

BLACK FLAG

FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE

NOV-DEC 89

30p

Pub Bombings : THE STATEMENT THEY SUPRESSED

PROMINENT establishment figures were party to the suppression of vital evidence proving the innocence of the four people sentenced to Life in 1975 for the bombings in Guildford and Woolwich. Members of an IRA active service unit, some of whom became known as the 'Balcombe Street Gang', freely provided the police Bomb Squad team, led by Detective Superintendent Peter Imbert, with information about the bombings that could only have been known by those who had carried them out. This information was shown to Sir Michael Havers, the Prosecuting Council in the 'Balcombe Street' trial (as well as the trial relating to the Woolwich bombing), and to Sir Norman Skelhorn, the Director of Public Prosecutions. This evidence was suppressed from the trial hearings on the advice of the DPP and on the instruction of the judge, Cantley. Desperate to make the truth known, the defendants took the decision to read out a

statement in court. On attempting to read the statement the defendants were constantly interrupted by Judge Cantley, who instructed police officers to restrain them.

The admissions by the defendants were referred to by some newspapers in their coverage of the trial but their statement was never published in full. As far as we are aware the complete statement was never printed in any publication at the time (with the exception of *The Leveller* magazine) and has, to date, never been printed since.

The statement was read out on behalf of the defendants by Joe O'Connell and is reproduced below, word for word. Those involved in the suppression of this statement and the incriminating evidence are just as responsible in the cover-up as those police officers who forced false confessions and who fabricated evidence in the earlier Guildford Four trial.

more on centre pages



Who can forget the moment when Gerry Conlon, one of the freed Guildford Four, emerged from court with his two sisters and made a bee-line for the crowd of supporters and reporters across the road, announcing with great emotion his innocence, the innocence of his father, the innocence of the Maguire Seven, and the innocence of the Birmingham Six? It was a moment of joy, triumph and anger. Interviewed on television later in the day Mr Conlon again reaffirmed his commitment to the release of the Six, who were convicted, like the Guildford Four, on forced confessions and as a result of discredited forensics tests.

STATEMENT OF THE 'BALCOMBE STREET' GANG

'We are all four Irish Republicans. We have recognised this court to the extent that we have instructed our lawyers to draw the attention of the court to the fact that four totally innocent people - Carole Richardson, Gerry Conlon, Paul Hill and Paddy Armstrong - are serving massive sentences for three bombings, two in Guildford and one in Woolwich, which three of us and another man now imprisoned have admitted that we did.

The Director of Public Prosecutions was made aware of these admissions in December 1985, and has chosen to do nothing. We wonder if he will still do nothing when he is made aware of the new and important evidence which has come to light through the cross examination by our counsel of certain prosecution witnesses in this trial.

The evidence of Higgs and Lidstone (*forensic experts*) played a vital part in the conviction of innocent people. Higgs admitted in this trial that the Woolwich bomb formed part of a correlated series with other bombings with which we are charged. Yet, when he gave evidence in the earlier Guildford trial he deliberately concealed that the Woolwich bomb was part of a series carried out between October and December 1974 and that the people on trial were in custody at the time of some of these bombings.'

'I've been in prison for 15 years for something I didn't do. I watched my father die in prison for something he didn't do. I'm totally innocent.

I feel bitterness towards the judiciary, towards the police who framed me, who fabricated evidence, but I have nothing but time and respect for all the English people who have helped and there have been so, so many of

them.

If you're Irish, and you're arrested on a terrorist, political type of offence, you don't stand a chance. Maybe now that they've been big enough, or there's someone who's been honest enough to admit the mistakes that were made, maybe the Birmingham Six will be next.'

Gerard Conlon, on gaining his freedom.

Cuba's Forgotten Anarchists

Deep inside the dungeons of one of Cuba's more notorious prisons is an anarcho-syndicalist militant who believes he has been forgotten for ever. Angel Donato Martinez is one of the few remaining members of the Zapata Group, an agrarian anarchist-syndicalist group that first emerged at the beginning of this decade to challenge the stalinist practices of the Cuban dictatorship.

The group saw itself as following in the traditions of the great Mexican revolutionaries Emilio Zapata and Flores Magon: they took part in industrial agitation and unionisation. Free syndicates were not tolerated and members of the group were forced to operate clandestinely. In 1982 several large-scale strikes took place. The authorities decided to clamp down and rid themselves of the strike militants. The police moved in swiftly and rounded up 20 members of the Zapata Group. They were accused of trying to form an independent union and of industrial sabotage.

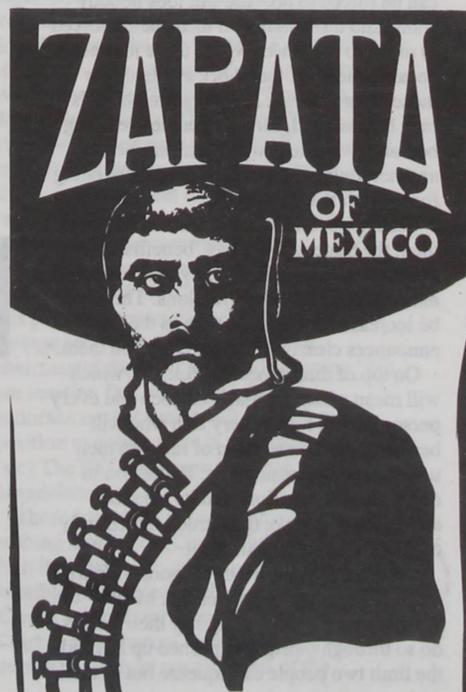
Five of the 20 were sentenced to death. One of them, Carida Paron, died in prison - she was tortured to death in the Villa Marista interrogation centre. Anarchist exiles began immediately a campaign to save the five. Communiqués about their fate were sent out to groups

around the world. Many of these communiqués did not reach their destinations, information about the campaign was suppressed, in some cases there was even disbelief that this sort of thing could happen in Cuba underlining the general ignorance of many outside Cuba about the true picture of what was really happening in that country. In consequence international support was largely confined to exiles in Central America and in the USA.

As a result of the international support the death sentences were commuted, the five instead being given long-term jail sentences. Only the fate of one, Donato, is known today - the other four may well also be still inside, or they may be dead.

Donato is believed to be inside the Combinado del Este prison, near Havana. Information as to his precise conditions is unknown. His supporters in exile believe his situation will improve if interest in him increases internationally.

The treatment of anarchists and agrarian-syndicalists in Cuba - who demand liberty, land and collectivisation - over the years by the Cuban authorities has been that of continuous persecution, imprisonment and - more



often than not - death. Many activists rarely find their way to prison but are taken by the death squads and killed. Since 1982 we know of several militants who have had their lives ended in this fashion. Ramon Toledo Lugo and Armando Hernandez were both killed by the death squads. Others have been given 30 year prison sentences - people like the brothers David, Carlos and Jorge Cardo, Jesus Varda, Israel Lopez Toledo, and Timoteo Toledo Lugo. Certain of their wives were also imprisoned on conspiracy charges.

The above represent only a tiny fraction of the anarchist and syndicalist struggle inside Cuba. The struggle has been isolated, but it continues. It is long-time that it was widened and internationalised. SOURCE: 'ABC Latinoamerica'

N.B. Unfortunately we have no knowledge of Latinoamerica; nor can we necessarily assume that 'ABC' here refers to Anarchist Black Cross. When we know more we will publish the details.

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

Sorry, owing to the massive increase in postage rates, our subscriptions have to be raised if we're to keep our heads somewhat below water as usual, but they're still below cost.

We also have to start cutting off expired subs—some old friends we've kept on for a long time until we hear they've moved years ago. But we maintain our offer to send to prisoners free; or to wageless for cost of the stamp only. So as not to upset direct sales we are keeping the giveaway selling price of 30p for now.

BACK NUMBERS: We find that we have a limited number of back numbers of BLACK FLAG, returns from bookshops. Anyone interested? Sorry no complete sets! Single copies available for 30p (incl. postage). Usual address.

Anarcho-Quiz

1. What is the maximum penalty for rape (on the most upper class) in this country?
2. As Gen. Franco supported Hitler's war effort to the extent of sending a Legion to fight, why was a Spanish citizen hanged for treason by the British Government for serving in the German Army?
3. What was the Greenshirt philosophy?
4. How did Dr David Owen justify Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan's confidence in choosing him as Foreign Secretary?
5. Distributism has been re-discovered by the 'Nationalism Today' tendency (Gadaffi wing) of the National Front—what was it all about?
6. It sometimes surprises people to read that when Catalan workers collectivised land in 1936 they confiscated holdings of employers but not of shareholders—why?

CONTD. ON BACK PAGE



IS BLACK FLAG

'...a link with anarchists and revolutionary terrorists overseas', that 'looks to Spain' (*Daily Telegraph*)... is 'the very vilest effluvia that oozes in to stain the banner of Anarchism' (*The Match*)... written by 'ill informed political juveniles' (*Searchlight*)... 'with little attempt made to provide a sustained anarchist analysis, still less a political lead' (*Socialism from Below*)... 'a Communist news sheet... produced by red filth' (*The Flag—NF*)... 'a sheet' (George Woodcock, Penguin), consisting of 'bombs in Bogota' (*Time Out*)?

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WHAT WITH ONE THING AND ANOTHER WE REGRET THERE WILL BE NO MORE ISSUES THIS YEAR. NEXT FLAG (No 196) WILL BE 1990—meanwhile happy new year!

Plans for Euro-gestapo

CIVIL LIBERTARIANS were outraged with the announcement by Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, that a National Criminal Intelligence Unit was to be set up to coordinate criminal intelligence data in the UK—they said it presages the way for the setting up of the equivalent of an FBI. But this is not the only move underfoot to coordinate policing on a wider scale. Behind the scenes initiatives are taking place for policing in Western Europe to become more centralised and an important element of this centralisation process is the coordination of information gathering.

The first signs within the UK of new centralisation initiatives came with the setting up this summer of a special intelligence unit to monitor 'football hooligans'. This unit would pass on information to police authorities in other countries. Next came the national Drugs Intelligence Unit. Within a matter of days of the setting up of this unit came the announcement that major criminal activity would be monitored by another intelligence unit, which would cover the whole country and which would also link in with police intelligence outside of the UK. Sir Peter Imbert, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, has already stated that he actually favours an FBI for Britain, and no doubt he sees the intelligence unit, CrimIntell, as paving the way.

But we need to look to 1992, and all that the changes in Western Europe involves, to see the possible direction of policing for the future. At the moment the police co-operate internationally through Interpol, but this set-up has never proven that effective in that it tends to respond largely after crimes have been committed: the police argue, therefore, that more pre-emptive policing, internationally, is needed, and that this requires greater co-operation on intelligence matters.

Another organisation, about which very little is known, which provides intelligence data internationally is Interdoc (International Documentation). Interdoc is believed to have been set up in 1963 by several intelligence agencies. It is based in The Hague, in the Netherlands and is believed to be funded partly by governments and partly by industry

(it has been said that it was set up originally with funds from the Shell oil company). Not much is known about the activities of Interdoc, except that it issues reports on all sorts of matters to recipients in several countries. These recipients include newspapers, news agencies, government agencies, intelligence agencies, the police, private companies, etc. We believe that it acts as a central coordinating point for information-gathering on political activity, industrial activity, and terrorist activity.

According to the now defunct *Digger* magazine Interdoc's affiliates include the Economic League, the blacklisting agencies based in Britain. The *Digger* reckons that Interdoc acts as an international clearing house for all sorts of information including, presumably, blacklisting. If this is true then the implications of the role of Interdoc take on a new significance.

One of the gaps in the blacklisters' armour is the cross-national flow of labour. With 1992 the blacklisters will be even more concerned at the prospect of workers 'flooding' in from mainland Europe and not knowing anything about their trade union backgrounds or political affiliations. Likewise victims of blacklisting in Britain will be able to sell their labour, in theory, in mainland Europe. If the Economic League is an affiliate to Interdoc then presumably its records or much of the information the EL holds is passed on regularly to Interdoc for 'processing' and for forwarding to other interested parties. Likewise, the EL would be a recipient of information originating from Interdoc.

The *Digger* maintained that Interdoc traditionally includes on its board a representative from the Economic League. They also say that previous British members of their board have included Brian Crozier (right-winger with MI6/CIA connections), Charles Ellis (formerly of MI6, but later confessing to having spied for the Nazis prior to and during World War 2), Walter Bell (another British spook), and Niels Elles (a director of Common Cause, an organisation that was set up by the right-wing of the Labour Party to monitor the left and which co-operates with the EL).

More recently other initiatives have been set in motion in the coordination of West European intelligence. For example there is the Schengen Agreement, involving Belgium, Holland, West Germany and possibly Britain in the 'examination of the centralisation of an intelligence system'. Then there are the activities of the Trevi Group, which meets in Italy and includes representatives of governments and security agencies from several countries: its remit is to coordinate information on political activists but operates under a smokescreen of combatting drug trafficking and terrorism.

Back in the UK another centralisation move, that might well be 'Europeanised', is the centralisation of debtors on records held by a privately owned database—the biggest in the country—believed to be run by CCN Systems based in Nottingham. Included on this database already are all the country's Electoral Roll details and presumably if the Poll Tax gets fully implemented 'Community Charge' information will be loaded on to this database as well. With the 'free movement of labour' across national boundaries that may disappear, this sort of information could be shared with similar agencies in other countries and help confirm background information generally on 'targets'. We also hear, incidentally, that the Home Office has appointed a merchant bank to look into the possibility of privatising the Police National Computer.

All this seemingly disparate moves are not merely coincidental. A 'free international market' with 'free borders' requires greater security. The internationalising of blacklisting is one aspect; the exchange of personal profiles via debt databases is another; the swapping of intelligence reports is crucial to all international co-operation between statist forces; and the centralising and internationalising of police information is growing day by day.

In Nazi Germany all this was achieved by the Gestapo. Today, the same thing is being done by the democrats: the trappings of fascism are missing, but its substance is becoming increasingly obvious.

Facing the Last Fight

THE NEW Social Security Act introduced a number of changes that might seem to have to do solely with bashing the unemployed, but are also part and parcel of a determined onslaught on the working class as a whole.

'In order to continue to receive unemployment benefit, income support and national insurance credits', it says, you have to prove (to an unsympathetic official) you are 'actively seeking work'. But in town after town, even in the south—and whole regions in the north—industries have been wiped out and jobs do not exist. In that case, you 'widen the type of job you will take'—which means you can be forced to take the shit jobs nobody wants and ultimately will mean being forced to move to the places where these jobs abound because there is other work available for those already there. It is suggested hostels may be provided; already people are living in bed-and-breakfasts with their families in another town; and younger people are being forced into sleeping rough.

Otherwise, and in some cases not even then, the State will not pay 'benefits'. Yet these are not hand-outs. They are paid for by national insurance contributions. These will be increased at the same time as the State announces clearly it is to renege upon them.

On top of this comes the Poll Tax which will mean a heavy penalty on each and every person except for the very rich who will benefit from the abolition of rates on their under-occupied residences. Reduction in direct income taxation, and its planned abolition, will make the burden fall entirely on those who cannot afford it.

Everybody is not 'rich' or 'poor' nor are those in between 'middle class'. Most working people who today buy their homes do so through mortgages pushed up beyond the limit two people can squeeze out of their

wages. Otherwise they would have nowhere to live. The Chancellor's solution to the economic crisis is to push up the interest rates still higher. This means homeholders will be paying up to breaking point; but the rich, who do not need to take out mortgages, will be receiving higher interest through their investments. There is another concealed twist in this: people forced out of their homes can just as well be homeless where the rubbish jobs are as where they are not.

It is not a coincidence that the unions are being gradually illegalised and the police are being given greater powers. Where there is no available defence of living standards, there will be riots, unless there is sufficient repressive presence, and this goes for any political system. (It is not unconnected that yuppies are staging profit-making mock-rebellions in the form of mass Acid House parties which both take the edge off the real thing and provide the police a rehearsal for it).

IF YOU THINK THE SYSTEM IS WORKING ASK SOMEONE WHO ISN'T

Riots and any form of confrontation break up the pattern of conformity and sometimes frighten authorities into reforms, even perhaps shifts of policy. They do not mean social revolution, the first essential of which is that the working class is ready to take over the economic system. We need to be as conscious as the government of the intensification of the class struggle and, like them, prepare accordingly. Meantime, resist everything.

WHOSE GOALS?

WESTERN GOALS UK are reported (*The Independent*, 12th Oct) to have invited to a Conservative fringe meeting in Blackpool Bruno Gollnisch, West German neo-Nazi. This is despite (or because of) his party bloc's Euro-leader Le Pen's bringing the European Parliament to a standstill in a row over those associations.



As reported in our issue 193, Western Goals UK is run by Tory ex-MP Sir Patrick Wall, and through Prof. Anthony Flew is associated with the Tory think-tank Centre for Policy Studies and similar bodies.

Q & A on Anarchism

Q CANNOT THE force of public opinion be as great a tyrant as any government?

A YES, IN A way (though being unpopular is better than being sent to prison, especially when the latter doesn't rule out the former, let alone being killed!). However, public opinion is an arm of government; officially controlled in dictatorial States, bought and sold in liberal-capitalist ones, the result of superstition in Fundamentalist ones, via the media (formerly, and still in some countries, religion). Many forces go to shape so-called public opinion, and in present-day society a rebel is by definition defying it.

In the absence of repression—and propaganda from above is one more means of repression—public opinion could be freely arrived at and would therefore be reasonable to take into account, though not necessarily worshipped. Few if any would knowingly and freely choose to be tyrannised or exploited, even by a majority.

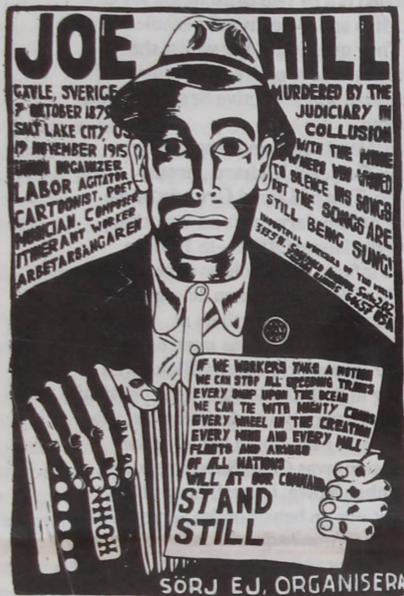
BEWARE OF THE ASHES—THEY MAY STILL BURN

WHEN IWW organiser Joe Hill was killed by firing squad in Salt Lake City he asked for cremation and the remains sent to comrades in Chicago, making his last gift, 'because I wouldn't be found dead in Utah'.

A small envelope containing the only known sample of Joe Hill's ashes has recently surfaced in the USA. Apparently they were seized by the Chicago postal authorities in 1917, en route to Charles Geggard, by the Bureau of Investigation (forerunner of the FBI). Now the IWW hopes to reclaim them.

The same Chicago FBI raided the home of the old, blind and dying Lucy Parsons—whose man they had executed half-a-century before—and when her body was scarcely cold looted her house.

There are European precedents—almost the first thing the Nazis did when they entered Paris was to demolish the grave of Heinrich Heine (ninety years after his death) and scatter the bones. Oliver Cromwell was dug up from his grave and beheaded: his head was still being passed around by Royalists up to a dozen or so years ago but is now lost sight of. So by these standards official Chicago's stand is not quite as mediaeval as it looks. But not civilised either.



GREECE IN BRIEF

IN RESPONSE to the forcible return by the Greek authorities of a Turkish refugee seeking asylum from death row (see last issue) there have been two bomb attacks in Athens, both claimed by anarchist groups.

Anarchists also claimed a bombing on Italian cultural centres in Athens in response to the campaign in Italy to frame comrades Bonnano and Stasi (see separate article) on a variety of charges unconnected to the robbery incident they freely admit to.

In Patra Prison 220 prisoners began a sustained hunger strike on September 4 demanding the halving of all sentences, the abolition of youth custody centres, etc.

On October 3rd a cop, Melistas, who was convicted of killing a 14 year old boy, Kalzetas, during a demonstration was released at an appeal hearing because the boy's family lawyers were unable to attend. Melistas is now receiving full pay while on bail.

SOLDIERS TU IN RUSSIA?

AN UNOFFICIAL trade union has been set up by Russian soldiers aimed at democratising the army and fighting corruption and despotism, adopting a programme which calls for the army 'never to be used against its own people or foreign peoples'. Naturally the Soviet Army hierarchy oppose this possibly first glimmering of democracy in any armed force. Reportedly it includes officers, which may defeat the object (sergeant is in Britain the highest rank compatible with not necessarily becoming part of the military establishment, though it differs from country to country). The declaration of not being willing to be used for aggression even against their own people is more significant than any Bill of Rights. It marks the difference between helot and free. The Continental slave army of conscripts, the British professional mercenary and dole-queue-refugee army, could learn something here: when people first try of democracy, their aspirations do not accept limits.

Workers Strikes ? Niet Comrade

THE LIBERAL facade of Gorbachev was well and truly exposed in the aftermath of the massive strike action by the miners of Siberia and the Ukraine, who are now organising independently to restore the free soviets. Gorbachev's response, together with that of the Supreme Soviet, was to 'democratically' vote in draconian measures to curb all strikes in essential industries. Strikes have always been banned in the Workers State, but Gorbachev perceived it was necessary, within the new liberalism, to ensure that old practices remained, at least with regard to the strongest sections of the workforce.

Deputies admitted during debate that the new legislation took on board lessons learned from anti-union legislation brought in by the Thatcherites. Initially Gorbachev called for a 15 month ban on all strikes—but this was but a ruse to see that something 'milder' was accepted in its stead. The liberals eagerly accepted the restrictions on workers direct action in essential industries in order to 'save

the economy'. Surely, this was what Stalinism was all about? Pre-Gorbachev, state-control of the economy was paramount; today it is the same, albeit that the restructuring process is about moving towards Western-style capitalism. Perestroika cannot afford workers control to jeopardise its programme: the workers must be curbed at all costs.

The new legislation brings in compulsory arbitration—a facet of industrial legislation in many Western countries. Strike leaders will also be punished for advocating 'unlawful action' (eg strikes). It is ironic that only days after Gorbachev brought in this measure the Government in Britain announced that it, too, had similar legislation in the pipeline. In the USSR, however, the strikes cannot be defined as 'unofficial' as the trade unions are state controlled and do not organise strikes: any strike action, therefore, is undertaken outside the unions by workers direct.

The new legislation even brings in measures to make strike committees

financially liable for damages. In this Gorbachev in most definitely following in Mrs Thatcher's footsteps. Will we see, for example, Soviet strike committees being sequestered for disrupting industry? Curiously, or perhaps not, the legislation actually provides for prisoners to take strike action—something that is virtually impossible to organise in Western gaols but may well be more common with the wider privatisation of prisons. In Soviet gaols prisoners are forced to do hard labour and the strike weapon by inmates is difficult to counter.

But will the new legislation work? Gorbachev presumably believes so. It bodes ill for him, however, that on the very day that details of the legislation were announced, 1000 miners in Lvov came out on strike. The Ukrainian miners have virtually taken over the employer's premises and are using the buildings to run local affairs. Since the strike wave by the miners it has been reported that many of the coal bosses at local level have been sacked by the strikers. Also 'union' funds have been reappropriated by the strike committees, now permanent bodies.

Gorbachev has clearly staked his career, for the time being, on limiting strike action. Having done this he will want to send in troops to quell strikes should they erupt again. If the workers decide to take matters into their own hands Gorbachev will then find himself openly on the side of the forces of repression—a role he has tried, so far, to avoid. On the question of troop deployment against industrial or civil unrest Gorbachev now has to face, too, a possible rebellion amongst elements within the Red Army: the newly formed union, called Shield, set up largely by middle-ranking officers, has openly declared that its members rule out the 'use of military force against our own people and those of other countries'. Shield is hardly a union, though, in that it also rules out the use of strike action and 'direct resistance' as a weapon to achieve its demands.

The miners in the Ukraine and Siberia showed what sort of challenge could be made and consolidated their gains by taking direct industrial and community control away from the bureaucrats, the party leaders and aparatchiks, and union stooges. They demonstrated the real meaning of free soviets.

A revolution against tyranny—whether state communist or capitalist—is the only road to freedom. Restructuring or 'perestroika' is the means by which one economic system will be replaced by another and to prevent that revolution. The Soviet people have faced greater odds.

N.B. As we go to press Soviet miners have refused to recognise the strike ban and have taken direct industrial action. 20,000 miners in the Siberian town of Mezhdurechensk came out on strike. Two days after they returned to work, miners in Vorkuta struck, refused to return to work, and demanded implementation in full of the agreement won earlier in the year in the aftermath of the first, and wider, strike wave.

55 Imprisonment Days to Christmas

FROM NOVEMBER 1 to Xmas Day Noel and Marie Murray will be facing 55 days of imprisonment. Marie has the 'honour' of being the longest serving woman prisoner in Ireland, while north of the border many Republican lifers have been, and are due to be given, early release on parole. The Irish Government demands justice for Irish prisoners held in jails in the UK, and the early release of Republicans helps keep the Anglo-Irish Agreement going. The Irish State has an image abroad of being 'progressive' and 'humane', but their treatment of the Murrays contradicts this myth.

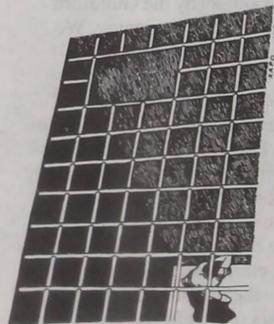
Marie and Noel in October of this year began their fifteenth year of imprisonment. They were convicted of killing an off-duty policeman in the course of a robbery by a no-jury court on evidence that was suspect. They were found in possession of a gun, whose calibre did not match the bullet that was used in the killing. The convictions were made almost solely on 'confessions' given under physical torture (another defendant, who was never charged, was so badly beaten up by the police that he had to spend several months under medical care).

In prison the Murrays campaigned for conjugal rights, but despite the services (given free) of Nobel Peace winner Sean McBride, they failed to get these rights. Some prominent people in Ireland believe that it is now time the Murrays are released. Marie is getting growing support for release from well known people in the Arts (since imprisonment Marie has established herself as a playwright). But one sticking point from the authorities is their insistence that both Noel and Marie dissociate themselves from any political links. The Murrays quite rightly say in reply that they have no political links: being in prison for 15 years breaks off all such links.

While the bureaucrats dither over the precise date of their release their case is fastly becoming known internationally. The Irish authorities cannot have it both ways: if they believe in justice for Irish prisoners, let them release the Murrays, by Xmas. To detain them longer will only demonstrate to the world that their protestations on behalf of Irish prisoners held elsewhere are ingenuine and based on hypocrisy. Should the Murrays still be detained after Xmas the Irish authorities will no doubt be assailed by outraged public opinion from beyond its own borders and that of the UK. The names of Noel and Marie Murray are now being spoken by people in countries as far apart as Argentina, Australia, Hungary and Russia. Soon it will be the Irish Government that will be placed in the dock of worldwide public opinion.

The pretence to liberalism cannot be sustained by the Irish authorities much longer. Instead the authorities now have a chance to demonstrate magnanimity: let the Murrays go. They have been inside for long enough. Let them go by Xmas.

Army units went into French prisons to 'maintain order' as the screws went on strike. But in an amazing show of solidarity, in some 180 prisons concerned, inmates showed solidarity with the jailers by refusing to return to their cells after exercise, it was reported in the press. Quixotic—not to say ironic? Perhaps. But when people act collectively instead of just 'looking out for No. 1', and when they then meet with support from outside—in this case, even from those entitled to think of them as enemies—their attitudes and opinions are liable to change; far more so than from any appeals to sentiment.



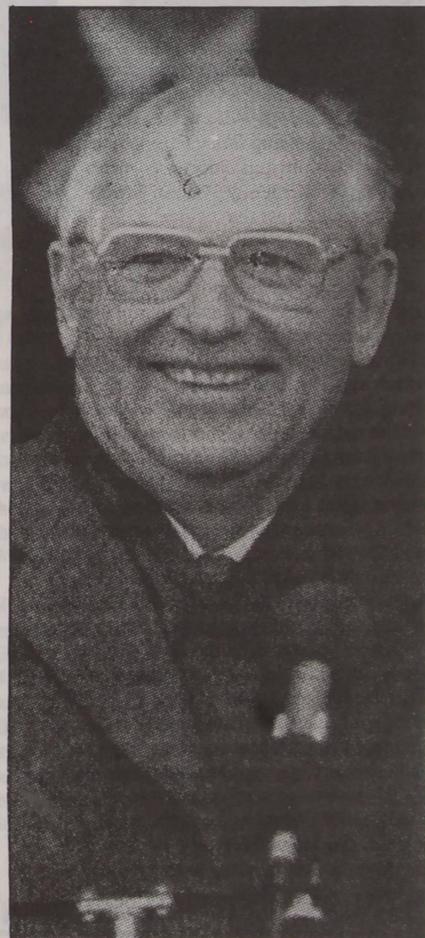
THE BERGAMO ARRESTS

THE ARREST of Alfredo Bonnano and Pippo Stasi during an attempted robbery in a jeweller's shop in Bergamo was followed by a series of police raids on addresses of militants throughout Italy, as reported in Black Flag, without reason and without result. In a statement they both declared that the attempted robbery was 'exclusively for personal reasons, because we did not have jobs and needed the money', taking the logical position that this was as honest a way as any other in a capitalist society. The myth-making police—wanting scapegoats now that they have given up on the Mafia—have claimed it was 'for the funds' and tried to lumber them with numerous unsolved burglaries and even a homicide, of which they literally knew nothing.

A full dossier has been printed in Catania (Sicily), and makes interesting reading. Available (in English) from *Insurrection*, BM Elephant, London W.C.1 3XX.

Excuse, please

Following the release of eight Spanish Anarchists (see previous issue), ten more have had all charges dropped. All ten were originally accused of belonging to an 'anarchist commando'. Charges also dropped included, possession of arms and explosives.



GUILDFORD 4 —

THE INNOCENT



Paul Hill



Carole Richardson



Patrick Armstrong



Gerard Conlon

THE TIMING of the release of the Guildford Four—convicted and sentenced to life in 1975 for the bombing in October 1974 by Irish Republicans of two pubs in Guildford and later a pub in Woolwich where British soldiers were known to frequent—was an exercise in damage limitation. It was impossible for the cover-up to continue: too many facts were being made public and solicitors had been passed evidence proving that the Four had been framed. An Appeal had been set for January 1990 and had it gone ahead the solicitors would have been able to take the initiative in exposing the cover-up and the fabrication of evidence, which was damning. The Government could not allow the solicitors to take that initiative and so, instead, took the initiative itself and, in an unprecedented manner, ordered the Court of Appeal to hold an emergency sitting. The Government had to be seen to be in control, even though the damage had been done. Events were happening fast and so a quick decision was made to order the release of the Four. It was to make legal history.

The press were quick to seize upon the implications of the affair, producing in-depth articles on aspects of the cover-up hardly touched upon before in their papers—yet few of these papers had taken interest in the Guildford Four previously. Now, the Guildford Four are 'good press', whereas before they were a lost cause. Newspapers are falling over themselves to be the first with new angles and new exposes, yet most were never there when the Guildford Four needed them most.

After their arrests in 1975, and during their trial, it was inevitably the so-called radical press that raised the crucial questions over the frame-up. The then newly founded *Leveller Magazine*, as well as other similar publications, including *Black Flag*, pointed at the time to their obvious innocence—not because they were merely a 'cause' worth defending but because the 'evidence' produced in court had all the signs of fabrication. But despite all the campaigning at the time of their arrest and conviction it was some years before the mainstream press renewed their interest.

For years campaigners struggled to demand their release. The Four's lawyers were nothing short of heroic in their determination to set the record straight—and eventually a team of journalists at Yorkshire TV were brave enough to broadcast a programme questioning the evidence that put the Four inside. Two other programmes by the same team followed. Suddenly interest in the case became politic and prominent people in the Church, the Media, the Legal profession and in politics itself latched on to their cause. In all fairness these prominent people discovered, no doubt, for themselves that a miscarriage of justice had taken place, encouraging them to pursue the case with even more vigour. Their persistence, together with the new evidence unearthed by the TV investigation team, made it impossible for the current Home Secretary to ignore the cover-up. The Home Secretary ordered Avon and Somerset Constabulary to investigate: they found evidence of a cover-up, and just as

quickly the facts of the cover-up were being independently set to record by the lawyers who had acted on the Four's behalf. Eventually the point was reached where the cover-up could no longer be concealed. The damage had to be limited before the whole thing got out of hand. By this time several of those involved in the cover-up had died: this was convenient for the authorities and blame could be ascribed to more junior players.

A Judicial Inquiry will follow a Criminal Investigation into the cover-up and some police officers of junior rank will be scapegoated. They are surely guilty but others, more prominent, were also party to the framing of the Four, as well as the Maguire Seven, who were arrested on the basis of forced and uncorroborated confessions made by the Four, who served long prison sentences and are now, at last, receiving the due attention their pleas of innocence demand.

Due to the recent media attention the public in general are now more fully aware of the facts of the cover-up than ever before. But the cover-up has been known by the Guildford Four's supporters from the beginning. We were not listened to, mainly because to acknowledge the extent of the cover-up would have meant the end of the careers of some very prominent and senior people in the Judiciary and the Police establishment. In this respect the mainstream press are just as guilty in the cover-up as anyone else: their disinterest in the case for many years contributed to the concealment of facts.

For the sake of clarity we have put together our own report on the extent of the cover-up: for this we have not only referred to information recently reported on but have gone back to our own and similar reports covered by the radical press at the time of the arrests. We present this overview of the cover-up and, with the limited knowledge we have at our disposal, name those guilty of the wrongful imprisonment of the Four (and, subsequently, the Maguire Seven). We tell what we know of the precise role and the actions taken by those guilty in the concealment of evidence. Some of the senior players in the cover-up are alive today and hold positions of immense power. They cannot be allowed to go unpunished.

ARRESTS AND TRIAL

The first of the Four to be arrested was Paul Hill, who was held at Guildford police station under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which had only come into force the day before he was taken in for questioning. Under interrogation Hill 'confessed' to the police officers from the Surrey Constabulary and the Royal Ulster Constabulary his involvement in the kidnapping of a British soldier who was later killed by Republican activists. Gerard Conlon Patrick Armstrong and Carole Richardson were also taken in for questioning and, like Hill, were interrogated by members of the Surrey Constabulary and the Bomb Squad (later known as the Anti Terrorist Squad), attached to Scotland Yard. There was immense pressure on the police to get quick results. The four were not the only ones who had been picked up for questioning.

In all forty people were taken in and interrogated by the Surrey Constabulary and the Bomb Squad. Hill was from Belfast, had been caught up in the fringes of the Republican movement in Northern Ireland; Conlon was also from Belfast, was a former member of the IRA's youth wing, a known petty criminal and a friend of Hill's. Armstrong, a friend of Hill and Conlon, had moved to London from Belfast; Richardson was living with Armstrong in London and had been engaged in petty thieving as well as drug taking. Collectively their lifestyles were hardly one that could be associated with a IRA active service unit. But information forced out of them under interrogation led to more arrests and others being charged in relation to the possession of explosives. These others—mainly members of one family, the Maguires—became known as the Maguire Seven.

Under interrogation the four arrested in connection with the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings were brutally treated, beaten up and subjected to threats. They were forced to make incriminating statements about themselves and others. They later retracted these statements and in court made it clear that 'verbals' they were supposed to have made were fabricated. The jury, on the judge's direction, accepted the police version and the four were convicted of the Guildford pub bombings (and Hill and Conlon with the Woolwich bombing) on the evidence of the 'confessions' only. They were sentenced to swingeing life sentences; none of them expected to get release.

Then came the arrest of members of an IRA unit operating in mainland Britain after a siege in Balcombe Street in London. These IRA activists, who became known as the Balcombe Street gang, made statements to the police confessing to the bombings in Woolwich and Guildford. They stated that they and not the Guildford Four had carried out these bombings. At the trial Judge Cantley attempted to prevent a statement being read out by the defendants claiming responsibility for the Woolwich and Guildford bombings; the defendants, despite constant interruptions, read out the statements anyway. The IRA activists were found guilty and convicted in connection with other bombings. The Guildford Four then lodged an appeal on the strength of the admissions made by the Balcombe Street gang. The appeal was lost. No other appeal was accepted despite, over the years, increasing amounts of evidence indicating that they were innocent.

FABRICATION

Inquiries by the Avon and Somerset Constabulary have resulted in the discovery of the fabrication of evidence and of a cover-up by police involved in the arrest and interrogation of the Guildford Four. This complements other evidence that proves the innocence of the Four which has been held and presented by lawyers acted on their behalf. But it was not just police officers who conspired to frame the Four, but members of the Legal profession and Judiciary who, being aware of this evidence in the Four's

favour, chose to conceal the facts from the hearings.

The Avon and Somerset inquiry team discovered that notes made by interrogating officers who had questioned Armstrong and Hill had evidence of fabrication. Lawyers acting on the Four's behalf also had evidence showing that Richardson had been administered the drug pethedine during her interrogation. During the trial the Four had stated that they had been threatened and beaten up by police officers during interrogation. Specifically, Conlon stated that police officers had threatened to 'throw him into a Protestant crowd, to tell the IRA he was a grass, and that they would get his family'.

Researching more recent reports as well as reports carried in the radical press at the time of the trial we can now name the officers involved in these interrogations.

The interrogation of Carole Richardson was carried out by two constables: WPC Anita Mills and Detective Constable Martin Wise. They questioned her whilst she was under the influence of drugs. In charge of her interrogation was Detective Sergeant John Donaldson.

Gerard Conlon was interrogated by Detective Sergeant Richard Jeremy, under the supervision of Lionel Grundy of the Surrey Constabulary (he is now working direct to the Home Office—in 1985 he attracted infamy in his role as deputy chief constable of Wiltshire when he organised the police assault on the travellers at Stonehenge). Paul Hill was interrogated by Detective Inspector Timothy Blake who, according to both Conlon and Hill, physically assaulted the two. Blake died only last year.

Representing the Bomb Squad in the interrogations was Chief Superintendent Christopher Rowe. Overall head of the interrogations on behalf of the Surrey CID was Wally Symmonds who, according to Conlon, threatened to have Conlon's mother shot in Belfast. Both Rowe and Donaldson were also responsible for the interrogation of Patrick Armstrong, who also claims he was assaulted and his life threatened.

Other police officers involved in the interrogations generally and the presentation of statements in court were Vernon Atwell and Peter Lewis. The names of most of these police officers were known and stated in reports carried in the radical press in the aftermath of the 1975 trial. It is now admitted that these statements had been altered and that evidence of their fabrication had been concealed from the beginning. These officers, therefore, knowingly took part in a conspiracy to frame the Four and conceal that conspiracy.

The conspiracy does not end there. With the arrest and trial of the Balcombe Street gang a second cover-up was carried out. In the course of investigations the Bomb Squad discovered vital evidence linking the Balcombe Street gang to the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings. A forensic scientist, Dr Douglas Higgs, presented the Bomb Squad with that evidence. (Higgs also held forensic evidence linking the Guildford and Woolwich bombings with later bombings carried out after the arrest of the Guildford Four.) However, despite statements being made to the police by the Balcombe Street gang that they, and not the Guildford Four, had carried out the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings, Detective Sergeant Doyle of the Bomb Squad instructed Dr Higgs not to present the forensic evidence in court. The man representing the Bomb Squad and who led the case against the Balcombe Street gang was Peter Imbert, who is now the Metropolitan Commissioner for Police and is the highest serving police officer in the land. Imbert cannot pretend ignorance of the Guildford Four case: it was he who represented the Bomb Squad in relation to the Woolwich bombing investigation.

It should also be noted that at the trial of the Balcombe Street gang Chief Inspector Nevill, then number 2 in the Bomb Squad, stated in the witness box that the Bomb Squad held intelligence reports indicating that the Balcombe Street gang and others, but not the Guildford Four, were the only ones who could be linked to the series of bombings, including the Woolwich and Guildford bombings.

BEHIND THE COVER UP

The intelligence reports referred to by Nevill had been passed on to the Director of Public Prosecutions of the day, **Sir Norman Skelhorn**. Skelhorn—as also **Sir Michael Havers**, the prosecuting counsel—was given details of the forensic evidence presented by Dr Higgs. In addition Skelhorn knew of evidence proving Gerard Conlon could not have been in any way involved in the bombings: Conlon had an alibi witness known to the police, but information relating to this witness was held back by the police and Skelhorn from Conlon's lawyer, Gareth Pierce. It was this evidence that Gareth Pierce was intending to produce at the Court of Appeal in January 1990 and which the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, knew would prove damaging to the convictions. The alibi witness in question was actually interviewed by the Surrey Constabulary prior to the 1975 trial. The witness convinced the police that Conlon could not have carried out the bombing, but the police, contrary to legal procedure, neglected to inform the Defence of this. Skelhorn was party to this concealment.

There were other alibi witnesses. Lisa Astin and Frank Johnson provided alibi statements for Carole Richardson. Both these witnesses were interviewed by the police but under interrogation they were persuaded to drop their stories. Years later the two witnesses were to re-state their stories, sticking to them.

THE CONSEQUENCES

The Guildford Four are now declared innocent. The guilty are those who conspired to send them down for the rest of their lives knowing that they were innocent. We have named the guilty above. Some are now dead, most are still alive. Certain of these now hold senior positions in the Establishment. They are responsible for the imprisonment for 15 years of four people convicted of bombings in Guildford with which they had no connection, and with the subsequent imprisonment of another seven people—the Maguire family—who also were innocent. Those involved in the cover-up deserve the same medicine that was doled out to those who were wrongfully convicted. However, the only action taken so far against the guilty has been the suspension of three police officers (Donaldson, Atwell and Lewis). These, relatively, junior officers clearly should be punished, but so should every other living person who participated in the fabrication of evidence and the subsequent cover-up.

On his release Paul Hill stated: 'I am profoundly sad that (Detective Inspector Tim) Blake is now dead. I'd love to dig him up and carry him to the judicial inquiry. Not in a spirit of revenge but I just want to be vindicated. It'd be nice if they could spend 15 years in jail thinking they were never to be freed.'

The Four deserve maximum financial compensation for the years of their life they have lost in prison. All were young and have

lost their youth. Hill, released on bail pending an investigation into the murder of the soldier in Northern Ireland (to which he confessed involvement during interrogations by some of the same police officers now under question themselves) is now physically weak and needs medical attention. Armstrong and Richardson are psychologically harmed by the experience of imprisonment and the shock of their sudden release having convinced themselves they would never see freedom. Conlon lost his father, Giuseppe, who was himself imprisoned as one of the Maguire Seven and who died in jail.

Those of the Maguire Seven who served their sentences and (bar Giuseppe) were released faced years of torment for their convictions by a public who were not aware of the full facts. The judicial inquiry needs to address their case too. The seven charged with possession and who were convicted were Anne Maguire, her husband Patrick, her brother William Smyth, her brother-in-law Giuseppe Conlon, her two children Vincent and Patrick, and a family friend Patrick O'Neill. The trial of the Seven was a farce. The only evidence presented against them was forensic, which attempted to show that minute traces of nitro-glycerine had been found underneath the figure nails of the accused. No actual explosives or ancillary equipment were found. Indeed the forensic scientist who presented the evidence in court admitted that the scientific test was not fool-proof, that the traces found could also have been traces of tobacco, nail varnish or air freshener and that the test confuses nitro-glycerine with nitrates. At the time of their trial the Media, which now likes to be seen as a campaigner against miscarriages of justice, ran stories about 'Aunty Annie's Bomb Factory' (Anne Maguire was identified in court as the 'ringleader') and provided much background prejudice for their conviction.

Both Paul Hill and Gerard Conlon now state that it is their intention to campaign

rigorously for the release of the six men convicted of the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974. The Birmingham Six lost their Appeal but since then the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad has been closed down due to widespread corruption and the fabrication of evidence in a number of trials by police officers, some of whom were involved in the Birmingham pub bombings case. The convictions of the Birmingham Six was based, like the Guildford Four, largely on uncorroborated confessions, as well as forensic evidence that has since been discredited. Members of the IRA have also since stated that they, and not the Six, carried out the bombing. There may not be any new evidence for an Appeal for the Six, but with the recent events relating to the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad there is now sufficient leeway for the judicial system to take these matters into account and review the original convictions, as also the convictions of others dealt with by the Squad whose innocence has been vehemently protested or where uncorroborated confessions have been the main evidence presented at trial.

Out of all this public confidence in policing and policing procedures, never mind the legal system, must surely be lacking. Apologists for the police in times such as this always raise the 'few rotten apples' theory; but we would, instead, argue that it is the other way around. Within the police there are no doubt a few 'good 'uns', who are made to conform and close ranks when accusations of corruption are made. It is a myth that compared, say, to 'third world' countries policing in Britain is that much more incorruptible. Policing by its nature is about corruption: it is about, at best, the containment of crime and the main priority is always clear-up rates. Under this philosophy there will always be those who are punished for things they have never done. This corruption will not be eradicated by new legislation or the odd judicial inquiry: the police will always find ways and means of

clearing up crimes by whatever method they can, regardless of the consequences and of how many lives they ruin.

PAUL HILL

ON THE MORNING of Saturday 23rd May 1981 I pissed down and I was soaked as twenty of us stood outside Hull Prison to express solidarity with four Irish prisoners inside—one of them Paul Hill.

It was the time of the 'dirty protest' and hunger strike by Republicans in the H-blocks at Long Kesh and the Armagh women's jail. They made a demand for political not criminal status and refusing to wear prison uniform had only a blanket over their bodies. In protest at continual beatings and humiliating strip searches, the prisoners refused to leave their cells and smeared their own shit over the walls.

As well as those in the H-blocks and Armagh, Paul Hill was on the blanket protest in Hull. The anarchist group held up a sheet with SMASH ALL PRISONS! painted on it. A few of us wrapped ourselves in blankets to signify our solidarity—we were caught by the Hull Daily Mail photographer.

I remember writing a note to Paul Hill saying he wasn't forgotten and handing it in at the gate, but I doubt if he got it. Now he's been released pigs, judges and politicians say it was a 'terrible mistake'. He was shunted from prison to prison fifty times, spent four years in solitary, and suffered countless beatings. The resilience of the human spirit never ceases to amaze me. Paul Hill I salute you. The last eight years haven't been easy for me in Thatcher's Britain, but Christ knows that compared with what you've had it's been a picnic. I leave the last words to Paul Hill wrote in 1978 'They cannot isolate what they cannot see—our spirits remain free'.

DM

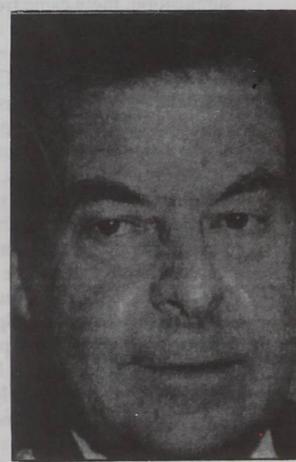
THE GUILTY



Lord Michael Havers



Sir Norman Skelhorn



Tim Blake



Sir Peter Imbert

INTO THE GREEN

CONCERN FOR the environment, ecology, the conservation of natural resources is a prime matter for working people, who have to suffer the worst excesses of exploitation of natural and human resources, whether industrially or on the land. The worst excesses have been caused, and still are being caused, in the pursuit of profits but such exploitation has reached its peak and if it continues, everything will dry up including the ability to make profits.

Hence the dilemma of the upper and middle classes: if they go on exploiting natural and animal products, these will cease to be available. Collectively they realise the time has come for limiting the amount of exploitation but individually there is still the possibility for profit which defy good intentions except among those already satiated.

An effective collective movement concentrating on green issues can only be one parallel, or indeed identical, with one concentrating on wage increases and a higher standard of living. For workers to increase

the immediate quality of life they need better housing, better surroundings, more availability of goods, less pollution, more cash, which they need to fight for collectively. Direct action to preserve the environment, or prevent people sleeping on the streets, or not be imperilled at work, or increase the standard of living are not 'reformist' (reformism is thinking that one or all of any of these things are sufficient); but they can only be achieved if linked to a social revolution aimed at control of our own destinies.

Political solutions?

For the middle class this is too daunting a prospect: they prefer to seek ways of curbing the excesses of capitalism which do not interfere with their privileged position. They say, for instance, (rightly) don't build more houses on the green belt round the cities—which is dandy for those living in a comfortable house in a leafy suburb or a listed country mansion which they have no intention of sharing, but less attractive to

slum dwellers.

Therefore (according to political expediency) they dream up political solutions—e.g. reducing the number of houses, reducing the amount of lead in cars, or the number of cars (not that they will do without one themselves), reducing the amount of pollution or food additives which provide the profits that makes the middle class tick, or even reducing the number of people (bet your life, not them). They will do anything for the environment except get off the back of the people they're living on.

It is, of course, only partly the excesses of pollution and the interest in them that have made the parties ecology-conscious: the other factor is entirely political. The formation of a marginal Green Party is irresistible to a fringe of voters as long as they don't know too much about it or are not asked to do anything. In British politics the party joined the fun-run candidates for parliament and—as nobody votes FOR a main party any more but only against the other—they looked a bit credible as a third party as the Liberal and Democratic alliance crumbled to pieces. They picked up a few votes and so the whole of the politicians (not to mention some industrialists and finance companies with

their green schemes) are jumping on the horse-powered bandwagon.

But voting green, getting parties to adopt green policies, or adopting the word green to a middle class programme isn't doing anything about ecology, any more than green capitalist concerns. Protection against exploitation of the environment needs direct action, but when anyone takes direct action for ecology, the political greens disown it, yet it stimulates those who vote for them, thinking someone is doing something about the problem and the least they can do is vote. When will they ever learn?

N.B. An example of cashing-in on the Green issue is the ownership of the newly published *Green Magazine*: the proprietors are Northern & Shell who built up their publishing assets selling soft porn magazines like *Penthouse* and *Forum*. They obviously see little difference between the consumerist boom in ecological matters and seedy interests in the purveyance of sexual titillation: both are a market to exploit.

THE SIEGE OF CARRARA

IN 1944 THE evergreen tradition of anarchism among the marble workers of Carrara, which even under fascism had continued inside families and despite harsh repression had made an unbroken resistance, burst from its confines and took advantage of the Allied invasion to make mass armed attacks on their new oppressors, the Nazi invaders and the republican fascists.

As they were in the north the most prominent in the resistance (since many parties hesitated at such attacks as savouring of national treason until the King changed sides) and nowhere more so than in Carrara, they were able in the last years of the War to occupy, or were given (sometimes following the first) various buildings in which to reconstruct their movement.

(For information regarding the Italian Resistance, see the latest pamphlet *Red Years, Black Years* published by ASP; and the many recent articles in *Black Flag*).

The workers in the marble quarries won the six hour day way back in 1911. The anarchist Alberto Meschi was secretary of the local trades council for years—there is a statue to him in one square. Most workers belonged to the Union Sindacale Italiana (USI) and it was a bastion of resistance to fascism from the first. In 1926 One of the local anarchists, Gino Lucetti, tried (unfortunately without success) to kill Mussolini. In 1986—to the outrage of the bourgeoisie—a statue to Gaetano Bresci commemorated this heroic young anarchist's successful 1900 attempt on the King of Italy in revenge for the massacre of workers in Milan two years earlier.

In the main square of Carrara there was a building occupied by the Fascists during the years of dictatorship. They had a meeting hall there; it also housed a brothel and a casino. In 1945 it became instead the anarchist meeting place named *Geminal*. Its red-and-black

banner spread over the balcony can be seen in the picture postcards you buy at the stalls in Carrara. Statues of well known anarchists (local and international) appear in many squares town.

Geminal was open to all sorts of grassroots initiatives from 1945 to 1989: conferences, international congresses, art exhibitions (nothing for sale), concerts, dances. There was a ballet school that started 35 years ago. Almost every little girl and many little boys in Carrara learned their first dancing steps in the



Geminal - anarchist meeting place in Carrara

main hall.

The building is part of a complex that includes a theatre, family residences and

shops. It is a main area of the town. Now the entire complex has been bought by a group of developers who want to 'renovate' the complex in the manner of London Docklands.

The first action taken by the developers is to try to evict the anarchists.

Unlike the situation in some other cities, the anarchists are not squatters. The developers are the 'illegal occupiers'. The complex was built 99 years ago on a lease of communal land. It has been sold by the council, but was not theirs to sell. It is a familiar thing in Italy

for politicians to sell common land which is not theirs and take a rake-off between politicians and financiers. The law is not clear

on the subject but the facts are undisputable.

And of course the existence of anarchism has always been a thorn in the flesh of the Carrara politicians, bourgeoisie and especially the rump of fascism. The dispersal of *Geminal*, the scattering of its archives, the ending of community involvement, the commercialisation of leisure and cultural activities, would be a happy day for the forces of greed and privilege even without the huge profits they will make.

Anarchists in Carrara have resisted the eviction. Our old friend Goliardo Fiaschi has been barricaded in since 26th September. He fought as a very young man in the anti-fascist Resistance and went on to fight against Franco in post-war Spain, spending twenty years in a fascist prison before being sent home—to face another prison sentence for his activity against fascism (against which the Black Cross launched a successful campaign for his release). Now he has rallied the defence of *Geminal*.

So deeply rooted is the anarchist movement in the local population, the busloads of riot police brought into Carrara could not be used for fear of too great a provocation.

But the eviction notice is still in force and could be implemented any time day or night: it has meant a continuous occupation of the building since September 26.

In Carrara on 28th October was scheduled a mass meeting, theatre and music in the streets, demanding 'the rights conquered with anti-fascist struggle must be protected from the invasion by private property and reactionary restoration'.

Though an international day of action was called for on that day by the besieged anarchists of Carrara (unfortunately giving too little time to notify comrades) it is not too late to organise protests against Italian consulates and official bodies, for the struggle will go on.

Italian Fascism, allied with greed, must not be allowed a final victory.

the hidden history of trotskyism in spain - ptll

WHEN FRANCO won the War, there were wholesale massacres of his opponents as well as mass imprisonments. The POUM, though it had been accused by the Communists of working for Franco, fared just as badly as the Anarchists. Being a small party, its members were totally wiped out other than those in exile. Though the anarcho-syndicalists took the brunt of the slaughter, the Communists were in no way spared despite the Hitler Pact with Moscow. Franco propaganda opposed Stalin even when both were in alliance with Hitler.

What there was of Spanish Trotskyists now openly disavowed connection with the POUM and some used the allegation by Stalin that they were fifth columnists as an alibi for survival. Nobody can blame them for this, I suppose. Cordera became a falangist labour organiser. One who did not turn was Munis, who went into exile (but like a good many trots, altered his stance on Trotsky). However, Mercader, who emigrated later, killed Trotsky because (he said) of the way he had manipulated his Spanish followers. He may in turn have been manipulated by Stalin's agents (though he certainly got no help from them afterwards), but Trotsky's followers maintained he was one himself, possibly all along. This opens up an interesting possibility: were the trots in Spain working for Stalin, not Hitler?

It was not beyond Stalin's cynicism, and without their active co-operation he could not have framed the POUM. It would have been in keeping that he would have blamed the fascist powers for what he was doing himself. Trotsky would have co-operated if he thought it was advancing the 'Fourth International' (which it did).

Some of the foreign Trots in Spain had been arrested by the Russian controlled police before defeat. It is said some were kidnapped and taken to Russia but one cannot understand why: it would have been simpler to have shot them in Spain if that was the intention. No Poumists were taken to Russia so (a) the Stalinists knew their own misrepresentation of the POUM was a lie; (b) there was some reason to find out more about the real trotskyists, or maybe they thought 'confessions' would have been forthcoming as readily as from the Moscow trials; or else (c) they had a special interest in their own agents.

NEITHER PEACE NOR WAR!
(trotskyist slogan in 1939)

After the World War, the tables were turned. The non-Spanish trots at last had the power to

do something for the Spanish workers who now were in the position of refugees, even within their own country. The trots had taken no part in war-time resistance, either in or out of Spain, but after Russia fell from Western favour they could rely on immense cash support from Trotsky's accumulated and mysterious funds. At the most charitable supposition, these came from wealthy backers in Ceylon (where they entered the Government) and from sympathetic Greek-Jewish bankers in Egypt (whom ultimately they had to jettison when they got Algerian government support). It could hardly be pretended any longer their funds came from Trotsky's book royalties. They sustained an international network of bureaux, with salaried staffs everywhere, particularly in America, but became increasingly avid for more cash. Previously they could plead lack of muscle when asked about positive action for Spanish workers. During the civil war, trot papers abroad had derided any call for 'arms for Spain' as a betrayal because it also helped the bourgeoisie. They could hardly pretend that when the bourgeoisie had switched to support for Franco and were the subject of attacks by the Resistance. However, for the next quarter of a century trots totally ignored Spain or the Spanish exile movement except to write books criticising what had happened in the Spanish civil war; tearing to pieces not only the immense achievements of the workers as a whole and the anarcho-syndicalists in particular, while not sparing the lash as regards the POUM, of which only an exiled handful remained. Though they had used the POUM as a springboard from which to publicise the Moscow Trials, now they were promoting the Fourth International and giving out the idea that this was a force to be reckoned with. Any effort for exiles, prisoners, or the Resistance, was in their eyes thrown away. As for supplying arms, that was now 'adventurism'.

Whatever the crimes of the Communists during the Republic, they tried to link up resistance to Franco during WWII with their resistance in Europe generally. Despite the compromises made by the anarcho-syndicalist CNT during the civil war, in the mistaken idea of preserving unity, its members carried on the Resistance in Spain during and after WWII almost alone. Meanwhile the Fourth International was covering itself with glory for its non-participation in the whole affair. It still cited the POUM, when claiming trots were there, while disowning anything the POUM did (this is quite clear from any trotskyist

history).

However, the POUM was not quite dead. During the civil war some international volunteers who had not liked the Stalinists, and refrained from joining the Anarchists (who were lukewarm to foreign volunteers except their own refugees) had joined the POUM and survived to glamourise it. The most notable was George Orwell; others from Britain included members of the Independent Labour Party (which had enormous funds from before the split with the Parliamentary Labour Party).

Though the ILP was dying, it was the richest party in Britain (thanks to cautious trustees). Many branches bequeathed their funds (from one branch alone, enough for a weekly printing press) to the POUM. Some joined the Labour Party and were able to direct funds to the POUM (the Anarchists got nothing for resistance, nothing for prisoners, and only limited help for wounded and impoverished exiles, except from themselves).

Suddenly then, the trots re-discovered the POUM: their intervention had damaged it beyond recovery in Spain (it was the only party not to re-group after Franco's death) but it became a valuable prize in exile. They encouraged initiatives to save the POUM in exile, applied the 'entry tactic' and walked off with the boodle. The POUM vanished from the modern scene in Spain.

Then the Militant Tendency turned their attention to 'raising funds for the UGT', the socialist trade union which had simply ceased to exist. The CNT was in active struggle but they ignored it except to denounce it for having previously 'entered the bourgeois government'. That the UGT had not only entered the same government, but had also previously entered the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, was blithely overlooked. If there was going to be a choice between reviving a reformist union and a revolutionary one, they decidedly wanted a reformist one to which they could supply any 'revolutionary leadership' wanted (or not, as the case might be).

Here they were less successful than with the POUM. What happened to the ILP money previously raised for the POUM went to the Trots, but though they got the British TUC to support the rebuilding of one 'politically neutral' trade union centre (the UGT) led by the Socialist Party (!), and hoped to get that too, the Spanish workers jeered at the notion when put forward. Though the UGT was re-launched and initially supported by British TU money, it never achieved the status intended nor provided a milch-cow for the

trots.

Meanwhile the Communist Party had—through an alliance with the right-wing Christian Democrats, representing capitalists against Franco—formed the Comisiones Obreras (CC. OO) which had control of the fascist unions. They wanted these unions to continue. Many trots in other countries (though this was not the official line) tried to glamourise the CP-controlled 'commissions' stating these were workers councils on council communist lines.

Finally the Government resolved the conflict by a mixture of fascism and democracy: all workers in industries could vote for their own party wearing its union hat, as it were, provided it adhered to the Pact of Moncloa (no strikes and acceptance of arbitration); and the works councils consisted of these representatives, who with the employers councils formed a corporate-state type union.

Because the new Spanish trotskyists were students, they were out of any of this action though some peddled the myth abroad that they had gone through a period of soviet-forming post-Franco.

Trotskyist attempts at penetrating any real unions failed but (together, if not in alliance, with Catalan nationalists and Catholic Actionists) they succeeded in penetrating the Renovados, a split from the CNT which admitted non-working members. The originally well intentioned Renovados, who had many valid points, thus fell prey to a political leadership which wanted to use the name of the CNT to enter the reformist political arena: this seems to have failed.

At present the new intrusion of trotskyism in Spain (via the students) seems to have been strangled at birth. Sadly, the POUM, which deserves a bit better obituary, is still thought to have been 'trotskyist' (or 'semi-trotskyist', whatever that is, by some 'historians'). Otherwise trotskyism is unknown there. It flourishes in England, where its spinelessness in Russia and Germany (a different story, but less hidden) is supposed to be exonerated by its 'blameless record' in Spain. The ever-denounced POUM had at its best a membership of a third of either Militant or the Socialist Workers Party here but was with all its faults infinitely so much more militant, socialist and working class than they as to defy comparison, for all it was Marxist.

Left wing critics of Trotskyism in the Labour movement here, who don't want to meet the fate of the POUM, are accused of joining with the 'witch hunters'. Trotskyism wants to select its own demons.

Albert Meltzer

SECTARIAN NOTES

(HEALTH WARNING: This is likely to be terminally boring to anyone without an exhaustive knowledge of pseudo-anarchist activity, and no doubt others besides. We should take backstabbing in dignified silence).

THE SAC is the Swedish syndicalist organisation, with a long tradition of workers anarcho-syndicalism. But it has fallen into strange hands. We call upon Swedish comrades to rescue it from its bureaucracy.

This comment is induced by an invitation from the International Secretary Annika Hjelm to various syndicalist groups here (only some offbeat groupuscules and CGT agents are likely to respond) to a 'libertarian trade union' conference in Paris on Nov. 4-5. on behalf of a preparatory committee consisting of the 20-member strong OSL (Switzerland), the Spanish CGT (formerly pretending to be the CNT and still conducting a campaign against it) and the SAC. The OSL is presumably included to give credence of a new 'international'.

The CGT formerly went to a previous conference called by Gaddafi (with members of the British fascist National Front, though the latter deny actually meeting them). This conference is to discuss a paper prepared by the CGT which is conventional trade unionism but contains a few perfunctory remarks at the end about anarcho-syndicalism (it wants anarcho-syndicalists to unite with orthodox unionism, and is clearly aimed at Spain and Sweden). But more significantly to us, in view of the Gaddafi mixing, it speaks of the 'reconfirmation of Nationalist movements' and the growth of 'radical national syndicalism'. Sounds familiar?

WE ASKED the author of an article in the latest volume from Freedom Press (*The Left in Britain* with reprints from 'War Commentary' fifty years ago, ed. V. Richards) what he thought about the Pottle and Randle scandal.

'Anyone naive enough to consider reading or contributing to this set up under its present bureaucracy after this will deserve what they get,' said Mr. Meltzer.

'Then why did you consent to be included in this latest volume?'

'Consent? I didn't even know until you told me. I suppose Richards thinks he took every moveable and nailed-down asset he could from the anarchist movement, and so became proprietor of Freedom Press, he is entitled to lift old articles and my name too. The article replies to attitudes prevalent fifty years ago, of no relevance to today—so it can't cause him any concern. He even includes articles in the book by the late Tom Brown—but as he's dead he can't protest. It would be honest to

give a quarter of the benefits conned from wealthy supporters for this dated collection to, say, Direct Action as a token of copyright to us both, instead of hanging on to the lot. If he pleads it's only because he doesn't believe

in copyright we could always take a leaf out of their book by launching a Freedom Press (renovado) with more justification than elsewhere!'



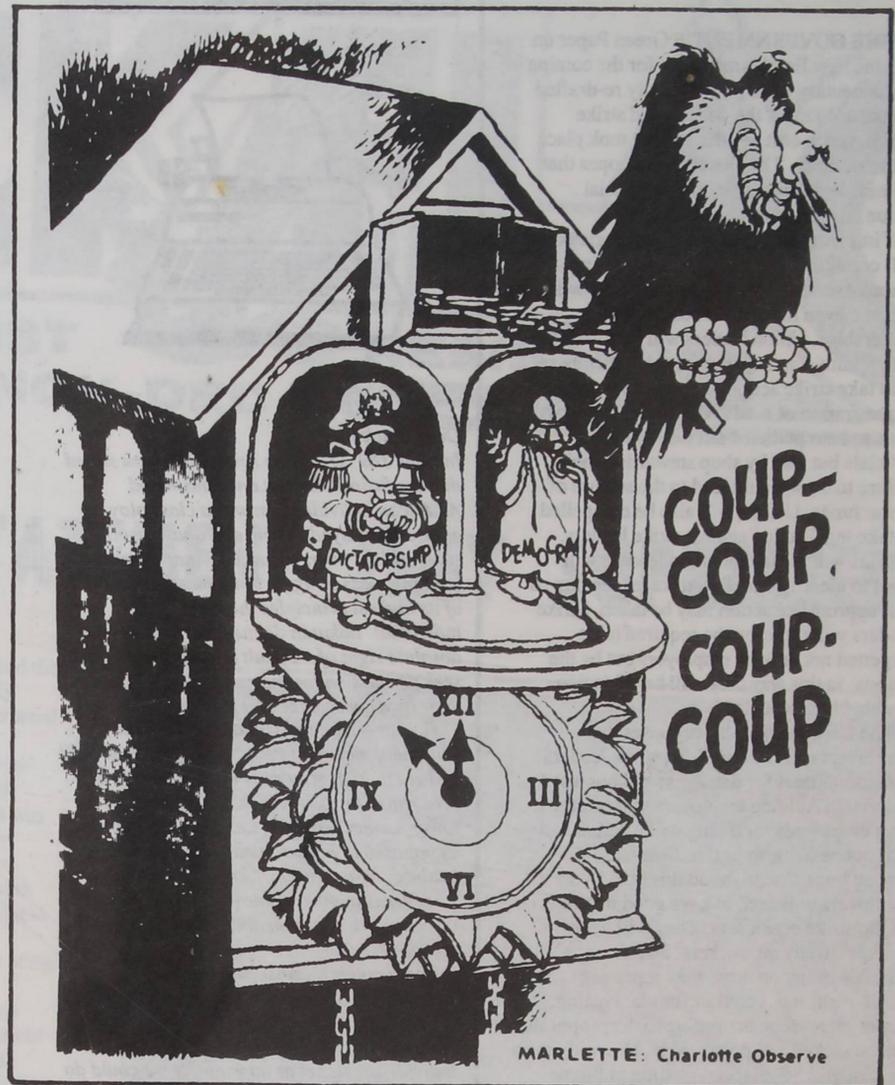
COLD OFF the press is a new mag dressed up as Anarchist but coming in like a second-rate trot mag (without the theory), *Socialism from Below*, published by the so-called Anarchist Workers Group. It's predictably filled with much package-deal leftism, which it claims will 're-establish anarchism a reputation as a serious ideological force', and much criticism of *Black Flag* which has been doing just that for real anarchism as against the various phoney and ringers for twenty years (and even been accused of sectarianism for doing so).

Up to the miners strike *Black Flag* had, it says, 'in large been a pot pourri of prisoners news, investigative journalism and articles about dubious European armed Leninist groups' (and not the accepted package deal at all). We support prisoners struggles—many of them imprisoned as a result of their anarchism. In post-war Europe, anarchism and neo-Leninism competed for the minds of resistance groups (thanks to the ringers, the neo-Leninists squeezed the others out). Anyone who thinks we supported the Leninists (except insofar as we support all class struggle prisoners) wants their tiny mind examined. But stay! With the miners strike we 'tail-ended it.. reporting but not analysing...collecting money, giving support and joining support groups'. Praise indeed: backing the struggle but not trying to take over: good? No. 'These activities are all necessary'—well, thanks—but we should have been 'analysing' instead, and giving a 'clear lead to the anarchists', like tell them and the miners to join the two and a half members of AWG, a caricature of a trot group approach.

Such groups trade on the pseudo-anarchist ghetto they pretend to despise, hoping to form a tiny group to join the trots in a Broad Left party. There is a whole history of this since the late unlamented 'platformist' ORA: they first persuade a few trots they represent the 'anarchist masses' Lenin told them to get hold of first, and some minor trot parties think they have a chance of demo fodder they can manipulate (sorry, make ideologically conscious). But then they can't deliver the bodies and the trots drop them, so the stranded groupies (like the ACF groupuscule) talk about action while undertaking none, falling back on 'Freedom' to advertise them. 'Socialism from Below' says 'most of the anarchists' look to *Black Flag* for a lead. Really? If so, we call on them to sweep away all this garbage from the doorstep so people can come in.

How's that for a clear lead?

INSIDE 'FORT KINNOCK'



MARLETTE: Charlotte Observer

DURING THE first Cold War the Soviet and American blocs engaged in a massive, and largely covert, propaganda war for the political control of western Europe. Soviet fronts were opposed by American and British—CIA and MI6 funded—fronts. One of these 'western' fronts was the World Assembly of Youth, WAY. Funded first by MI6 and then later by the CIA, WAY ran a press office, put out leaflets, magazines (the main one published in four languages), organised meetings, and funded delegates to big international conferences. (Some of the details are in Bloch and Fitzgerald's *British Intelligence and Covert Action*, 1982).

In 1966, just ahead of the exposure of the CIA's funding of much of the world student political scene, WAY was reorganised and renamed the British Youth Council. Today it is funded by 'the Foreign Office', although these days also by the Department of Education and Science. In 1977 Charles Clarke was president of the National Union of Students and was chosen by the British Youth Council to join the organising committee of the World Youth Festival in Havana. His job, according to *The Guardian* (July 4, 1977) was 'to make sure that the festival—which will attract more than 20,000 young people from more than 150 countries—is not taken over by Soviet-inspired propaganda...Mr Clarke is expected to be backed by a representative from the youth organisations representing Scandinavia and other Western European countries'. The conference was organised every year by the Soviet youth front, the World Federation of Democratic Youth. In 1973 for the first time, the WFDY invited the 'western' student organisations. Clarke, in short, was being sent out to join the other 'western' students in an anti-communist bloc on the organising committee.

The Guardian piece also reported that endorsement of Mr Clarke's appointment to this position was being sought from the then foreign secretary, David Owen. The chairman of the BYC is quoted as saying 'We are meeting Dr Owen to ask for his endorsement because it will strengthen our position to ensure there is a genuine festival' (sic) The BYC chairman that year was Peter Mandelson.

These fragments of biography may tell us nothing more about Clarke and Mandelson than that they were career-minded, politically sensible young men, with good connections. Clarke's father, for example, was Otto Clarke, a Permanent Secretary in Whitehall during the Wilson governments of the

Sixties. There is no evidence at all that these men have ever wittingly met a member of the British Intelligence services. It is, nonetheless, a striking coincidence that the two most important individuals at Fort Kinnock—the gatekeeper (Clarke) and the political strategists (Mandelson), both came up into the party machinery through WAY.

The fantasies of Soviet penetration of the Labour Party peddled by MI5-salaried Soviet bloc defectors like Joseph Frolik have concealed the simple truth that the important penetration of the Labour Party (and the wider labour movement) since the war has been by British and American intelligence agencies. It is quite possible, historically possible, that among the party leader's present circle there are British and/or American intelligence agents. This was true during Gaitskell's period as leader. As the Gaitskell Diaries show, the US Labour Attache, Joe Godson, was actually helping Gaitskell's faction write their policies and speeches and plan their strategies against the left of the party.

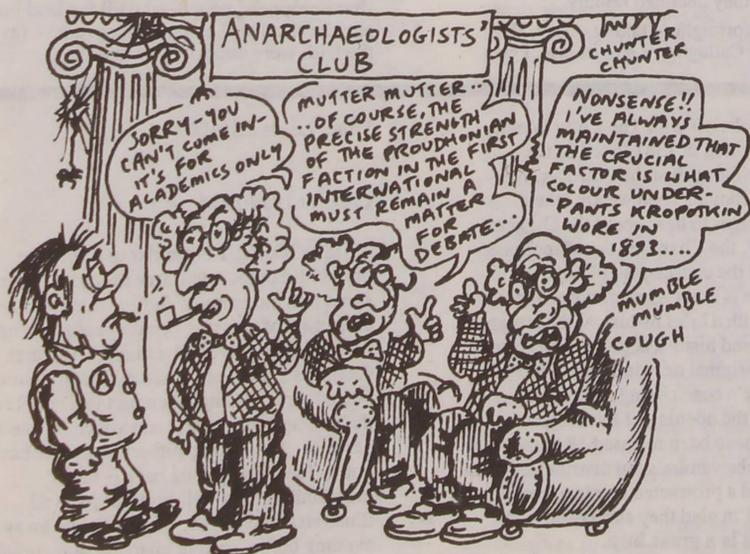
If there are no spooks within the Labour Party's headquarters then the CIA, MI5 and all the rest of them are failing, and will certainly be trying to penetrate Walworth Road. If Clarke and Mandelson are guilty only of premature careerism, who are the spook assets in Walworth Road and the Parliamentary Labour Party? Whose rise through the party is being promoted by 'the friends' and their 'cousins'?

Robin Ramsay.

('Fort Kinnock': the Labour Party headquarters in London's Walworth Road)

BLACK FLAG says: It would not surprise us that British and American Intelligence agents infiltrated the Labour Party amongst many other movements but surely the question is to what purpose? Sometimes they penetrate to seek State information (like Soviet agents in the Tory Party), sometimes to provoke or prevent action, sometimes to discredit, sometimes to make arrests, sometimes only to justify their own existence. What sort of agents couldn't find out in five minutes what it really is and how could they discredit it more than it does itself unaided? And could agents in the Labour Party, or even its uncorrupted leaders from time to time, do more damage to the interests of the working class than its committed, genuine membership?

We think it has been proven over the years the main political parties and the like supply information on dissidents on an organised basis rather than that the Intelligence Services has to go looking for it.



STRIKES TO GO UNDERGROUND

THE GOVERNMENT'S Green Paper on the new Employment Bill for the coming parliamentary term was hurriedly re-drafted to take account of the widespread strike action, much of it unofficial, that took place in the summer. The Government hopes that the new legislation will curb unofficial action.

If implemented as proposed the legislation will certainly have the effect of dividing unions even further. The membership will become even more divorced from the leaderships. Union leaders will be forced to take punitive action against union members who take strike action or themselves face sequestration of funds. Unofficial action will have to be repudiated not just by union officials but also by shop stewards—their failure to do so could lead to the seizure of union funds. Unions will also be compelled to take legal action against strike leaders. All this will mean that union leaders will need to identify who the strike leaders are so that appropriate action may be taken. Strike leaders will therefore be required to be targeted not only by employers but by the unions: in this way they will be subject to double blacklisting.

The Green Paper also proposes that employers can sue unofficial strike leaders and committees for damages, and not just unions. In addition employers will be able to sack employees for taking strike action and will not be liable to unfair dismissal proceedings. Again, to do this effectively, employers will need to have good intelligence on the strike organisers. They will want workers to spy on workers, and union officials to spy on those they represent.

All in all, it is a charter for blacklisting. Strike organisers, according to the proposals, can be sacked and presumably, to avoid other strikes, will be subject to vetting in future employment.

Under these conditions strike action conducted directly by workers will be impossible unless organised outside the unions altogether. If a union collaborates with the legislation it will alienate itself from its members. If it ignores it, then it will be penalised and bankrupted.

By outlawing all strikes, bar those organised by the unions direct and under conditions set by the government, the legislation will succeed in forcing industrial action underground. This is not something to delight in, but to be accepted given no other choice. Underground action will be difficult to organise and will divide workers; nevertheless it will have to be accepted if the full consequences of this proposed legislation are felt.



Melbourne (Vic), Australia: Black Flag readers meeting in December. Albert Meltzer speaking tour: November and December.

LETTERS



Dear Black Flag

In issue 189 'Q & A on Anarchism' you stated that confusion between anarchism and American individualism was a class ploy against both syndicalism and anarchism, surely this is overt paranoia. Anarchism is a working class struggle but it must hold as one of its highest principles the rights of the individual. Bakunin defined freedom as 'the absolute right of all adult men and women to seek permission for their actions only from their own conscience and reason'.

The American individualists (Thoreau, Whitman) were just such people and so should be held in high esteem by all Anarchists. The problem with society is that it is based on the lower human instincts, i.e. greed and vanity, as opposed to higher instincts, i.e. learning, healing, co-operation. Government, or whoever is in power, knows this and so uses it, hence privatisation and selling of council homes to tenants.

The struggle against capitalism is a struggle which will only be won by changing people's attitudes, and the best way of doing that is through example. The American individualists set us an example we could do a lot worse than try to follow, especially concerning Poll Tax.

SMB, Clitheroe.

COMMENT: Right on! But what was actually said was that the (current) definition of anarchism as purely lifestyle comes from confusion by 'European liberalism and American individualism', which equals the extreme right wing of the Tory Party here. Though the 'libertarian right' talk about individualism nowadays they have no more Whitman and Thoreau's writings in mind than when Dr Owen's Social Democrats are called Owenite they have 19th century co-operation in mind, any more than Bakunin's Social Democratic Alliance! The New Right have used individualist phrases the way the nazis used socialist ones: the confusion in language is deliberate.

Dear Comrades,

We were surprised to read in your May 1st issue in reference to an article 'Anarchy in Greece', the claim that Anarchist Coil is now

working with a reformist prisoners group. This statement is slanderous and utterly fictitious!

The Anarchist Coil was formed in January 1988 after a split with the Union of Anarchists. Since then 'the coil' has embarked on a long-term anti-militarism campaign, has supported imprisoned anarchists Smyrniotis, Marinos, Vogiatzi and Boukouvalas, protested to the visit of the Turkish Prime Minister Ozal and more recently called for an electoral strike. In Greece there are numerous anarchist groups operating and the spread of false information could not only shatter the sometimes fragile relations but also damage the cause of international solidarity.

In solidarity

Anarchist Coil
P.O. Box 30658
Athens 10033
Greece

Dear Black Flag,

Your September issue has a front cover and much space inside devoted to indiscriminate support for anything remotely resembling 'syndicalism' or 'independent unionism' in the Eastern bloc regardless of whether it really helps the struggle or not. Meanwhile there is no mention at all in your whole paper, of Solidarnosc seizing State power in Poland and preparing to crush strikes and impose capitalist austerity. Does your mindless support for 'independent unionism' mean in practice you support the Polish government? The free unionism which the authorities in the East are encouraging and which is backed by Western governments is just part of the perestroika programme of more capitalism, privatisation and austerity. It makes little difference whether these unions are bureaucratic or self-managed or syndicalist: they aim to involve workers in the imposition of perestroika and get them to participate in their own exploitation. Black Flag should be concentrating on supporting material proletarian struggles, not supporting unions that will be used to derail these struggles.

P.P. Reading

COMMENT: We do not support anything 'remotely resembling' syndicalism in Russia but the thing itself (our critics do not usually reckon non-sectarianism our besetting sin)—nor do we support some things remotely resembling anarchism in this country either. What is significant about Russia today is that workers organisations are at last appearing in the course of strikes, and not ordered from above (alternatives to this are State encouraged). It does indeed make a difference if unions are run by the workers themselves for their own benefit and not by a bureaucracy, precisely for the reason of taking over their own industry which is what syndicalism, but not perestroika (rebuilding the economy) is about. This defines them as revolutionary if not yet anarchist (though some are). Perhaps it's happening so fast it's hard to take in—there's plenty of time and scope for a leadership to move in and betray without the need for wishing it.

We have had a lot of coverage on Poland, an entirely different development in no way parallel except that the governments have the same ideology. Solidarnosc was originally a workers revolt; but it didn't become an independent union in the sense of being independent of any other class. On the contrary, being involved in national independence, unity with the Catholic Church (a rally point for the would-be bourgeoisie) has provided it with a bureaucracy available to sell out at any time and a feeling of identity with the national governing strata, which the leadership has now joined (Lech Walesa's reason for not joining was because he understood, despite his involvement, what would happen in leaving the working class).

P.P. should not sneer at the prospect of a new Russian revolution coming out of the strike movement, or see in it support for the class it confronts, a neighbouring government or even 'the West' (however much States enjoy other states' problems, they always crack down on revolution—Interpol helped the Stalimist police too).



Answers to quiz

1. Rape on royalty is one of three offences still carrying the death penalty (the other two are high treason and arson in a naval dockyard).
2. John Amery was a British fascist who got naturalised Spanish when fighting for Franco, and who during WWII joined a German show unit of British volunteers: his father was Minister for India (his brother a Tory MP). As others in like circumstances who had been naturalised German were hanged (some who changed nationality pre-war were imprisoned) his family

3. The Greenshirts advocated Social Credit, which wanted to cure unemployment in the '30s by monetary reform (similar to today's bank loans and credit cards). They thought it would save capitalism while attacking world financiers and borrowed some phraseology from fascism. They were popular for a time in Canada, and achieved power in Alberta, after which they declined rapidly.
4. Within a fortnight of taking office, Dr Owen made Callaghan's son-in-law, Peter

Jay, Ambassador to Washington.

5. Distributism glorified the small shopkeeper and peasant and wanted to curb the workers, financiers and major capitalists, but never explained how. It had a political-Catholic background but its appeal to the present-day Right fringe is because, unlike fascism itself, it was a home-grown product (dreamed up by novelist G. K. Chesterton).
6. 'Rabassaires' is translated as shareholders, but not in the English sense. It means share-croppers; people who till the land but pay the rent by a share of their produce (as the Irish were once obliged to do).

Chumbawamba—English Rebel Songs 1381-1914

A 12 INCH MINI-LP of old folk songs, and very good too. The massed ranks of Chumbawamba sing their unaccompanied way through twelve songs in traditional style, in a modern reclaiming of our forgotten oral history.

The tracks here are, as the title suggests, old songs that document our history (as not taught in schools), a glorious history of strikes, riots, rebellions and insurrection. This is history in song that records the struggle of working class folk of the past and inspires us to keep the flames of struggle burning.

The LP kicks off with The Cutty Wren, originally written in 1381 to tell of the Peasants Revolt against the Poll Tax. An appropriate choice. Then we are taken through the ages to hear about the Diggers, the Luddites, the Chartists, the Manchester Martyrs and the conscripts of WWI.

The sleeve is great—lots of notes about each song with a brief history of the struggle of that time and historical notes. The front cover is an original drawing from 1795 of King George's coach being attacked by rioters after the opening of Parliament.

It should have been released 18 months ago but as Chumbawamba's old distributors went bust they had a protracted hassle to reclaim their work. I'm glad they succeeded as for only £4 this is a great buy.

(If you can't get it from a record shop, it's available from Agitprop, Box 4, 52 Call

Lane, Leeds LS16D7

Cabaret 1980-1988

THIS BOOKLET is similar to *Buffo!* the brainchild of the late Larry Lamb: it reprints some fine moments of *Buffo!* which was a collection of amazing pranks people got up to revenge themselves on authority. Cabaret catalogues some of the same kind of political buffoonery. Having taken part in a couple of the incidents recorded I can vouch for their veracity. The incongruity some people have got up to when fighting back is just breathtaking: it's well researched, well illustrated and just the thing to while away an evening before getting up to the same pranks.

(£4.00 from A-dis, 84b Whitechapel High St, London E.1).