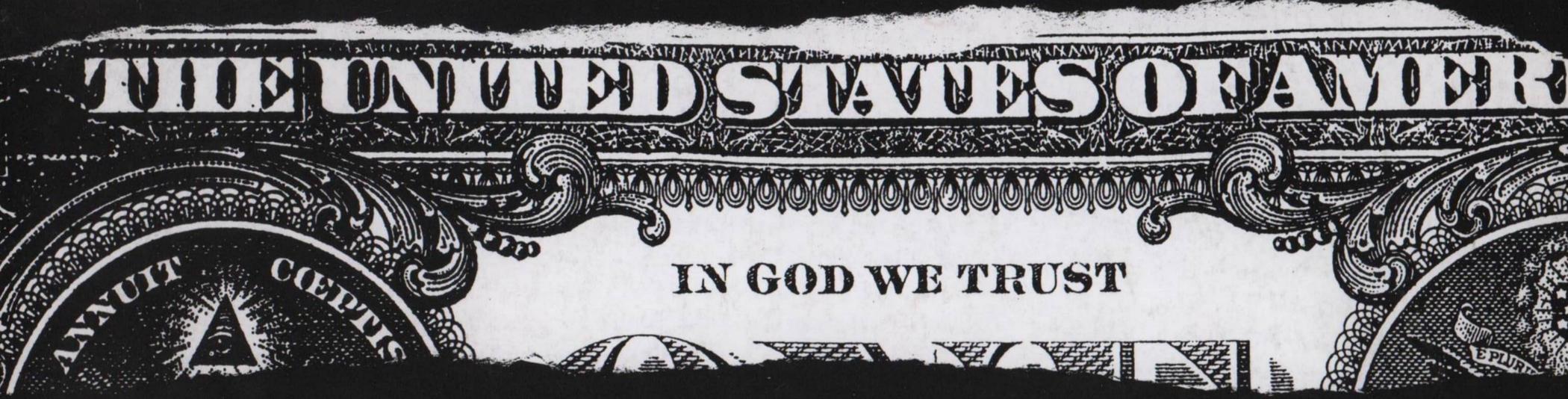


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FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE

An eagle with spread wings, perched on a branch, positioned between the words 'BLACK' and 'FLAG' in the title.

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editorial

On 1st October 1998 the International Monetary Fund announced that the world economy was on the brink of recession. Growth forecasts for the UK were around 2%-with the UK's performance the worst of all G7 economies bar Japan. As ever, it will be working class people who will be expected to pay for any loss in profits to our bosses - through job cuts, price rises and cuts in services.

A number of features in this issue look at the world economy - at the causes of the crisis, at strategies available to the ruling class to resolve the crisis in their interests, and at what we can do to assert our interests against theirs. We continue the debate on anarchist organisation with a look at the lessons of the Black Panther Party, and critically examine some ideas put forward by Green Anarchist and by Andy Anderson about the theory and practice of resistance today. We follow up issue 212's article on police involvement with Yardie drug dealing with a further examination of the connections between "law and order" and the drug trade.

New Labour has time and again sought to play the "race card" as a means of dividing our communities and a number of articles focus on anti racist solidarity and anti deportation fights. The commitment and resourcefulness demonstrated in these reports are precisely the weapons we need to employ in the struggles ahead...

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Dover residents against racism

by refugees, including the molesting of a young girl. One woman said she was too afraid to go out at night as each time she did she was propositioned for sex. Another 'had to give up her job' for fear of returning home along 'asylum alley'. The principal spokesperson, Mrs S. Amos, said she wanted no asylum seekers of any creed - "How can they come here to live when no-one wants them?"

The two papers published hostile lead articles, inspired by Jack Straw's new rules, titled 'Too soft for refugee molesters' on their front pages. Add to this a spate of vicious, hate filled letters in the papers, and you get the general picture. In the Westbury Road article residents claimed that asylum seekers receive more benefits, preferential housing from the council, drive around in flash cars and carry mobile phones! One letter writer spoke of his/her distaste for refugees wearing shell-suits and playing ball in the park!

And now lets look at the other side of the picture. Some weeks ago, just one family (Roma) was due to move into a house in Westbury Road. The empty house was plastered with notices saying 'asylum seekers not wanted' and a board threatening to burn them out was placed outside. (A disgusted resident came to us with this information). The Amos woman, who lives next door to this family, placed barbed wire around her garden in a gesture of welcome and a Roma woman had beer poured over her head in the corner pub.

Elsewhere in the town, we were told of another arson threat, but no refugee had moved anywhere near the person who had made it! He is, however, close to the place where refugees and some locals play football regularly. This regular event is organised jointly by local Refugee Link, IWW, Sol Fed and KSA (Kent Socialist Alliance) members and is enthusiastically supported by refugees of varying ethnic origins; Kurds, Roma and Kosovan Albanians.

In another incident, a Kurdish friend of ours was attacked by three youths and told to 'go home'. This man was a victim of torture in his 'home' country of Kazakhstan where, in one attack, his 10

year old daughter had tried to help her dad as the police were beating him. She was kicked in the head and left with a broken skull, a wound that has never healed. She has been deeply emotionally affected by the incident.

One accommodation agency recently published a list of properties to let; on the list appeared in big capitals 'NO ASYLUM SEEKERS'. We investigated and the agency said that they felt 'pressured' into this by landlords. In pubs, on buses, people are spreading 'refugee stories'. I've heard a man in a pub calling for all refugees entering Dover to be 'machine gunned', an Italian cafe worker was verbally attacked by people in a supermarket who had 'confused' her with a refugee and an Egyptian resident was told to 'go home'.

When compiling the leaflet we checked out the Westbury residents' allegations - they were found, of course, to be false. The police had no record of any attacks by refugees against residents. We pointed out that refugees get 10% *less* in benefits than locals and that they do not get council housing at all. In the social club room, members of AFA, IWW, Sol Fed, the Socialist Party, KSA and Refugee Link, Christians, Refugees and the non-aligned all sat together and hammered out the leaflet under the umbrella of 'Dover Residents against Racism'. Members of these groups then distributed the leaflet along the Westbury, Clarendon and Folkestone Road areas.

Meanwhile Dover's Multi Cultural Festival took place in the town-centre park on 29th August. The bulk of the work had fallen on the shoulders of Refugee Link and, in particular, two members. It's important to pay tribute to these two, because it was the first time such an event had been attempted in Dover, and involved a lot of hard graft. The Festival hosted groups playing music from Ireland, England, Peru and the Roma tradition; a local poet; a Hindu poet; a Unison Italian ice cream stall; KSA; AFA and various 'cultural' stalls. Most of the audience were refugees, but there were some locals. The day was a welcome change from the rantings of the Westbury true-blues.



LUSMORE

During the long hot summer two meetings took place in Dover. The 'heat' had little to do with our British summer and a lot to do with the rising tide of racism in this predominantly white, inward looking town. The meetings in the Catholic Social Club room, offered by the Chaplain to the largely Catholic Roma, were held to produce a leaflet confronting the nastier racist developments in the Westbury Road area of town.

In August the 'Dover Express' and 'Kent Mercury' publicised a petition calling for the repatriation of 'all asylum seekers' signed by 90 residents in Westbury Rd. According to the articles, these petitioners represented 50 of the 80 households on the road. Phrases such as 'Folkestone Road - no-go area', 'Asylum Alley' and 'Refugee Molesters' headlined residents' allegations of sexual harassment

knowle west riot

Coming only weeks after the massive police mobilisation to prevent "mob violence" at the Reclaim the Streets demonstration at Easter, Bristol police were thrown into total disarray when Broadbury Road police station in Knowle West was attacked by a huge crowd of rioters.

Bottles, bricks and petrol bombs rained down on police lines and the station following a protest over released child killer Sidney Cooke.

Only days earlier residents in St Pauls

had protested angrily at the idea that Cooke should be housed in a bail hostel there. When it was later rumoured that he had been taken to Broadbury Road, local residents came out to voice their objection.

After receiving no hint of confirmation or denial from the police that Cooke was being held there, tempers erupted when officers in riot gear started lining up outside the station. Heavy handed police tactics coupled with their unswerving arrogance was all that was needed to push the protest into full scale conflict.

Residents from all parts of Knowle converged on the station and gave full vent to their anger. The arrival of police reinforcements along with dogs and more vans only inflamed the situation. Local residents were having none of it. In the ensuing riot 46 officers were injured, windows in the station smashed and several cars set alight.

Police had plainly forgotten how quickly a community can react against them. The following day police spokesmen

moved swiftly to lay the blame upon "outsiders" and the catch-all rentamob. Failing to explain just who these "outsiders" and "mob" were. The same mob they vowed but failed to stop at the Reclaim the Streets demo perhaps?

The riot delivered a number of messages. Particularly that out on the council estates there is still a genuine hatred of the police that can be ignited at any moment: That places like Knowle can only be dumped on for so long before reacting. That there are common links between the black working class of the inner city and the white working class of the estates. That the liberal bleaters calling for "calm" and "tolerance" are hypocrites in that none of them are offering child sex killers a place to stay in their homes and communities.

And amongst the dross of the media reportage- the sparkle of class war summed up by one resident's quote: "Why doesn't he go to Clifton or Sneyd Park- but I don't suppose there is any chance of that?"

*Bristle, Box 25, 82 Colston St, Bristol
BS1 5BB*

genetically modified food-

....policing the news

On Monday 20th July, video footage sold to HTV by Bristol network 'i-Contact' made top news all day. Bulletins in the West of England led with film of, and interviews with, exasperated citizens pulling up the Genetically Modified crops most of us know to be unsafe. The next day HTV's news editor, John Alcock, got a visit from the police. They wanted to know who and where the film came from and to take a copy as evidence. John made it clear that they'd have to get a court order first and handed them a copy of the previous night's broadcast.

Two weeks later the high court ruled that it was powerless to interfere with a GM test field next to an organic farm in Devon despite its illegality. On Mon 3rd August i-Contact were tipped off that a group from the Genetic Engineering Network may respond by pulling up crops again. This time though, cameraman Ben Edwards was stopped in his tracks. Before he'd got any worthwhile film, before protesters had even got to the offending field, he was arrested with the protesters on 'suspicion of conspiracy to cause criminal damage'.

Ben was kept in Totnes police station

for 24 hours while a team from Trinity Road police station in Bristol searched his home. Fellow i-Contact founder Tony Gosling was there when the police arrived. He checked their warrant then watched helplessly as the police went through Ben's room earmarking the i-Contact computer, video tapes and piles of documents. Tony called The Press Gazette who were anxious to cover the story and he was interviewed for about ten minutes by Andrew Johnston. When Tony put the phone down one of the policemen asked him who he had been talking to and Tony told him. The cop warned him that by calling the press he could be "perverting the cause of justice." The article was subsequently pulled. Andrew Johnston claims this was an editorial decision of the Press Gazette.

Keeping a watchful eye on the police going through Ben's room, Tony then called HTV's newsdesk. The news editor immediately sent a cameraman round. As he arrived outside the five policemen beat a hasty retreat with armfuls of Ben's belongings, including the i-Contact computer and video tapes. HTV's cameraman filmed them as they drove off. This and Ben's overturned bedroom were on HTV

news Tuesday evening. The loss of the computer has effectively put i-Contact out of action. One their services had been an environmental video e-mail list with an international list of subscribers.

Ben was released on Tuesday evening without charge and bailed to return to Totnes on September 24th. The cops refused to return his £2000 digital camcorder ensuring no more i-Contact coverage of the GM food issue. When Tony contacted the inspector, who signed the search warrant, he was told the camera would be retained for the foreseeable future as "evidence is prioritised". When asked how the camera could be evidence, the detective in charge of the case, Peter Gartrell, replied: "we don't have facilities to copy the tape, so we need to keep the camera".

Monsanto and their colleagues at MAFF were clearly unhappy about the coverage HTV gave to the GM issue and are certainly involved in a conspiracy far more serious than that alleged of the protesters.

From an article by Tony Gosling posted on the net. i-Contact video network: c/o 76 Mina Road, Bristol BS2 9XQ. Tel/Fax: 0117 914 0188

devon wobbly success

On 20th August I got a call from Mark Harper to say that he had quit his job 3 seconds before being fired. I drove over to Wrafton, a village on the coast of rural north Devon and talked with Mark.

We arrived at the church hall before 4 p.m. to be met by two other Wobs, and the President of the local trades council who had given Mark some support, but was there to recruit to TUC-affiliated unions (he had already been to Wobblies' homes to persuade them to join TUC unions).

Just before the meeting there was a bit of a commotion outside - the factory owner (and local Conservative Party big wig) and his personnel officer sought entry to the meeting. We told them they were not welcome at a private workers' meeting and escorted them from the premises. However they hung around the hall and this intimidated a number of workers from coming in. We decided to turn the screws on them by photographing their pathetic attempts to bust our union.

When I told the meeting what had happened I got a cheer and applause! 40 workers were there despite Mark's dismissal making it hard to advertise. The TUC rep went first saying how important it was for workers to be in unions so that they could get legal representation in the event of an accident. He went on to tell the workers to join one of three unions MSF (Manufacturing Science and Finance - for supervisors), AEEU (Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union - skilled maintenance workers) and TGWU (Transport and General Workers - for production workers). He said that being in an affiliated union was very important, but didn't say why and then said the IWW offered some opposition to the TUC.

First thing I did was point out the absurdity of workers in one factory being split into three unions. I then explained how the IWW was indeed different from the TUC in respect of membership control; cheaper dues (half remaining with the local branch); no political affiliation; no paid officers; volunteers carrying out all union work, including negotiations, individual representation, and taking cases to indus-

trial tribunals; no insurance or benefits. We were based on transnational, industrial unionism, and I mentioned our organising efforts in the US, Canada, Australia and Germany. We believed that bosses and workers had nothing in common. I asked a couple of times if the workers controlled their own factory would they run it like it was run? I also said we did not recognise anti-union laws - if members wanted to break the law collectively that is what we would do.

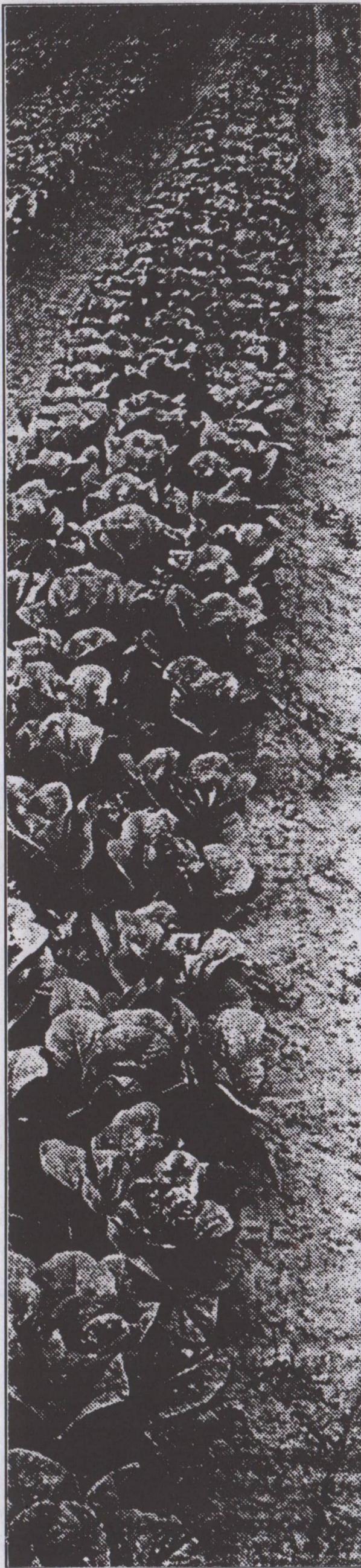
There followed a lively question and answer session and the meeting finally broke up after an hour. Everybody there took an application form and many took others to distribute around the plant. A couple of workers came to the meeting on their day off and some had travelled many miles to get there.

We agreed to organise a training course for people wanting to become union delegates and shop stewards. A couple told us there had been a slow down in the plant after Mark's dismissal and, rather than put people off, they had been galvanised. We waited till 6.30 just in case any night shift workers wanted in, however it transpired that someone had been signing up twilight and night shift workers anyway.

The next day Mark phoned with the good news that the workers had decided collectively to go IWW. They have elected delegates to get things going and are already working on a set of demands to put before the boss. The first is outright recognition and they want to get membership up to 50% (200 workers) quickly. They have pages of grievances and at the moment seem very buoyant.

A very successful time was had by all and it's given me a lot of inspiration. If nothing else it proves that we have the right message and can organise, even where there is TUC opposition. Why am I so surprised that we can be this successful? Only one in five UK workers in the private sector are unionised and the trade unions are having a hell of a lot of trouble convincing workers of their relevance. Having seen the TUC presentation I can see why. Maybe just maybe we are on the verge of something good.

*Kevin Brandstatter IWW-UK
Solidarity greetings to: Mark Harper, 17 Barn Park,
Wrafton, near Barnstaple, Devon EX33*



Steve Hedley

- Victimised by railway management

Steve Hedley is a trade unionist, a member of the rail union RMT, and is the local staff representative for GTRM workers at Euston. The RMT is currently in dispute with the infrastructure companies set up on the rail network under privatisation for better pay and conditions. Steve Hedley is seen by GTRM as a thorn in their side for insisting on safe working practices - always a barrier to the pursuit of profit.

On July 2nd a contractors van was driven straight at the picket line at Euston. The next morning Steve was identified as having damaged a wing mirror on the van and was arrested. The description from the contractor was of someone wearing a bomber jacket, jeans and brown boots, which couldn't have been Steve, and he has not been charged yet.

However, management have used this flimsy accusation to discipline Steve. On July 29th, Steve was sacked. Steve has 5 kids and is likely to be blacklisted. Witness statements from scabs used by management are contradictory and show that this is just a stitch-up.

Ring or fax the GTRM management to express your disgust and demand that he is reinstated immediately. GTRM phone number is 01923 207 306, fax is 01293 207 428.

Send messages of support and cheques made to 'RMT Strike Support Group' to 145 Imperial Avenue, Victorian Road, London, N16 8HL.

For more information or speakers for meetings phone Terry Dunn on 0181 314 522.



masking up

Passing largely unnoticed in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act was a section to stop people wearing masks. The police are given the power to demand the removal of masks and face covering and to seize them. If an officer or inspector or above thinks there is going to be serious violence or that people are carrying knives they can authorise this power. This is very similar to other public order powers that the police have when a senior officer is getting worried.

You can be arrested if you don't comply. The policeman must "reasonably believe" that the face covering is being worn to conceal identity. The law does not state what happens on cold days, what to do about face paint and beards (real or false) or gas masks. Our advice is steer clear of the cops except for necessary short periods and don't talk to them.

[Ss 25-27 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. The sections are due to be implemented in winter 1998]

Movement against the Monarchy

Class War's own think tank, Movement Against the Monarchy, pre-empted the Communist Party's successor Demos' report on the monarchy with a solution to the age old problem of reforming the monarchy: do we shoot 'em or do we hang 'em? Their answer is in the European tradition - the guillotine. MA'M will be giving their guillotine an outing on 31st October, meeting at Hyde Park corner at 2pm. Strangely the march on Buckingham Palace is not being received with the welcome that a royal family who claim to want to be more like Diana (ie 6 feet under) should offer. The police are also being uncooperative. So dress respectfully, check the usual sources for up to date news and contact MA'M at PO Box 14672 London E9 5UQ.

Class War prisoners network

From 1995-96 Class War subscribers in prisons rose to around 200. Issue 67 was banned by the prison service and prisoners often had to fight to receive copies. Good contacts were built up by many of the CW groups. With the "review process" this stopped and, with no paper coming out, contacts inside prisons have been lost. London Class War are trying to build up the class war prisoners network. Class War is still free to prisoners They want to work with ABC and others, including ex-Class War members, who believe in the ideals of prisoner support work.

All class war prisoners, those interested in, or breaking, the law can contact Class War Prisoners at PO Box 467, London E8 3QX

More white laws

Racists in government don't talk about "illegal immigrants" any more. They talk about "bogus asylum seekers". This is a useful code for squeaky clean racists like Jack Straw and Mike O'Brien. They don't need to talk about being swamped by an alien culture, the press know what to do and oblige with stories of hordes of asylum seekers in Richmond [about seven in fact] or tidal waves of Slovak Roma at Heathrow, and threats and attacks on asylum seekers start to rise again. But, of course, they haven't played the race card.

Labour have taken a battering on trying to follow the Tory asylum laws, losing in court cases over the Onibyos and the Slovak Roma as well as being forced to back off over action against refugees from Algeria and the former Zaire. On immigration they have dropped the "primary purpose rule", an expensive and pointless exercise which subjected spouses trying to come into this country to humiliating interviews and then refused them entry.

After 18 months they have produced two white papers on Asylum. One deals with the appeals system and says nothing conclusive. The other is a tinkering exercise and mostly an excuse for Straw and O'Brien to say "bogus asylum seekers" a lot on Newsnight.

There is no reason for immigration controls of any sort. They are another power that the nation state creates for itself to control people and to back up the pretence of the necessity for its own existence. These white papers, therefore, contain nothing to welcome. Below we will look at what is proposed and why.

Like every new policy this one has three words beginning with the same letter to set out its aim: In this case it's "Fairer

Faster and Firmer." Fairer means some sort of "asylum seekers charter," Faster means more desperate and Firmer means more CS gas. Nobody would dispute that the current system sucks but there is nothing here to deal with the problems even within the limits of our social democracy.

The tone of the white paper appears at first to nod recognition to the anti-racist movement and to Britain as a multi-cultural society. A few mentions of the Empire Windrush and the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. No mention, however, of the reports exposing racism inherent in the Home Office itself. The attitude towards asylum seekers is one of disbelief and irritation. A huge amount of time and money has been spent on

studies and reports about the asylum system. The white paper has ignored all of these. Of the case studies referred to, none includes a successful appeal against the refusal of asylum. The only "genuine" asylum seeker described is a case taken up by the UN. The others are all failed applications. The majority of refugees these days are those who have applied for asylum and been refused and win their status at appeal to an "independent" adjudicator or when the Home Office concede when faced with losing. The white paper proposes to make applications more difficult by: trying to stop people getting here in the first place with "airline liaison officers" overseas which, in an asylum context, means grassing potential asylum

seekers (ie undocumented travellers) at the airport in their country of origin; bouncing people back to other countries [eg France] more often; and cutting the time limits for, and the availability of, legal representation for making the initial asylum application.

The next step is to make life shit for people while waiting for an appeal. At present a court ruling means that people are supported under the National Assist-

*There is no
reason for
immigration
controls of any sort*

ance Act by local authorities. This was not intended in the 1996 Act which sought to deny people any support at all. The good thing is that there is a commitment to taking the responsibility off Local Authorities. This may relieve the situation in places such as Dover. However they aim to dump responsibility on refugee communities (who face the same problems of everyday survival as most other people) and voluntary organisations to support asylum seekers. The proposal is for a system of vouchers to cover food, toiletries, travel to interviews and phone calls. This is going to be a lot more expensive to run but will be a nice little bonus for whichever company gets to run the scheme and will obviously deter all those who come here seeking our Jobseekers' Allowance.

Unsurprisingly, there is nothing concrete about dealing with the ignorance, cynicism and culture of disbelief in the Home Office decision making.

After the Campsfield trials and the Ramsbotham inquiry there was some hope that the Secretary of State would restrain his enthusiasm for the detention of asylum seekers but it will be business as usual for the highly respected Group 4 and the born-again christians of Wackenhut.

Specific proposals will emerge towards the end of this year with a bill scheduled for this parliamentary term. There is little point in getting drawn in to the dead end of a lobbying process during the course of this legislation. The practical examples of activists in Dover and the Belgian anarchists' own "detention review" are more worthwhile.

gandalf three, the state nil

On 23rd July 1998 the Gandalf Three had their conviction for conspiracy to incite persons unknown to commit "criminal damage" quashed by Court of Appeal.

It was ruled by the court that the original charge was badly worded as it said "Criminal Damage" but quoted the section of the act that refers to Arson and where a charge of arson is made the specific word arson must be used.

The Court also ruled that because the original trial judge did not tell the jury they had to be sure we had incited people to carry out arson as well as criminal damage there had been a fundamental misdirection. The convictions were quashed unconditionally.

Hopefully this will hasten the collapse of the charges that continue against Robin Webb and Paul Rogers.

This is a real victory for the defendants but because the convictions were quashed on a technicality suing the police isn't a real option. The court, however, didn't rule that reporting direct action cannot be an offence. The absurdity of this is that if, for example, we reported that on 8/8/98 the words "Scum" and "Class War" were painted on the London HQ of the Countryside Alliance this could, in the terms of the original charges, be incitement. So everyone's learnt their lesson then.

On 5 March 1998 the Italian police arrested 3 anarchists on serious charges of "subversive association for the purpose of constituting an armed gang". They were accused of various actions linked to the popular struggle against the construction of the high speed railway through the Val di Susa in Piemonte. Now only one of the 3 arrested anarchists remains alive.

Edoardo Massari, a 38 year old anarchist from Ivrea, died in the Vallette prison in Turin on 28 March 1998. The authorities said he hanged himself with a bed sheet.

Maria Soledad Rosas, a 22 year old Argentinean hanged herself on 11 July. At the time she was under house arrest.

Silvano Pelissero, the third prisoner, went on a hunger strike before being transferred from prison in Novara to house arrest on 22 July.

The anarchist and grass roots opposition movements have reacted to the deaths angrily and forcefully. There was a several thousand strong demonstration in Turin on 4 April and a street blockade following Maria's death. On 18 July there was a picket of Novara demanding Silvano's release.

The charges against the three anarchists were not based on hard evidence. A much-publicised "arsenal" supposedly found in their home has never been shown in public. Along with the charge of "subversive association" the charges included accusations of actions against the building works for the rail link, the town hall in Caprie and the building site for a new court in Turin. The high speed rail project is opposed by all in the area.

The arrests on 5 March were accompanied by police raids on two self-managed social centres in Turin. These resulted in street protests in Turin and the press responded with a campaign against anarchists, squatters and the social centres.

All of this is in the context of a major assault both on autonomous social centres elsewhere in Italy and a series of attempts to frame up militant anarchists with charges of "subversive association".

they call it suicide -

we call it murder!

Following Edoardo's death on 28 March demonstrators came to Turin from all over Italy for a demonstration on 4 April. Anarchists, autonomists and people from the social centres participated in a demonstration 5-8000 strong. As the march came to the prison and court house there were scuffles with the police and stones were thrown.

In reaction to Maria's death over 100 protesters gathered in the centre of Turin on 12 July, and blocked the road with a barricade of furniture wood and mattresses. A barrage of Smoke bombs and flares transformed the scene while paint sprayed messages appeared on the walls. The anarchist radio station Radio Black-out, silent for the day before, broadcast the action declaring "this is the first reaction to the death of Soledad."

Caught unawares by the action the police were slow to react and only after half an hour had the numbers to charge the demonstrators. At this point the barricade went up in flames and the demonstrators disappeared in the smoke with no arrests.

On 28 July, in a customary display of solidarity, anarchists in Athens, Greece, burnt out two cars at the Italian embassy. An hour later 8 more cars at showrooms of Fiat and Alfa Romeo were burnt out. A message to the Greek paper Eleftherotypia stated that the attacks were "a demonstration of international solidarity for the mur-

dered anarchists Edoardo Massari and Maria Soledad Rosas in a context of persecution and terror that the Italian state has recently launched against anarchists. Our common struggle against the state and authority knows no frontiers....Freedom for the imprisoned Italian anarchists."

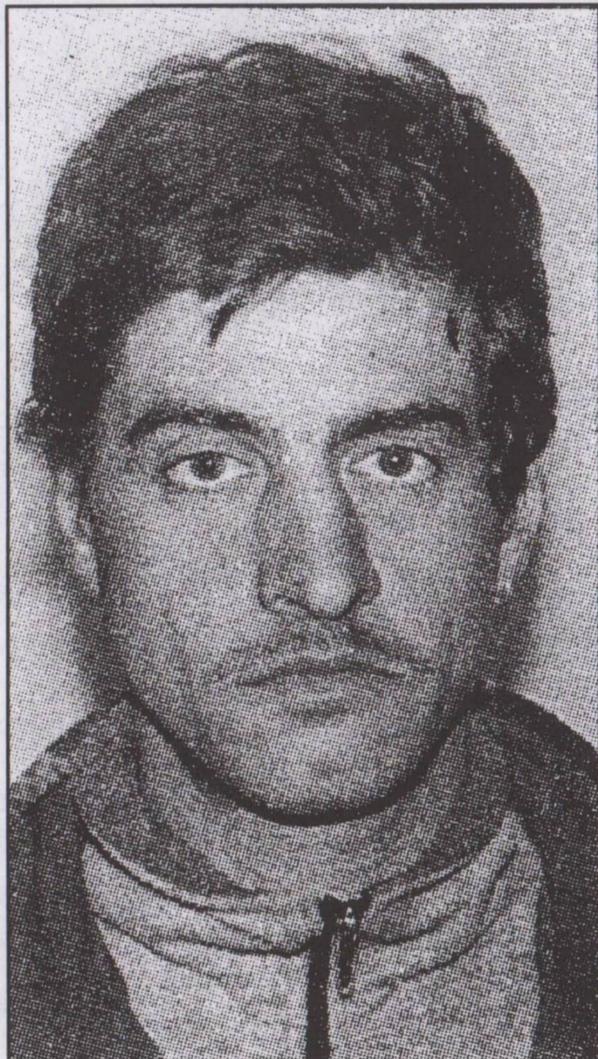
In London 20 people had picketed the Italian Tourist Office on June 19 in solidarity with all anarchists suffering state repression in Italy.

An anarchist from Carrara wrote in the anarchist weekly Umanita Nova: "Edoardo proclaimed himself an anarchist, he was active in the struggle against the high speed railway: this movement was an obstacle to the restructuring process which has as its results the destruction of the environment of the area, the sackings of thousands of workers, the super-exploitation of the railway workers, to benefit a clique of businessmen and speculators.

To protect the right to exploitation the government banned railway workers from striking. The scumbags of the state criminalise the most combative sections of the movement against the high speed train.

Edoardo is a victim of the reaction of the institutions to popular opposition, he is a testimony to the struggle for the defence of the region and to the right to oppose those in power."

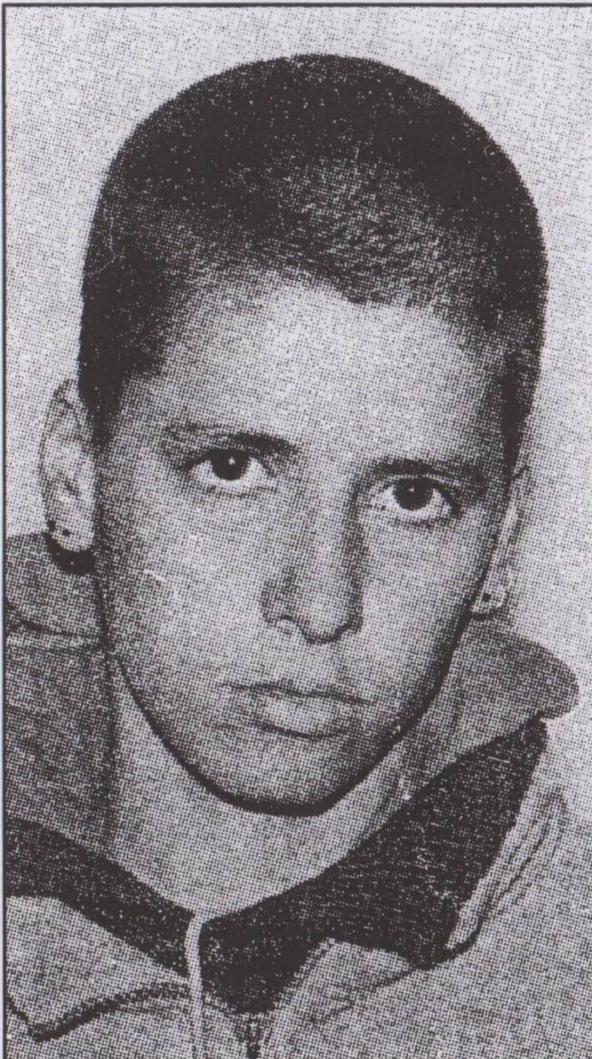
The Turin Anarchist Federation said,



Edoardo Massari: committed suicide

"We know that everyone will talk about suicide. We prefer to call things by their right name. Suicide in prison is murder, a murder for which responsibility surely cannot be avoided by those who, like the magistrate, decided that Edoardo Massari should stay in a cell by himself and therefore, in substance, in isolation. Our concept of anarchism was certainly different from that of Edoardo, nevertheless his memory and his extreme choice of freedom will be spurs in the daily struggle of the exploited and oppressed for a society without the state and without prisons. The new world that every anarchist carries in their heart cannot ever be suffocated by the walls of a prison cell."

At the beginning of August politicians and prosecutors received a number of letter bombs. The first was to a prosecutor, Maurizio Laudi and was defused. A journalist who had given evidence against Massari in 1993 and had been beaten up at his funeral also received one and was hospitalised for six weeks: the only casualty. Three more were sent to politicians from the Green Party and the Communist Refoundation. The fascist Alleanza Nazionale are calling for the closure of 12 social centres as a response. As unemployed protests in Naples and elsewhere in the South intensify the state is faced with the prospect of a hot September.



Maria Soledad Rosas: found hanged

anarcho-quiz questions

1. How did Napoleon define "Anarchy" to his brother Jerome and how did he advise him to deal with it?
2. What contemporary suggestions were offered to account for Napoleon's sister Pauline's breakdown in health in her late 20s?
3. The "anarchist Saint" Fermín Salvochea was buried in Cádiz in 1907. Fifty thousand people followed his cortege, mainly ordinary workers from Cádiz and Jerez, and a spontaneous shout of "Long Live Anarchy!" went up as he was lowered into the grave. Salvochea became an anarchist in prison. What unlikely position had he held before that?
4. Following John Edmonds recent attack on greedy bosses at the TUC Congress, what did an *Independent* columnist admonish the unions to do and who was he paraphrasing?

answers on p.33

in short

Anti-racists murdered in Vegas

On the July 4th weekend, Dan Shersty and Lin "Spit" Newborn were lured into a desert ambush and shot execution-style. They were members of the Las Vegas Unity Skins and supporters of Anti-Racist Action. Both were active in building a peaceful anti-racist scene for young people.

Nazi boneheads are the only suspects. Dan was white and Spit was black, and this friendship across races clearly angered the fascists.

ARA Las Vegas has helped set up a trust fund for Spit's 2-year-old son. Send donations and messages of solidarity to:

ARA Las Vegas

POB 29057

Las Vegas NV 89126-3057

Vaclav Jez acquitted

Vaclav Jez (the Czech anarchist who shot a nazi-skinhead in self-defence) was acquitted in July. The case had looked very bad - the state representative suggested 11 years in the hardest type of prison - but judge agreed with Vasil's version of incident. The state representative appealed to Appeal Court so everything can change (their verdict is expected no sooner than 6 months). Vaclav isn't free yet - he must spend another 18 months in prison because of an earlier sentence (20 months prison for fighting nazis - he was living in a town full of this shit). So - he needs your support - you can send him postcards/letters in any of the main Western languages (also Russian) via his girlfriend (because of censorship):

Sonia Samalikova

Dvorska 18

67801 Blansko

Czech Rep.

red card for Chile

A comrade from Chile wrote to us that during the World Cup, the government passed five labour regulations reforms, hoping that workers would be pre-occupied with football and not notice. The worst of the regulations allows a boss to fire a woman for getting pregnant.

One of the things the Chilean anarcho-syndicalist movement is agitating around at the moment are these rules. The movement is growing, with up to fifty unions looking to federate into a real section of the International.

Refugees resist

On the evening of 21st July people of the Collective against Expulsions (based in a squatted Social Centre in Brussels) held a peaceful torch-lit march at the detention centre in Steenokkerzeel, near the Brussels airport. The refugees inside started to chant and scream. The warders reacted immediately by beating the detainees, including women and children. The prisoners weren't intimidated, and fought back blocking the doors of their cells. In the tumult they smashed a window, and dozens jumped through. Twenty-nine even managed to escape through a hole that had been cut in the fence.

17 activists were arrested and locked up, first in the camp itself, then transferred to the federal police jail in Zaventem. They were accused of 'inciting fire by night', 'conspiracy', etc.

The action in Steenokkerzeel had been prompted by another attempt to deport Sémira Adamu. Her story is just one example of the inhumanity of the current refugee policy (in fact a hunt, imprison, and deport policy).

Sémira Adamu is a young Nigerian woman who fled to Belgium some months ago. She was escaping a forced marriage to a 65-year old man with several wives already. On her arrival in Belgium she was immediately imprisoned in Steenokkerzeel and her demand for asylum was refused. Her solicitor made an appeal on humanitarian grounds, but this didn't stop the Office of Foreigners trying to deport her anyway. A first attempt failed thanks to her courageous resistance and the action at the airport by members of the Collective against Expulsions.

On Tuesday morning, they made a second attempt. At 7am, they dragged her out of bed without any warning and took her to the airport. They wanted to put her on the plane to Lomé (Togo). Happily, at that moment some people of the Collective were at the airport and convinced a passenger to protest. As a result the pilot refused to take her. Sémira was taken back to Steenokkerzeel. That night the Collective protested at the detention centre.

Seven escaped Sans Papiers [asylum seekers, immigration detainees etc] were captured the same night, the other 22 are still free! All 17 of the activists arrested have been released, but 7 have been

- the state murders

charged with 'infringement of article 77 of the law on foreigners' and 'damage to state property', other charges may follow.

The squatted social centre was evicted as a response by the government but has since been re-squatted.

A lawyer for a successful Sudanese escapee, still on the run, apparently complained that now his client had no chance of being allowed to remain on compassionate grounds. This attitude is naïve beyond belief. The Belgian authorities have shown that they have no compassion.

A message posted to A-Infos list said, "We are not sure if Sémira is still in Steenokkerzeel but the State still wants to expel her. The latest news is that on August 11 there was a fifth attempt to deport her. After the escape the government strengthened the already strict measures: no more visits, letters, telephone calls." They asked people to try to contact her at the detention centre.

The message continued "Sémira is a remarkable and courageous woman, she keeps fighting, and encourages others to resist and fight back. It is common practice to chain and beat those who resist deportation. This is a letter that Sémira wrote just after they tried to deport her for the second time:

"6.30 a.m., 21st July 1998, a lady called Soyana woke me up, and said that I have to go back to my country, and that I have 20 minutes to pack up my things. I did not even take a shower and I forgot some of my things because I was in a hurry. So finally I was ready and they escorted me to the front side, where I was searched first and then entered in the bus that took me to the airport.

Reaching the airport they tied me up twice on my arm and once on my leg, and then they put me in an isolation room. They locked me until 10.30 am, then they came and said that we are going to the aeroplane. We got to the mouth of the plane, and we stood there until 11.15 am when they now asked me to go inside the plane.

Getting inside I started screaming, crying and they all gathered around me, eight of them. Three of them just stood there looking at me while the other five tried all their best to get me seated in the plane. Two

Sabena-security and police or immigration, I don't know, were the ones trying to put me down, they were pressing all over my body and one of them was pressing my face with a pillow, he almost suffocated me. It was a very terrible experience.

Finally the passengers interfered and they had to take me down to the bus. It almost result in a fight in the flight. So while I was down in the bus I saw one of the passengers dragged out, it was the guy that was particular about my bags, that they must take them out. They took the guy to a van and after some few minutes the came to me with the guy. This guy told me that he wanted to help me, that I should just go inside the plane and that he was going to collect my documents from them, and that he would pay for my ticket to come back here. But I refused and I told him that I will not go anywhere, so they took the guy back to the plane and took me back to the isolation room in the airport.

After some time they took me to the centre and still put me in isolation, from 12 to 4 p.m. on Wednesday. I was in the isolation room when they brought in some others... They tried to escape, they were Precious, Bonsu Aaua, Cytia and Antila. We all had to stay in the same small room with only one bed and with a toilet in it. We had to call them to flush to toilet after we used it, they flushed it from outside.

They took me out on Wednesday and brought to the centre, but to the other side because our side was damaged. So presently I am in the other wing and upstairs. Things are just the way they used to be, except for the tight security now, and for the airport, the people there can kill."

On 24th September Sémira was killed by the Belgian immigration authorities as they tried to deport her again. She was suffocated as they tried to keep her quiet.

On 17th August the Collective had tried to prevent the expulsion of Precious, a 23 yr old Nigerian friend of Sémira. She was one of the escapees who had been caught the same night and imprisoned in the women's prison in Brussels. When they tried to deport her to the airport, a group tried to stop the van by throwing paint at

Between 24th of July and 2nd of August, close to Rothenburg, about 20 km north of Goerlitz in Germany, 300 people gathered at the "Jump Across the Border" action camp. It was called by the different antiracist and antifascist groups in the "No one is illegal" campaign to protest against European migration policies under the Fortress Europe Schengen Agreement. The site was chosen because it is less than a kilometre from the Polish border and there is a Bundesgrenzschutz (BGS = Federal Frontier Protection Police) station and a Police Academy in Rothenburg. The camp's aim was to publicise the situation of refugees at an EU frontier and to exchange experiences. Held a few weeks before German elections, the camp was also an attempt to intervene in the ongoing public debate about racism and migration issues. The "no one is illegal" campaign demands freedom of movement for everybody.

Early Tuesday morning, activists es-

Central Europe: During fascism hundreds of thousands of refugees from Germany were smuggled into neighbouring countries, during socialism this enterprise was supported by the former West German government. Since 1989, flight assistants have become public enemy number one. Even worse, the Border Police statistics claim up to 70% of their arrests come from information provided by local residents. This posed a difficult question for the camp: on the one hand, the activists want to inform the local population with 20,000 copies of a free magazine, while on the other hand the camp policy is to protest against this dominant popular mentality of fear of "criminal foreigners" and to fight against collaboration with the police. The main aim is to support those people who offer the incoming new citizens some discrete help on the most dangerous part of their travel.

The camp started with a rave, attended by 800 people mostly from the region. On

jump across the border

antiracist camp in Germany

established two new border crossings across the Neisse river near Goerlitz. In the south east part of former East Germany today there are 10,000 new border patrols to detect "illegal" border crossings. The German police were confused, but Polish military guards managed to arrest two activists and cut the new bridges under construction and seized the beta version of the pan-European ferry boat.

Simultaneously, a press conference took place to stress the right of free movement for everybody and to proclaim free access for all to Europe. In the afternoon some dozen campers on bikes led the field of the regional cycling tour called "Sachsendrundfahrt" in "no one is illegal" tricots. In Goerlitz they crossed the finish line 10 minutes before the professionals.

In the evening a discussion took place about the number of deaths along the new wall along Fortress Europe. Flight assistants (called 'coyotes' on the US-Mexican border), who were recently arrested, told of their motivations and experiences. Flight assistance has a long tradition in

Monday the camp, joined by an all-Italian reggae sound system drove to Goerlitz stopping on the way in every village to hand out the newspapers. Afterwards, a demo took place in Goerlitz. Under the slogan "Jump across the Border", Germany's most famous basketball player, Henning Harnisch, played a symbolic game with the city youth in front of the monument for the victims of fascism, dating back to the communist era. Taxi drivers and supporting vehicles cruised through the area of Goerlitz, because there have been several court cases against local taxi drivers who can be sentenced to two years in prison for transporting refugees within German territory.

On Thursday and Friday the programme was changed because the night before, 7 refugees from Kosovo had died after being chased by the border patrol. 16 people were injured and brought to hospital. Around 4.30 a.m. border police had set up a control 16 km behind the borderline to the Czech Republic. The driver of

continued on page 13



ALUSMOREA

it. They did not succeed, two people were arrested and released after two days, but they face some charges. Another group went to the airport, but in vain: Precious was deported.

Write solidarity statements to:
Centre Sociale, Av. de la Porte de
Halle 2 - 4, 1060 Brussels; email:
ccle@altern.org

The Brussels Collective against
Expulsions have a homepage (in
French), check out for more informa-
tion, to sign the petitions: <http://www.altern.org/ccle>

the barrel of a gun

- capitalism in crisis

In his 1998 analysis of the US financial system, *"Wall Street"* (Verso), Doug Henwood gives us a brief tale of his experiences as a worker in a Manhattan brokerage; *"One morning, riding the elevator up to work, I noticed a cop standing next to me, a gun on his hip. I realised in an instant that all the sophisticated machinations that went on upstairs and around the whole Wall Street neighbourhood rested ultimately on force. Financial power, too, grows out of the barrel of a gun."*

August 1998 gave us three illustrations of how gun law capitalism works.

The collapse of the Russian economy caused a ripple of panic amongst Western financiers when the Russian Central Bank suspended conversion of the rouble into dollars and declared a 90 day moratorium on paying \$10 billion of short term debt. A surprisingly nervous editorial in *The Economist* (surprising because Russia has such little economic weight anyway) noted *"the sickness that started in Asia is spreading still, claiming victims far beyond its source. Investors cannot find time to count their mounting losses, so busy are they trying to guess where the plague will strike next. The recent (and mainly downward) gyrations in stockmarkets bear witness to the new surge of fright and confusion - and to mounting concern that the turmoil in emerging markets will end in worldwide depression."*

The dismantling of state capitalism in Eastern Europe heralded a new order of low wages, mass unemployment and corporate asset stripping. Integration of the former Soviet economies into the global economy meant the expropriation of land, labour and resources and the reduction of living standards to Third World levels. Eastern Europe became a playground for speculative capital. Multinational corporations have rushed in to take over Russia's reserves of oil and natural gas. A 1994 *Guardian* article noted *"The hundreds of millions of dollars spawned by Western aid programmes have mainly ben-*

efited the Western companies which headed East to board the aid gravy train."

A 1996 International Monetary Fund loan of \$10 billion was linked directly to the privatisation of agriculture and the ending of human service and fuel subsidies. *The Guardian's* economic editor, Larry Elliott, interviewed by *Tribune*, summed the mess up: *"they've been told to stick with free-market "reforms" when workers and pensioners have not been paid for months. Output is about half of what it was when communism collapsed. Things are much worse in rural areas and large chunks of the economy are operating on the basis of barter. They were told "just get on top of inflation, shut down all your inefficient factories, throw loads of people on the dole and when you've done all that we might give you some money."*

Russia does almost no trade with the United States, and precious little with the European Union. So why the panic? Simple. As the Canada-based economist Michel Chossudovsky observed (*The Globalisation of Poverty-Third World Network* 1997) *"The movement of the global economy is "regulated" by "a worldwide process of debt collection" which constricts the institutions of the national state and contributes to destroying employment and economic activity. In the developing world, the burden of the external debt has reached two trillion dollars; entire countries have been destabilised as a consequence of the collapse of national currencies, often resulting in the outbreak of social strife, ethnic conflict and civil war."* IMF sponsored reforms are used to regulate labour costs to establish a *"cheap labour economy."* Debt has become the prime medium for the transfer of wealth from poor to rich, whether through servicing external debt from Third World to First, or the use of tax revenues to service public debt, while handing out, at the same time, tax breaks and subsidies to big business.

The end result, as Larry Elliott comments, is *"all market constraints have been taken off. The ability of a shock in one country to affect another and rico-*

chet round the world has become immense over the past 20 years."

As capital becomes more voracious in its pursuit of global profits, so it becomes more exposed. It is this that has made the financial pundits start to panic. *"As for the sentiment that it is not merely the international capital market but the basic principles of capitalist economics that need to be questioned, one can only despair that the thought has even surfaced."* (*The Economist* 5/9/98)

The threat of Russia's proposed moratorium on short term debt and Malaysia's leader Mahathir Mohammed announcing controls on cross border flows of capital, *"a kind of financial autarky,"* made the penny drop. The bubble won't burst if no-one bursts it!!!

In August 1998 the US launched air strikes against targets in Sudan and Afghanistan. The ostensible justification was retaliation for bombings of US embassies allegedly carried out by Muslim activists under the direction of Osama bin Laden. This is bullshit. There is no clear evidence of any link between bin Laden and the embassy bombs. Support for bin Laden grows with every US action. Even accepted on its own terms, the military strike reeks of hypocrisy given that the US is the main defender of Israeli aggression in the Middle East at the United Nations. (In 1996, when Israel attacked a civilian refugee camp the US blocked any attempt at condemnation by the UN Security Council.)

The real basis for US military sabre rattling against the *"threat of Islam"* is neither defence of secular virtues nor of its territorial integrity. It is the fear of *"financial autarky"*- that the nature of Islamic regimes such as the Taliban's is such that they are likely to attempt to resist incorporation into the global economy on the terms set out for the Latin and Eastern economies. The cruise missile strikes were a shot across the bows for any government in the region considering the option of doing anything other than rolling over and playing dead for the IMF.

Similarly, in the aftermath of the Omagh bombing by the Real IRA, Tony

Blair moved to pass "emergency legislation" - the backdoor introduction of internment. Part of the reason for this was to show a clenched fist to the nationalist community should they consider rejecting the dubious carrots of the Belfast Agreement. The legislation, however, went much further, including provisions for convictions of groups conspiring to commit "terrorist acts" abroad. Obvious targets for this arm of the legislation include dissident groups in the UK who dare to oppose "friendly states" in the Middle East - such as the Egyptian oppositionist Arab Observation Centre and the Advice and Reformation Committee which aims to

expel the US from Saudi Arabia. The demonisation of Islam dates from the 1970s oil crisis, when the Arab oil producers asserted their economic clout against the US. The new legislation is part of the same process.

Whenever and wherever someone rocks the boat, the "sophisticated machinations" of capital disappear and the gun barrel is produced. The panic of the last few weeks should serve to show us how easily the boat can be rocked. Moreover, the increasing globalisation of capital has left it vulnerable and over exposed. Chossudovsky has, correctly argued that there are "no technical solutions to this

crisis" - that the globalisation of poverty requires co-ordinated international resistance by our class. "What is at stake is the massive concentration of financial wealth and the command over real resources by a social minority...The "globalisation" of this struggle is fundamental, requiring a degree of solidarity and internationalism unprecedented in world history. The global economic system feeds on social divisiveness between and within countries. Unity of purpose and world-wide co-ordination among diverse groups and social movements is crucial." We have, still, a world to win.



jump across the border cont. from page 11

the bus tried to escape, but after a short chase he hit a tree. Shocked by the news, the participants of the camp decided to go immediately to Freiberg, near the scene of the accident. Three people went to the hospital and visited four of the injured refugees in police custody. In a while it became clear that the authorities were trying to stop the refugees from applying for asylum. On Friday and Saturday some activists again went to Freiberg to get in touch with the other refugees. They managed to get the UNHCR involved and the Czech authorities refused to take the injured refugees back.

Thursday night a very special event took place in front of Goerlitz prison, where a lot of refugees and Poles are held. Controlled by a time fuse, two sound systems, hidden in surrounding old houses, suddenly started playing music, explaining about the camp and the background of our activities to the people inside. At the same time an antifascist video screening started on a main square. Two groups prepared separate actions, both in front of hotels in the area. One of the hotels is

owned by "Sorat", a luxury hotel chain which sells food to asylum seekers at extortionate prices. The other hotel is the yearly venue of the neo-fascist elite and advertises conference rooms in neo-nazi publications.

Friday afternoon they took the camp's garbage to the hotel entrances. One group gathered in front of "Sorat-Hotel" in Goerlitz, the other group went from the camp in a car-convoy followed by lots of police. The convoy managed to lose its police escort and the campers dumped their garbage in front of the hotel.

Friday morning, the city of Rothenburg got a wonderful present. "Fit for Flight Assistance!" was the title of a keep-fit trail with 12 different exercises we opened around Rothenburg and along the Neisse river. Because the inventors of the project expected a lack of sportsmanship from the police, the re-opening of the keep-fit trail in the internet will come soon.

On Saturday morning there was a final regatta on the Neisse river, which borders Germany and Poland. While the border police expected us in the city of

Goerlitz and assembled there, the protestors went to Bad Muskau, 20km downriver: a group with boats and banners entered the river 2km before Bad Muskau, and were accompanied into the city by a dozen swimmers carrying wooden cases, each with one letter of the slogan "no one is illegal".

At 1 a.m. they gathered on and under the bridge of Bad Muskau and informed the inhabitants about the aims of this extraordinary borderline occupation under the slogan "Schengen sprengen" (blasting the Schengen Treaty). In fact the borderline seemed to blast, when several dozen swimmers started an amazing water ballet to latin music from the sound system. The people on the bridge and in the houses applauded. When the police finally arrived, by helicopter, they wanted to arrest people for illegally crossing the border, but after some wrangling gave up. The protestors returned to the camp, where the atmosphere was a bit tense with the news that neo-nazi gangs had called to threaten the camp. After rumours all week some nazis really came, but stayed a few hundred metres away. After two hours 30 frustrated nazis left in their cars.

black panthers

Real struggles never conform to a prepared agenda, and learning how to develop our ideas in relation to movements that don't conform to our expectations or ideals in every aspect and as part of what goes on around us, has to be part of engaging with how we've ended up here.

Issue 213 of Black Flag carried two articles touching on arguments about anarchism and spontaneity and anarchist involvement in community politics. If we want to move our politics forward, we can't allow such debates to exist only as abstractions, or run back to arguments about 1917 or 1936 as safe ground from which to consider our sidelining since then.

We live in a society where increasing numbers of "working class" people are without work (around 4 million at the time of writing). A 1997 London School of Economics survey, "Literacy, Numeracy and Economic Performance" observed that 40% of all jobs, and around 80% of unskilled jobs require reading skills no better than those achieved by most primary school children. The welfare state as a universal safety net is being dismantled, leaving whole communities to collapse in on themselves, with informal economies of theft and drug dealing developing as means of survival. Too often, we approach the circumstances most people deal with today with a political method developed during a period of industrial growth, high levels of workplace organisation, educational self-organisation and working class self-identification. Bluntly, the methods we embrace are pretty much irrelevant to the lives large numbers of people now lead. Strike calls, leaflets, papers, talk of "Communes", "Soviets" etc. mean nothing if you've not worked in five years and are more concerned about being robbed or how to feed your kids.

In October 1966 Huey Newton and Bobby Seale organised the Black Panther Party in Oakland, USA, in response to police violence, and inspired by Malcolm X's call to "freedom, by any means necessary." Newton and Seale met at Merritt College and worked at the North Oakland Poverty Centre. Disillusioned with middle class cultural nationalism they decided to try and respond to the lessons they'd learned from Malcolm X's formation of the Organisation of Afro-American Unity. Huey Newton wrote that Malcolm "knew what

the street brothers were like, and he knew what had to be done to reach them."

In determining the aims and objectives of the new party they knocked on people's doors in the Oakland ghettos and asked them what they wanted. "We're going to draw up a basic platform," Newton explained, "that the mothers who struggled hard to raise us, that the fathers who worked hard to feed us, that the young brothers in school who come out of school semi-illiterate, saying and reading broken words, and all of these can read..."

The Panthers' Platform and Program (the 10 point program) was straightforward, and, for poor blacks in the US ghettos, inspirational:-

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our black community.
2. We want full employment for our people
3. We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our black community.
4. We want decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society.
6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people.
8. We want freedom for all black men held in Federal, State, County and City prisons and jails.
9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group, or people from the black communities, as defined by the constitution of the United States.
10. We want bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which all black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

The Panther program was about black control of the black community; of every

aspect of its politics and economy. The Panthers in the '60s tried to pull off what Lorenzo Kom'Boa Ervin, in "Anarchism and the Black Revolution" described as turning "our communities into dual power communes, from which we can wage a protracted struggle with capitalism and its agents." The Panthers were hit with all the force of the US state machine, they carried with them a Leninist political baggage that meant when their leadership were targeted by assassination, jailings, and counter-intelligence operations they did not have structures in place to manoeuvre; their aims though, should be the aims of all of us, in our own communities, their means of struggle should be ones we should learn from and adopt.

Before his death, Malcolm X stated: "We should be peaceful, law abiding but the time has come to fight back in self-defence whenever and wherever the black man is being unjustly and unlawfully attacked." It was the Black Panther Party's emphasis on self-defence, leading to armed confrontations with the state, that made it headline news and an inspiration to a generation of militants. One US sociologist observed: "The cop's trigger finger is the gavel of justice in blacktown." The BPP met this head on, with armed patrols. Whenever black people were stopped by the police, armed Panthers would be on the scene, making sure their constitutional rights were not violated. Why the BPP counts, though, is not just for its stand against police brutality. A Wall Street Journal article noted in 1970: "...a sizeable number of blacks support the Panthers because they admire other, less well publicised activities of the Party such as its free-breakfast programme for ghetto youngsters, its free medical care program and its war on narcotics use among black youth." The labour historian Philip S. Foner describes the Panthers as "deeply involved in a wide variety of other work. The party was protesting rent eviction, informing welfare recipients of their legal rights, teaching classes in black history, and demanding and winning school

traffic lights. The installation of a street light in South and Market Streets is an important event in the Party's early history. Several black children had been killed coming home from school, and the community was enraged at the indifference of the authorities. Newton and Seale told Oakland's power structure that if the light was not installed, the party would come down with guns and block traffic so the children could cross in safety. The traffic light was installed."

Crucially, the BPP was part of the community it claimed to serve. Newton and Seale were working class black men who felt at ease with street kids. They didn't share either the middle class assumptions of the cultural nationalists, or the liberalism of the white left. When the California Assembly at Sacramento moved to pass a gun control bill designed as an attack on the BPP, 30 armed Panthers went to the Capitol building to protest. Bobby Seale said afterwards: I'm going to show you how smart brother Huey was when he planned Sacramento. He said 'Now the papers are going to call us thugs and hood-

lums... But the brothers on the block, who the man's calling thugs and hoodlums for 100 years, they're going to say "Them's some out of sight thugs and hoodlums up there! Who is these thugs and hoodlums?" Huey was smart enough to know that the black people were going to say: "Well, they've been calling us niggers, thugs and hoodlums for 400 years, that ain't gon' hurt me. I'm going to check out what these brothers is doin'"

Newton made it clear that the BPP was "The People's Party" and was "like an ox to be ridden by the people and serve the needs of the people." If black children were being harassed in schools, the Panthers organised mothers to patrol the halls while armed party members stood guard outside.

The breakfast for children programme involved the BPP working with community volunteers to distribute food to the black community. The food was distributed primarily through a network of black churches. "Hunger is one of the means of oppression and it must be halted." The BPP set up liberation schools, teaching

everything from basic literacy to black history. "We recognise that education is only relevant when it teaches the art of survival."

An article in the 'Daily World' (16/5/70) reported on the BPP's establishment of a People's Medical Centre in Chicago, regularly treating 100 people every week:-

"We have 10 doctors, 12 nurses and two registered technicians who officially serve in the free Medical Centre. We also have a large number of interns who come and help regularly, from medical schools around the city. Part of the centre's work includes training community people to perform services wherever possible. For example, we are training some of the young people to do laboratory analysis and blood tests, and teams of people from the community are organised to canvas the neighbourhood and bring the Centre to the people. Most of the people in Lawndale are so poor they never go to a doctor unless they are practically dying. Our teams take their blood pressure, medical histories and in general determine if there are people suffering from illness. If illness is



The murder of Fred Hampton, USA, 1970.

STEVE GILBERT

discovered, whether chronic or just simple ailments, the person is urged to visit the centre, where an examination, treatment and prescription are all free."

Community organisation and community control were the basis of everything the BPP tried to do. In 1969 alone, 28 of its members were killed by the police. The state's strategy was to push the BPP into an armed confrontation it could not win. Members were jailed, harassed, set up and gunned down. FBI agents, under the COINTELPRO program, were sent in to destabilise the Panthers. In consequence, much of the BPP's energies were sucked into defence campaigns, and chapters across the US were set against each other. Yet the Panthers' community-based work remain models of how revolutionary organisations should work with non-revolutionary groups to meet the needs of the communities they are part of.

The BPP cracked under the force of jailings, assassinations and infiltration. Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, Eldridge Cleaver and David Hillyard were all jailed at various points and played off against each other by the state, crippling their ability to lead the party. Their Leninism was a fetter on their chance of survival. As Lorenzo Kom'Boa Ervin had it: "because of the over-importance of central leadership, the national organisation was ultimately liquidated entirely... Of course, many errors were made because the BPP was a young organisation and was under intense attack by the state. I do not want to imply that these internal errors were the primary contradiction which destroyed the BPP, the police attacks did that, but if it were better and more democratically organised, it may have weathered the storm."

The BPP were unlike most political organisations of their time, and no organisation since has been as focused, nor embraced any of the best aspects of the Panthers' method with any consistency. The Panthers' starting point was: "What does our community need?" They were drawn from the class they claimed to represent, and saw themselves (for all Huey Newton's proclamations of the BPP as "the vanguard") as a means to facilitate the needs of their communities, by revolutionary means- by contesting the state's right to control our food, clothing, shelter or justice. In their demise the BPP were also an illustration of how not to operate politically within a working class community. At the end, Newton, isolated, with the BPP split and feuding decided to push to make

US blacks a political force in the way that Italians, Irish, etc. were. David Hillyard recalls coming out of jail to find BPP members being told to read "The Godfather" as a guide to strategy. At the end, Newton saw "community politics" as being about organising the black community to compete effectively against other ethnic groups for resources. Given the violence the BPP was subjected to, none of this should surprise us. The BPP succeeded because they saw it was necessary to have something practical to offer to those communities they worked in. They succeeded because they put working class communities actual needs above theory. At the time, some of the left denounced this as armed reformism. As a lesson for today, I'd rather see an anarchist group responsible for stopping one eviction, feeding one child, than dribbling on about hunter-gatherer societies, primitivism, etc. It's time to stop the bullshit. The BPP succeeded; they were judged on what they did by the audience so many of us say matter to us. How many of us now would be judged the same way?

In the UK the number of "working poor" has risen by 300% since 1979. In the same period the amount paid to DSS claimants through income support has been cut by £435 million. Free school meals have been restricted; in some areas there is no free school meal system at all. In the last 15 years a million people have lost their right to housing benefit; over 5.5 million have had their benefit cut. Between 1979 and 1995, council house rents have risen by 100%, with a consequent rise in evictions. By 1987, the Thatcher government had saved £12 billion through cuts in the welfare state. Under New Labour, the process has continued. As the journalist Nick Davies put it: "There is no crusade against poverty in Britain. No leading politician demands full employment for the country's workforce. No prominent public figure insists that the wealth which was taken from the poor and given to the rich during the Conservative years should now be returned. There is only the immense jabber of the powerful who are surrounded by the victims of their affluence and yet continue to know nothing of the undiscovered country of the poor." (Dark Heart, Chatto & Windus, 1998)

Whole estates have become battlegrounds over heroin and crack. If a politics based around working class self-determination is to have any meaning at all, it has to have meaning in the lives of those who have suffered most under the last two

decades' steady redistribution of wealth from the poor to the rich.

In the US, the Black Autonomy group has raised the call for a Black Survival programme, building a "Socio-political infrastructure to intervene in every area of black life: food and housing co-operatives, Black Liberation schools, people's banks and community mutual aid funds, medical clinics and hospitals... Building consciousness and revolutionary culture means taking on realistic day-to-day issues, like hunger, the need for clothing and housing, joblessness, transportation and other issues. It means that the commune must fill in the vacuum where people are not being properly fed, clothed, provided with adequate medical treatment, or otherwise deprived of basic needs."

In the next few years, New Labour will attempt to suck out the remaining resources allocated to our communities - we, in turn, need to battle to keep those resources, obtain community control of them, and organise to replace them when the battle is lost. This means anarchists, dirtying their hands in helping to occupy closed schools, playgroups etc., to either keep them open or restart them under local community control. It means looking at setting up food distribution schemes, trying to set up community centres to give housing and benefit advice, helping stop evictions, setting up prison visit transport - whatever is needed, wherever we can.

Black Autonomy's call for a Survival Programme based around community control of food, education, health, housing is as relevant to the estates of the UK as the ghettos of the US. As they say: "We have to do it ourselves if we are ever to get on the road to freedom." In doing so, we can learn more from the history of the BPP, their actions, their methods, and the critique of their history from groups like Black Autonomy, than we can from the mindless student drivel of the likes of Green Anarchist or Hakim Bey.

"If we can understand Breakfast for Children, can we not also understand Lunch for Children and Dinner for Children, and Clothing for Children, and Education for Children, and Medical Care for Children? And if we can understand that, why can't we understand not only a peoples' Park but Peoples' Housing and Peoples' Transport and Peoples' Industry and Peoples' Banks? And why can't we understand a Peoples' Government? This is liberation in practice..." Eldridge Cleaver, 1969.

bent for the cause-

In Black Flag issue 212, in the article "Scotland Yardies" we argued that "police strategy is in reality about the confinement of crime within working class areas" and that "whether for political purposes or private gain, some police are actively involved in the drug trade in inner cities." This article attempts to further substantiate that contention.

At the 1998 Labour Party Conference Prime Minister Tony Blair announced he would extend his experiments with zero tolerance policing to 25 "crime hot spots" throughout the UK. The government intend to spend £250 million on "crime" over the next 3 years. For those of a liberal temperament, who flinch at the idea of mimicking the law and order policies of right wing US Republicans, Blair has coined the phrase "order maintenance"- which, conveniently for us - happens to sum up the real aim of the policy pretty nicely.

What "order maintenance" means, we are told, is saturation policing of high crime areas, Operation Welwyn - the police targeting operation in Kings Cross is cited as an example. By the Home Office's admission, this isn't really a strategy to cut crime. The July report "Reducing Offending" confirms that "there are large question marks over the ability of the police to distinguish between firm and harsh policing styles, and over the long term effect of arresting many more people for relatively minor offences. Police tactics in some implementations of zero tolerance have been described as over zealous and this can lead to poor police community relations."

One example of such poor relations could be Cleveland - stomping ground of

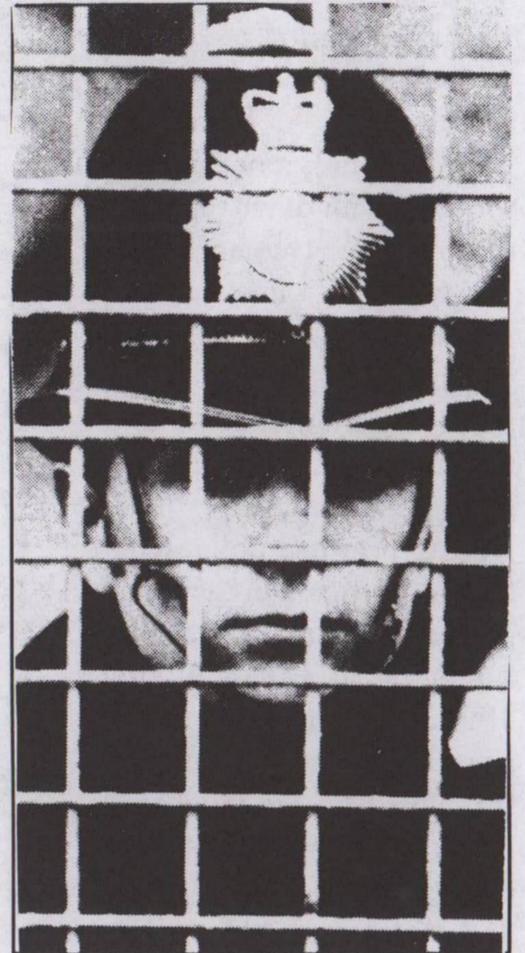
Blair's currently suspended "super cop" Ray Mallon. Members of the local police authority have described Mallon's policing as "close to the line", with aggressive use of CS sprays (Cleveland is the smallest force in the country. In 1997 it used CS 600 times - the highest in any constabulary area), high profile arrests with TV crews in attendance; allegations of prisoners being offered heroin in return for confessions, and local solicitors complaining of erosion of civil liberties.

Bizarrely, we are told that one result of the crackdown on crime will be that the police will no longer respond to every call from the public and "the day an officer visits the scene of every burglary may be long gone." (The Guardian 29/9/98). Or perhaps it's not so bizarre. What "order maintenance" really means is the use of aggressive policing and environmental aids like CCTV and police surveillance helicopters to keep the animals in their cages - to physically contain crime within working class areas (euphemistically referred to as high crime areas - even though "order maintenance" is likely to be a cause rather than cure) so that middle class vot-

ers can feel safe in their beds. Poverty causes crime, and as Labour have no intention of tackling poverty they've put their jackboots on to cordon off crime.

Within working class areas, it will be business as usual. And business is precisely what goes down.

The Sunday Times on 20/9/98 reported the allegations of Duncan MacLaughlin, a detective of 18 years standing, who spent 5 years in the drug squad and 5 years in the London based regional crime squad. MacLaughlin records his experiences in the regional crime squad as follows; "You put all the clever ones, all the brains, in one office, and you got the cleverest scams. There were no better criminals in the country... I was a member of the most professional criminal cartel that Britain has ever produced. If we got anonymous information that there was going to be a coke deal involving, say, 25 kilos of coke, straightaway you would create an imaginary informant. Then a friend would come in and sign a bit of paper and maybe receive up to £40,000 reward money. Drugs were recycled all the time. If you found 15 kilos of coke, you produced



cops and cocaine

12 kilos and 3 would be sold. A kilo of coke you get £30,000 for, so you have made £90,000." Scotland Yard have tried to smear MacLaughlin as an oddball, but the shit won't stick because MacLaughlin's story fits in too well with other reports of police involvement with drug distribution.

When Tommy Adams was jailed recently for cannabis importation some of the press intimated that earlier cases against the Adams firm had collapsed because officers in the pay of the Adamses had tipped them off in advance. In 1996 John Donald, a detective of 15 years standing, was jailed for his involvement with Kevin Cressey. In September 1992, Cressey

and another man, the son of a well known south London villain, were arrested in Streatham on a drugs charge, Donald stitched up bail for Cressey for £18,000 and took £1,000 for giving him his "collator" file-details of police intelligence. Donald also agreed, for £40,000 to arrange a "burglary" to lose Cressey's files. Donald also offered to sell information to Kenneth Noye and sold information on Operation Circus, a targetting operation, to Noye's associate Michael Lawson.

Ronald Palumbo, a Met officer at Stoke Newington police station was jailed for 10 years in 1997 for his involvement in a conspiracy to import cannabis worth over £2 million. Palumbo acted as a courier during the importation of cannabis from Spain. Palumbo was also involved in the false conviction of a housing worker, Rennie Kingsley, and 13 other defendants who had their convictions quashed at the Court of Appeal following revelations of fabrication of evidence by Palumbo.

Over 30 Flying Squad officers are currently under investigation following statements made by two of their colleagues who were arrested and charged with conspiring to supply cannabis worth £50,000. In November 1996 the Observer revealed the existence of at least 6 other major enquiries into police corruption in the South East:

■ Operation Gallery - into alleged leaks from the Regional Crime Squad to



major figures in organised crime.

■ Operation Gallery Part Two - into allegations of extortion by Crime Squad officers over reward money for informants

■ The Harrods inquiry - into allegations that Crime Squad officers deposited thousands of pounds in three of the store's safe deposit boxes

■ An inquiry into allegations of rape and theft of confiscated drugs

■ An inquiry into sensitive leaks from the Criminal Records Office

■ An inquiry into allegations made against a senior police officer.

None of this is new. In 1996 Frank Williamson, the police officer who led a major investigation into corruption in the Metropolitan police in the 1970s, revealed that he was obstructed by the force's then commissioner, who had knowingly assigned him a corrupt officer Ron Moody as his assistant, and was ostracised by senior officers. At the end of his investigation three officers were charged. Williamson told Duncan Campbell of the Guardian there could have been charges laid against 10 times as many (Guardian 22/1/96). He stated that the CID at the Met contained "not a rotten apple but a barrel of rotten apples." He believes that endemic corruption was a main reason why organised crime flourished in the 1960s. "Without

it, the Krays would never have got off the side of the pavement in Bethnal Green."

In 1977, the No.5 Regional Crime Squad made an arrest in Romford, and found drugs which came from a 1,200lb haul seized the previous year, which had been recorded as having been destroyed. The arrested market trader, John Goss reported that he had been pressured into selling the gear by serving police officers. Investigations showed that drugs sent for burning had been removed from their bags before destruction and another substance substituted. The list goes on....(The list would be even longer were it not for the sharp practices of the

Police Federation, who threaten libel actions against any journalist who starts to sniff around rumours of police corruption.)

In coining his theory of "due process", the American sociologist Herbert Packer more or less gave the game away. Society (ie the New Labour voting middle classes) doesn't mind too much who gets punished as long as someone does. If too many wrong people are processed and enough fuss is made about it, then the state becomes undermined. "Law and order" means making the middle classes feel safe because the undeserving and ungrateful poor are locked down. Within working class areas, the police and their criminal co-conspirators just line up to screw us like all the rest. As the US anti drugs activist Clarence Lusane puts it, "The proliferation of hard drug use in these communities plays the dual role of social control and economic delusion. A drugged-out community, pacified, subdued, and bent on self destruction, is not going to rise up against the white corporate power structure. The youth of these communities, who are most likely to rebel, are at the centre of the drug epidemic, and the government sponsored drug war". Law and order is a game, and, more importantly, it is a game played at our expense.

The extent to which this is the case is made clear in a new book "White Out" by Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St.Clair

(Verso). The book is concerned with instances of CIA complicity in international narcotics, but the issues it raises parallel those raised here.

In August 1996 the San Jose Mercury News ran a series of articles by Gary Webb, entitled "Dark Alliance - The Story Behind the Crack Explosion". Webb's story was simple. A group of Nicaraguan exiles set up a cocaine ring in California, establishing ties with the black street gangs of South Central Los Angeles who manufactured crack out of shipments of powder cocaine. Webb charts how profits made by the Nicaraguan exiles were funnelled back to the Nicaraguan Contras. The drug ring was headed by a Nicaraguan exile named Norwin Meneses Cantarero, who served as head of security and intelligence for the leading organisation in the Contra coalition, the Fuerza Democratico Nicaraguense. The US Drug Enforcement Agency had files going back to 1974 on Meneses, yet he was granted political refugee status in July 1979, when he and other members of the Nicaraguan elite fled to the US. Evidence exists that the Meneses ring moved 900 kilos of cocaine in 1981 alone. During the period of Meneses operation, he and his accomplices were protected by the CIA from prosecution.

As Cockburn and St Clair argue, the existence of the drug ring is not the only issue here. "Was it true that cocaine prices set by the Nicaraguans rendered the drug affordable to poor people for the first time? Arguably, this was the case... As Ricky Ross (the ring's main street dealer) told Webb, the prices offered... gave him command of the Los Angeles market. It was unreal" Ross remembered, "We were just wiping everyone out." His connections to the ... street gangs solved the distribution problems... By 1983, Ross-now known as "Freeway Ricky"- was buying over 100 kilos of cocaine a week and selling as much as \$3 million ..of crack a day."

Webb's story is substantiated by witness statements, FBI documents, DEA reports and federal grand jury transcripts. Nevertheless, Webb was targetted by a smear campaign designed to deflect attention from the issues thrown up by his story.

Maxine Waters, the Congress Representative for South Central Los Angeles, seized on Webb's story. She was also attacked by the mainstream press. Waters felt she had no option but to fight on the issues raised by Webb's reports. "In South Central we wondered where the guns were coming from. They were not simply hand-

guns, they were Uzis and AK-47s, sophisticated weapons brought in by the same CIA operatives who were selling the cocaine because they had to enforce bringing the profits back in. It was at about this time that you saw all these guns coming into the community, that you saw more and more killing, more and more violence. Now we know what was going on. The drugs were put in our communities on consignment, out to the gangs and others. The killings just mounted and people said "what are they fighting about? What are these drive by shootings about? What is this gang warfare? And the press said "oh, it's the colors. Some like red, some like blue. Well, you know, it was about the drugs, it was about crack cocaine, introduced into our communities by people who brought it in with a purpose."

Cockburn and St Clair set out further indictments against the CIA in their excellent book, detailing CIA involvement in narcotic trafficking in Bolivia, Columbia, Afghanistan. In every case, the US's "anti communist" friends made billions. "The Medellin cartel alone racked up \$10 billion a year in sales, prompting Forbes magazine to put two of its leaders - Pablo Escobar and Jorge Ochoa - on its list of the world's richest men in 1988. At the other end of the line from this affluence were the crackheads of South Central and other inner cities."

The scale of activities revealed by Cockburn and St Clair has no comparison in the UK, to our knowledge. It is nevertheless the case that cartels subject to CIA protection and trafficking with CIA complicity (particularly with regard to Afghan heroin and Medellin cocaine) also exported to the UK. It is further the case that heroin hit Liverpool at rock bottom prices immediately after the 1981 riots there. Scotland Yard's involvement with Yardie informers (Black Flag 212) suggests police involvement with crack cocaine. In a sense, there is no need to graft a conspiracy theory onto all the documented evidence of police involvement with drug distribution. If the purpose of law and order is really **order maintainence** - the containment and pacification of working class communities - then re-dealing crack and over use of CS gas are all part of the same process. They're not bent, gov they're just doing their job. As Cockburn and St Clair put it, "*Drug war* is a code phrase for social control and repression."

omagh bombing - the aftermath

The August 15th bombing of Omagh City Centre, claimed by the "Real IRA", which took 28 lives cannot be justified on any terms. The bombing has been condemned by Republicans and Socialists who support the peace process and by many of the groups who oppose it. In its aftermath both the Real IRA and the INLA declared ceasefires.

Not everything about the bombing makes sense. Omagh has a predominantly nationalist population. It makes little sense for a Republican group which has yet to claim any real political ground within the nationalist community to carry out such an action. Prior to the Omagh bomb, the Orange Order had been fragmenting after Loyalists burned to death three Catholic children and this bombing only served to give the forces of reaction a breathing space. Further, it allowed the British and Irish governments an excuse to rush through legislation which amounts to selective internment of any organisations which oppose the Stormont agreement.

British and Irish intelligence forces have, without doubt, penetrated the Real IRA. It is very likely that they would have known in advance of the bomb. Previous police operations against the organisation have indicated that the British and Irish states have been able to anticipate Real IRA actions. Conveniently, on 15th August, any such intelligence appears to have been ignored.

Moreover, Britain's argument that the Real IRA failed to give accurate warnings of the Omagh bomb is not borne out by the evidence - particularly details of a third telephone call which stated that the bomb was located 200 - 300 yards from the Omagh court house. Armed with this information, the RUC herded people into Market Street, where the bomb was located, rather than evacuate everyone down to the Dublin Road, as had been their normal practice in such situations.

It has long been the contention of Republican militants that the British deliberately ignore bomb warnings, to gain political credibility from maximum civilian casualties.

Such a strategy would bring real re-

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Lies, damn Lies,

- and economics

Joan Robinson once said that the point of studying economics was to be able to work out when economists were lying. Being a left-wing Keynesian, she was immune to the usual ideological (if not religious) biases of mainstream economics. Her point is both correct, and usually ignored because economics has far more to do with ideology than facts, belief than science.

This is why the books reviewed here are so important. In one way or another they all burst the bubble of an "economic miracle" created by 20 years of free market magic. A 'miracle' whose basis lies rather in hype than in reality.... as we shall see.

Our first book is John Gray's "False Dawn". Gray is an ex-Thatcherite and his book feels like an extended "Oops, I got it wrong" essay. It takes a strong man to admit being wrong and his book is well worth reading. Drawing from the work of Karl Polanyi (in particular, his classic "The Great Transformation"), Gray argues that laissez faire capitalism, rather than being a natural product of evolution (as claimed by the right), was in fact a creation of the State.

Drawing parallels between the 1980s and the rise of capitalism, he indicates the disastrous effects of market forces on society. Taking New Zealand, the US and the UK in turn, he shows how crap neo-liberalism, in practice, proved to be.

Indeed the new right's ideology actually created some of its major bug bears such as 'welfare dependency'. The "percentage of British (non pensioner) households that are wholly workless.... increased from 6.5% in 1975 to 16.4% in 1985 and 19.1% in 1994". Furthermore "this dramatic growth of an underclass occurred as a direct consequence of neo-liberal welfare reforms".

While this may surprise the economist, it should not surprise an anarchist. After all, a "free exchange" between the powerful and the powerless in the market will benefit the former at the expense of the latter. Hence anarchist support for unions, solidarity and collective resistance to make us more powerful than our exploiters.

The benefits of neo-liberal labour market reforms are equally unimpressive. Gray quotes the Financial Times to refute claims that 'Labour force flexibility' is the key to job creation:

"Open unemployment is, of course,

lower in the US. But once we allow for all forms of non-employment, there is little difference between Europe and the US: between 1988 and 1994, 11% of men aged 25-55 were not in work in France, compared with 13% in the UK, 14% in the US and 15% in Germany."

And, as Gray correctly stresses, all estimates of US unemployment must take into account America's jail population. Over a million more people would be seeking work if American penal policies resembled those of any other Western country. He also notes that Britain is following in America's footsteps in terms of crime, the penal system and the causes of crime, causes (such as the atomisation of society) which he thinks flow directly from our ruling class's embrace of free market ideology and policy. And if we look at unemployment, more people were unemployed when Blair took office than when Callaghan left power in 1979 - so much for 18 years of labour market reforms and "flexibility".

Gray's book concentrates on globalisation, showing how national neo-liberalism fits into a global neo-liberal agenda. Overall, and despite the flaws you'd expect from an ex-Thatcherite, Gray's book is useful for exposing much of the hype of the "free market".

The same can be said of Larry Elliot and Dan Atkinson's "The Age of Insecurity." Both the authors work for *The Guardian* and their book (or at least a fair proportion of it) is an excellent source of facts refuting claims that Thatcherism was good for the economy. They state "thus far, [the] actual performance [of free market capitalism] has not lived up to the propaganda" and present ample evidence to back this up.

For example, as market reforms have taken hold, growth has fallen. The UK growth rate in the 'bad old days' of the 1970s was 2.4%, in the '80s 2% and in the 90s 1.2% (a similar fall occurred in the US). Given that the standard response of the new right to calls for redistribution of wealth was to say that it would harm growth (and growth would allow us all to take a slice from a bigger cake) - the figures are ironic.

Elliot and Atkinson argue that the "performance of the world economy since capital was liberalised has been worse than when it was tightly controlled". New Labour are promising more of the same.

"The Age of Insecurity" also acknowledges the social authoritarianism that is associated with market reforms. After all, a free market needs a strong state to keep the proles in their place. Elliot and Atkinson provide a long list of examples of state interference in our lives. Money may be free, but humans are not.

Unfortunately, their critique of authoritarianism does not really extend to the workplace. While seeking to protect the worker from excess social controls (drugs tests etc.) they express no interest in abolishing wage slavery, the selling of our labour and liberty to a boss. They may be disturbed by the state's interference in people's lives after they have clocked off, but people managing their own work time goes unmentioned.

There is a refreshing short discussion on Tory "Euro-sceptism" in the book. They note that Euro-sceptism did not exist prior to the Labour Party's adoption of free-market policies in the aftermath of the 1987 election. Before then, Europe was seen by the right as a way to undercut Labour's reformism by lifting key economic issues (such as the freedom of capital, control of la-

bour, laissez-faire competition) out of the domestic arena, an area the right feared it would lose in a popular vote.

However the discussions on Europe also show the limitations of Elliot and Atkinson's analysis. Whilst clearly understanding that the *"left in Britain and elsewhere seem to believe these organs [such as the EU and the WTO] act on behalf of big business only because the left has failed to press the case for change and because, in the right hands, they would become mighty engines for progress"* they fail to see that this argument is just as applicable to the nation state! If the EU is institutionally set up to favour capital, then so is the nation state, being subject to the same forces and interests.

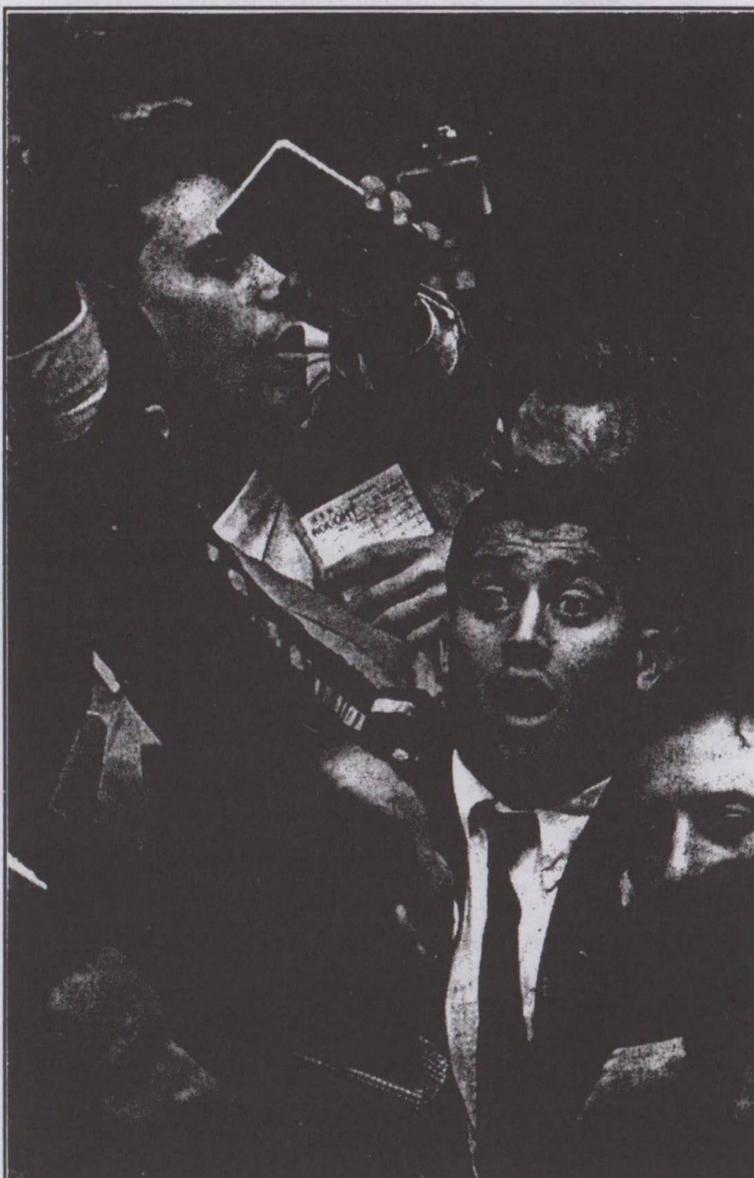
Indeed, it could be argued that those in New Labour who want to "capture" the EU are on stronger ground, historically, than Elliot and Atkinson. After all, the British left did "capture" the nation state (most recently by Blair). In the process they forgot about socialism and even social democracy. As anarchists predicted, the parties involved were corrupted by electoralism and socialism was abandoned.

True, there have been reforms in the past, but only due to fear of what would happen without them. It is here that the key to social change lies - in our communities and our workplaces. Unsurprisingly, Elliot and Atkinson do not mention class struggle, nor its role in social change.

This brings us to Robert Brenner's "special report" on the post war world economy in issue #229 of the *New Left Review*. While the report is a serious piece of scholarship, its whole *raison d'être* appears to be to refute all attempts to place the dynamic of capitalism in the class struggle. This should be of interest to anarchists and other libertarian socialists because it attempts to refute an analysis which has its roots in libertarian theory. In the 1950s/60s Cornelius Castoriadis argued that the real problem for capitalism was the human beings within it subjugated to wage slavery - i.e. the subjective element associated with people rather than the objective forces associated with capital, commodities, things. He argued that Marx, in *Capital*, took a step back from the class struggle and assumed labour power to be like any other commodity. This is not the case, as labour power cannot be separated from workers who resist their bosses' demands (something machines and raw materials cannot do). Since then a number of libertarian Marxists have taken up this "subjectivist" analysis of capitalism, including Tony Negri, Harry Cleaver and other Autonomists.

Cleaver wrote an excellent essay linking Kropotkin's revolutionary analysis of social struggle to that of the Autonomists. Moreover, Bakunin, in passing, presented a rough and ready understanding of class struggle being the basis for capitalist dynamics.

As far as facts and figures go, Brenner does explode mainstream claims that the 1980s marked a new dawn for (deregulated) capitalism. He uses hard



facts to expose the capitalist hype, ideology and economics for the nonsense they are:

"as the neo-classical medicine has been administered in even stronger doses, the economy has performed steadily worse. The 1970s were worse than the 1960s, the 1980s were worse than the 1970s and the 1990s have been worse than the 1980s".

Taking the specific example of the current American "economic miracle" which New Labour emulates, he quotes the *Financial Times* (1997):

"Conventional wisdom is that the US economy has been motoring along in the 1990s, while Europe and Japan have been left behind in its dust. Not so, US performance has been mediocre at best, while the difference between it and the other two has been largely cyclical."

Useful as these facts are, does Brenner's central thesis hold true? He argues

that the logic of competition between capitalist firms, rather than class struggle, rules the deeper rhythms of growth and recession. Objective factors - not social struggle - led to crisis in the 1970s - essentially a restatement of the "over-investment causing crisis" school of thought associated with the Marxism of the Second International and Leninism.

Is this return to orthodoxy successful? Not quite. The crux of his case against a class struggle analysis is that, firstly, real wage growth fell during the so-called "profits squeeze" of the late 1960s and, secondly, the length of the economic downturn (30 years, of which 20 were under explicitly anti-labour regimes). These points do appear to undermine claims that workers' power was the source of the crisis. But Brenner gets it wrong.

Firstly, it's hard to believe that as unemployment fell during the 1960s, so did the price and economic/social power of workers. As supply decreases or demand increases, prices go up - and why should labour be the exception to this rule? This paradox can be overcome by realising that it is not real wage growth that counts in assessing workers' power in the modern economy. Rather it is nominal growth. As the German anarchist Gustav Landauer argued over 80 years ago, *"capitalism always has the advantage as long as the workers can influence only wages but not also prices"*. Thus rising prices, or inflation, is the means by which capitalists recoup the rising wage costs associated with approaching full employment. So a period of rising workers' power can be marked by a fall in growth of real wages.

Was this the case in the late 1960s? According to Brenner's account this seems likely. As he notes (in respect of the US) *"the inability of US manufacturers to sufficiently mark up over costs accounts for almost all of the fall in manufacturing profitability"*. This inability to pass on costs was due to the increased international trade and competition. In addition, *"inflation accelerated"* after 1965, a clear indication of rising labour costs. Similarly his acknowledgement that, *"in the absence of pressure from labour, real wage growth would certainly have fallen faster than it did"* in the early 1970s, suggests that workers' power was greater than he gives credit for.

So, by looking at real wage growth as a *"rough and ready indicator of workers' influence"* he fails to understand the dynamic of class struggle in the Keynesian

age. Inflation is a key way to undercut workers' power and pressure on profits.

Moving on to the length of the crisis, Brenner is correct in arguing that "worker resistance" cannot be the cause of the continuance of the downturn. The working class has suffered major defeats over the last 20 odd years. But, ironically, these defeats have been the major source of capitalism's problems. As labour lost power, inequality grew. In the words of Elliot and Atkinson:

"Back in the early 1960s, the heaviest concentration of incomes fell at 80-90% of the mean... But by the early 1990s there had been a dramatic change, with the peak of the distribution falling at just 40-50% of the mean. One quarter of the population had incomes below half the average by the early 1990s as against 7% in 1977 and 11% in 1961.. where then is the evidence that trickle-down has enriched Britain from top-to-bottom? There is none."

So, with the shift of wealth to the rich, aggregate demand has fallen, as has investment, leading to increasing economic stagnation. While labour resistance to exploitation helped start the crisis, the capitalist counter-offensive made it worse. Capitalism is stuck between the Scylla of full employment increasing workers' power and the Charybdis of unemployment disciplining the workforce but reducing demand.

So, if Brenner gets the dynamic of the crisis wrong, what does he get right? Firstly, his contention that international competition forces down prices, although this only served to accelerate the outbreak of the crisis. Secondly his argument that investment in fixed capital is "sunk" and so not instantly reversible. In the real world, unlike in capitalist economics, capital which has been invested in the actual means of production cannot, by its very nature, be 100% mobile. These physical barriers do cause obstacles to adjustment, extending crisis. But this leads to another problem for Brenner's over-investment argument. If over-investment was the problem, you would expect the numerous recessions since 1979 to have helped somewhat by destroying fixed capital. It obviously has not, although declining aggregate demand would increase relative over-investment.

As noted above, Brenner's argument is truly within the "objectivist" school of crisis theory. Its supporters usually attack the "subjectivist" approach as being too close to the analysis of the right - and therefore dangerous. And indeed, capitalist economic theory is based on "blame the workers" (or the state, never capitalism itself). Bourgeois economists are fond of blaming our class for capitalism's prob-

lems. We are denounced for being "greedy" or "union thugs" or "ignorant" (of economics and other forms of witchcraft). In the end, capitalist ideologues hate the fact that people act as people and not things, that they don't accept their role as economic inputs and don't follow their bosses' orders.

So unemployment is caused by workers being paid too much, rather than the bosses' need for a slack labour market to maintain their profits and power. Inflation is caused by unions, not companies refusing to accept labour market forces, as expressed by decreasing unemployment, and increasing their prices to maintain their profits.

Given this viewpoint, it is understandable that many socialists take an "objectivist" position - namely that crisis is caused by the system, not workers. But workers are part of the system and supporters of this approach implicitly assume that workers are commodities and their behaviour can be predicted by capitalist economic ideology. Moreover, if workers do resist attacks on them, then using this logic, they will make any crisis worse by acting as people, not things. It is ironic that these Marxists argue that workers can change the world, but not the workings of the economy.

Our hopes, dreams, interests, aspirations and actions are missing from "objectivist" accounts, and so is any desire for a free, just world. They say socialism will come about because it is necessary, not because we want it. Leninism is the logical outcome of this position; the dictatorship of the party over the masses whose mere opinions cannot stand in the way of History.

The "subjectivist" approach is not right wing - it offers the only hope for a libertarian society. To dismiss the human activity that causes capitalism so much trouble, is to objectivise people and, as Castoriadis pointed out, leads to bureaucratic politics and the substitution of ideology and the party for human beings.

Finally, Brenner talks about a global crisis, but seems to confuse an economic crisis with a human one. One of his headers reads "*A Golden Age for Finance and the Rich*" - which, to state the obvious - is hardly a crisis for them! It may be one for us, but since when did human beings matter to capitalism or those who run it?

Whilst having serious reservations about these first three books, the last two are excellent. Indeed, the first three are the kind you'd get from the library and read via the index; whereas you would want to buy, read from cover to cover and tell your friends to read the second two. I have nothing but praise for Doug

Henwood's "*Wall Street: How it works and for whom*". This excellent book exposes the role of finance, how it influences real life and the truly awful state of capitalist economics.

The book is packed with facts, arguments and analysis and, whilst it would be impossible to do it justice in any review, a few points from the book are usefully repeated here.

First, far from being a source of funding for industry, the stock market "*has surprisingly little to do with real investment*", is "*stupidifyingly expensive*" and "*gives terrible signals for the allocation of capital*". In fact 92% of all US investment between 1952 and 1997 was paid from the firms' own funds and between 1980 and 1997 the stock market was a "*negative source of funds*".

Second, the bond market - the financial heart of capitalism - fears economic strength and loves weakness. When the economy looks too strong, Wall Street demands that the state tighten its controls to slow it down, to ensure the real value of the financial assets of the elite. New Labour has imported this set up over here by handing over control of interest rates to the Bank of England.

So, if it doesn't provide funds for investment, what does Wall Street do? What it does very well, according to Henwood, is to concentrate wealth (the richest 1/2% of the US population claims a larger share of national wealth than the bottom 90%). With this wealth comes extraordinary social power - "*the power to buy politicians, pundits and professors and to dictate both public and corporate policy*".

Financial markets are a key means by which the ruling class rules. So when the media reports the "reaction of the markets" they mean the reaction of the tiny number of people who control the vast majority of shares.

With the rise in power and influence of the stock markets, there has been an increase in what Henwood calls "*rentier income*" (namely dividends and interest payments). This increase in "rentier income" has had a negative impact on investment and, so, growth. Combine this with the short termism associated with the financial markets and it is little wonder that the economy is in such a bad state.

As the stock market dislikes a strong economy, the booming US and UK stock markets reflect (ironically) how badly the real economy is doing. The stock market boom undermines the real economy as it impacts on government policy. It is a feedback loop with a vengeance, and given the inherent instability of the financial markets, one which will eventually implode. Given the looming current financial cri-

crisis, Henwood's book is timely.

Henwood also shows how working class debt, a means to sustain consumption in the face of stagnant or falling wages, is also used to increase the

wealth of the rich via interest rates and debt service. As an added bonus, debt acts as a "conservatising force" - a hefty monthly mortgage or credit card bill makes "strikes and other forms of troublemaking look less appealing".

Henwood is a left wing "Post Keynesian", one of the few schools of economic theory with anything sensible to say; it is not based on the usual nonsensical, absurd assumptions. An important aspect of post Keynesian thought is its acknowledgement of power relations within a capitalist economy - appropriately he quotes Tony Negri: "Money has only one face, that of the boss".

Unless you understand that the economy is marked by power (derived from wealth) you will not get very far. Capitalism is marked by power, hierarchy and authority both inside and outside the workplace. Anarchism is aware of this fact; anarchists are well placed to develop a revolutionary critique of economics, unlike most Marxists who seem to have to fit all their ideas into the orthodoxy or be denounced.

Henwood has a couple of lovely pages discussing "Hilferding's curse." Hilferding was a Social Democrat who wrote "Finance Capital", a massively influential book in Marxist circles. Unfortunately, as Henwood explains, this book is rubbish - which could give Marxist reviewers of "Wall Street" a problem. When the SWP did so they tried to blame the sorry state of Marxist theories of finance on Stalin! Stalin did pollute much "socialist" thought but strange how the SWP did not mention that Hilferding's book influenced Lenin (particularly his book "Imperialism" and ideas on the transition to socialism) and thus the whole of Leninism, including the allegedly anti-Stalinist Trotskyists. Oops.

In passing, Henwood exposes the Hilferding of the right, Milton Friedman, and his monetarism for the nonsense it is. Which brings us on to our last book, Robin



Ramsay's "The Prawn Cocktail Party, The Hidden Power Behind New Labour". Ramsay is the editor of one of the excellent Lobster magazines covering the secret state, conspiracy etc.

In this book Ramsay charts the attempts of "the City" to restore its pre-WW2 dominance politically and economically. From "Operation Robot" in the 1950s to Thatcher's freeing of finance after 1979, Ramsay paints a vivid picture of the comeback of finance after its bash with Keynesianism and the interests of industrial capital which it represented. In the process he discusses the activities of MI5 and the CIA in the British Left and the links between New Labour and the European-American transnational elites, all well researched and documented.

The key decade for the victory of finance was the 1970s. In 1971, proposals from the Bank of England to remove restrictions on banks (such as lending ceilings and liquidity minimums) were removed. Only changes in interest rates (market forces!) would be used to control credit in the economy. Unfortunately the demand for credit/money is not affected by interest rates until they become very high. In the early 70s as the British economy suffered from a profits squeeze like most of the West. The effect of freeing the banks was a large increase in the money supply.

Unsurprisingly inflation exploded under Heath's Tory government.

This another of the joys of Ramsay's book - a reminder that the Tories, rather than Labour, are the party of high inflation. Inflation may have peaked at 25% under Labour (who brought it down using Keynesian policies) but it was at 20% and rising when Heath left office. The Tories' embrace of Friedman's ludicrous monetarism in the late 1970s helped to destroy the economy, producing the worst recession in 50 years. Of course anyone with half a brain and not blinded by ideology could have predicted the disaster created by

monetarism (and many did). After a few years of trying to control the money supply the Tories gave up as it was impossible and because inflation has little to do with the money supply.

The key year for the dominance of the city was 1979. The 74-79 Labour government placed controls on the banks. Thatcher set them free again, abolishing exchange controls, restrictions on lending etc. They put up interest rates high enough to affect economic activity and so deepened the recession, destroyed a large section of the manufacturing base and, ironically, put up inflation. Once unemployment had exploded enough, inflation levels started to fall. In the end monetarism had to be abandoned before the economy self-destructed. With the dominance of the city however the British economy has continued to get worse although you would never think so listening to politicians and the media.

All in all, the 80s were disastrous for the working class, the domestic economy and monetarism.

In his analysis of this period, Ramsay, rightly, follows the money. As he notes "all that happened is that economic policy followed the money", an analysis which should be applied to any theory with links to reality. If you work out who benefits from a theory you will soon see why it is taken seriously by "experts" and pundits.

Ramsay argues that New Labour has taken over the role of the party of finance from the Tories. He details how the party has been taken over by a Thatcherite clique with its policies dictated by the City, big business and the US ruling elite. The party not only wooed the City, it has become its political wing. Hence the title named after the "prawn cocktail offensive" of a few years ago.

And New Labour has indeed proved worthy of their backing. The "Iron" chancellor's first act was to make the bank of England independent by giving it the power to set interest rates. Given that this

follows the US - and proposed EU - model it is a clear indication of whose interests Labour are putting first. This placing of finance before industry is done in the name of controlling inflation (i.e. maintaining rentier profits) and "stability" - not that there is much evidence that low inflation leads to high levels of growth.

It is worthwhile here to name the "theory" behind New Labour's decision; the "natural rate of unemployment". This is the level of unemployment below which inflation is said to start accelerating. Ignoring the fact that any level of inflation can start an upward spiral, this rate is both invisible and mobile, which means that the Bank of England hikes up interest rates (shifting industrial profits to finance, workers' income to the rich and increasing unemployment) on the off chance that the unemployment rate happens to coincide with this "natural" rate. Despite the fact that you can prove anything with an invisible, mobile rate, it is taken very seriously by economists, politicians and the financial markets. Like God, it cannot be proved not to exist. Who invented this quasi religious piece of "theory"? Milton Friedman, whose Monetarism has proved to be so successful!

Unsurprisingly, New Labour is facing the same problems as occurred during the first years of Thatcherism, with manufacturing industry complaining of high interest rates and an over strong pound. As Ramsey argues "*Gordon Brown acts as though he's got the equivalent of economic amnesia, and cannot remember anything that happened before 1997*".

All in all, Ramsey's book is an excellent and essential read, though not perfect. His division of the capitalist class into financial and industrial is correct as is the fact that their interests can clash. The rule of finance has had an adverse effect on industrial capital (industrial capital is aided by moderate inflation as it cuts labour costs and interest repayments, finance capital likes high interest and low inflation as this gives them a larger slice of the surplus value we produce).

But it would be wrong to conclude that we have an interest in supporting or working with industrial capital (as Ramsey sometimes seems to imply). As Henwood points out:

"Liberals and populists often reach for potential allies among industrialists, reasoning that even if financial interests suffer in a boom, firms that trade in real products would thrive when growth is strong. In general industrialists are less

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irrationalism

- steve booth against "the machine"

In Green Anarchist #51, Steve Booth, one of Green Anarchist's editors, published "*The Irrationalists*", his views on "*resistance in the new millennium*." According to Booth, we are entering "*the Age of the Irrationalists*", who "*commit acts of intense violence against the system with no obvious motives, no pattern*." We are told by Booth that "*The Oklahoma bombers had the right idea. The pity was that they did not blast any more government offices....The Tokyo sarin cult had the right idea. The pity was that in testing the gas a year prior to the attack they gave themselves away*."

In issue 52, both GA and Booth himself, attempt a retreat from the position initially expressed. In a letter to the Scottish Anarchist Network, who GA thought had pulled a speaking tour by the London Gandalf Support Campaign in protest at the content of the article (in fact, the SAN postponed it in order to discuss their approach to the tour in light of the article), GA accuse the SAN of "*intolerance, credulity and conformism*", presumably for treating Booth's rantings with the contempt they deserve. Apparently, Booth only wrote the article to "*express his anger*" at the Operation Washington raids, and GA concede that "*maybe Steve goes too far affirming certain desperate acts, rather than just acknowledging them as inevitable reactions to an ever-more organised and repressive society*". Booth also tries to escape the logic of the positions he'd earlier put forward, by arguing that "*irrationalism*" is a product of despair, and that we need to develop "*the capacity of revolutionary action to enlarge our hope*."

This won't do. Booth's original article blatantly endorses the actions of the Aum and the Oklahoma bombers. We are told "*they had the right idea*." To this we can only echo the comments of Larry O' Hara, Dave Black and Michel Prigent

that the Oklahoma bombing was "*fascist mass murder*" and that "*we have as little sympathy (zero) for those carrying out a sarin attack on the Tokyo underground as we would anybody carrying out a similar attack on the Newcastle Metro or London Underground*." In his initial article, Booth contends that "*The question is asked 'What about the innocent people?' How can anyone inside the Fuhrerbunker be innocent?...Why should Joe and Edna Couch Potato derive any benefit from what the Irrationalists do? They can either join in somewhere, or fuck off and die, it's up to them, it's up to you*." For Booth, the enemy is not any longer capitalism, technology, or (whatever the fuck it means) "The Machine"- it is anyone who doesn't embrace his particular view of the world, or his particular Utopia as an alternative. Some alarm bells should now be ringing for those familiar with the history of *Green Anarchist*. GA's original editor, Richard Hunt, now edits *Alternative Green*, a fascist, misanthropic rag. Booth appears to be following a similar trajectory.

So, is it that everyone who gets involved in the GA collective develops a personality disorder or is there something at the heart of the "anarcho-primitivist" project that engenders the rot?

Whenever the "primitivists" are pushed to define their agenda in comprehensible terms, we are told that "*there's no blue-print, no proscriptive pattern*." The closest we get to a point is the US journal *Anarchy's* statement that they aim for a future that is "*radically co-operative and communitarian, ecological and feminist, spontaneous and wild*." *Fifth Estate* babble about "*an emerging synthesis of post-modern anarchy and the primitive (in the sense of original) Earth based ecstatic vision*". In his "*Primitivist Primer*", GA's John Moore endorses this definition. Primitivism, so far as anything about it is clear, looks back to the primitive communism of hunter-gatherer societies as an alternative to the "*multiplicity*

of power relations" of "civilisation." All of which is fine, as far as it goes. Even the US science writer Carl Sagan, in his book *"Billions and Billions"* states that hunter gatherer existence was more democratic and egalitarian than contemporary society, and writers as diverse as Engels, Levi Strauss and Maurice Godelier have articulated an anthropology of primitive communism. The problem for contemporary primitivists is not whether such societies were "better" than our own, but how their legacy can be incorporated in a politics of the here and now.

We live in a society that edges ever closer to the brink of ecological destruction. Capitalism sees Nature as one more commodity. As the US writer Michael Parenti puts it, the *"capital accumulation process wreaks havoc upon the global ecological system....An ever expanding capitalism and a fragile, finite ecology are on a calamitous collision course. It is not true that the ruling politico-economic interests are in a state of denial about this. Far worse than denial, they are in a state of utter antagonism towards those who think the planet is more important than corporate profits."* The problem for the primitivists is that their politics leave them unable to effectively resist.

Primitivism abandons any notion of a class-based analysis of the structures of "control, coercion, domination and exploitation" and replaces them with a rejection of "civilisation" and an idealisation of a period of history superseded by the development of agriculture, and the relations and means of production which have led us to our present state. The problem is - you can't wish such developments away, or wind the historical clock back. The primitivist project fails on two counts. The first is the question of agency. Every social transformation - from feudalism, to the bourgeois revolutions, has been based upon the material interests of a particular class, who act as conscious agents of transformation. The primitivists have not been able to identify any positive agent for the "destruction of civilisation" and so their politics becomes a counsel of despair. As GA concede, it is this despair which is at the root of Booth's "Irrationalist" tantrums. What they fail to concede is that such despair is fundamental to the hopelessness engendered by their politics in and of itself. With no rational agent for primitivist change, GA are left with the Utopian babble of *"One day soon, very soon, the whole system will perish in flames, and*

where will your designer clothes and Mercedes 450SLs be then?" making Aum and the Oklahoma fascists vehicles for *"the absolute physical destruction of the machine"*.

Moreover, even if a positive vehicle for the primitivist project could be found, should we then embrace it as a viable alternative to the immiseration of millions under the rule of capital? In his book, *"Beyond Bookchin"*, David Watson of *Fifth Estate* argues that aboriginal society represents a viable Utopia. He quotes favourably the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins; *"We are inclined to think of hunters and gatherers as poor because they don't have anything, perhaps better to think of them for that reason as free."* (Perhaps, then, Watson, in the relative comfort of the middle class anarchist scene in Detroit, envies the "freedom" enjoyed by the 1.5 million currently starving to death in Sudan?)

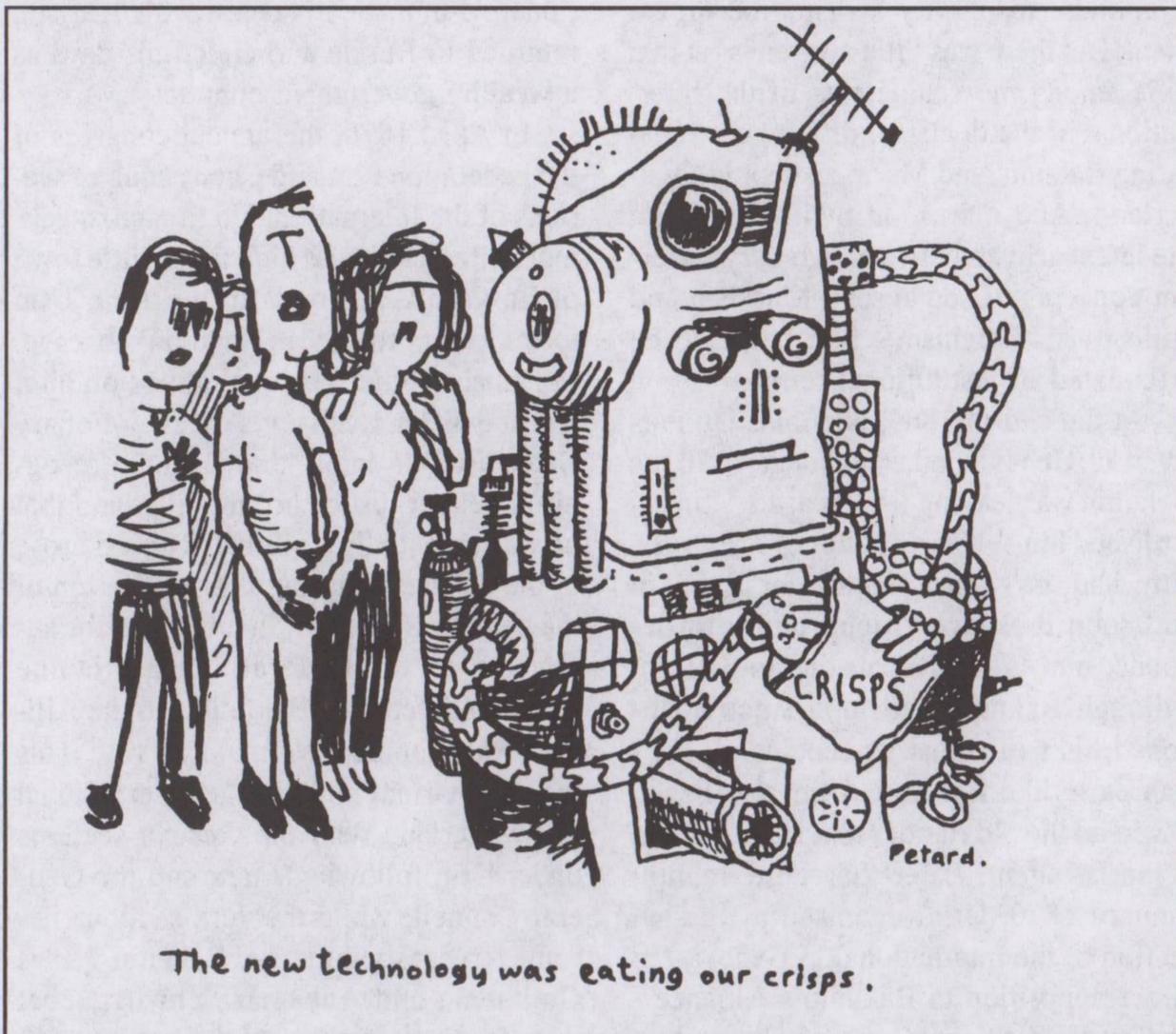
He tells us that aboriginal societies are in reality "affluent" because *"everyone starves or no-one does."*

What a miserable vision the primitivists - even at their most reasoned - are trying to hawk - at a time when the wealth produced under capitalism is sufficient for all, at a time when radical ecologists are engaged in a battle for planned, environmentally sustainable production in the interests of and under the control of those

currently at the bottom of the production process, all the primitivists have on offer is the communism of want!

It is our contention that the nature of the primitivist project is such that the "irrationalisms" of Steve Booth are, within the context of GA's project, perfectly rational; that the GA project results in, faced with the age old choice of socialism or barbarism, the election of barbarism as the chosen alternative.

Booth contends that *"Only the ability of a given group to create facts really counts. 11 million people not paying poll tax. That was something. The Oklahoma bombing. Unless you can create facts, you are nothing."* Booth is fond of sending out "propositions" to his opponents. We have a few for him (and it would be nice to get a straight answer, instead of the usual thought disordered rant). If the Oklahoma bombing "creates facts", does also the election of the FN in France or their equivalents? If the Aum got it right - if Joe and Edna Couch Potato don't count - if *"the only question could then be - so where was your bomb and why did it not go off first?"* would Booth endorse, say, the fascist bombing of Bologna railway station, or a far right militia using poison gas on a black community in the US? If not, following your own logic, why not? Go on surprise us; give us a considered reply.



The new technology was eating our crisps.

decline and fall of the

This text comes from the book "Bakunin: The Philosophy of Freedom" by Brian Morris, published by Black Rose (but we believe out of print). In this chapter Morris looks at the decline of the International and Bakunin's conflict with Marx.

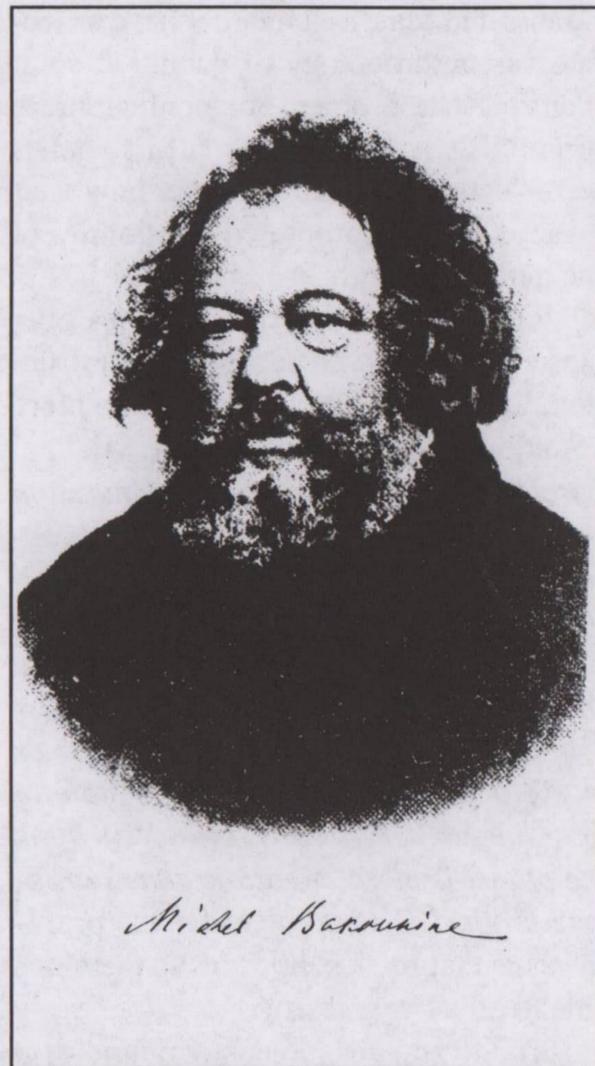
Between the Basel congress of the International in 1869 and the end of 1871 there had been a great growth of the International in both Italy and Spain, largely due to the influence of Bakunin. In 1870, at a general congress in Barcelona one hundred and fifty societies from thirty-six regions constituted the Spanish Regional Federation and adopted as their statutes those of the Jura Federation (drawn up by Bakunin). Thus, while the International was experiencing a marked decline in membership in the industrial countries, particularly in Britain where Marx lived, it was expanding in the Latin countries in leaps and bounds. And, wherever it was spreading it was doing so, as Paul Thomas writes, "under the mantle of Bakuninism."

¹ Thomas even hints that Marx's "The Civil War in France" was a calculated move, using the symbolism of the Paris Commune to reunify a disparate movement. But there was little awareness at that time among most adherents of the International of the doctrinal differences separating Bakunin and Marx - except in Switzerland. And it was in Switzerland that the latent schism between two very different concepts of socialism - Marxism and collectivist anarchism - first began to be articulated in institutional terms.

At the end of 1869, Nicholas Utin arrived in Geneva and in January 1870, as Bakunin was leaving for Locarno, Utin established himself as an editor of *L'Égalité*. Utin had an intense dislike for Bakunin and soon took every opportunity to denounce him as an advocate of Pan-Slavism - though Bakunin had long since abandoned his nationalist tendencies. A Russian exile like Bakunin, Utin also began to spread the old rumour that Bakunin was a Tsarist agent. Later that same month, January 1870, Utin organised a Russian section of the International in Geneva - in direct opposition to Bakunin's Alliance - and applied to the General Council in London for recognition. He also asked

Marx, who he addressed as the "Venerable Dr Marx", to become the representative for Russia on the General Council. Marx found all this rather strange but seems to have accepted the proposal especially as Utin mentioned that it would be among the tasks of the new section to publicly "unmask Bakunin." Thereafter, Utin continued to supply Marx with a steady flow of information, or misinformation, about Bakunin and played a considerable part in poisoning relations between the two men, although Marx had long harboured quite unfounded suspicions that Bakunin was simply a political intriguer out to "wreck" the International. If anything, Bakunin did far more to expand the membership of the International than did Marx himself, who had little influence on the English trade unionists. Significantly, after having helped to destroy the International, Utin made his peace with Tsarism, returned to Russia and ended his days as a wealthy government contractor.²

In April 1870, the annual congress of the Federation Romande, consisting of sections of the International in French-speaking Switzerland, was held in the little town of La Chaux-de-Fonds in the Jura. Utin took the opportunity, in Bakunin's absence, to launch a bitter personal attack on him, quoting from Nechaev's "Revolutionary Catechism" to imply that Bakunin recognised neither justice nor morality and that he was essentially a nihilist. This all arose in the debate regarding the application of the Geneva Section of the Alliance for admission to the Federation. Guillaume spoke in defence of Bakunin and the Alliance was admitted by a majority vote. This led to a virtual split in the International in Switzerland with the Geneva sections under Utin following Marx and the General Council, while the Jura sections became fervent supporters of Bakunin. James Guillaume and Adhemar Schwitzguebel were leading members of the latter group, which became known as the Jura Federa-



tion. The General Council eventually agreed to accept both the Geneva Federation and the Jura Federation as affiliated bodies of the International. It is important to stress that this split represents a genuine disagreement within the International between the libertarian and State socialists. G.D.H.Cole expressed this cogently. He wrote:

"This conflict of views was not the outcome of any "conspiracy" either on Bakunin's part or on that of Marx. It arose out of real differences both in attitude and in the character of the movements of which the International was made up. Bakunin and Guillaume, and the Spanish and Italian leaders, did carry on increasingly active propaganda against Marx and the General Council; but there was nothing particularly conspiratorial about it, unless one counts Bakunin's habitual tendency to give his most commonplace activities a conspiratorial tone. Marx for his part, intensely irritated by what he regarded as the unrealistic folly of the anarchists, had developed an aggravated form of conspiracy-mania which led him to see the entire anti-authoritarian move-

first international

ment as a sinister conspiracy directed against himself." ³

The conflict between Marx and Bakunin, however, came to a head in the sham conference of the International held in London in September 1871. Given the widespread support for Bakunin and his anarchism among the Internationalists in Spain, Belgium, Italy and the Jura, it was clear that Marx and the General Council could only defeat him by upstaging him.⁴ The London conference was therefore largely a private and secret affair. It consisted only of the General Council and invited guests, almost entirely partisans of Marx. Two delegates were invited from Switzerland - Utin was one, but none from the Jura Federation, only one from Spain and none from Italy. Because of the war, Germany had no delegates and France was represented only by refugees, mostly Blanquists. The dice, as E.H.Carr put it, were well and truly loaded against Bakunin. Besides implying that anarchism was almost a heresy and forbidding the formation of separate sections, one of the most important decisions taken by the conference was to declare the necessity for workers to form their own political party, independent of bourgeois parties. With the complete absence of the anarchists and the support of the Blanquists, this was easily carried.

The Swiss groups of the International, all Bakuninists and hostile to Marx, immediately organised their own conference at Sonvillier in the Jura in November 1871. Bakunin could not attend, and the leading spirits of the meeting were Guillaume, Spichiger and Schwitzguebel. They immediately repudiated the London decisions, refusing to recognise that the London conference was a properly constituted organ of the International. They denounced the autocratic powers assumed by the general Council and called for the reaffirmation of an International that was composed of a free federation of autonomous sections rather than one governed by a General Council. The congress produced the "Sonvillier Circular", which demanded an immediate congress of the International to debate its structure. The circular was sympathetically received not

only in Spain and Italy, but also Belgium. As a result, the General Council was obliged to announce a congress at the Hague in September 1872. It was clear that this meeting would prove to be an important encounter between the Marxist and anarchist (i.e. Bakuninist) sections of the International. as it turned out, it proved to be the last real meeting of the First International.

The Sonvillier Circular was a critique of the basic doctrine formulated by the General Council of the International, namely the importance of the "conquest of political power by the working class." The circular counterposed this doctrine with the notion that a social revolution should involve the "emancipation of the workers by the workers themselves" and that:

The future society must be nothing else than the universalization of the organisation that the International has formed for itself. We must therefore strive to make this organisation as close as possible to our ideal. How could one expect and egalitarian society to emerge out of an authoritarian organisation? it is impossible. The International, embryo of the future society, must form now on faithfully reflect our principles of federation and liberty, and must reject any principle tending toward authority and dictatorship. ⁵

Bakunin enthusiastically welcomed the Sonvillier Circular and devoted his energies to actively propagating its principles. Marx responded to it by issuing, as a circular from the General Council, a pamphlet entitled "Fictitious splits in the International." it was printed in Geneva and sent out to all sections of the International. It outlined Marx's own views on Bakunin, and his opinion of events surrounding the formation of the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy. Marx was critical of Bakunin on a number of grounds: his advocacy of total abstention from politics; his attempt to create an "international within the International" thereby creating confusion between the programme of the International Working Men's Association (identified with Marx's own ideas) and Bakunin's makeshift programme; his assertion that making the International an

embryonic egalitarian society would only weaken the organisation in its fight against the exploiters. Marx seems to have seen Bakunin's Alliance as a kind of sectarian organisation like those of the early utopian socialists, which could only inhibit the formation of the International as a "militant organisation of the proletarian class of all countries." He also saw the various radical manifestos by Bakunin as "verbiage" which would be useful in promoting the aims of the reactionaries, the implication being that one shouldn't publish radical manifestos in case they upset or helped the bourgeoisie. Yet Marx's pamphlet indicates an underlying ambivalence, for he wants to believe that the splits in the International are all of a "fictitious" nature and that the Bakuninist groups are "sham sections" that have either no reality or are small cliques composed not of real workers but of "lawyers, journalists, and other bourgeois doctrinaires". This coming from a man who studied law at university, earned a living as a journalist (as well as being supported by Engels) and whose whole lifestyle was thoroughly bourgeois. Marx was also obsessed with the idea that Bakunin was an intriguer who intended to replace the General Council with his own personal dictatorship. Guillaume and other supporters of Bakunin found Marx's pamphlet full of personal slander. Bakunin is said to have described it as a "heap of filth".

The all-important congress at the Hague was duly held in early September 1872. Sixty four delegates attended the congress, the majority of whom were supporters of Marx, for the Italians had decided to boycott the meeting. In August 1872, the first national congress of Italian Socialism was held in Rimini and there formed an Italian Federation of the International. The congress denounced the "slander and mystification" of the General Council, and Marx's "lust for authority". and therefore resolved to break all solidarity with the General Council. It proposed "to all those sections who do not share the authoritarian principles of the General Council to send their representatives to Neuchatel in Switzerland for the purpose of opening..... (an) anti-authori-

tarian congress.”⁶ Bakunin, who could not attend the congress, lost much of his support at the congress, and only six delegates, two from the Jura and four from Spain, were supporters of Bakunin. The General Council made up largely of Marx’s followers and Blanquists and the German state socialists formed the bulk of Marx’s support. Again Marx had engineered a conference that was packed with his own supporters. But it was clear that Marx aimed to defeat Bakunin- and the ideas he propagated- not only by weight of numbers, but also by destroying his personal reputation. To this end, Engels drafted a long report at the request of the General Council aiming to demonstrate that Bakunin had founded a secret society, the Alliance, (the main organ of which was the Central Committee of the Jura Federation), whose aims whose aims were incompatible with those of the International which it sought, it said, to disorganise and dominate. Engels therefore proposed that the congress should expel Bakunin and all present members of the Alliance of Social Democracy (including the Jura Federation) from the International Working Men’s Association. On the last day of the congress- after one third of the delegates had already gone home- this proposal was put before congress and by a vote of twenty seven for and seven against- with eight abstentions- Bakunin (along with his friend Guillaume) was expelled from the International.

Although there was little evidence that

the Alliance had existed as a secret society after 1869, Bakunin was nevertheless condemned. What seemed to have swayed the committee of inquiry that had been set up to examine the allegations was that Marx produced- behind closed doors- a copy of the letter that Nechaev had written to Bakunin’s publishers regarding the translation of Marx’s *Das Capital*. Bakunin was therefore unfairly dismissed from the International on two grounds:

1. That he had tried to establish and perhaps succeeded in establishing a society in Europe named “the Alliance” with rules, social and political matters entirely different from those of the International.

2. That Bakunin had made use of deceptive tricks in order to appropriate some portion of another person’s fortune, which constitutes fraud.⁷

It was clear that Marx was determined to remove Bakunin from the International even if he had to use the most underhand methods to do it.

But the bombshell at the 1872 Congress was the startling proposal, presented by Marx and the General Council, that the seat of the General Council of the International should be transferred to New York. It came as a complete surprise to most of the delegates, although they voted for the proposal nonetheless. What Marx’s motives were for such a move has been debated, but it effectively killed the International. But at least, by removing it to New York, he had saved the International from the influence of Bakunin.

Immediately after the Hague Congress, the anarchist members of the International held their own congress in the Swiss town of St Imier. It comprised delegations from Spain, Italy and the Swiss Jura. It was a small gathering and the delegates unanimously rejected the decisions of the Hague Congress and the powers given to the new general council. They constituted themselves into a free union of federation of the International, bound together not by an autocratic council, but by solidarity and mutual friendship. For a while, two rival Internationals continued to exist, but by the end of the decade the First International Working Men’s Association had essentially ceased to function. The

International congress held in Geneva in September 1873 was perhaps the last viable meeting. The congress dissolved with the General Council and declared the International a free federation of autonomous sections each with a right to reorganise itself as it saw fit.

Notes

1. Thomas, P. 1980 *Karl Marx and the Anarchists*. London RKP, p319
2. Cole, G.D.H., 1954. *History of Socialist Thought, Vol.II, Marxism and Anarchism 1850-1890*. London, Macmillan, p.197
3. Cole, op.cit., p.193
4. Thomas, op. cit., p.320
5. Guillaume in Dolgoff, S., ed., trans., introd., 1973 *Bakunin on Anarchy*, New York; Knopf, p.45
6. Hostetter, R. 1958. *The Italian Socialist Movement*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, p.284
7. Guillaume in Dolgoff, op. cit., p.47

lies damn lies & economics

continued from page 24

sympathetic to these arguments. Employers in any industry like slack in the labour market; it makes for a pliant workforce, one unlikely to make demands or resist speed ups. If a sizeable proportion of industry objected fundamentally to central bank policy - then central banks wouldn't operate the way they do, while rentiers might like a slightly higher unemployment rate than industrialist, the differences aren't big enough to inspire a big political fight”.

Like the differences in the ruling classes’ vision of the EU, it is a family quarrel, nothing more. We need to look to our own class, no-one else.

So, all five books are useful in determining when economists are lying to you. And in order to change the world, you really need to understand how it works and who it works for. You need the facts to see through the hype and PR exercises and unquestioned assumptions of the media.

The fact is that after 20 years of free market reforms, things have gotten worse. 20 years of “non adversarial”, “flexible” labour markets have resulted in stagnating pay levels, longer hours and increased workplace stress. Not that anarchists will be surprised by this.

The hype and the reality are moving in opposite directions and such tension can only be a god-send for agitators and other rebels. The question is whether anarchists can take advantage of the situation. We can only be helped by the facts and arguments provided in these books - knowledge is power after all!



nikos maziotis

communiqué from an 'anarchist urban guerilla'

Strymonokos Bay in Halkidiki, Northern Greece is the site of a proposed gold mine. Local people opposing the mine have confronted blockades by riot police and a curfew.

Solidarity actions against the government and TVX Gold, the mining company, have taken place in Athens and Thessaloniki. On 6/12/97 a bomb was placed at the Industry Ministry. Raids and arrests of anarchists, along with a hysterical media campaign followed. One of those arrested was Nikos Maziotis, a well known anarchist militant. Following his arrest there were a huge number of solidarity actions in Athens, arson, demonstrations and clashes with the police.

On 13th of February, Maziotis admitted in a letter to the press that he had put a bomb in the Ministry of Industry and Development, and explained why he did it. This is the first time in Greece that someone has claimed responsibility for the actions they are accused of.

"With the attempt against the ministry of Industry and Development on the 6th December 1997, my purpose was to send a message to the political, business and police circles of this country that their plans, either economic or repressive, are not going to pass without resistance. My purpose was also to send a message of solidarity to the just and dynamic struggle that the residents of Strymonikos Bay carry out, against the installation of gold mining in north-east Halkidiki by the Canadian multinational TVX GOLD.

So, I take complete responsibility for my actions. The "Anarchist Urban Guerrillas" is me. I, alone, made and placed the improvised mechanism in the ministry of Industry and Development on 6/12/97. What was found in the house in 13 Sparti St is exclusively mine. I don't consider myself as an armed guerrilla, but a

social guerrilla. I struggle, according to my individual strength, for the subversion of the state and of the State and of the existing social regime, without either rejecting any form of action or considering one as superior to another.

During my political action, I have written and distributed leaflets, posters, I have participated in mass demonstrators and marches, in occupations and conflicts with the repressive forces of the state. In a specific moment of my struggle, I chose this way to send my political message, the message of social solidarity. My past certifies the multiplicity of my revolutionary activity. In 1991 I was convicted for refusal to serve the army, and was detained for eight months in military prison, there are still charges against me for desertion. I was convicted in August of '94 along with 51 other comrades of mine, for the occupation of the economic university, as an expression of solidarity with the anarchist prisoners on hunger strike Odysseas Kampouris and Giorgos Balafas. I was also convicted for my participation in one of the most serious social events of the political reform period, the revolt of the Polytechnic in November of '95, that was an expression of solidarity with the Koridallos jail revolt and also with the political prisoners of that period, anarchists K. Kalaremas, who was on hunger strike, S. Dapergolas, Od.Kampouris, Chr. Marinos, G. Balafas, with the 4 anarchists arrested in a demonstration in Salonica, and also with the objector of military service N. Karanikas.

I am an anarchist and I aspire the total destruction of the State and of the capitalistic regime and its replacement by anti-authoritarian Communes. The only charge I can accept, and it's my honour, is that of subversive activity. If freedom is a crime for my enemies, then yes I admit I am a criminal. So, I recognise as my class enemies those who belong in specific social classes and are responsible for the sufferings of this world, poverty, exploitation, oppression, drugs, prisons, wars, environmental destruction. These social categories are those of state officials, poli-

ticians, technocrats, mandarins of capital, bureaucrats, uniformed murderers of the Security Forces and the militarists. These social castes will never disappear from the stage of history and will never give up their power or privileges voluntarily or by persuasion. This is why the social and class war is inevitable. And I am nothing but a political prisoner, a prisoner of the social and class war that is simmering and many times it spreads as a blaze in society.

There has been a lot of talk in the media (which broadcast the organised lie) that I belong in the "second generation of terrorists" I consider these interpretations, rather misinterpretations, ridiculous. I have to say the following about these kind of comparisons. There are three kinds of political violence. Terrorism of the state, which is the most usual and most organised, as the state possesses the monopoly of violence; the "revolutionary terrorism" of organisations with Marxist-Leninist ideology, that through their hierarchical structure reproduce the structures of the state and are a state in miniature; and there is the liberating violence. Social revolutions and revolts are mostly driven forward by fighters who act inside an open mass movement, rather than from "Jacobin" clubs and isolated military organisations of Marx-Leninist ideology. So, I send back the characterisation of "terrorist" to my accusers. More than twenty years of bourgeois parliamentary false-democracy can prove that.

In July of 1976, during conflicts in the centre of Athens between construction workers and the police, a police armoured vehicle murdered a woman aged 66, Anastasia Tsivika.

In 1978, men of MEA (special police units) murdered doctor Tsironis in his home in N. Smyrni, when he declared that his house was a dominion autonomous from the Greek state.

On the 16th of November 1980, during the demonstration from the polytechnic to the American embassy, Iakovos Koumis and Stamatina Kanelopoulou were beaten to death by the MAT (riot police).

On the 17th of November 1985, during clashes around the polytechnic, riot-policeman Melistas murdered 15 year old Michalis Kaltezas.

In 1986, in Kessariani, during clashes between strikers of the EDOK-ETER and the MAT, the worker Agelos Mavroudis was killed.

On the 9th of January 1991, the teacher N. Temponeras was murdered by right-



wing thugs who wanted to stop the students' occupations of school in Patras.

On the 10th January, 1991, during clashes after the students' demonstration after the murder of N. Temponeras, tear-gas thrown by the MAT set fire to a shopping centre and four citizens died.

On the 27th of the same month the death after torture of the Turkish political refugee Souleiman Aknar was announced. He was detained in the Public Security Building.

On the 10th January 1994, officer Lagogianis, who belongs to the police station of Moschato, with 5 shots executed Th. Giakas, during a simple identification.

In December of 1995 an Albanian prisoner was murdered during an attempt to escape from Stavrakiou Ioanninon prison.

In July of 1996, in Piraeus, on the ship Pegasus, inside cabin 53, anarchist Christoforos Marinos was executed.

The same year, in a police blockade outside the city of Livadia, policeman murdered Tasos Mouratis a Roma.

In December of 1997, an Albanian prisoner was murdered by policemen in his effort to escape Diavaton prison in Salonica.

The list of murders by the "democratic" state and the "democratic" police has no end. None of the murderers ever paid for their actions.

The blame was always on the victim who "committed suicide", or the police guns "accidentally shot", or the policeman was under the state of "legal self-defence". "Justice" has found the murderers either innocent or had simply dropped the charges.

So, who are the terrorists and dangerous ones for society and for the citizens?

I belong to a political and social mi-

lieu that in many cases has proved the danger of its action for the state's and regime's security, as it has repeatedly been an example for the oppressed social parts, about the forms of fight and resistance against the generalised attack of the state.

We can take a look at the social events of the last twenty years to prove how true that is.

During the 80s, when the social-democratic administration of capitalism was dominant, along with a model of development fed by the state and grants from the EEC, the only social conflicts against the mood of social peace and submission, were those caused by anarchists, with the occupations of the period '84-'85 the march against Le Pen in '84, the occupation of Chemistry University in May of '85, and the occupations of Chemistry and Polytechnic universities because of the murder of Kaltezas.

Some years after, in the 90s, occupations, as a dynamic form of struggle, resistance and self-organisation that was inspired by anarchists, became appropriated by other oppressed social parts, workers, students, farmers.

In 1989-90, when social democracy collapsed and the attack of neoliberalism began, workers in industries occupied many factories in Patras, Piraeus, Lavrio, Mantoudi in an attempt to stop the bankruptcy of the enterprises and their privatisation that led thousands of workers to unemployment.

In 1990-91 the movement of university and mostly high-school occupations erupted, with the riots and the occupation of the polytechnic. In fact it is this movement that led to the collapse of the right-wing government in the next elections, as it forced it to show its inhuman and anti-

social face, through the murder of teacher N. Temponeras and of the 4 citizens burned inside K. Marousi by the tear-gas thrown inside by the MAT.

In August of 1992 the wild-cat strike of workers in EAS (public transportation) begin with clashes in Votanicos. Mass expressions of people's violence, like the occupations and arsons of prefectures (Chania-June '90, Iraklio-August '91), blockades and occupations of national roads by farmers in the period 1995-97, or by citizens of local societies against the environmental destruction of

their place (Kalamas '87, Aravisos '89, Pouri 93-'94, Avlonas-Keratea '96, Strymonikos '96-'97) prove that when the oppressed people react to the hurricane of the state and the attack of neoliberalism, they, many times instinctively, appropriate forms of action with insurrectionist characteristics.

Anarchists have a great part of responsibility in that, as they keep always alive the purpose of resistance and social subversion, even in lulls of the social war.

So anarchists, who never seek authority positions, can rightly feel proud that they have left their own fingerprints on this whole period of social and class struggles.

I send greetings to all my comrades.

Solidarity with K. Kalaremas, S. Dapergolas and G. Vlassopoulos. Solidarity with social and class struggles. Solidarity with all those in revolt."

Koridallos Prison

11/2/1998

Nikos Maziotis

Maziotis was sentenced to ten months for desertion and other charges connected with the military. He was taken back to Koridallos Prison, where he is detained, charged for the bombing attempt at the ministry and guns and explosives found in his house. The comrades who were gathered outside the military courthouse chanting slogans of solidarity with N. Maziotis and against the state and the army, attacked the riot police who didn't let them go inside the court.

Policemen were beaten up and injured and forced to run inside and close the gate, as stones fell on their heads, cars and inside the yard of the court house.

omagh bombing cont. from page 19

wards in the case of Omagh - principally the alienation of the nationalist community from anti Stormont forces.

In the aftermath of the bomb, the Irish government rushed through the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act 1998, which provides for the effective criminalisation of any opposition to the status quo:

- refusal to answer police questions will be regarded as corroborative evidence

- the creation of a new criminal offence of directing an unlawful organisation - with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment

- a new offence of collecting, recording or possessing information which could be useful for 'anti-government purposes'

- extension of the period of detention under the Act from 48 to 72 hours

- an accused person on a membership charge must reveal all defence witness details to the prosecution in advance of trial - giving licence to the state to harass and intimidate witnesses.

Britain rushed through its own amendment of the PTA - the Criminal Justice (Terrorism and Conspiracy) Act which allows:

- conviction for membership of an illegal organisation on the "opinion" evidence of a senior police officer

- a new offence of conspiracy within the UK to commit offences abroad

We should not allow our horror at the slaughter at Omagh to blind us to the need to oppose the actions of the British and Irish states in their harassment of Republicans opposed to the Stormont settlement. It is not necessary to share the analysis of the 32 County Sovereignty Committee to seek to defend its right to put its arguments and organise in pursuit of its politics. Similarly Republican Sinn Fein (with demonstrable electoral support in the 26 counties) should still have its voice heard without censorship and criminalisation. Omagh is being used as a justification for smashing all opposition to Stormont. Twenty nine percent of the nationalist community in the 6 counties, and 5% in the 26 counties do not support the Agreement. Is the new era in Irish politics to be one where nationalists who hold the "right" opinions are accorded meaningful citizenship, while those who do not have no rights at all?

innocent bystanders? 'the enemy is middle class'

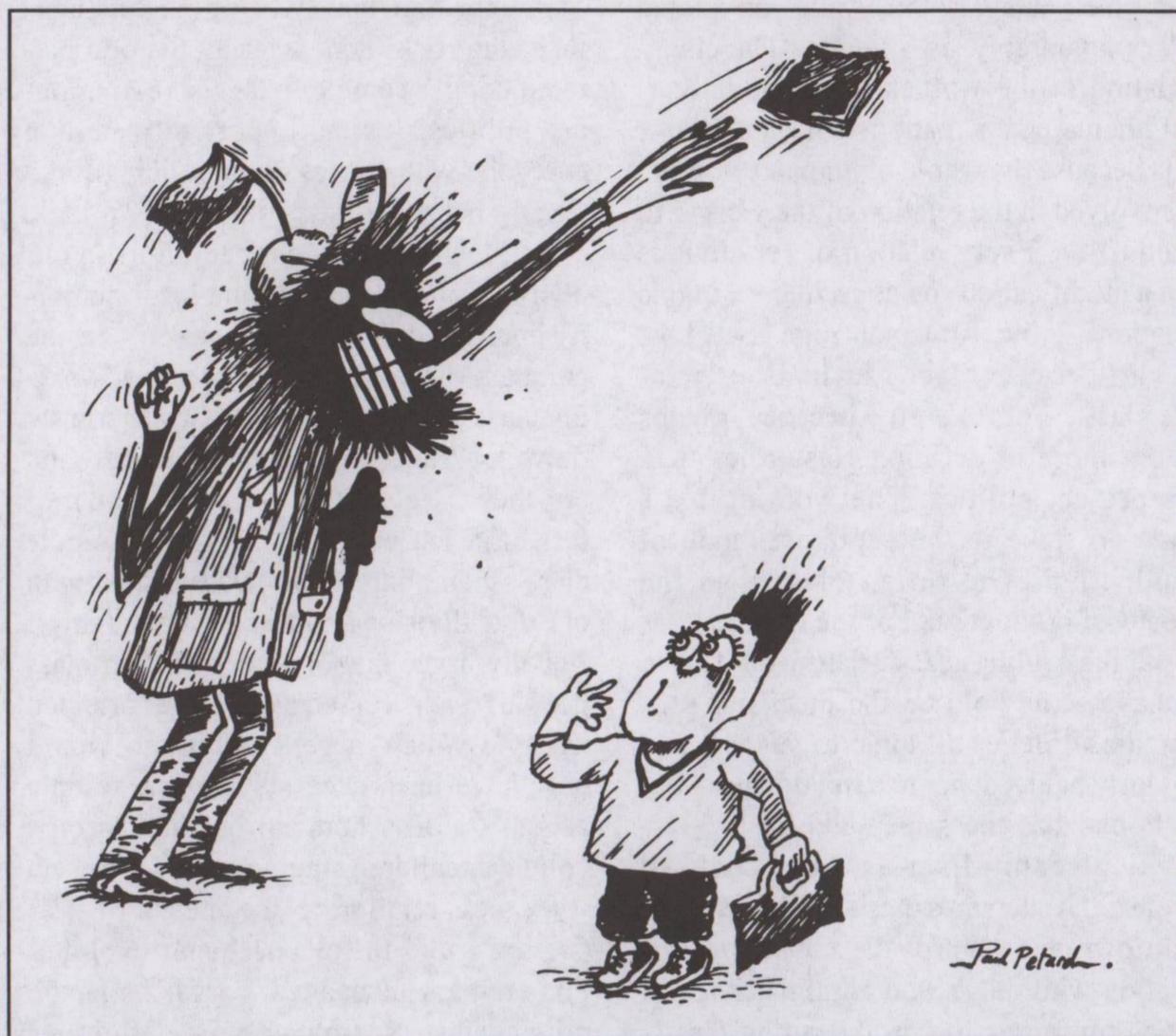
- *Andy Anderson & Mark Anderson*
(*Openly Classist Publications*)

Andy Anderson's big idea is that "there are two classes in this country, this society, and two only. One dominates the other in every aspect of their lives. This dominated class is the working class. It will therefore be shown that the real enemy of working class people - the enemy that keeps them suppressed - is not capitalism, not the State, not the never defined "Ruling Class", but this dominating class, the middle class." His conclusions have been roundly dismissed by everyone from the (unlamented) Anarchist Workers Group to Class War. This review also rejects Anderson's central contention - it is nevertheless the case that Anderson scores a few direct hits along the way.

The first problem is that Anderson says that he intends to "explain more clearly... what reason shows to be true" and then does no such thing, relying instead on assertions about class structure and hierarchy without substantiating any of it. The end result is that the "never defined "Ruling Class" is replaced by an equally ill-

defined middle class. At no point does Anderson offer up a definition of the "middle class" or, crucially, their relation to the means of production. We are told that "our failure to recognize our true enemy is the reason why today we are no nearer to our emancipation - to freeing ourselves - than ever we were"- but are offered no theoretical tools to help us in this task. Instead, we are left with the assertion that "It is quite easy to see the great majority of the middle class for what they are." (Obviously not, or we would be "nearer to our emancipation" than we actually are!)

We are told that there is no middle class in the accepted "leftist" sense - that the middle class are in effect the ruling class, but that "it ought to be obvious that - inevitably in a class divided society - there can be no clear cut line between working class and middle class. A few people do move from one class to another; this is what the "sociologists" refer to as the "blurring of class lines." - It is a remarkable "blurring" which allows working



class people to move up to the ruling class, and members of the ruling class to slip down into the working class. A ruling class so fragile and unboundaried - it makes you wonder how it has survived so long!

Later in the same section of the book, "Working Class or Middle Class?" Anderson tells us: "Income is a fair indication of class in many cases, but there are some where income alone is not; teachers, the vast majority of whom are middle class, have a smaller income than some working class people in other occupations; there are of course other indications: education, background, parents, lifestyle, the way they speak, accent. ...The question only arises when a working class group devoted solely to the "emancipation" of our class is being formed... And if, at the time of such a formation, the class of someone who wants to join can't be decided, you could reasonably give her/him the benefit of the doubt, that is call her/him working class at least until it should become obvious that this is not so, then get rid of them."

So - it's vital to know your enemy, but it's not easy to always tell - so give them the benefit of the doubt if they say they're on your side! Ah - the precision of science - don't you just love it? Obviously this is complete gibberish. The reason Anderson ends up in such a mess is because his central premise is entirely wrong, and he ties himself in knots as a result.

Way back in 1964, in his (excellent) pamphlet, Hungary '56, Anderson quoted Marx favourably, as follows: "The emancipation of the workers contains universal human emancipation - and it contains this because the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production. Every relation of servitude is but a modification and consequence of this relation." Now, Anderson rejects all this, in part because Marx was himself "middle class." This is a pity, because it helps us far more in defining class roles than his present politics. The working class have no stake in the capitalist mode of production. The ruling class own the means of production. For the middle class to be the "ruling class" they would have to have some hold on the means of production. It defies all logic to suggest that a poorly paid teacher in a run down school in Poplar has the same stake in the survival of capitalism as, say, Richard Branson. Anderson's thesis conflates those who own and control the means of production with those who administer it and carry out repression on the ruling class's

behalf. To recognise the existence of the middle class is not to imply it has a progressive role in the battle between capital and labour. The development of fascism in Germany and Italy in the 30s teaches us a different lesson. The middle class is like a frightened rabbit caught between two more powerful contenders. It will run with whichever appears the stronger force.

Again, in '64, Anderson argued "For years to come all important questions for revolutionaries will boil down to simple queries...Are you for or against workers management of production? Are you for or against the rule of the Workers Councils?" Anderson's new positions muddy the waters. If the revolutionary task of the working class is to take control of the means of production this has to imply the suppression of those who currently own the means of production - and a successful revolutionary strategy will be organised around this aim. If bosses are confused with their agents then the class war can be reduced to nothing more than a classroom rebellion - winding up the middle classes. In our day-to-day lives we are policed by the middle classes - probation officers and social workers, for instance, and part of our survival as a class will be through resistance to this policing process. The logic of Anderson's position, though, is to confuse defensive revolts with a wider struggle against capital. The end result of this is fairly clearly where some elements of Class War came unstuck - throwing rocks and cheering the odd battered copper came to pass for revolutionary politics. Just as importantly, calling everyone who carries out a policing function on behalf of the ruling class, "middle class", lets off the hook the traitors in our own ranks - some front line local authority housing staff and DSS workers can be amongst the most hostile to other working class people - yet by all the criteria set down by Anderson - income, background etc. they are clearly of our class - and traitors to it. Far easier to call them "middle class" than address the need to deal with our own divisions honestly (and harshly)! Equally, large numbers of working class people have accessed a consumer oriented lifestyle which, a generation ago would only have been accessible to the middle classes - videos, home ownership, foreign holidays, children staying on at school etc - yet their relation to the means of production - and their consequent exploitation - remain unchanged. For all Anderson rails against "sociology", his definitions

of class are entirely sociological and completely divorced from analyses of ownership and control of production.

It is, however, possible to agree with some of Anderson's conclusions without accepting the logic of his central argument. There are valuable passages detailing the use of credit to ensnare working class people as a means of social control, sale of council houses as a means of fostering divisions within working class communities, education as the instillation of "obedience", and a celebration of the '81 riots as working class resistance. Moreover, Anderson's most useful conclusion is the one most vociferously condemned by his usual critics (for obvious reasons). If the emancipation of the working class is the task of the working class themselves, then it follows that working class organisation should be the property of the working class itself and that organisations which speak in the name of our class but which are dominated by middle class members have failed in their self selected task. "We must put no reliance whatever of any kind of middle class people helping us to break out of the prison." The end result of the abandonment of this position by supposed "workers" organisations, whether Trotskyist or anarchist, has been the effective abandonment of working class areas to either the parties of the status quo or of the far right, while the constituency of the "left" has become the campus or the Labour Party branch meeting. It is not to decry the efforts of sincere middle class militants (Anderson thinks they don't exist - I disagree) to acknowledge that a politics which has at its core the self emancipation of the working class has run aground if its membership and audience are predominantly middle class. It does not follow that Anderson's redefinition of class roles is correct - the centrality of the working class to the revolutionary project is based on our class's role within the production processes of capital, and whether we accept the middle class as caught between capital and labour or see it as the "ruling class" makes no difference in this regard: if working class people are to bring about the end of class society, we must control our own organisations to do so.

Anderson's book is wrong, but it is challenging, and at least Anderson is passionate about the history and traditions of the working class (as he says, "Look back with pride-and anger!") It's also a fair bet that most of those who usually slag him do so because they feel a bit caught out!!

Out of the Frying Pan: a critical look at works councils

Published by Solidarity Federation, £1.50 (see contacts for address)

Works councils are to be introduced into the industrial relations system in this country on the pattern already established elsewhere in the EU. In France all employers with 50 or more staff have Works Councils consisting of representatives of the staff and of management. Their purpose is purely consultative. They are to be set up on a similar pattern in this country. In France they have provided a focus for trade union recruitment. But they are not designed to be and never will be a means of carrying out collective bargaining. This is the principal large function performed by trade unions in this country. It is important the trade union side can use the power of their membership to influence the result of the negotiating process, and the system is worth preserving for this reason. It has been under recent attack through the move to replace the national agreement system in the National Health Service with a system of local pay settlements with individual NHS trusts. These moves merit in response the old trade union watchword "United we stand; divided we fall". Similarly any move to introduce universal employee management consultation to replace genuine negotiation must be resisted. Essentially I agree with the author of this pamphlet that this is what will happen with the introduction of Works Councils on the EU pattern into this country.

I see it in embryonic form in my own job. I work for a Labour controlled local authority. Every autumn for many years

the leader has called trade union officers to a meeting and told them how bad the budget cuts for the next year look like being. He then passes round papers outlining what service and staffing cuts are being considered to meet target reductions. The trade unions then take the papers away, look at the proposals and discuss a response. Obviously areas which involve job cuts are where the unions' concerns

are keenest. After much argument in the trade union side a response is made making alternative suggestions and this process of consultation goes on until January or February of the next year when the final budget package is revealed.

Invariably many of the cuts in the original proposals, which had given the trade unions most anxiety, have been removed, but many of the others are still there. It's very much a swings and roundabouts affair. And above all, the final decisions on what cuts are made rest with the councillors who are in the Labour Group, and there is no way of knowing whether the bits they have put in the autumn document which have

vanished by January were only ever suggested so the unions could be cheaply appeased by taking them out. It can never be known what influence the unions' arguments have had. And because the process is consultation not negotiation this cannot be changed.

The role of Works Councils on the EU model is designed to be similar. This will appeal to top trade union professionals who live for their consultative panels their government advisory bodies. But those of us active at the sharp end, in the workplace, have more prosaic views of the purpose of a trade union. We note the powerlessness of employee representatives and oppose any move to replace proper collective bargaining between trade unions and employers with the fullest possible membership support and participation on the trade union side.

Otherwise works councils must turn out to be a means whereby employers legitimise what they were going to do anyway by pointing to trade union participation in the consultation process. Trade union activists must always be aware of this danger, and my experience tells me they generally are.

In general I agree with the arguments in this pamphlet. My feeling is that, while it is valuable to analyse how trade unions are becoming incorporated into the power structure of the state, it also needs to be emphasised that their independence must be preserved, as this, together with their members, is their most valuable asset.



Captain Jack White

Organise, the Irish section of the IWA have reprinted *The Meaning of Anarchism* by Captain Jack White

White was an Ulster Protestant whose father was a field marshall and landowner. He met Connolly and was "converted" to socialism. In 1913 White proposed the formation of a workers militia, which became the Irish Citizen Army but always rejected nationalism.

This pamphlet is an explanation of anarchism, in the context of the Spanish revolution where White went with Ryan's International brigade. In itself it is a clear explanation of the differences, and the common ground, between Anarchism and Socialism. Its most important for its preface and as a part of Irish anarchist history

£1 from Organise PO Box 505, Belfast, BT12 6BQ

quiz answers

1. Jerome was King of Westphalia and was confronted by a discontented populace. Napoleon advised him "If the people refuse what makes for their own welfare they are guilty of anarchism and the first duty of the prince is to punish them".
2. The suggestions mainly concerned her voracious sexual appetites. One was that she had gonorrhoea and the other that she suffered internal damage due to the outsize organ of her former lover Forbin.
3. Mayor of Cádiz.
4. "With membership of TUC affiliated unions down to 6.6m compared to 13m in 1980, the unions have a duty to organise as well as moan, to paraphrase the old Industrial Workers of the World slogan." Donald Macintyre, *The Independent* 15/9/98

Dear BF,

Good you support the Gandalf Defendants but bad we have to write critical GA editorials to ever get you to show it. Good too that the principles at stake around the Gandalf case are more important to you than the unconditional approval of the cop-sucking Searchlight + Leeds/Bradford mafia.

As Noel Molland has also written his apologies to the Neoist Alliance's Fabian "Fuckwit" Tompsett- who continues to denounce him as a supposed "anarcho-fascist" in his usual deranged manner- and as all GA's editors disassociated themselves from him in October 1997 for grassing to the court in an attempt to get me banged up for contempt, his opinions hardly count for much. His continuing to smear me in print- despite his own experiences of conspiracy legislation- and his clandestine correspondence with you prior to this just goes to show that once started tale-bearing is a hard habit to break.

Immature Noel seeks to trash me as his grassing undermines his status as a former animal rights prisoner, all he's in it for. By labelling me paranoid he hopes to discredit my defence even before I come to trial in November. Then, in part, it'll be argued that what's published in GA is justified as self-defence against State attacks on basic freedoms, and that the activities of spooks directed at society generally and GA particularly is evidence of this. Noel got involved in GA in 1994 after reading about the Tim Hepple affair and all his early RATs featured army intelligence provocateur, Final Conflict editor and patriotic vegan Stuart McCullough, so he knows the score. Doesn't that make him paranoid like me - and show up what a malicious lying little shit stirrer he is? His claim the Gandalf prosecution "just about Robin Webb" depoliticises this issue and implies it's about nothing else whatsoever. That fails to explain why Robin is being prosecuted alongside GA rather than anyone else - and why Operation Washington CO Des Thomas admitted at committal that MI5 were involved because of us not Robin. For more info on this I refer your readers to The Law (#13, pp16-17, PO Box 3878, London, SW12 9ZE) and when published my response to Noel's Arkangel 19 piece and Larry O'Hara's forthcoming pamphlet on the Gandalf trial.

Our open letter to the Scottish Anarchist Federation (GA 52) makes my position on Steve Booths article quite clear.

On the subject of cults, though, I call on Black Flag to publicly condemn the Neoist Alliance, whose arse-licking of fascists and poncey bourgeois publishers must disgust genuine anarchists far more than Aum Shirikio's bygone bad behaviour.

Yours for the destruction of civilisation.

Paul Rogers, Gandalf Defendant.

[No we still think that writing arty crap will never be as stupid as killing tube passengers. Perhaps that's what makes us liberals.]

Dear Liberals,

I doubt whether you'll print any of this letter, but I disagree with your description of me as misanthropic. As to Noel Molland, he doesn't need to apologise for anything said in GA because he repudiated GA in the box in Portsmouth Crown Court, and described Paul, the general editor of GA in very strong terms. What is said in GA is nothing to do with Noel.

More importantly- you have obviously not read and not considered what was said in my irrationalists article. You call for people to condemn it but you do not engage with the contents of it- your comment is a knee jerk reaction. I still await a refutation of my Irrationalist article by such as yourselves, Feebledom and all other abusive fluffies. Your comments are symptomatic of the total weakness of the so-called revolutionary movement. Armed struggle is OK for somewhere far away, like the Zapatistas, or long ago, as with the Spanish Civil War, but not for now, not for the moment, not for Basingstoke. You know full damn well that a revolution (ie armed struggle) against the system is necessary, but people like yourselves, Feebledom and other fluffy bullshitters and anarcho-merchandisers denigrate anyone who says this out loud.

When people mouth rhetoric like "By all means necessary", they are making a call to armed struggle, but when it comes down to it all their talk is just so much wind and piss.

Enough abuse from me: In the spirit of constructive debate here are 24 propositions for you to consider,

Steve Booth, community resistance editor GA.

[accompanying this were 23 (one repeated) points along the lines of "the machine must colonise everywhere" and "generally, with few exceptions the masses are passive". I'm not typing these in. If anyone really cares we'll send you a copy. Fucked off "liberal" typist BF.]

Dear BF,

As a member of the Swedish SAC, It was with great interest that I read Kieran Casey's piece in BF#214. In a rather sensible (unusual for comrade Casey) and pedagogic form he has given a brief description of his version of SAC's positions in the numerous questions concerning SAC's relations with the IWA. Casey's article, in combination with Peter Principles earlier piece, paint a generally accepted picture of the situation.

There are however, a few points made in Casey's article that I would like to comment upon as well as a few points in regards to the SAC which he has unfortunately forgotten to mention.

First is his claim that no section of the IWA has a "higher degree of democratic culture and transparency than SAC, no matter what their size." I can only giggle at such organisational chauvinism! It must be obvious to any sensible person that a small affinity group, of which I suppose some IWA sections consist no more of, have a better democratic culture than an organisation of circa 9 000 members in which only circa 300 partake in member referendums on a regular basis (such as the SAC)!

Casey further claims that there are no "informal hierarchies" within the SAC. I must give him some credit on this point in reference to his own four year term as the duly elected International Secretary, and thereafter employee, of the SAC. His term in office was sufficient enough to convince SAC's members that his responsibilities were better off being taken care of by a committee of interested members rather than by a paid official. The recent 26th Congress of the SAC dismantled comrade Casey's former post. But, the fact remains that the SAC does suffer from informal, as well as formal, hierarchies. To claim that any organisation in today's society, no matter what size, were free from such is simply plain folly.

In regards to the claim that all SAC employees and functionaries enjoy the same wages - that is a truth in modification. SAC currently owns three judicial corporations, connected to its union activities in various degrees, and the employees of those enjoy differing wages and benefits, ranging from housing to well paid salaries. Indeed, some of these employees are not even members of the SAC but of the social democratic Lands Organisation, LO!

letters continued

Casey also refers to SAC as a revolutionary syndicalist organisation and I assume that he sets that term in juxtaposition to anarcho-syndicalism as well as "ordinary" syndicalism. Although I should not assume things, this is relevant in the fact that he does not define what revolutionary syndicalism is. SAC's brand of revolutionary syndicalism however, allows for political party functionaries and members, not only into its rank and file (which does not necessarily have to be a problem), but into central posts of trust. At least one member of the central working committee of the SAC is a member of the left party, former communists (Vänsterpartiet) and one member of SAC's highest instance between congresses, the central committee, is a member of the bourgeois agrarian party (Centerpartiet)!

I would like to end this on the positive note that, as Casey has written, the "SAC does not propose itself to be the perfect workers organisation and that (SAC) continually seeks to improve (its) democratic structure so that it might serve as a tool in the shaping of a future libertarian socialist society." SAC has also continually become increasingly radical for every congress in the last sixteen years and the current influx of societally-disposed youths from the independent Syndicalist Youth Organisation, SUF, as well as different anarchist networks, are the spear-point in a continued radicalisation of the SAC. For all its shortcomings, SAC does deserve to fly that red and black flag high.

With anarcho-greetings,
Kurt Svensson
member of Stockholms LS of SAC

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Communications Workers Network - SF
Both PO Box 29, SWPDO, Manchester M15 5HW

Transport Workers Network - SF
c/o Norwich Solidarity Centre (see E. Anglia section)

Public Service Workers Network - SF, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE

Industrial Workers of the World - British Isles, F. Lee, Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester, LE1 1WB

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Anarchist Black Cross (prisoner support) and "Taking Liberties"
PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY

Legal Defence & Monitoring Group, BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX

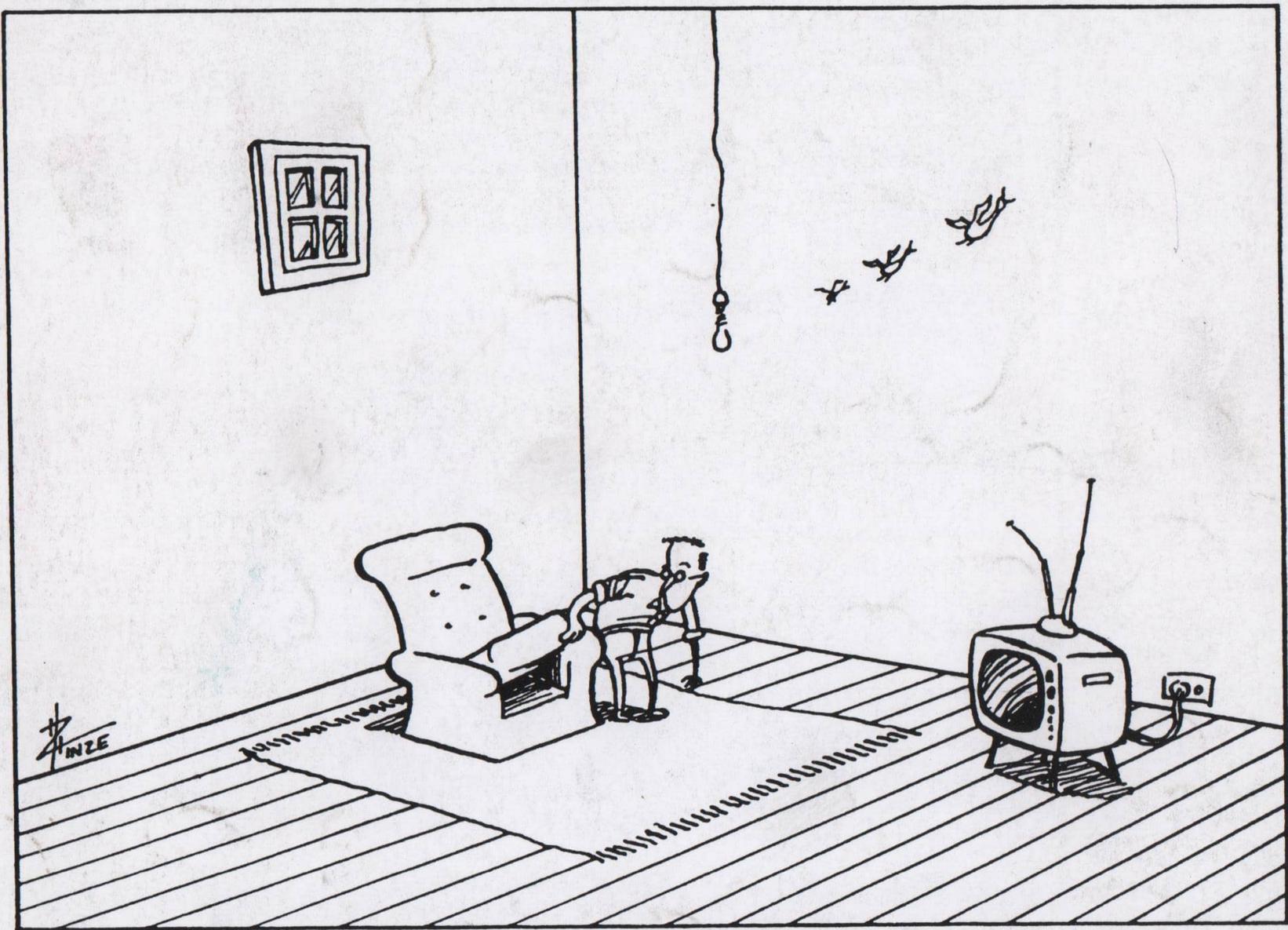
Kate Sharpley Library,
BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX

Anarchist Graphics, Box 5,
167 Fawcett Rd, Southsea, Hants
PO4 0DH (graphics collective)

Smash Hits -'A Discussion Bulletin For Revolutionary Ideas'
BM 5538, London WC1N 3XX

NOTICES

The International of Anarchist Federations (IFA) has moved its secretariat. It can now be contacted at:
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As a worker of the world Dan had nothing to lose.
Except, of course, those bloody chains...