques directly to AL, PO Box 1920, Enugu, Enugu State, Nigeria. Take care to seal the envelope to beat mail thieves.

For further info contact WSA-IWA, 339 Lafayette St, Rm 202, NYC, NY10012 USA. Tel +212-979-8353.

VENEZUELAN PRISON RIOTS

122 PRISONERS were killed in ethnic riots in Venezuela's Sabaneta Prison in Maracaibo on the 3rd and 4th January. Sadly it seems that rival gangs, based around ethnic background, fought each other with homemade knives and firearms in a bloody feud over control of the prison. Some prisoners set fire to the prison while others tried to dig their way out. In the previous six months, 26 prisoners had died and 72 injured in this prison.

Meanwhile, 40 prisoners in Torocan Prison used the diversion of security forces to Sabaneta to fight their way to freedom on the 4th; 9 other prisoners died in the attempt. This fighting against rival gangs is apparently a common part of prison life. The prison authorities were probably following the well-worn tactic of backing one faction against another to exploit their divisions to prevent any unity between prisoners.

Source: ABC/Taking Liberties.



THE 1 IN 12 FIGHTS ON

"Where's the Gaffer mate?"

"Who's in charge?"

"Can I see the Manager?"

ON HOW MANY occasions have members of Bradford's One in Twelve Club been asked these questions? By a band arriving for a gig or a brewery rep touting for business, a visiting team in the 'Pool and Doms' league or a visitor checking the place out for the first time. As often as not, the answer will follow a familiar pattern: "There's no gaffer, no one's in charge", said as a matter of fact and with a knowing smile as if nothing should be more obvious or self-evident. The visitor, disorientated by the reply, searches for something familiar and reassuring. The notice board with its fixture lists for the football, quiz or pools team perhaps, the juke-box in the corner opposite the trophy shelf in the other. But this place is something quite different, testimony to what can be achieved when people with enough nous and determination coupled with a commitment to DIY politics and self-organisation get together. The 1 in 12 Club is based in a converted inner city warehouse, with its two bars, gig room, cafe, snooker room, its membership of 600, thriving publications and records collectives, is alive and kicking, thirteen years of anarchist organisation in Bradford!

Formed from the nucleus of an essentially anarchist orientated Claimants Union in 1981, the 1 in 12 represented a creative and grass-roots response to the problems of unemployment and the city's continued industrial decline. The tradition of working class resistance and direct action has a long and proud history in Bradford and the 1 in 12 has striven to be a part of it. A hundred years of participative, active and locally controlled direct action in the city, from the Manningham Mills Strike in the early 1890's, to the anti-fascist "Battle of Bradford" in the mid 70's finds only its most recent expression in the 1 in 12 Club.

During the early 1980's, in a series of rented rooms around the city, a gradually growing membership of mainly working class young people, met each Sunday to

discuss, socialise and plan. Organised on participative, anarchist principles, the meetings were lively, diverse and fun, in sharp contrast to the usual monotony, drabness and suffocating misery of the left and the irrelevance of most political

and bouncer intimidation. The objective was to create a lively and participative social scene, to stimulate a culture of resistance, a space under the control and direction of the membership for entertainment, debate and solidarity.



meetings.

Nevertheless this could bring its own problems! At no stage in the Club's history has the relationship between 'ideal' and 'reality' ever been straightforward. Indeed conflict over whose ideals and which reality has often thrown the Club into deep internal conflict. The diversity of interests, priorities and expectations of the membership, empowered by the open and active process of decision making, has often come with a price. Sometimes members have left, disillusioned and perhaps occasionally bitter, but this is the uncomfortable reality of taking responsibility and control. Nevertheless new members have replaced old, and a constant regeneration and influx of new ideas and energy continued, likewise new sources of disagreement and conflict emerged too!

The twice weekly gigs held in several city centre pubs provided the embodiment of the 1 in 12 'way'. Providing gigs that were cheap, free from sexist, racist and statist hassles, the usual promoters and rip-offs, dress restrictions

The results were emphatic, the gigs were often packed out and the membership swelled to a thousand. The Sunday meetings produced spin-off collectives for those interested in developing various ideas further. The 1 in 12 Record Collective began production of a series of compilation tapes and records - *Worst of the 1 in 12 Club* - of the bands that had played there. For better or worse (depending on your musical taste) the albums provided early exposure for *New Model Army*, *Joolz*, and *The Cult*, a platform for local talent, controlled at a local level by local people.

The Club spawned a magazine - *Knee Deep in Shit* - which quickly gained local notoriety for its irreverent and risqué approach to local affairs. Investigations into the activities of the local Freemasonry sparked widespread controversy for example, eventually provoking the local council into action against the influence of the Lodge. Later the investigative skills of those involved and the quality of their work received national recognition and generous media

coverage. Further exposés of local politicians and influential persons continued, and the consistent ability of the magazine to generate controversy maintained the Club's profile as a tireless thorn in the side of the local establishment.

During the 1984-5 Miners Strike, the 1 in 12 established a close and supportive relationship with strikers at the nearby Kellingley Colliery. The Club organised meetings at which miners came to speak to Club members, the gigs were turned into benefits, and regular collections of food and basic essentials were established. When the Bradford Trades Council ran a double decker bus to a picket at Emley Moor, the entire top half was occupied by the 1 in 12 Club. When Bradford Council refused to allow local miners to collect money in the city centre, the 1 in 12 invited them to collect at its outdoor festival at which hundreds of people had attended. After the strike, a book of poetry by Jean Gittens (mother of two striking miners at Ledston Luck Colliery) - *Striking Stuff* - was published by the Club to raise money for the NUM Solidarity Fund. A plaque, presented by the Kellingley miners now sits behind the bar, a proud reminder of the solidarity members showed during that great fight.

By early 1985 the ambitions and self-confidence of the Club was underlined by the decision to apply for a Department of Environment grant to purchase a building for itself. Again the nous and enterprise of the membership proved effective, and a grant of £90,000 was secured for the purchase and renovation of the building. The membership had been adamant that under no circumstances was this to compromise or weaken the principles of the Club's organisation and activities. Under the licensing laws the Club was required to establish a variety of official positions within its structure and elect a 'Management Collective' to 'run' it. True to both its anarchist principles and the legal obligations required of it, a management committee was indeed elected, but remained subsidiary to the traditional Sunday meetings. It was instantly recallable and subject, where appropriate, to immediate deselection. And so there is no 'executive' in the Club. The weekly member meetings remain the sole decision making body.

The prospect of the 1 in 12 receiving such a large sum of money, together with its scurrilous reputation quickly had the

alarm bells ringing amongst police, politicians and local media. "How Public Money is Funding Anarchy" screamed the front page of one newspaper, quickly followed by police raids on several member's homes. When questioned as to the evidence of the allegations contained in the paper's report, the local journalist admitted that the only 'proof' had come from information supplied by Bradford CID!

A later Department of Environment investigation of the 1 in 12, provoked by a track from a Records Collective release attacking the then leader of Bradford Council, Eric Pickles (*Eric Pickles is a Fat Tory Bastard*), revealed the quantity of information compiled by the State on the Club's activities. Inevitably most of the allegations were misinformed and inaccurate, nonetheless the Club was questioned as to its "bomb-making activities", its anti-police profile and the damaging investigations of *Knee Deep in Shit!*

Nevertheless the money was secured and work began on the new premises, a derelict warehouse, down a cobbled street in the heart of Bradford. With those more skilled in plumbing, electrics, painting etc, sharing their expertise with those less knowledgeable, a buliding with all the recognised fixtures and fittings of a social club took shape. Three years of dedicated hard work, almost all carried out voluntarily by the club membership were rewarded when in May 1988 21-22 Albion Street was opened for business.

"I walked down to the Club on

opening night....I was stunned. It was actually working. All of a sudden it hit me - fuckin' hell we did it. And if the Club closes down tomorrow, we still did it."

The achievement was monumental, after years of moving from venue to venue, meeting room to meeting room, the Club actually had its own premises. Yet the building, with its attendant regulations and controls, its colossal expense and responsibilities created a new set of problems for the membership. It became imperative that the 1 in 12 paid its way, it was a depressing brush with the real world, of tax, bills, and rates, of final demands, solicitors letters and bailiffs.

The never-ending struggle to meet the financial obligations of running a building the size of 21-22 Albion Street has often imposed a dreary obsession with creating enough revenue to survive. Whilst the Club has never made a profit, most work is done voluntarily and those staff paid work for ridiculously low wages. The pressure to succumb to capitalistic and exploitative methods has never been far away. It is the classic paradox familiar to those who attempt change whilst everything else around them remains the same. Yet while compromise affects every area of the 1 in 12 Club as a building, the 1 in 12 Club as its members has had no such restrictions or obligations. If 21-22 Albion Street closed tomorrow, the 1 in 12 Club would still survive and flourish, still aggravating the authorities and keeping politics accessible and fun.

Matt



1 IN 12 FC - NEVER SAY DIE!

AS THE mist clears and the last desperate cries from the Spencer Road faithful rise up into the cold Bradford air, and then drift away into the cobwebbed calm of footballing history books, a new dawn of hope emerges from the ashes of a brave but terrifying battle, the scars of which can still be found, deep cuts in that hallowed, lopsided turf.

Half way into their inaugural season, One in Twelve FC have relocated and with them are surely blowing the winds of good fortune. This move follows a series of diabolical hammerings at the hands of such notables as Dale Farm, by such humiliating scorelines as 7-1, 9-1, 4-3 and so on. Only one win, significantly away to Grosvenor, had left them languishing in the foggy reaches of Grattan League Division Two. Since the much publicised move to their new Legrams Lane ground, or "multi-stadia complex", as the board of directors prefer to describe it, the club has only notched up a single point. But how.

The first match at Legrams Lane was an 8 goal thriller against Menstone Rangers. 4-2 down at half time, despite the sweetest football you're ever likely to see on a cold Sunday afternoon in the mud, One in Twelve clawed their way back into the match with a display not of this earth; and when they finally netted that stubborn ball, the mud-bath celebrations resounded through a crowd which included one supporter who had travelled from as far afield as Reading.

The second of these games, and the team's most recent to date, was a narrow defeat which can be attributed in no small part to their continual slow starting. A goal conceded within the first five minutes was enough to sink the club's hopes, and snatch a fortunate victory for the outclassed and outrun home side, U-Save DIY. The lads spilt blood, but nothing could reward the anguished cries of the travelling contingent (which, as ever, far outnumbered the home support).

Nevertheless, having finally adopted the sweeper system, whilst also looking for a new regular first team goalkeeper, this is



THE FORMIDABLE 1 IN 12 IN ALL THEIR GLORY

surely the turning point in One in Twelve Football Club's season. Mid-table respectability is no longer a dream. Rather, it is a mere hurdle to be gracefully assailed with characteristic skill, hard work and sheer, gut-spilling determination. Faith in

maverick manager Steve Jackson looks at last to be paying dividends, as the Red and Black Army go marching gloriously on to take the Grattan League by force, or is that storm?

Noel Batstone 16/1/94

ANARCHO QUIZ

1. What dangerous foe was wiped out and what city was burned by second world war heroes Generals MacArthur, Patten and Eisenhower, nine years before the US entered the war?
2. What American trade union leader collected a file of political dissidents in his profession, which he passed to the CIA, thus getting union members blacklisted but opening up for himself a career in mainstream politics?
3. Capt. the Hon. ARM Ramsay, DSO and Tory MP was interned during World War II as a Nazi sympathiser and potential traitor - but what pertinent fact, known to the press who were not allowed to publish it, was kept from the British public at the time?
4. Why was the first exclusive interview to the foreign press, given by Hitler after becoming Reichs Chancellor, given to Sefton Delmer of the *Daily Express*, the one paper that consistently supported Churchill?
5. In a classic judgment, the High Court granted the petition of an American slave brought to England as a bodyservant, that he was automatically free on British soil. American law acquiesced and so others who could, 'defected', becoming free in both countries. Who was the last person to make such a statement (but failed)?

Answers on Page 25

WHAT IS TERRORISM?

TERRORISM IS a word frequently bandied about. Its meaning varies but is nowadays generally taken to mean illegal political violence, as distinct from war or State repression. In this definition, nobody in power is a 'terrorist' any more than a traitor, since once in power, however tyrannical or terrorising, they make the laws. Anyone without power to define the law, who resists the law for political reasons, is a 'terrorist' if they use violence, however mild.

Anarchists have long been labelled 'terrorists', as if all Anarchists at all times and for no reason used violence, and all who used political violence were Anarchists. This definition still holds for shock horror journalists, shady lawyers or police in the sticks. It is worth pointing out that almost every use of terrorism resulting in death used by Anarchists, or those in the same tradition, has been justified by history. Most of the terrorism used by their opponents, in and out of power, whether Nationalists, Imperialists, Republicans, Royalists, Fascists, Bolsheviks, Conservatives and Liberals, Socialists, Christian- and Social-Democrats, has been condemned. The examples are endless.

Terrorism in History

THE FRENCH revolutionary Terror was against a bloodythirsty and tyrannical regime. It had to be wiped out. Despite the distortion of the degree of Terror, (particularly in England, which happened to be war with France most of the time) it led to the destruction of feudal tyranny all over Europe. In any case by this time France was a republic and the whole process of the Terror from then on was legal, and "therefore" not terrorism. The English aristocracy wiped out far more of their own peasantry than the French did their aristocracy, at the same time.

The Russian Nihilists and Socialist Revolutionaries instituted what they called the Terror against the tsar, noblemen and generals, not because of their birth, but because of their atrocities. It was precisely counter-Terror. The devoted women and men who carried out the acts deliberately sacrificed their own lives. Their actions were applauded in the West, until they

began to be emulated by Anarchist workers against capitalist repression. The French Anarchists began a series of attacks on bourgeois society after the bloody, vicious and indiscriminate slaughter of workers after the destruction of the Paris Commune. The Spanish Anarchists likewise responded with discriminate attacks upon indiscriminate murderers such as Prime Ministers and Kings. The killing of the Italian king was in response to the slaughter of soldiers who refused to join in an unprovoked war on Abyssinia.

After World War I, indiscriminate political murder both by the State and by those who aspired to become the State became common. It was Anarchists who, for instance in Italy, carried out counter-attacks against Fascism, although the "cloak and dagger" image still clung to them throughout. Even in Germany, when indiscriminate slaughter was being carried out by the Nazi State daily (after political murder in the streets had been initiated by the Social- and Christian Democrat governments), the attempts by Anarchists led them to be labelled 'bandits'.

Nationalist terrorisms, condemning as enemies people of one nationality, race or religion, are only held in general esteem if they are successful and are thus able to command a powerful media backing, and not always then. Every single government established after both world wars by revolutionary nationalism turned out to as bad as, or worse than, the government it overthrew and not worth a single life. There are no exceptions.

The Spanish Resistance

THE MOST RECENT series of 'terrorist' attacks by Anarchists have been in or with regard to Spain, sometimes linked to other struggles. The world press passed over without comment the genocide of a million after the civil war ended. It held up its hands in horror at the fight back. People like Sabater, Facerias, and a long list of fighters and their helpers abroad were scorned as bandits. Now, almost overnight, as the Franco image is shaken off, even moderate Spanish opinion has decided they were resistance heroes and all dead ones should get statues and all living ones should receive medals! (Even Rudolf Rocker thought research into anarchist

attempts on Hitler was perpetrating the "negative image" of Anarchism!) Though British Customs officials still regard as suspicious published material on the Spanish civil war, let alone the post-war resistance, plaques and street names of partisans now appear in Spain. In a similar way Joe Hill is honoured by a main square statue in his Swedish birthplace while still regarded as a criminal in the USA.

The old liberal fallacy to justify nationalist terrorism is "One person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter". In reality, the fake ideals of nationalism and religion always demand both voluntary and involuntary sacrifice, illegal if out of power, legal if within, and patriotic or pious according to choice. But this has nothing to do with Anarchism, any more than does total non-violence, which means submission, and is thus the other side of the coin of tyranny. Struggles cannot be judged by the degree of violence or abstinence from it, but by the targets attacked.

Nationalist and religious violence is indiscriminate of those with different races or allegiances and must be equated with war. It is different from discriminate terrorism which singles out the guilty: kings, emperors, dictators, generals and the like. But, such is the power of propaganda, the latter receives by far the worst immediate condemnation. But the experience of libertarian fight proves that while the bourgeoisie still condemn the practice of violence in the workers' struggle, the fact that the violence is against a palpable evil and harms only the guilty, means that the partisans themselves are always honoured by future generations. Like John Brown, who tried with a handful of 'terrorists' to start a slave insurrection, their "souls" are said to go "marching on" but after "smouldering in the grave". Long before that, they are an inspiration to the many who never have the opportunity or inclination to the grand deed, but who face up to day to day exploitation.

Imitation guerrillas

MARXIST-LENINISM, dead in practical application but alive in doctrinaire university teaching, spawns many parties and policies.

Continued on next page

**TERRORISM
CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 13**

A minor aspect of this is its relation to terrorism. Once the Marxist-Leninists see a cause they can penetrate, be it nationalist, anti-racist or working class struggle, they tag on, trying to give a lead by standing on one side theorising or running ahead at a safe distance from the conflict. As they see it, this is giving a lead to the ignorant masses, and appeals to those given an elitist training through university Marxist-Leninism. The media love to pass this off as Anarchism so long as possible, then (without admission of a mistake) switch over when it comes out of the closet and reveals itself in its undeniably real colours.

Nobody could from an Anarchist point of view even slightly criticise hunt sabbing, which fights the gruesome pursuits of the class conscious wealthy by direct action rather than parliamentary manoeuvres. But other elements of the militant animal rights campaign are another matter. To target the Hunt is one matter (even if it were not as bloodthirsty as it is). To target workers in their capacity as butchers, furriers, sales assistants, research chemists, beauticians, circus hands, farm breeders, even customers is quite another. Workers do all the shit jobs. They are also plane mechanics, arms makers, nuclear engineers, they print the propaganda, build and staff the prison and military installations, and some or many for a period of their lives in the armed forces. You are either for the workers struggle or against it, either with them or an elite from outside. No amount of concern for animals or the environment will succeed while profits determine all and the profit system cannot be altered by animals or Nature, but by the productive class.

Concern for animals is commendable and even if exaggerated is worth saying. But those who put the same energy into violence against the workers in any industry that in many cases they would condemn if used against a politician guilty of thousands of deaths, even though it be in imitation of real live guerrillas, are no revolutionaries, however illegal they are. AM

**A REVIEW OF AN EXHIBITION
OF PHOTOGRAPHS
BY SEBASTIAO SALGADO**



I WAS expecting something which reflected more on the people, and less on the processes of that onerous necessity, work. But despite this, Salgado's photographs do make you pause for a moment and reflect on the inequities of world capitalism.

The photos themselves ranged over many different activities in many different countries. What is clear is the global nature of industrial production, and the increasing power of the few who control it. This is manifested in many ways, such as automation, falling wages for the workers, the dying out of traditional crafts and skills, lower numbers employed and the suppression of any opposition which challenges this.

Chief of Salgado's themes are those of the dignity of the workers, no matter what tasks they have to perform, and the world trade system which exacerbates the poverty of those in the South. A Brazilian himself, he documents the extent of labour in the South, whether it be harvesting agricultural commodities, extracting minerals, or making basic consumer goods. He highlights the use of child labour, and the pitiful sums paid to workers who toil for many hours.

Work occupies a lot of our time, too much. The reasons why are highlighted in the portrayal of cocoa farmers from Brazil. The international price of cocoa on the

commodity markets had fallen to such a low level it wasn't worth harvesting. Yet the industrial goods produced by the West and exported to Brazil continued to rise in price, as did the price of chocolate in the West. Someone, somewhere is making a lot of money out of this, and it isn't the workers, either in Brazil or the West.

As anarchists we are interested in the abolition of "work". That doesn't mean that essential jobs won't have to be done, such as the preparation of food, shelter, fuel, entertainment, etc, but that these should be done as "play" rather than work. There is no reason why this isn't possible, plenty of people do them as hobbies now. But we have strong disagreements with those who deny the existence of the working class just because white American workers think they're middle class, or because industrial production is shifting to the South.

European and American heavy industry might be in terminal decline, but the same isn't true of East Asia. Increasingly, the world is dominated by the financial markets which determine how we live our lives, whether we are to be at war, etc. Salgado's photos show a bit of the dignity of workers the world over. But dignity isn't enough - organised resistance is what we really need.

MH



ABORTION - THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

PREGNANCY is, medically, the most dangerous period of a woman's life. The problems associated with it do not end with the birth but can last many years.

If pregnancy is medically dangerous, the anti-abortionists want to ensure that it is also politically dangerous. In an ideal world, all women would be free to control their own fertility - deciding for themselves when, and indeed if, they have children. In this country there are laws ensuring that, in theory, women have access to family planning information, contraception, abortion and benefits. All of these things should mean that no child is born to an unwilling mother and that no baby should suffer as a result of poverty. The reality is very different. Without the political will to support these 'rights', they are useless. Women's rights to control their own fertilities are being attacked by the Tories. The government is closing Family Planning and Health Clinics and restricting sex education in schools. As a direct result of this, teenage pregnancies are on the increase. This is a major problem, but not for the 'moral' reasons spouted by the Tory Party with their 'back to basics' campaign. Babies born to young mothers have an increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (cot death). Teenage pregnancies also pose a health risk to the mother. However, perhaps the single most important factor in the lives of young mothers and their children is the appalling poverty in which most of them are forced to live.

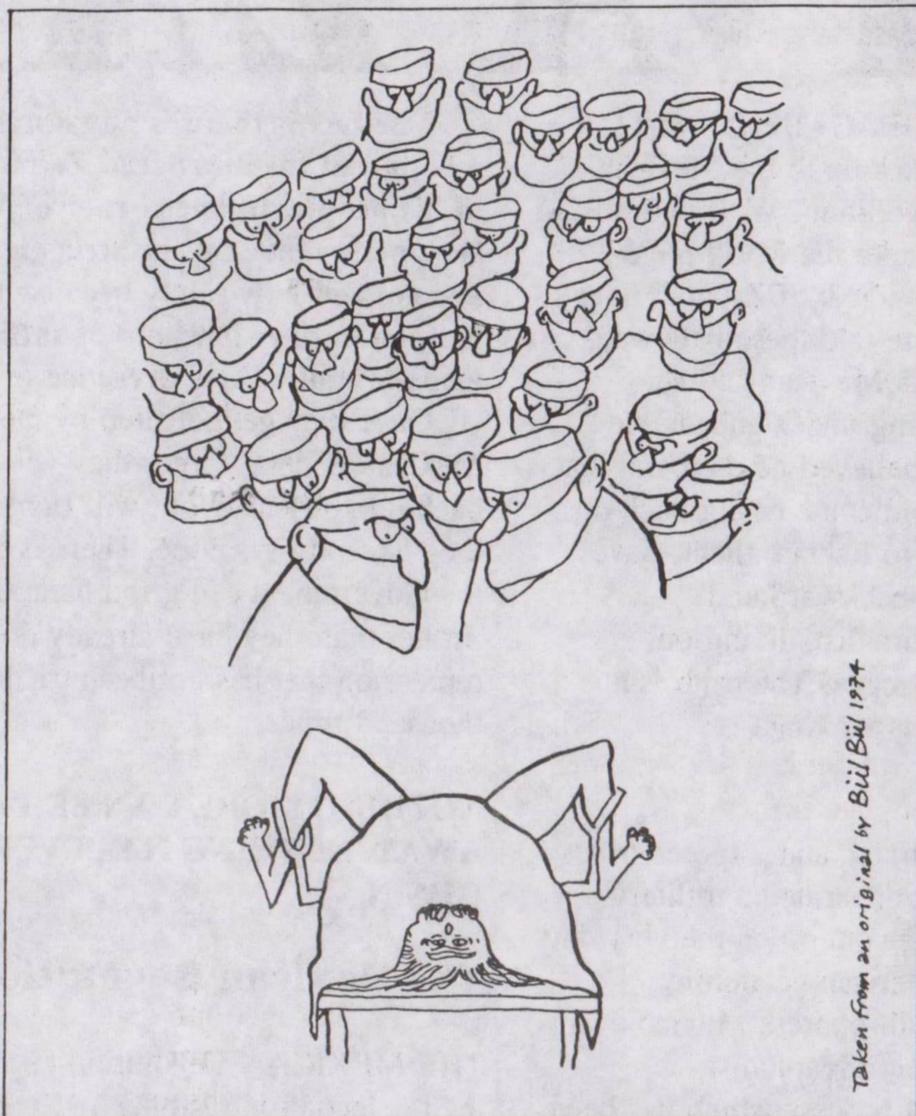
Contraception is at present available free on prescription to all women over the age of 16. The government is planning to change this, making some brands of 'the Pill' available only to those who can afford to pay. Child Benefit, currently about £10 a week, is pitifully inadequate and continually under threat of being cut entirely. Income Support is also being eroded. With all the cards stacked against women, abortion has become increasingly important as an option. It is a chance to retain some control over your life. Obtaining an abortion on the NHS is, at best, difficult and sometimes impossible. Time is a crucial factor. Whilst abortion is legal up to 28 weeks, in practice few

are carried out over 20 weeks and are best carried out under 12. A pregnancy cannot be confirmed by a doctor under 6 weeks, two doctors' signatures are needed and then there are the waiting lists. The waiting time depends on the area of the country. Many women are forced to go private for £180-£250. Part of the reasons for these cuts is due to the lobbying pressure put on the government by anti-abortion groups. Many of these groups are funded by right-wing organisations and would ban all abortions - even as a result of rape, incest, or where the mother's health is at risk. In America, the same groups campaigning against abortion also campaign against Welfare. In some States women are being forced to take any job offered, even if this means working for less than Welfare and causing an effective return to slavery for black women in some southern States.

Why do anti-abortion groups fight so

abortionists know full well that banning abortion will not prevent it. Naturally the rich will always have access to contraception, abortion and good health care. In societies where women are subject to frequent pregnancies, they often have no hope of supporting themselves. They then become dependant - either on a partner or the State and so are then more vulnerable and easier to control.

The **NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN (NAC)** is the only organisation in this country dedicated to defending our abortion rights as well as working to extend and improve them. Since it was formed in 1975 the NAC has helped defeat numerous attacks on the 1967 Abortion Act. The NAC is not tied to any organisation, religious or political. It relies for its funding on membership, affiliation and donations. At the end of 1993 it nearly folded due to a lack of funding. Whilst it managed to survive by



hard for 'unborn' children yet care nothing for their subsequent lives? The organisations behind them aim to remove any control of fertility from working class mothers and hence, to control both working class men and women. The anti-

the skin of its teeth, it desperately needs more money if it is to survive. Without it our lives will be a lot worse. For more information contact: **NAC, The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL.**



ZAPATISTAS IN THE JUNGLE

VIVA ZAPATA!

ONCE AGAIN the world wakes up to the Mexican Revolution. With patronising wonder the world press reports that “the ghost of Zapata” rides again, and we are told these backward and superstitious Mexican-Indian tribespeople living under unbearable peonage never believed he died and that one day he would come riding back on his white horse to liberate them. Save that version for backward and superstitious journalists living on unbearable patronage! The truth is a damn sight more exciting.

The rebel Mixtec and Zapotec tribes of the south seized strategic military points, the rising coming on the very day of the latest American economic decisions that will oppress Mexico even more in the name of capitalist reconstruction, a process which has been going on since Mexico overthrew the Spanish yoke 200 years ago. Armed bands, calling themselves Zapatistas, raided haciendas and towns. Even international tourist spots found themselves in the middle of a revolution. What caused the uprising?

The fact is there is no “uprising” whether of the murdered Zapata nor of his people. In one corner of Mexico they never gave up the struggle. They are noticed now solely because they happen to have got hold of sufficient arms to make their presence felt.

Once they get defeated by the Mexican Federal forces they will retreat back into obscurity but will fight on as they have always done. There is no way the Government can grind them down further than they have already done, no repression that has not been tried a thousand times.

NOTHING MORE CAN BE TAKEN AWAY. NOTHING HAS EVER BEEN GIVEN.

The Mexican Revolution

THE MEXICAN Revolution began after the re-election in October 1910 of the dictator Porfirio Diaz, who originally rose to power as an anti-imperialist fighter under the ‘liberator’ Benito Juarez. The spread of simple but undeniable demands for land and liberty led to an anarchist (Magonista) uprising in Baja California, and culminated in the

old dictator, absolute ruler for thirty years, leaving for Europe. Luis Madero, a bourgeois professor and wealthy landowner himself, took on the impossible task of dismantling the corrupt regime without throwing out of office anyone who had profited from it.

Madero, at one time trusted by the revolutionaries despite his liberalism, tried to appease all classes. To appease the reactionaries, he turned on his most faithful ally, former ‘bandit’ Pancho Villa, getting him to lay down arms, and then, when living in legality, illegalising him. Madero preferred to rely on the Regular Army, led by General Victoriano Huerta. As soon as Villa was out of the way, Huerta had the President murdered and took over in a re-hash of the Diaz regime.

Then everything exploded. Villa returned from exile in Texas with a handful of followers and raised an army. The organised workers in Mexico City armed themselves to fight the State. Magon planned an invasion. In the south the tribe to which Emiliano Zapata belonged seized arms from the Regular Army.

Zapata was a genius at stirring up the countryside which in Morelos was still in effective slavery. But what counted was the response. Forget the learned explanations about pure Mayan ancestry and all that bull, the province behaved the same as everywhere else until he introduced the explosive revolutionary ideals of anarchism to the people. He got them not from the ancient gods but from the accident of being taught to read and write Spanish, the language of the conqueror but also that of its bitterest opponents. From that they learned of ideas that may lie buried on professors' bookshelves but which they breathed life into and which still breathes life into them.

The ideas Zapata inspired were welcomed by the people who related them to their own experiences rooted in the land and the idea of resistance and freedom, and taken up as enthusiastically as in many countries. He had no concern with any form of nationalism, nor any identification with ruling, and he had the gift of seeing through would-be leaders that nobody else in the Revolution possessed. This inheritance he gave to his people and though the world forgot them, they never forgot. They gave the ideas a tenacity of their own.

When Mexico City fell, a new general, Venustiano Carranza, put himself at the head of the revolution when Villa and Zapata marched on the capital, where neither felt at home. Between them they had Mexico in their hands. Villa did not know how to run a government (though his proposal to wipe out the National Debt by raiding the Bank of Mexico, burning down the Stock Exchange and hanging speculators, has economic merit). Zapata did not want to run a government, though Villa pressed him. He had no interest in the city or for that matter the nation, and only a troop with him. All he wanted was freedom from the State. Carranza saw his chance at filling the gap and, due to conniving between Carranza and the US, Villa's army was defeated.

The 'institutional revolution' of Carranza won, which proved to be a 'socialist' version of Porfirio Diaz all over again, minus the old landlords, plus American exploitation, and the party has now been in power longer than Diaz. The land reforms, if ever they were intended

seriously, were crushed. Zapata retreated to his stronghold undefeated, but was killed in an ambush.

The Mexican Revolution began in glory and optimism and ended, like all other revolutions this century, in disaster and gloom, but never forget that in one corner of the world they did not give in nor accept genocide as inevitable. They kept on fighting when they could. Nobody is organising them now, nobody is telling them what to do, nobody dare claim leadership because they do not know what the Zapatistas will do next.

"Viva Zapata" never meant the man, great fighter though he was. It paraphrases the ideal of "Land and

Liberty" that has been upheld for a century by the people of Southern Mexico.

ACCORDING to the press, a tour guide on a coach, complaining that the road to the Maya ruins was closed, was told by the Zapatistas: "Sorry for the inconvenience but this is a revolution". This is an echo of the dry humour of Zapata who, in response to President Woodrow Wilson's advice that "violence only beget violence", asked if in that case, had he sent US General Pershing to work in the fields?



HEAVILY ARMED MEXICAN TROOPS IN SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS

PABLO SERRANO

A NEW campaign was started in December fighting for the freedom of **Pablo Serrano**, a Spanish Anarchist prisoner. He was sentenced in 1984 to 33 years for the murder of a local Employers' Organisation consultant and for placing a bomb in the Graphic Arts Employers' Organisation central office. He has now served nine years and as a Category 'B' prisoner is eligible for parole, but this has been refused him ten times. In Spain, it is almost obligatory for the authorities to grant parole in respect of political prisoners after 4 or 5 years.

Pablo has been involved in prison struggles since 1986 and he has played a full part in defending the rights of political prisoners to organise their own education, recreation and food. In 1989 he was offered "conditional release" provided he swore obedience to the State and renounced armed struggle. Because of his principles, he refused.

SOL, a Spanish prisoners' support group and **Ateneo Libertario** have initiated the latest campaign and are asking people to send letters and faxes to the Ministry of Justice denouncing the treatment of Pablo.

Please send letters/faxes to:

Juan Alberto Belloch
Ministerio de Justicia
C/ San Bernardo
28071 Madrid, SPAIN
FAX: 5210501

YOU CAN TAKE THE FOLLOWING TEXT AS A MODEL:

"Manifestamos nuestra protesta hacia el Ministerio de Justicia por la actuación que mantiene con el preso Pablo Serrano.

Pablo Serrano va a cumplir 10 años encarcelado de una condena de 30. Pese a tener un historial limpio, no ha disfrutado de ninguno de los beneficios penitenciarios establecidos en la legislación vigente (permisos de salida o tercer grado).

Nos sorprende su actuación con Pablo Serrano y el agravio comparativo que supone con otros presos: militares golpistas, GAL, ultraderechistas y miembros de fuerzas de seguridad, que pese a ser condenados a penas muy superiores se encuentran muchos de ellos en libertad, con tercer grado o con continuos permisos.

Le solicitamos se digne a recibir a la organización CNT con el fin de negociar la situación de Pablo Serrano. Atentamente."

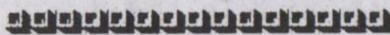
Letters of support:

PABLO SERRANO, Prison de Torrero, Av.America 80, 50007 Zarragosa, Spain.

ABC news

THE *Anarchist Black Cross Bulletin* produced by London Anarchist Black Cross, and *Taking Liberties*, formerly produced by Northern Anarchist Black Cross, have merged and will now be known as simply *Taking Liberties*. It will be produced in London and prisoners and supporters who previously wrote to either of the two are welcome to carry on doing so. We especially want news, articles, and comments on what we have to say. Donations and offers to help with distribution are also very welcome. Help is also needed to help produce the *Bulletin* - any offers?

containing useful tips dealing with arrest, rights, courts etc. Available for a donation.



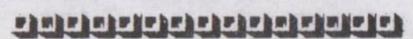
AUGUST 10th every year is commemorated as Prisoners Justice Day in memory of prisoners who have died inside prison. It was originally started in Canada in 1976 after Canadian prisoner Eddie Nalon died in isolation after slashing his wrists in 1975. Prisoners Justice Day is now commemorated in many countries and there is now a *Prisoners Justice Day Bulletin* available from Toronto. It contains reports of events from August 1993, poems, writings and drawings from prisoners and ex-prisoners. It also contains news of other demos such as a protest in October 1993 by the *Prisoners Rights Group* over the killing of prisoner Robert Gentles. There is strong solidarity shown in the actions around Prisoners Justice Day and the *PJD Bulletin* helps reinforce this.

Available from: **Box 238, Stn.B, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2W1, Canada** or from *London ABC*. Please send a donation in either case.

A CAMPAIGN called *INNOCENT* has been set up to support prisoners framed by the Greater Manchester Police. The first public meeting was held in Manchester on 3rd November last year and over 200 people attended. The meeting was addressed by relatives of some of the imprisoned men, some ex-prisoners, Michael Mansfield QC and Paddy Hill of the Birmingham Six. Relatives told of the widespread police practice of fitting people up as well as malpractice in the courts and indifferent or corrupt solicitors allowing this to go unchallenged.

The campaign urgently needs support from people in the Manchester area, in the form of volunteers to help with campaigning work, writing to prisoners, attending demos and so on.

Contact: **INNOCENT, Dept 54, 1 Newton Street, Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 1HW.**



A TTEMPTS are being made to reform the Irish ABC. Anyone interested, regardless of what part of Ireland they're in, the address is **IABC, PO Box 5, Derry, Northern Ireland BT48 6PD.**

THE latest issue of *Taking Liberties* (no 11) is now available at the ridiculously cheap price of 25p (free to prisoners) from: **London ABC, c/o 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Road, London SE24.** Please send an SAE/money to cover postage.

ALSO available from *London ABC* is a handy little booklet entitled *No Comment - The Defendant's Guide To Arrest*

JOHN PEROTTI

Back To The Streets

DOWN TO THE WIRE: JOHN PEROTTI. HISTORY AND WRITINGS OF A PRISON ACTIVIST AND JAILHOUSE LAWYER

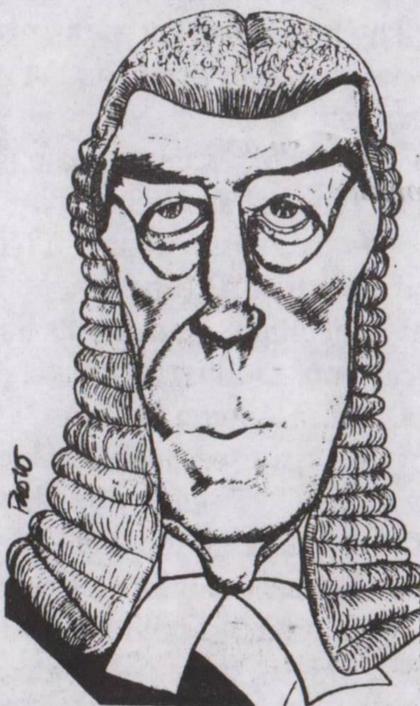
Published by the John Perotti Defence Fund: (Scotland) 45A Bedford Avenue, Powis, Aberdeen.

(USA) 1142 Hall Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio 44107

Booklet sent free to prisoners, or for £3 anyone else from either address. (Add postage). It is a fundraiser for the Defence Fund.

THE latest news on John Perotti is that he is in isolation and his security rating the highest possible. He lost his appeal against the additional 12-15 years but is re-appealing against the decision. The same judge who presided over the original trial was taken out of retirement for the appeal, so John has good grounds for fighting his judicial decision. John is busy now doing legal work for those facing charges over the riot at Lucasville and has issued a writ over overcrowding and degrading treatment in the jail he is in (Mansfield). He gets about six one-hour visits a month through plexiglass and by phone. He is also working to create some opposition to Ohio's plan to build a multi-million dollar 'control unit prison' (concentration camp).

His address: JOHN PEROTTI #167712, POB 1368, Mansfield, Ohio, USA



TWENTY FOUR hostels for the homeless in London, housing nearly 1000 folk, were funded by the Government two years ago under a scheme called the Rough Sleepers Initiative. This was a rather cynical scheme to clean up the streets in central London. The motive may have been suspect but the hostels have helped a lot of people get off the streets. The stay in hostels has given some the stability needed to start sorting out their lives. These direct access hostels were provided for two years under phase one of the scheme. Now those two years are up and the money available under phase two is being spent on providing permanent accommodation. Don't get me wrong, I think it's about time money was spent on creating permanent places, it's simply that the sums don't add up, and the shortfall means that between 450 and 540 people may be literally out in the cold.

Of course, this is only one example of how our crazy world makes a necessity like housing almost impossible for some of us to attain. The government are planning to amend homeless legislation so that local councils can say they've done their duty for the homeless by persuading a private landlord to give them a six-month tenancy.

As well as that, squatting will be criminalised. This affects tenants as well, because if a person "suspects" or "has reason to believe" that their property is squatted they can ask for an eviction order to be made without the person concerned ever being told, let alone reply in their defence. Dodgy landlords all over the country will be rubbing their hands when this law is passed.

If housing continues to be treated as a "saleable commodity", and people are left to "shop" in the "housing market", then it will be more profitable to make it scarce. And of course, working class people will have to go without to keep the market buoyant. (At present, 60% of the population own their homes; the government is aiming to increase this to 80% - eds.)

Residents of the threatened hostels have set up an action group with CHAR (the campaign for single homeless) to stop the closures. It's run by the residents themselves and can be contacted at: THE RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP, C/O 10-12 BELGRAVE RD, LONDON SW1V 1QE.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q Is anarcho-syndicalism mostly, or only, concerned with industrial workers?

A Obviously not, if you look at the social composition of any anarcho-syndicalist movement that got off the ground. The Industrial Workers of the World, despite its name, was successful in its heyday with seafarers, itinerant farmworkers and the needle trades. Miners were the breakthrough it made in heavy industry. Marxists have usually accused anarcho-syndicalist movements in "Latin" countries of being only or mostly of peasant origin and influence, though this is as much nonsense as the opposite accusation of being entirely industrial orientated. (Why do academics' analyses always clash?) In cases where the ruling economy is based on heavy industry, unless that is taken over there will be

no change in the economy. That can only be done by the workers directly concerned, but it is their choice what to do with it.

A movement of the workers, concerned with their own liberation, is bound to reflect its origins, differing by country. Different classes of workers may seem to exist socially, but not economically. Some non-manual workers, for instance, may consider themselves socially superior to manual workers, but their economic problems are broadly identical. An anarchist movement in reality rather than name cannot transcend broad class identity. The exploiting class requires government and oppression by one means or another. Liberalism, i.e. freedom within proscribed limits governed by upper class interests, is the highest degree of freedom a non-working class can achieve, and even that is always precarious.

THE ASTURIAN COMMUNE OF 1934

The 1934 Asturian Commune in Spain is one of the greatest milestones in the workers' movement. It has been disgracefully lied about by the old Communist Party and its trotskyst followers-on. The Leninist myth peddled is that the Government got "the anarchists to carry arms to suppress the revolution". The evident absurdity of the lie escapes the profs, divorced from real life, who peddle these yarns. When, in Spain up to 1939, the organised majority did something of which the Stalinists/Trotskyists approved, these were then "Spanish workers"; when it was something of which they disapproved, they were then "anarchists". What is meant is that the railway workers were not on strike. Why? And what really happened? The story of Asturias 1934 is told by Jose Luis Mulas Hernandez.

THE WORKERS' ALLIANCE sealed on 28th March 1934 was an agreement between the (anarcho-syndicalist) CNT and (trade unionist) UGT, later joined by the PSOE (Socialist Party), the BOC (Worker-Peasant Bloc) and their youth organisations, the Communist Left and later the Communist Party. The Alliance intended to set up local revolutionary workers' committees, each organisation retaining its independence, in a regional and eventual national alliance. This was to stand firm until a socialist federated society was achieved.

Such an alliance was only possible because of the supposed radicalisation of the socialists. Three years after the victory of the Left and the establishment of the Republic (1931) the Right had won the elections, and the PSOE and UGT began to talk about insurrection. They later admitted their rhetoric was the result of grassroots pressure. In Asturias the socialists were more revolutionary

than elsewhere and the leadership closer to the people. This alliance would have been the key to success but in the rest of Spain there was no insurrection but a general strike.

The CNT in the whole of Spain was broadly in favour of an alliance but differed as to the timing. Many in the CNT, and also the FAI (Spanish Anarchist Federation), had doubts about its political implications, mistrusting the Socialists. But in Asturias, where 25-30,000 of the organised 80,000 workers belonged to the CNT (and sympathisers were put at a further 20 thousand) the other organisations combined were larger and (more importantly) not reformist as elsewhere. Even so, there were stormy arguments, not about the UGT but about the dubious role of the PSOE. The FAI would not join the Alliance, nor the La Felguera local Federation of the CNT. However, the FAI and the La Felguera CNT threw themselves wholeheartedly into the insurrection.

The local Communist Party had a hundred out of only 800 members in the whole of Spain. It discredited the alliance, as it offered no scope for it to assume leadership. At the last moment it applied for membership, doubtless on instructions from the USSR. (Later it was to discredit everything, and its fabrications are now taken up by the Trotskyists, who were not present in those days. - *Flag*).

PREPARATIONS FOR RED OCTOBER

The anarchists of La Felguera had a resounding victory during the Duro-Felguera strike of 1933, and there were strikes and actions across Asturias. A general strike (8th Dec 1933) was called by the CNT across Spain, with sabotage, bombs and attacks on the security forces. Accion Popular (the right wing party of

Gil Robles) tried to mount a rally from Covadonga (extolled by patriots as the town where the expulsion of the Moors began). The workers' alliance (under the watchword UHP, Proletarian Brothers United) had called a strike throughout the mining region, leaving the streets, strewn with nails, with no taxis, rail connections cut, sporadic sniping and so on. Such actions led to the October 1934 rising.

On 4th October it was announced that three CEDA (clerical-fascist) members were joining the government and the Socialist Party in Madrid called at last for a general strike.

THE EVENTS OF THE REVOLUTION

Early on 5th October the Guardia Civil barracks throughout the villages of Asturias were called upon to surrender, and then attacked. When they had been overcome, revolutionary groups were set up in Sama, La Felguera and Mieres to attack Oviedo, the provincial capital, where there had only been risings in one or two barrios, and where the government forces had seized strategic positions. On the 8th/9th October the Model Prison in Oviedo was stormed and found to contain a huge quantity of rifles and machine guns but no ammunition. However, the government troops were forced to retreat.

On 9th October Gijon was bombarded by the Regular Army and Navy as were other towns. Gijon fell on 11th October. On 12th October the enemy seized back most of Oviedo and a new front was established. Without ammunition, the Provincial Committee was forced to surrender. General Lopez Ochoa, commanding, demanded surrender of the weapons of the captive Guardia Civil and Guardia de Asalto, restoration of all arms, the lives of prisoners taken to be



The end of the rising in Asturias

spared, and the committees to give themselves up. No shots were to be fired on the advancing troops. The committees' conditions for workers to lay down their arms were for the Tercio and Regulares to be kept out of the mining towns and withdrawn from the front on account of their bloody reputation.

Ochoa agreed to these terms, and the Committee surrendered on condition that none of the committee were handed over. The agreement was read out to the population in Sama, who greeted it with cries of "treachery". They refused to surrender, knowing how vicious the repression would be. They said they would sooner take to the hills. In the end it was accepted as inevitable and when the troops entered the town there came the harshest repression yet known in Asturias.

Ever since March 1934 the people of Gijon had been demanding part of the weaponry seized from the towns but they were denied by the Socialists who had possession. Nor were they given any reinforcements once the revolt got underway. This delayed the insurrection there. In the end the industrial workers and fishermen in the town took to the streets, but the Yague Column (foreign legionnaires and Moorish troops brought in via Ceuta by sea) put men, women and children alike to the sword.

ARMY ATROCITIES

Gen. Lopez Ochoa led 25,000 troops against Asturias, but the orders came from generals Franco and Goded in Madrid. Ironically (in view of what Covadonga was supposed to mean) they had brought Moorish soldiers back to Spain to wipe out the people. As the

troops advanced they encountered blown-up bridges and roads blocked by trees, even where the revolution had not broken out, showing the depth of support it had. In Grado the armed forces faced resistance from a small group of 400 that forced them back to Aviles.

However when the troops reached Oviedo, the generals had all the wounded in hospital rounded up and shot. They did not even enquire which side they were on. The prisoners were questioned and shot. A hundred held out on Monte Naranco. In flushing them out, a young girl, 16 year old Aida de la Fuente was killed. Her friend was wounded and raped before being murdered.

REVOLUTIONARY CONDUCT

All the Spanish historians and even those who belittle the events agree that in the anarcho-sindicalist areas like La Felguera, Ciano, Valdesoto and Gijon, there was greater respect and consideration shown to prisoners and clergy. During the struggle food was obtained by means of ration cards issued by the Supply Committee, determining allocation by family size. Foodstuffs were taken from warehouses and goods vans. All had access to them.

It is traditional for miners in Asturias to combine their toil with some gardening, so there was no shortage of milk and eggs in the hospitals. There are no large holdings there, only tiny holdings, so some way had to be found of obtaining meat without alienating the farmers. The committees bought in sheep from Extremadura shepherds, while in Pola de Laviana traders were paid for their foodstuffs. In these transactions, money (which had been abolished) was temporarily brought back. The Oviedo branch of the Bank of Spain was cleaned out.

Many fires were blamed on to the "savagery of the miners" when in fact they were started by the military. In the case of the torching of the Campoamor Theatre in Oviedo, this was done by the revolutionaries, and had to be done to deprive the enemy of a vantage point. In this way, a nunnery had to be set on fire, though its residents were led to safety.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASTURIAS CONTINUED

THE COMMITTEES

The War Committee attended to the distribution of materials and tactics. The Supply Committees allocated food and clothing to the villagers and fighters. There was also a Sanitary Committee, which managed the hospitals. In some cases medical supplies had to be manufactured: "staimant" flints for fractures were manufactured in Duro-Felguera. The Transport Committees in nearly every town had access to fifteen or twenty vehicles, while the Work Committees ensured the mines were kept in good order. Furnaces, which would be needed in a new society, were also kept in order. Telephone communications were restored or, where none had existed, introduced.

REPRESSION

Once the rebels had surrendered, the police crackdown began. The signal was the ransacking of the Workers Athenaeum in Sama, with 500 books tossed on the flames. (In Germany, almost at the same time, the burning of the libraries of the intellectual bourgeoisie was greeted by the world with horror; but this event was ignored by the press. - *Flag*).

The rubbish incinerator in Oviedo was burning for eight solid days burning bodies, including Aida and her female friend. By the end of October 10 thousand people had been arrested, a third of them ending in prisons which had capacity for a couple of hundred.

REASONS FOR FAILURE

One might cite strategic oversights, the sectarianism of the Socialist leaders, lack of munitions, the deadly air raids, the failure of the Leon air base to rise in revolt, and of course the fact that in the rest of Spain, the rising held out for one or two days, at best amounting to a general strike and some sporadic shooting. But the fact is it could not have been otherwise.

The CNT and FAI, who enjoyed the sympathy of the Spanish workers, failed to throw themselves into the revolt in the rest of Spain because of the attitude of the PSOE, whose sole objective was to seize power and win back the support it

lost among the workers due to its collaboration with the Primo de Rivera dictatorship (in which Socialist leaders like Largo Caballero had served) and its time-serving attitude under the Republic. The same might be said of the UGT.

In Catalonia the Generalitat declared an independent Catalan State. The Anarchists were alert and ready for a rising. But even as the new regional government was defying the national governments, anarchists were rounded up and jailed. The Generalitat's council of defence declared "Watch out for the FAI".

Anarcho-syndicalists could see the revolt there was nationalist and not revolutionary. Outside Catalonia the PSOE aimed only at a general strike, not a rising, a rebuke that was later put to it in Asturias. Anti-Statist anarcho-syndicalism was not disposed to mount a rising that would simply be in the interests of a party and its trade union

appendage. Only In Asturias did the proper conditions exist for the setting aside of past resentments and an insurrection in which all were united.

"CNT" (Oct 93) Granada.
Trans. Paul S.



ASTURIAS 1934 is commemorated in the SIA (International Anti-Fascist Solidarity) calendar of 1994. The calendar is produced in French and Spanish versions and can be ordered from SIA, 4 rue Belfort, 31000 Toulouse, France.

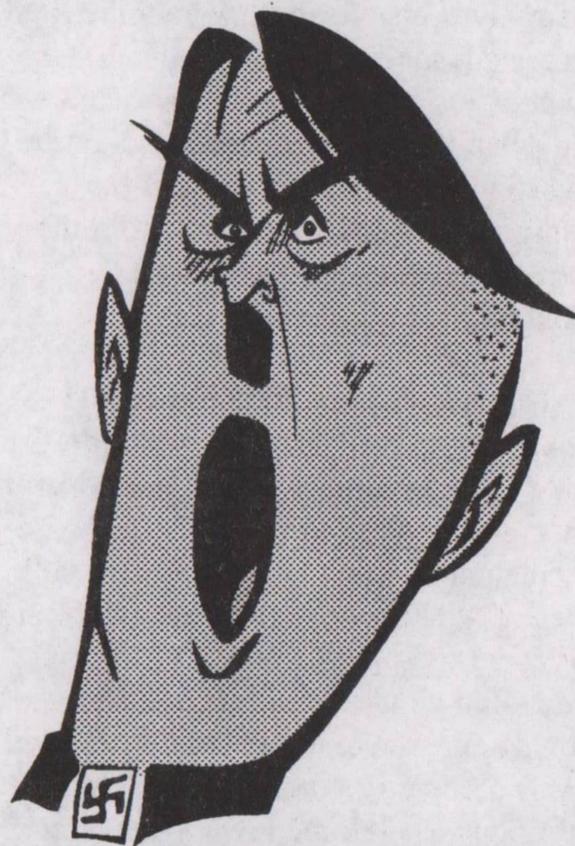
HEROES & VILLAINS

IN January 1994, in a bid for popular support, Boris Yeltsin declared that the Russian Government would erect a monument to the sailors, soldiers and workers of Kronstadt who laid down their lives for liberty against Bolshevik tyranny. After seventy years it is safe to invoke their memory.

THE Generalitat in Catalonia has now a statue to Francisco Ferrer, erected prominently outside the Olympic Stadium on Montjuich, apologising for 'the years of oblivion when his words and teaching were unknown'. Not by us.

THE graves of Ferrer, Durruti and Ascaso are prominently commemorated. Even more prominent in Mexico are the tributes to the Anarchists in the Mexican Revolution. Joe Hill has a statue in the main square in his Swedish birthplace (Gavle).

THE fascist National Front is trying to surface again after the split that left the British National Party main contender for the Hitler Prize. Its phone number is 081-471-6872. (Live sometimes, other times answerphone).



LETTERS

Sexuality Debate

Dear *Black Flag*,

MUCH OF the article "Sex and Sexuality" (*BF* 203) I would not disagree with, especially the first paragraph which attacks labelling with respect to definitions of sexuality and sexual stereotypes. However, the overall article is flawed, particularly with reference to sexuality being innate. While I contend the desire for sex is innate I cannot agree that our sexuality is innate and/or genetic.

Our sexuality can be and often is constructed by the establishment within the context of the inequalities governing our individual power relationships. An analogy can be made to food and eating. No one would disagree that our desire to eat is innate, but what and how we eat is determined by socio-economics and individual taste, as well as fashions and trends.

When the above is applied to our sexuality the determinants of "liberation" carry out the same process resulting in crude definitions, eg gay, straight, bisexual, fat and ugly, thin and sexy, ad nauseam. Therefore the individual's repressive and deluded search for sexual liberation (from the state) is at the expense of individual and social sexual freedom. Thus the terms "liberation" and "repression" in this way amount to being one and the same, and the identification of the sexuality of minority groups in society by state agencies is tantamount to the confessional. This is because the very acknowledgement of difference demands a response from the state which is oppressive whether it claims to enhance equality or not, eg equal opportunities policy is as divisive as Clause 28.

Fortunately however, expressing our sexuality allows us to exercise power relations on an intimate level which may lead to the realisation of our shared and autonomous sexuality as well as addressing the inequities within the economics of power sharing. This leads us to the abuse of power and, especially in relation to children, can only be exercised if and when particular sexual activity has been identified and sanctioned by the state. Consequently, corporal punishment is accepted, especially

by the British state, and the history of corporal punishment is also intrinsic within sado-masochism derived in turn from the confessional methods of the Spanish Inquisition.

Thus the "protection" of children has been placed with statutory agencies. Those agencies' current obsession with paedophilia and paedophile rings paradoxically enhances paedophile behaviour because it is the very foundation of bourgeois Victorian values.

We only need look at the 1950's Baden Powell model of "character building" for Scouts, etc, which were the real paedophile rings just like church and state involvement with poor and vulnerable children in orphanages, summer camps, approved schools and children's homes. Power is the common denominator, and not the individual choice possible through power sharing.

There was also an overemphasis on Tory policies on the "traditional nuclear family" structure which is also restrictive and simplistic. I say this because it may undermine the position of those who live within such a structure to the same extent as other groups, eg single parents, who are condemned by the State but revered by lefty statist.

With the above in mind, the state and capitalism, including Tories, could promote homosexuality and/or one parent families in the same way it now promotes heterosexual two parent families. Would it really matter to them so long as it didn't impede the production and subsequent exploitation of children for power and profit? Thus militant homosexuals involved in outing could be the first stage in the above process. Hegemony is always established by getting the children young and subsequently indoctrinating them by alienated adults. Adults should be entitled to worship who they like but they should not feel entitled to impose their deity and alienation onto the children which is bound to result in psychological, physical and sexual terrorism...Let the children play!

Graham Short, Plymouth.

Searchlight on Whom?

THE RELATIONSHIP between *Searchlight* editor and reporter Gerry Gable and the Special Branch/MI5 has been a source of rumour and speculation for years. However, recent evidence by Gable has confirmed that such links do exist and are not the product of overactive or malicious imaginations.

An article in the *Independent* of 9th December 1993 gave details of Gable's evidence to the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee. In this he admits to "...increasing contact with provincial (police) forces". He does admit that his relations with London Special Branch "are not going well". When asked whether MI5 or MI6 should co-ordinate investigations into race attacks, he stated "I think it is going on". He did not state sources for this belief.

It was not a racist organisation which imprisoned and then deported the Christmas holiday-makers from Jamaica, but the British State. It is the State which is the root cause of most racism in this country, not small, though nasty, organisations. How can we trust a man who admits to being hand in glove with the State's political police? How do we know what information he is passing to Special Branch contacts, and on whom?

Kirklees Black Workers Caucus/ W.Yorks YRE, Huddersfield ANL, PO Box 34, 24 Westgate, Huddersfield, W.Yorkshire.

COMMENT: We quite agree. We've always said there are risks in co-operating with the State and it's not worth it. The fascists are a problem, and need to be fought, but the State is responsible for most of the racism people experience everyday. We must never lose sight of our real enemy.

Dear Editor,
MAY I, through your pages, draw the attention of your anti-racist readers to an unpleasant - and almost unbelievable - development affecting workers at the London Borough of Hackney?

Although Hackney is a Labour council, and makes noises about Equal Opportunities policies against racism, sexism and so on, Hackney managers have now taken disciplinary action (two written warnings)

Continued following page

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

against two African workers for speaking to each other in their own language!

We would be interested to know of any other cases like this, and especially of any successful fight against such policies. Meanwhile, we shall treat it as a totally unacceptable act of discrimination, and one which we will we hope will be widely condemned.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Whelan, Branch Publicity
Officer

UNISON Hackney #1 Branch

Room 52

Edith Cavell Building

Enfield Road

London N1 5AZ Tel: 071-214-8644

Fax: 071-214-8531

Dear *Black Flag*,

I LEARNED the glad news that *Black Flag* was back, stropky as ever and fighting for anarchism, thanks to the chorus of 'disgraceful' and 'outrageous' in 'Freedom', and hastened to get my copy again. Mostly they objected to your review comparing Peter Marshall's efforts to distort and dilute an anarchism as fit for the Tories and liberals with David Irving's presenting a cleaned-up nazism. But why did they get steamed up about the remarks that both deserved the same 'appropriate answer'? What do these apostles of non-violence think the appropriate answer to Irving should be? Column 88 actually torched their premises and their response was to invite them to write an article for the paper and initiate a civilised discussion.

Les Grant

Dear *Black Flag*,

I AM SICK of the repression of commonsense industry - the Rotary or Wankel engine. It is lighter, simpler, cheaper to make and run, faster, more efficient and is simply brill for motorbike engines - a culture that WILL continue!

Me and a friend who has worked on these engines want to make a small cc prototype that could power a bicycle. We

want to base a company on anarchist values and want, if we are successful, to pay a fair wage for all and base all workings on co-operation and trust between friends. So I am out to contact engineers, anarcho-syndicalists of any country, bikers and anyone with a genuine interest to start this project.

Anyone interested in this or alternative technology, please write to me at 129A Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 0SE (GB). I look forward to any letters.

Julian Morfey

PS. I am interested in other projects to raise cash for things like sites and woodland.



NORTHERN STAR FADES

THE *Northern Star* magazine - formerly *Leeds Other Paper* - has finally folded after 20 years. The country's longest surviving independent weekly paper finally collapsed under growing financial pressure and the shifting political realities of the '90's.

Formed collectively in 1973, the 1st copy of the then monthly *Leeds Other Paper* rolled off the presses in a Leeds garage under the headline *Don't Let The Bastards Carve Us Up*. Proudly proclaiming itself *Leeds Libertarian Socialist Paper* it was born in the midst of the 1974 miners strike.

The paper quickly moved to fortnightly production, then weekly, and by the early 1980's it was at its best. With half a dozen underpaid and overworked staff, its own press and an army of tireless volunteer contributors and helpers, *Leeds Other Paper* (or LOP as it came to be called) not only reported local strikes, community actions, riots, occupations and so on, it often became an active part of many such struggles.

In 1981 LOP exposed secret military nuclear rail transportations through the city - just one of a series of exposes on the states' nuclear war plans of the time.

1982 saw LOP's detailed coverage of the defence of the Bradford 12 - 12 asian youths charged with conspiracy following

the 1981 riots. The 12 were acquitted when the jury agreed that "self defence is no offence". In 1984 LOP was once again reporting the reality of the miners strike.

But it was LOP's deep involvement in many local campaigns and struggles that saw it at its most effective, giving a voice against the silence of the establishment media. Anti-deportation campaigns, tenants struggles against ruthless private landlords (including the council), sweat shop employers - these were the tales of dreary city life that continually filled the paper's pages each week.

In 1991 LOP tried to move out to a Yorkshire-wide readership and changed its name to *The Northern Star*. But the growing financial pressures have proved too much. The proliferation of free regional *Whats On* guides cut into much of the papers market and powerful establishment figures were quick to learn that the simple threat of an expensive libel action was enough to force a retraction (such as the recent case following the paper's revelations of the corrupt dealings of former regional UCATT official Paul Corby - who subsequently defected to the EEPTU).

Sometimes inspiring, often frustrating, the *Northern Star* will be greatly missed.

TG

NONSENSE ABOUT NATIONALISM

THE PEAK of nonsensical nationalism has been reached in ex-Yugoslavia with each religion deciding overnight it that has a separate nationality.

Imagine if in a forcibly dis-United Kingdom, Scots were burned out of their homes in England and Welsh ethnically cleansed from Scotland, or if Catholics were safe only in the Yorkshire Moors and Nonconformists sought to create a homeland in Devonshire with their own language. But do not imagine too long. Stranger things have happened before and may happen again.

Under feudalism there were nationalities and races, but no sense of nationalism. Loyalties were expected to be to the ruler. Some nations have the myth that they were always oppressed by another. But in reality all nations were oppressed by their lords, whether of the same nationality or race or more often, foreign.

With the rise of capitalism and specifically the French revolution, there came the idea of nationalism. Originally this was a crusade against the old regime and 'patriot' meant 'rebel'. Napoleon exploited the idea of nationalism throughout Europe for his personal advantage, the French soldiers were inspired by it, but it inspired a backlash from other nationalities. Every single nationalism started off as an idealistic crusade, sometimes a protest against oppression or revival of ancient tradition and every single one of them led to despotism and corruption. Even the Jews,

who, as an entity, at the end of the 19th century had not even the idea of a 'homeland', by now have swallowed the nationalist poison exactly as much as everyone else.

Just as nationalism proved to be the lever by which the old imperial rulers were destroyed, no sooner were the emperors out than nationalism with new rulers meant dictatorial regimes and the lever by which social revolution was to be destroyed. The heady mixture of national and racial prejudices made for the dismal years of fascism triumphant. With fascism defeated but multi-national capitalism firmly in the saddle, nationalism has come in for a revival in new clown-coloured array equally suitable for Right and Left.

The broad Right think there is something mystic about the father- or mother-land but not the people, without whom it is a barren waste. Spanish fascists worried about the Spanishness of the Rock of Gibraltar at the time (1939-49) as they murdered enough Spaniards to fill a major city. British Conservatives are starry-eyed about 'Britons who never, never will be slaves' but hate the working class. A ritual feature of international fascist meetings is the punch-up, guaranteed to bring racial harmony to a close, between foreign fascists who see the IRA as Nationalists and good Catholics fighting the heretical British Empire, and British fascists who see them as villainous Reds.

On the other hand the Left has gone equally gaga in the name of anti-imperialism

about Nationalisms, especially if they can be shown to be subject, and above all if they can be shown to be 'ethnic' (as if any national or racial group were not). The Left is absurd enough on the subject of nationalism as to beggar belief.

There used to be many pacifists opposed to the use of violence in the class struggle, even if used against a dictator, who justified it in a nationalist cause. On the whole leftists pay homage to every 'national struggle', especially if it induces a guilt complex in themselves.

That right and left nationalism can exist side by side in the same party is proved many times. Plaid Cymru combines the nazism of Saunders Lewis and others with the idealism of the anti-Franco ETA. Nationalism is not about having a nationality, any more than racism is acknowledging having a race. It is not about cherishing traditions, or keeping up different customs harmless in themselves, unless used to claim superiority. It is about division and ultimately hatred, usually of the nearest neighbour.

If a multi-national government is oppressive, assertion of nationality can lend itself to revolution, but the speed with which it changes to become reactionary depends on the extent it becomes divisive. Organised religion is the soft drug of authority, nationalism the hard stuff now available from street dealers everywhere. The addictive habits thus formed lead to major crimes, those of the State.

AM

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

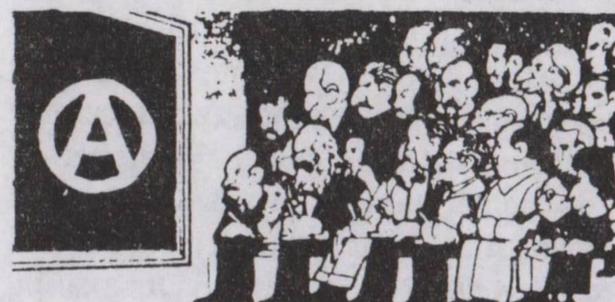
1. The (unarmed) veterans of the first world war marched on Washington in 1932 to demand payment of the bounty promised them, and camped out in the capital. The fearless generals ordered out the regular army and shot down the protesting ex-soldiers, going on to burn the 'tent city' and neighbouring Anacondia, despite Republican President Hoover's qualms that "the Democrats would be laughing their heads off" at the electoral impact.

2. Ronald Reagan, a film actor whose last (miscast) role was President.

3. His Nazi sympathies came from his wife's family associations, and Lady Patricia Ramsay, who had discarded the title of Princess on marriage, was closely related to the Royal Family.

4. Sefton Delmer was a sympathetic reporter to Hitler in his pre-election days. Hitler told his press aide Hanfstaengl that one of Delmer's articles was 'worth a million votes to us'. Churchill was in no way against Hitler until opposition to the re-arming of Germany became a way back to power within the Conservative Party.

5. Film star Bette Davis sought to get released from her contract to Warner Brothers (described as 'gilded slavery') under this judgment.



OBITUARIES

AUDREY BEECHAM

AUDREY BEECHAM was a subscriber to *Black Flag* from 'Bulletin No,1' to the last. The renewed issue came back with a notification that she had died in Oxford, where she had retired. She was in her seventies.

In the 'thirties Audrey went to the Spanish War as a driver in the Friends Ambulance Unit. The Quakers did not approve of her carrying a rifle, and she joined the Anarchist militia. In the 'sixties she was principal of a Nottingham women's college and the *Black Cross* could always rely on her to get residence and work permits for those of the Iberian Resistance

wanted by the fascist police who came, at a minute's notice, to England.

She worked for many defence campaigns including the Angry Brigade and "Persons Unknown". Though an Anarchist she also supported some active Marxist-Leninist feminist separatist groups and was involved with Amnesty and other civil liberties organisations as well, explaining once she 'could not escape from her middle class liberal academic background'.

I was told by her shocked colleagues that when the 'Yorkshire Ripper' was loose,

some male students holding a 'rag' twice invaded the women's dormitories at night pretending to be the rapist-murderer. On the second occasion they were confronted by the formidable principal in her dressing gown, firing a pistol in the air, and shouting "Next time I'm shooting straight", which discouraged a third replay.

She was a good friend to Miguel Garcia and myself. I took back from Barcelona this October many messages of greetings from Spanish friends both of the 'thirties and 'sixties, which will never now be delivered.

AM

FEDERICA MONTSENY MAÑE (1905-1994)

FEDERICA DIED at 88 in France. Daughter of two of the most committed Spanish anarchists and teachers in the Ferrer tradition she was a passionate propagandist of the anarchist ideal. She was not in the CNT when the civil war broke out (there was no teachers' union then) but there was a healthy laidback approach that counted people in the 'anarchist family', whether they held a card or not, and an unhealthy personality cult of the 'well known' which caused her to be looked on as a 'leader'. This still fools journalists and historians, and it had disastrous consequences in the war and resistance.

Luis Companys (former lawyer who acted for the CNT who became President of the Generalitat) felt that the CNT-FAI should be represented in the anti-fascist government by a 'well-known personality' within the CNT. D.A.de Santillan persuaded Federica that she was one of the most loved famous personalities, and she became Minister of Health (though not elected by any constituency nor chosen by her organisation). She battled for the survival of the workers' collectives, and for a caring hospital system, but in preserving 'anti-

fascist unity' enabled the vicious attacks from the Stalinist enemy from within, which led to the downfall of the revolution.

When the Republican Government abandoned Madrid during the civil war, the anarchist patrols stopped the convoy and wanted to shoot them. Asking for advice, they were told by the Madrid CNT that if they did, in honour they would have to shoot them all, including the three Anarchists, but warned "Which of you will have the courage to shoot Federica?"

After the war she apologised for her part in the government, but, like all the well-known personalities who had risen from a movement where there was no bureaucracy to become bureaucrats in the government, she led an increasingly ossified junta within the movement in exile, which dominated the IWA for years. They expelled the resistance fighters, such as Facerias, Sabater, Cerrada and many others, and laid the foundations of both the post-Franco divisions and the loss of the powerful influence of the libertarian movement. Nevertheless, it has to be said that her post-Franco visits to Spain proved there was a



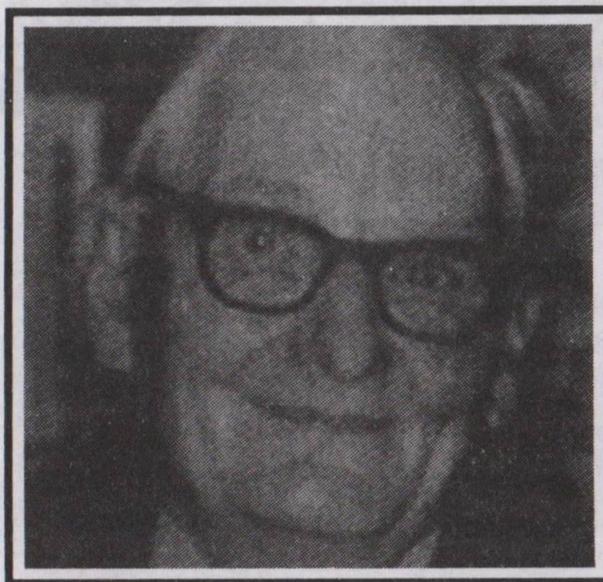
large block of working class fighters who adored her. Old, ill, tottering, after years of tragedy and bereavement, she could still toddle in her carpet slippers to hold an audience spellbound. In the British television series on the Spanish Civil War (1986), her defence of her actions comes over brilliantly.

JAMES ALEXANDER ("ALEX")

IN THE last issue of *Black Flag* we reported the murder of an old friend J. M Alexander ("Alex") in August, the long-term companion of the late Kitty Lamb. Many wrote to say they wanted to attend the funeral of this pioneer atheist and socialist. It may not be known that when you survive your relatives, have made no will, and are murdered, English law allows your possessions and body to be seized by the police.

The Kate Sharpley Library & Libertarian Archive needed to refer to his books and papers for a memorial pamphlet but these have been taken by Camden Council after possession by the police, and will probably end in the municipal trash bin. Yet had he any surviving relatives, they would have been able to sue for damages while the deceased was under Council care,

and certainly there would have been a huge claim upon the Criminal Injuries Board. As he was not a member of any religion, the



authorities feel entitled to treat his corpse with contempt. Seven months after his death it still lies on a mortuary slab and will

continue to lie there indefinitely in case the lawyers want another post mortem. The North London coroner, John Denney, states it is by orders of the Home Office and "this is the law" when perpetrators are not known. "What about the funerals I see on TV of people killed in Northern Ireland, within the week?" - "You can't believe all you see on TV".

The Callaghan Government fell because of the horror stories of the Unburied Dead. There was a strike by Municipal Workers including gravediggers in Liverpool in the mid-'80s, and we are still regaled with horror stories how dozens of dead were unburied for a week or more. None of their effects were seized by gravediggers. Now it would seem the dead can lie unburied for up to a year and their life's work wiped out.

REVIEWS

BRIDGE OF COURAGE - LIFE STORIES OF THE GUATEMALAN COMPANEROS AND COMPANERAS

Jennifer Harbury AK Press £7.95

GUATEMALA AND the human rights abuses by the American puppet regime are often regarded as a bit of a trendy cause. However, this book is unlikely to be the subject of discussions at Islington dinner parties, for the people whose stories are told are not passive victims who need us to save them, but courageous resistance fighters, prepared to live life and fight for it.

The life stories, ghost written as they are by an American who married a Guatemalan companero, are remarkably free from dogma. Marx is only mentioned once, and then at the insistence of the interviewer. What is clear is that their struggle isn't one of those national liberation struggles which just wishes to enthrone a new ruling class, but a living resistance movement against the gross injustices of the American puppet regime.

An introduction by Chomsky goes through the recent history of Guatemala. In

his usual concise manner, he is able to show how crucial events in Guatemala's history, such as the US backed coup in 1954, serve to reinforce American business interests and the local elite which collaborates with them.

The *compas* relate how they came to join the struggle, whether they were Mayan or Ladino, peasant or student. The brutal terror of the state in the city is laid bare, as is the repression in the country. But it is not all grim. The real strength of this book is that it shows how these are just ordinary people, driven to doing extraordinary things. The recent uprising by the Mixtec and Zapotec peoples of the Zapatista Army in southern Mexico, just across the border, shows that the spirit of resistance among the Mayans is still alive. This book will give you a glimpse of the nature of this resistance. Read it and be moved.

Mike Ward.

TELLEZ: CHRONICLER OF THE RESISTANCE

THE WORKS of Antonio Tellez on the Resistance in Spain bring up very recent history, deliberately buried by the world to conceal the post-war genocide and the continued fight by the anarcho-syndicalist movement inside and outside that country against Franco. It has also been conveniently forgotten by those who collaborated with the government in the Civil War, and after the World War disowned the fighters inside Spain, as well as those who harp on about the collaborators and omit to mention the fighters.

Some works of Tellez have appeared in English and more will follow. His book on Sabater was published by Rupert Hart Davis, subsequently by Cienfuegos and then by Elephant Editions.

The Kate Sharpley Library discovered an essay written by Tellez some years ago.

Continued on page 28

TELLEZ CONTINUED

KSL published it in translation before the Spanish edition (*Virus*) came out. This is on the Assassination Attempt on Franco from the air (in the series *The Unsung Struggle*).

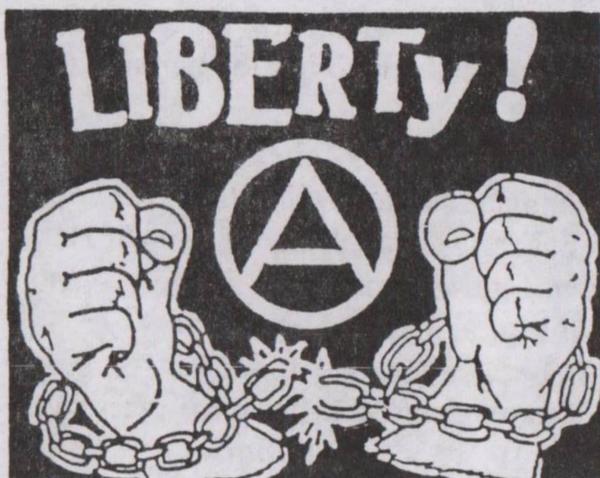
Spain 1962 (also issued by KSL, price of all these pamphlets, £1) deals with the period after the Resistance chronicled by Tellez. It is the next wave of resistance in the dying years of the regime.



ANTONIO TELLEZ IN 1947, TOULOUSE

On Russia: after *My Visit to the Kremlin* (Makhno) and *Memories of a Makhnovist Partisan*, KSL has published the true story of the Tsarists' *Two Lies That Shook the World* (the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the *Nationalisation of Women*), neither of which have completely died, but the fantasy of which gave rise to credence to the Great Lie of Marxist Russia.

AM



YEAR ONE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION BY VICTOR SERGE

PLUTO PRESS £12.95

VICTOR SERGE (1890-1947) was one of many anarchists throughout the world, who sided with the Bolsheviks after the 1917 Russian Revolution. A libertarian voice within Communism, Serge's *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* has become something of a favourite among anti-Stalinist Marxists - and a means with which to counter anarchist attacks on Bolshevism ("Serge was an anarchist and he supported Lenin" etc.).

Serge's *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* is worth reading. The son of Russian revolutionary exiles, Serge's political life spanned anarchist-individualism (in Belgium and France), anarcho-syndicalism (in Spain) and Bolshevism (working for the Communist International in Central Europe and Russia). Against Stalin, Serge took part in the last stand of the 'Left Opposition' headed by Trotsky - leading to his arrest, deportation from the USSR and narrowly missing the mass murder of the Purges. He died in Mexico in 1947, a refugee from Nazi-occupied France and still active.

But the *Memoirs*, like all memoirs, shouldn't be taken as absolute truth. For instance it totally glosses over his enthusiastic support for the Bonnot Gang - the then notorious French anarchist-individualist bank robbers. ("I am with the bandits. I find their role a fine one.")¹⁾ The Bonnot Gang were gunned down or guillotined. Serge's support cost him five years in prison.

Likewise, anyone expecting to find the Victor Serge of his *Memoirs* in his earlier - Bolshevik - writings, is likely to be disappointed.

Year One of the Russian Revolution is a case in point. This, the major historical work by Serge (the draft for *Year Two* was seized by Stalin's police) has recently been re-released by Pluto Press. In it you will find none of the "mature", "balanced", "critical" support for Bolshevism found in the *Memoirs*. This is Serge over 10 years earlier, an

unashamed apologist for the Communist state.

In the *Memoirs* Serge recounts how in 1919, then in Petrograd during the Russian Civil War, he decided he was with the Bolsheviks, "albeit independently, without renouncing thought or critical sense"²⁾. In *Year One* however, we read that "The party is the nervous system of the working class, it's brain"³⁾; without the Communist Party "the mass would have been no more than a heap of human dust, experiencing confused aspirations shot through by flashes of intelligence"⁴⁾; and "better to be wrong with the party of the proletariat than right against it. There is no greater revolutionary wisdom than this"⁵⁾. Some "critical sense"!

As Serge says in the foreword "the impartiality of the historian is no more than a myth"⁶⁾. This is Serge writing history as political propaganda. At the time of writing *Year One*, he was a member of the besieged 'Left Opposition' in Russia. Daily expecting arrest and possible 'disappearance', the manuscript for *Year One* had to be smuggled out of Russia in fragments and published in France in 1930. As such, *Year One* seems written more as a defence of Trotsky's role in the Russian Revolution - against the Stalinist rewriting of history then taking place.⁷⁾ A few instances: As the editor points out in his Introduction and Notes, Serge is "evasive" about the suppression of the anarchists by the Bolsheviks. His claim that "no anarchist known as such" died during the crushing of the anarchist movement in Moscow in April 1918⁸⁾ is an obvious lie. Likewise Serge claims that "*Golos Truda*, the anarcho-syndicalist journal in Petrograd, which at various moments had rivalled Lenin's *Pravda* in influence, folded up only through the fault of its editors."⁹⁾ In fact, as Serge must have known, the paper was suppressed by the Bolsheviks in May 1918.

Again, from his *Memoirs* we know



VICTOR SERGE IN THE LATE 1920s

that Serge spent much of his time saving anarchists and other socialists from the clutches of the Cheka - the secret police, the forerunners of the KGB. There he also states that "I believe that the formation of the Cheka was one of the gravest and most impermissible errors the Bolshevik leaders committed in 1918....All evidence indicates that revolutionary tribunals, functioning in the light of day (without excluding secret sessions in particular cases) and admitting the right of defence, would have attained the same efficiency with far less abuse and depravity".¹⁰ No such doubts in *Year One* where the Cheka's Red Terror is "not only a necessary and decisive weapon in the class war but also a terrible instrument for the inner purification of the proletarian dictatorship itself".¹¹

Again, take Kronstadt. Since 1917 the sailors of the Kronstadt naval base had been held up by all revolutionaries - Bolsheviks included - as the very

backbone of the Revolution. In 1921 the Kronstadt sailors demanded a return to working class democracy and free soviets - and were massacred.

Serge in his *Memoirs* recounts that "Kronstadt had right on its side. Kronstadt was the beginning of a fresh, liberating revolution for popular democracy."¹² But despite this and after "unutterable anguish", Serge sided with the Party - basically because he saw no other alternative. ("The Revolution has no other mainstay".)

A slightly different picture is painted by Emma Goldman, then in Petrograd: "Victor Serge used to spend every free hour in our room running up and down, tearing his hair, clenching his fists in indignation and repeating "Something must be done, something must be done to stop the frightful massacre". When he was asked why he, as a party member, did not raise his voice in protest at the party session, his reply was that that would not help the sailors and would

mark him for the Cheka and even silent disappearance."¹³

In *Year One* Kronstadt is also mentioned. In a passage dealing with the "heroic tenacity" and "moral superiority" of the Red Army comes a section on the future Red victories including: "The world will see....the Red Army taking by assault two impregnable fortresses, Kronstadt and Perekop".¹⁴ Perekop was a Red victory over the counter-revolution in 1920 (won, as it happens, with the aid of anarchist [Makhnovist] guerillas, who were then ambushed by the Red Army and butchered). In other words, Kronstadt is the same as Perekop, part of the White counter-revolution - the official Bolshevik line, faithfully echoed by Serge.

Year One has been called, by the Libertarian Communist Daniel Guerin¹⁵ "largely a justification of the liquidation of the soviets by Bolshevism." Guerin also recounts how Serge, in 1921, was quite willing to admit in private to the French anarchist Gaston Leval, that "the Communist Party no longer practices the dictatorship of the proletariat, but dictatorship *over* the proletariat." Leval responded by publishing Serge's private statements, side by side with his public praise for the Soviet State - and termed the latter "conscious lies".

Year One is packed with details and interesting facts and figures. This willingness of Serge to "consciously lie", however, reduces its worth considerably. For all but the Leninist faithful, a *very careful* reading between the lines is in order.

1. Serge in *L'anarchie* quoted in *The Bonnot Gang* by Richard Parry, p90. 1987.
2. Page 76, 1978 edition.
3. Page 60. All page references to *Year One* are from the 1972 english edition.
4. Page 366.
5. Page 100.
6. Page 18.
7. This is especially clear in the section on Brest-Litovsk.
8. Page 215.
9. Page 213.
10. Page 81.
11. Page 305.
12. Page 128.
13. "Trotsky Protests Too Much" 1938.
14. Page 332.
15. In his book *Anarchism* p97. 1970.

FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: WAR AND NATIONALISM

THE WAR in what was Yugoslavia goes relentlessly on between races and ethnic groups created in the wake of the downfall of the communist regime. In Croatia the problem is the nationalism of small ultra-patriotic parties. This has mainly been caused by HDZ, the party in government, strongly supported by the army.

The party leaders have introduced a new language ("Croatian") in schools, and only books by Croatian authors may appear. They have re-established the 'crime of word'. They control all means of communication. Any opposition is labelled 'Serbo-Communist'.

Serbian populism

THE SERB nationalists force people to believe that without a national State they would disappear and be destroyed by others. 'Only in large peoples', they proclaim, 'can the individual be taken into account. For small peoples this is not possible because of taboos and popular myths and the first moral duty is the subordination of the individual to the community, to the people and to the State'.

The ideology of Serb populism is displayed in the literary, scientific and especially historic fields. Marxist-Leninist dogma is replaced by Orthodox religion. Serbian populists claim to defend the Western frontiers of the Greek Orthodox faith, and expect their Russian Greek-Orthodox brothers to defend them, while they say to the West that they are defending the south-eastern borders from Islam.

The Croats on the other hand say they are defending the Roman Catholic faith, while the (hitherto purely nominal) Muslims look to the Arab countries. God's got his work cut out.

Refugees

CITIZENS OF Bosnia-Herzegovina as refugees in Croatia suffer from

discrimination and segregation in their 'homeland' after they have escaped from murder in their real homes. In many cases men are arrested and forced to the front.

Most refugees have spent their life savings to pay for their rent, schools and other needs. They have lost their houses and everything except what they stand up in. This is the result of State massacre, and the reward for outliving despotic State communism and getting capitalism, where everything has a price.

In Bosnia witnesses have denounced rapes committed by soldiers of both sides, as well as by UN soldiers. Those who are trapped in a State artificially created around them are doomed to organised terror in the name of nationalism or religion.

Germinal

(The above is from a Trieste correspondent).

Comment: What can be done from outside to end the war? The brutal answer is nothing. The most we can do now is to try to prevent more States from putting their snouts in the trough, even under humanitarian pretences that will finish up as territory grabbing. Genuine humanitarian efforts have to be independent.

The memory of Serb partisans and of the pre-war Anarchist forces in Serbia and Macedonia is forgotten. History is being rewritten and after the crushing by the old monarchy, the Nazi occupation and the Croatian Ustashi, followed by the tyranny of Titoism, you might as well invoke the Stone Age as the former workers' resistance and the guerrilla tradition. There are pacifist groups, but what do they mean? Everybody outside the ruling factions knows that peace is wonderful and longs for it, but the only way individuals can achieve it is by getting out somehow. But nobody wants them except as slave or cannon fodder. This is the sorry plight to which

nationalism and the State reduces a people, now even without the means to fight back even in desperation.

Given the circumstances, any nation can be split into warring factions and repeat the Yugoslav horror if it does not repudiate nationalism, racism, militarism and religion beforehand. We should be prepared when, given no alternative, to fight back, even as lone outlaw gangs, rather than face State massacre.

Even this last-chance plea for ex-Yugoslavia is stamped upon by international intervention. We received a letter from a Serb Anarchist from within the country months ago saying that matters were going to come to fever pitch and that a group wanted know-how in armed struggle obtainable from legally printed publications in Britain. We tried to answer the request but sanctions prevented us doing so.

It is from those individuals that the hope of any future exists.

CAN'T PRAY WON'T PRAY

IT'S DIFFICULT to be satirical. *Issue 203* mentioned the Religious Orders Industrial Network, and within months the clergy plan to join a TUC affiliated union. The Rev. Simon Cox has approached the Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union, to "protect the clergy from economies made by the Church of England's growing financial problems and diminishing congregations."

Why a manufacturing and science union? A group of Anglo-Catholic parsons, led by the Rev. Stuart Purkis, more for political credibility as pioneer English Trotskyites than for industrial reasons, once joined a union. Their choice? The Railway Clerks Union - the nearest to 'sky pilots' in those days.

FLAG FINANCES

BALANCE SHEET APRIL 25TH '90 TO JULY '93 (including the gap)

Sales and subs	£2018.64
Donations *	£1215.32
Royalties	£30.75
	£3264.71
Postage	£1269.61
Printing	£2199.61
Stationery	£303.42
	£3772.64

***Donations:** (Finland) SH £27, (London) PS £5, AM £60, RB £10, A & P £42.92, SR £2, RB £2, Memorial mtg for Leo £60, RD £4, (Herts) AN £8, (Lancs) AL £12, DL £5, (Manchester) RB £10 (Yks) MJA £4, RW £6, PF £45, (Norfolk) HJP £99, (Dorset) MK £30, P £7, (Oxford) RB £17, (Germany) LC £3, (London) £500 Joe Thomas's will. (W.London) MK £25, (Leics) PN £12, (Finland) KH £25, (Norwich) JP £100, (P'mouth) SB £2.50, (London SE) P £10, (Crewe) SG £10, (N'castle) RB £30, (Surrey) JY £5, (Edinb) AN £5, (Banff) AF £2, (Dyfed) CWG £5. (Burnley) RG £8, various £23.90

We had to suspend publication with accumulated bank debt risen to **£4271.85** (debt taken over by private mortgage) and print debt to **£600**. We will be paying the latter gradually.

JULY 93-JAN31 '94.

Sales & Subs	£353.75	
*Donations	£728.00	
Royalties	£36.20	£1117.95
Part Printing	£650.00	
Stationery	£54.75	
Postage	£327.85	
Part old debt prtg	£100.00	£1132.60
Grants. subsidies etc as usual-	Nil	
Salaries, personal expenses-	Zero	

***Donations:** (London) A & P £100, AM £100, (Oxford) £10, (Som) RE £8, (Leics) PM £20. (E.Lond) AB £4, (Notts) MC £9. (Sheffield) B £4, (Essex) AB £4, (Italy) AC £4, (E.Lon) LC £100, (Scotland) AF £4 (SE Lon) Shandy Boy £40, (E.Lon) BS £6; (Oz) M,P & L £200; various £11 (London) Leah Feldman's will £100

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20

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