

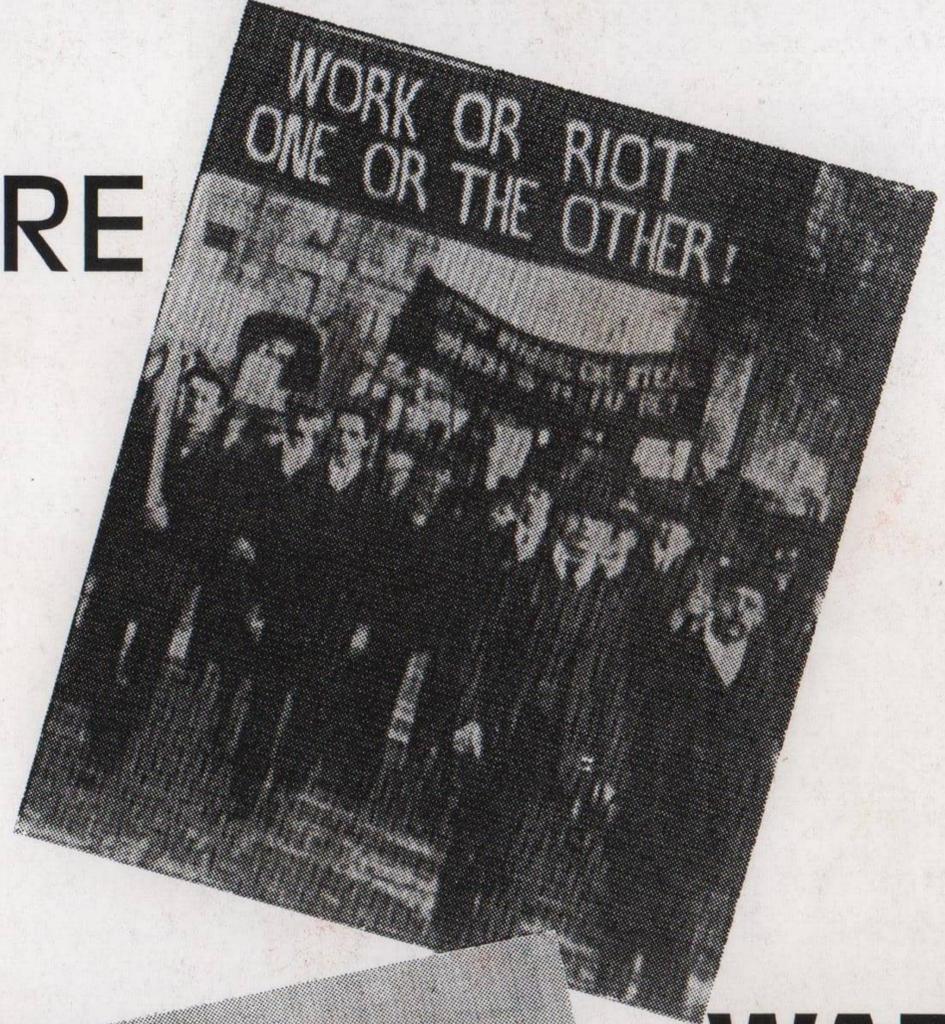
issue 217

21775
£1.50

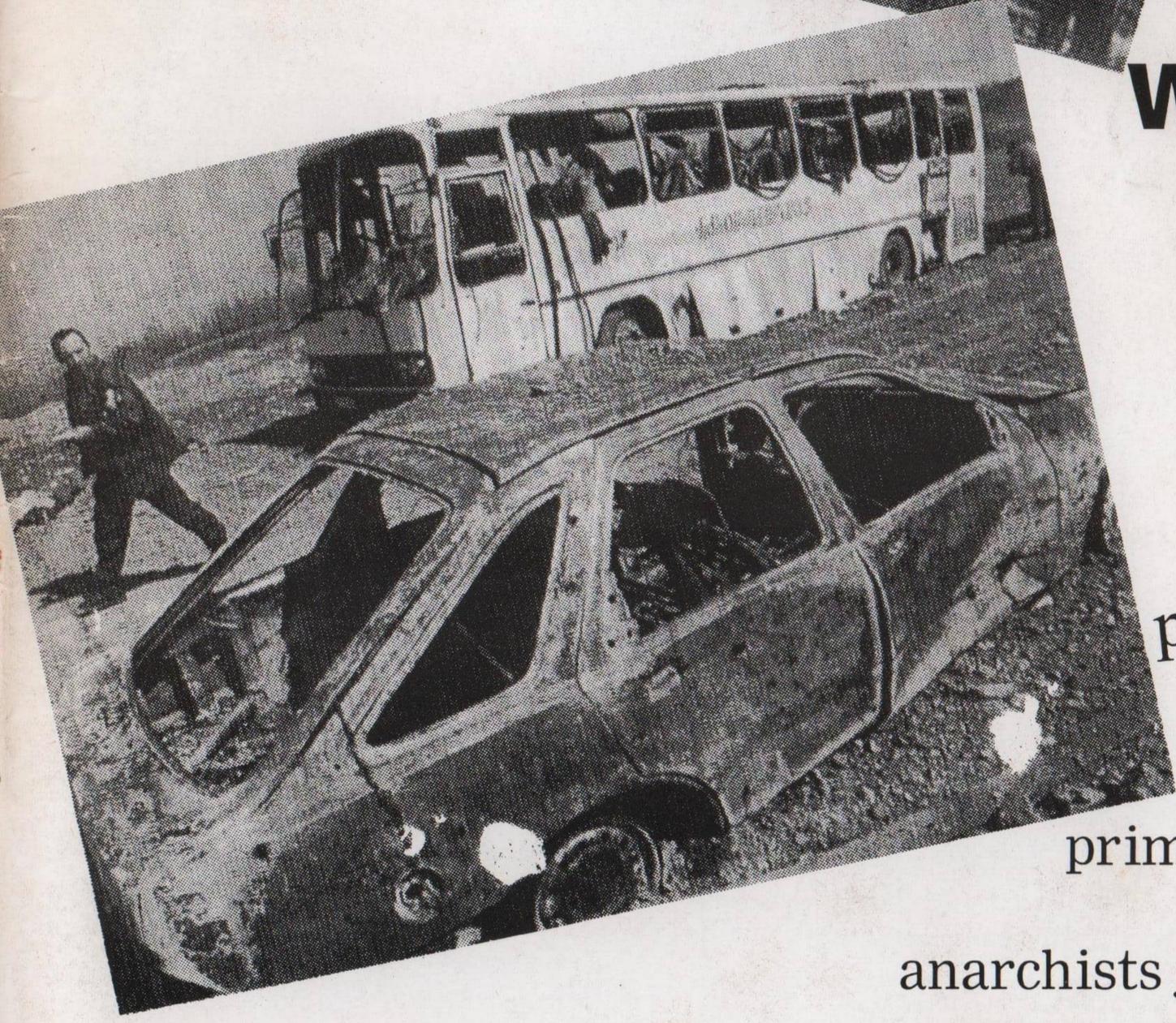
BLACK FLAG

FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE

WELFARE



WARFARE



plus

transport
the committee
primitivism refuted
prisoners
anarchists jailed in Russia

**Black Flag
BM Hurricane
London
WC1N 3XX**

issue 217



blakflag@dircon.co.uk

Black Flag on-line

Articles from this and previous issues of Black Flag can be found at our webpage at:

<http://flag.blackened.net/blackflag/>

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

Trade Orders

AK Press
PO Box 12766
Edinburgh EH8
0131 555 5165

AK America
PO Box 40862
San Francisco
CA 94140-0682

**Giro Account No.
585524009**

editorial

The country we live in is currently waging war on another. Many of us are opposed to the war. How many of us feel anything we say or do makes any difference?

The majority of Kosovar Albanians support NATO because they see no other force able to defend their interests. NATO, meanwhile, has bombed Belgrade while the Yugoslav army shells those fleeing ethnic cleansing and active KLA units in the region, completely without NATO response. Western intervention in Bosnia was done to suppress democracy, partition the country and prop up Milosevic. This time round, the best money is on a partitionist solution again.

We feature here an article by a member of International Workers Aid, which attempts to answer the question of "what can we do?" In Greece, there have been blockades of NATO troops, and in Italy, people have attempted to storm the airbases from which the bombers fly.

The anti-war movement's lack of presence here cannot be divorced from the absence of a militant, politically independent working class movement. If we are serious about opposing the agenda of Blair and Clinton we have to rebuild the tradition of class struggle anarchism in the UK. This means building a movement that deals with everyday realities like supporting prisoners, fighting for better services, providing solidarity with refugees. Our movement talks a lot about building communities of resistance. Rhetoric, though, does not change a thing. The first step to rebuilding a working class anarchist movement has to be recognising why one does not now exist. A number of articles here address that task.

contents

May Day on the Tube	page 3
Rosemary Nelson	page 5
Scottish elections	page 6
Full Sutton	page 7
International News from page 8	
War in the Balkans	page 13
Fighting for Buses in LA	page 18
Welfare	page 20
Prisoners News	pages 24-7
Italian Syndicalism versus Fascism	page 28
A Chilean film-maker who worked in Chile - Miguel Herberg's story	page 31
A Response to the irrational	page 33
Reviews, letters, contacts	

May Day on the Tube

International Workers Day 1999. Several hundred people gather at the Tower of London. In smaller groups they descend underground, on to the Tube. At Liverpool Street station they meet up, on the clockwise bound circle line platform, waiting for a particular train. On board decorations go up, lengths of brightly coloured material decorate the carriages, balloons are released, slogans displayed, games set out, music played, food given away and signs erected declaring the line under joint worker/passenger control. The Tube is transformed from a dull empty alienated space. The Party Line has begun.

A leaflet is distributed, mimicking in style that of London Underground (LU), ripping off their distinctive font and logo's. In content however, it is something else, setting out the case against privatisation, showing how strikes are good for workers and commuters alike, and linking this to the demand for a free transport system and to the need for a new world.

The tube moves off and, at Tower Hill, more people join in. The cops stop the train here, announcing it will go no further. As a stand off ensues sadly many, but not all, of the other passengers leave the train. After 15 minutes, the train moves off, not stopping again until Embankment. From there we are put on another tube, non-stop to Clapham Common, the publicised end of the Party Line. There the party heads out into the open, to join the dope smokers on the common. Two hours after it began, the action is over.

May Day - Our Day

The action originated with the call to do something more creative, more fun, more revolutionary and more proletarian on May Day, instead of simply tail ending the official parade. Tube workers had already taken strike action against privatisation and in

defence of their terms and conditions. The strikes were planned for the beginning of the year, but LU obtained an injunction using the anti-strike laws. A new ballot was held, leading to a strike from 6pm on Valentines Day. The popularity of this was demonstrated by the lack of traffic on the Monday, as commuters took the chance for a day of leisure. Popular support could also be seen at Hammersmith, for example, where home made placards declared "we love the Tube Strikers" against the background of a red heart.

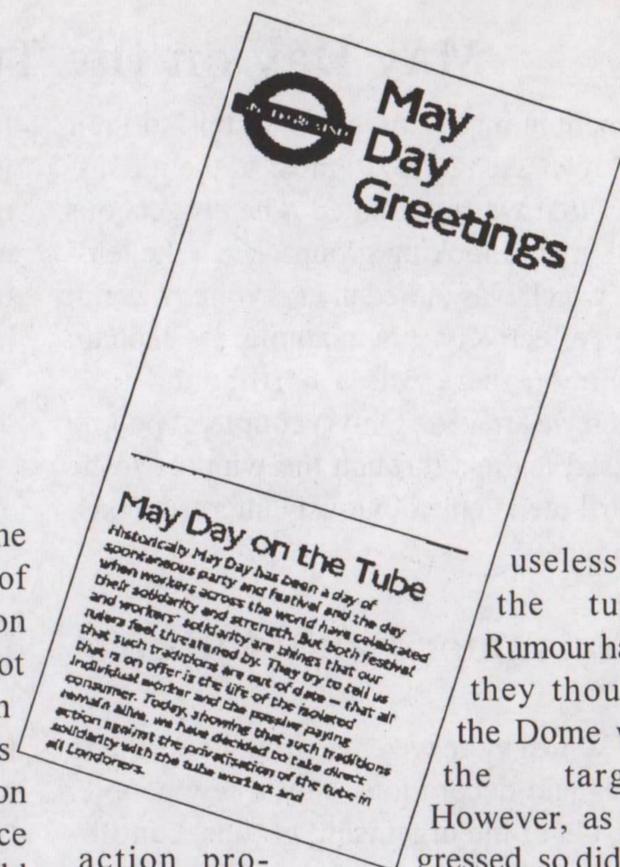
Last year sparks working on the Jubilee Line extension won a series of reforms from the hard line private management when they took wildcat action outside the unions control, in an example to us all. The privatisation of the Tube will have a major impact on Londoners, leading to worse service, fare increases and corners cut with health and safety. It was decided to hold a tube party as a way of showing solidarity with the tube workers with the potential to unite all proletarian Londoners.

The Good, the Bad and the ...

In the main the action was a success. A large number of people attended. The decorations were brilliant, the food good (although not enough people brought any), the atmosphere was light hearted and the leaflet was great. So far there has only been limited feedback from tube workers, but there have been requests for further information and a number of positive comments. The leaflet has also become sought after. After such an action, however, we have the opportunity to reflect upon it with the benefit of hindsight, and to draw what lessons we can for the future.

The Tactics of the Cops

Large numbers of cops were anticipated. At the start they were clueless. Motorcycles and vans were standing by,



action pro-cops response.

useless on the tube! Rumour has it they thought the Dome was the target! However, as the gressed, so did the

One of the main aims of the action was to transform the tube for its users. In doing so we hoped to break down barriers and talk to other passengers, encouraging them to join in. The cops were largely successful in preventing this, not by curtailing the party early (that possibility had been foreseen), but by running our tube non-stop. Such tactics had not been predicted and this was a weakness, which will have to be overcome in any future tube parties. Publicising the destination of the party was a mistake, as it allowed the cops to direct us there. Without this it would have been harder for them.

Our Self-isolation

However, it was not only the cops who succeeded in isolating us. To a large extent we did so ourselves. From the outset there were a number of protesters who declined to follow the facilitators, seemingly because they did not look the part (it seems to have escaped them that the facilitators may have had good reason to be anonymous - how will we fare on June 18?). The plan was to spread people in small groups along the circle line, as far back as Kings Cross, thus making it less easy to close stations. Whilst most of the facilitators did a fantastic job in getting people on the tube under the noses of the cops, even the earliest groups only went as far as Liverpool Street. Everyone gathered there and it was luck (or stupidity on their part) that the cops allowed the train to stop. It seems there is great comfort in numbers.

Once on the tube only a small minority

(cont. page 6)

May Day on the Tube (continued)

of people made any effort to talk to their fellow passengers. To most of them I suspect that we represented a heterogeneous and inward looking group. Even the leaflet, which was aimed at everyone, was not used effectively. For example, at Clapham Common there was a northbound tube when we arrived. Only a couple of people passed leaflets through the window to be distributed to the obviously interested passengers.

Consumer Party Culture

Whilst there were inspiring home made signs and decorations only a few people, outside of the organising groups, contributed anything to the party. Most turned up expecting to be entertained. This was especially ironic, given that the leaflet proclaimed:

Packed together at rush hour, miserable faces, nobody talking with anyone else, hiding behind personal stereos, or looking at the adverts for products that never satisfy the tube is as alienated an environment as the traffic jam.

Perhaps this is a wider problem of the party protest scene. Certainly the lack of politics was evident. The first leaflet calling for the action had linked it to the judicial murder of the Haymarket martyrs, who died for their part in a reformist struggle

linked to revolutionary ends. The second leaflet, however, concentrated on the case of privatisation, making only a single reference to May Day. The problem with this is that, as our history is forgotten, everything has to be rediscovered and experienced as though for the first time, neglecting valuable lessons from the past.

Moving On

As I said at the beginning the action itself was largely successful. If this article seems over critical, it stems from the desire to make any action better next time (and can in large parts be read as self-criticism). On the 4 May Railtrack announced their willingness to run the whole Tube network as a privatised entity. In doing so they came to the rescue of the Government, who have been unable to find anyone willing to take on the deep lines. The struggle against privatisation will therefore continue. RMT are launching a campaign and discussing further strike action. In supporting this and doing further actions, we need to continue to link our opposition to privatisation with the need of our class for communism.

The most positive aspect of the Party Line was the fact that we broke with attending the boring lefty May Day parade. Next year International Workers Day falls on the Bank Holiday Monday. We need to think of bigger and better ways to celebrate it. After all we have a tradition to uphold.

whose medical services have a far better record on Parkinson's, and the Cubans have offered Des a 5 week course. The cost is £10,000, and the Trust is appealing for money to make this happen.

Cheques, POs to Des Warren trust Fund, c/o 3 Alma Terrace, Stanley Village, Crook, Co. Durham, DL15 9QP

Source: Building Worker Group

@ Trade Unionists

A new network of anarchists in tradesunions has been set up. "The @TU does not have a line on whether anarchists should or should not join trade unions." It is intended as a forum, a network of contacts and a platform for debate on work and union related issues. For their newsletter send four 1st class stamps to: Box EMAB 88 Abbey Street, Derby, DE22 3SQ or email williamgodwin7@hotmail.com

Dover Public Meeting raises spirits

April 27th saw a well-attended public meeting in Dover, called by Dover Residents Against Racism and the National Union of Teachers. About 150 people, mainly from East Kent, heard speakers from the NUT, the RMT, Youth Against Racism in Europe and the Refugee Council talk about the situation in the town.

Patrick Carey, NUT publicity officer, compared the situation of Kosovans now that they are acceptable, with their situation before the bombing, and the situation of all other refugees now. He blamed schools and the media for failing to offer any alternative view of refugees than that of the gutter press.

Bill Martin of the RMT said that Dover had been damaged enough by the nazis during the last war, and they should not be let in now.

There were many lively contributions from the floor, including a critical one saying it was "preaching to the converted". However, the real benefit of the meeting was to get a good turnout and increase the confidence of anti-racists in Dover. The war in Yugoslavia has changed the media situation for asylum seekers, but the most prominent media racist, Nick Hudson, editor of the Dover Express, didn't show his face.

a right royal rave-up

London and South East counties MA'M groups turned out to welcome her majesty on an unannounced visit to Basildon and Southend, Essex. The police were extremely twitchy about the arrival of protestors and nicked one for criminal damage to a flower bed in Southend and five more in Basildon. All were later released without charge. Despite the heavy handed policing a good time was had by all and this over-reaction shows that this is a sensitive area. We are at least beginning to irritate them.

any excuse for a new hat

After joining the June 18th action in the City, MA'M will head for Windsor on the 19th June for the Royal Wedding. Bring you own "confetti" and contact MA'M for invites. [PO Box 14672, London, E9 5UQ].

Support Des Warren

In 1972, there was a bitter national building strike, which culminated in the "Shrewsbury 24" conspiracy trial. Shrewsbury was selected because the sheriff was a member of the McAlpine building family, and the state could be sure of a conviction. Des Warren was given 3 years, Ricky Tomlinson (later of Brookside fame) got 2 years, and the other 22 lesser terms or heavy fines. Des insisted he was a political prisoner and refused to wear uniform. Despite never being violent, he was administered the liquid cosh. On release, he was found to be suffering from addiction to tranquillisers and drug-induced Parkinson's Disease.

With the help of the Des Warren Trust Fund, set up to help him, he has overcome the addiction, but has been advised that nothing more can be done for him here.

The Trust has approached Cuba,

Rosemary Nelson

A 50 year old Lurgan man speaking to *Republican News* said, of the murder of Rosemary Nelson, "If a Catholic goes and gets an education and then demands their rights, this is what happens. It's Croppies Lie Down. That's the message they are trying to send out: Croppies Lie Down. All Rosemary Nelson did was get people their rights."

Rosemary Nelson died because she dared to suggest that Catholics in the six counties had a right to justice and should have access to justice. She died because she refused to stand by while the RUC terrorised the nationalist community in Lurgan. The RUC told her clients that she would be killed. When she was murdered RUC Chief Ronnie Flanagan purported to be outraged at the suggestion the RUC had colluded with her death. Perhaps then he can explain the reason for the increase in RUC patrols and helicopter activity in the days before her murder. According to one Lurgan resident "For the past 72 hours (prior to the murder) we have seen RUC in areas they would have never patrolled before." Perhaps he can explain also how the Red Hand Defenders came to suddenly be in possession of tilt switches and Powergel? It is rumoured that Rosemary was murdered with the support of Ulster Resistance and Belfast UDA members, who would have access to such materials, and have collusive links with the RUC. In his book *The*



Committee journalist Sean McPhilemy details how the "aristocracy of Ulster" colluded with RUC officers and Loyalist assassins in the "murder triangle" of County Armagh to murder members of the nationalist community. In Rosemary Nelson they've claimed another victim.

Rosemary Nelson was killed because she gave a voice to people who otherwise would never be heard. She was killed because she acted for the family of Robert Hamill who was kicked to death by a mob of 30 Loyalists while the RUC sat and watched. When the RUC failed to declare a crime scene and did not collect forensic evidence, when they failed to administer first aid to Robert as he lay dying, and when all the suspects arrested were released without charge, Rosemary con-

nected the case with Stephen Lawrence's murder, and said that the institutional racism of the Met was mirrored by that of the RUC - that Catholics in the Six Counties were treated as inferior, less than human. She was killed because she represented the residents of the Garvaghy Road, who wouldn't lie down before Orange supremacy on the march. Rosemary Nelson was killed because she wouldn't lie down, and fought for the rights of others who, like her, refused to be second class citizens in an Orange state.

On Monday 15th March 1999 Rosemary Nelson died. Graffiti painted by the rail tracks in Lurgan says everything that need be said: "Rosemary Nelson the voice of the people. Murdered by RUC/RIR."

Friends of the Garvaghy Road

The Good Friday Agreement is supposed to create a level playing field in the Six Counties, with freedom, justice and equality seen as rights for both communities.

Rhetoric, though, is little protection against the sustained violence of Loyalist paramilitaries. The nationalist community in Belfast has been subjected to repeated kidnap and murder attempts by Loyalist gangs. Recently, John Brady and Jackie Dixon were abducted and savagely beaten while walking through the Whiterock Estate. Over thirty Loyalists armed with bricks and petrol bombs rampaged through the Parkside area of North Belfast on April 26th.

There remains, as Gerry Kelly of Sinn Fein noted, "a concerted, planned, sectarian campaign of intimidation by Loyalist organisations against Catholics."

Residents of the Garvaghy Road have suffered more than most. As one puts it, "In Portadown, being a Catholic is almost as conspicuous as a black skin amongst white supremacists. There are numerous give away signs - a name, address, your school, where you socialise, what direction you are walking from or to. Robert Hamill was kicked to death because he was walking away from a Catholic social club towards a nationalist estate." Portadown is Ireland's Alabama. Since July 1998 there

have been over 170 Orange rallies and marches in Portadown, the vast majority around the Garvaghy Road. A further 50 are planned between April and July this year. Portadown town centre has become a no go area for Catholics. In August 1998 several hundred Loyalists forcibly expelled Catholic families from the shopping mall while the RUC stood by. Seventeen families have been driven out by Loyalist mobs in the last ten months.

A London Support Group has been set up. Contact: Friends of the Garvaghy Road, PO Box 3923, London NW5

“Parcel of Rogues”: The Next Generation

Scotland finally has its own parliament, nearly 300 years after a “parcel of rogues” decided to throw in their lot with the English-dominated Westminster Parliament. We do not expect any major changes to occur because of it but a few interesting results were recorded during the election.

Rebel Labour Candidate Dennis Canavan won a stunning victory in Falkirk East. Canavan, the Westminster MP for the constituency, stood as an independent after he was rejected as Labour’s official candidate list by Blairite “control freaks,” despite overwhelming popular support in the local party and area. Given that New Labour has taken over Thatcherite policies, it comes as no surprise that they have also taken over her centralism.

This, and the results in Wales, show that Blair cannot take traditional Labour votes for granted. Which is a good sign, in its own way.

Canavan is joined, thanks to PR, by two other rebel MSPs - Tommy Sheridan of the Scottish Socialists and a Green. According to Sheridan, the Scottish Socialist Party is now the fifth party in Scotland and was here to stay. We have to wonder, however, if this success and the commitment to stand in every single constituency in Scotland next election will have the same deradicalising effect on the SSP as it had on German Social Democracy in the last century, the Labour Party in this one or the German Greens in the 1980s.

All these parties started off as radical (and in the case of the German Social Democrats, Marxist and revolutionary, just like the SSP claims to be). However, years of working in Parliament paid off and they became just another mainstream party. Perhaps SSP members and voters should ponder these (somewhat summarised) words of Alexander Berkman:

“[At the start, the Socialist Parties] claimed that they meant to use politics only for the purpose of propaganda... and took part in elections ... to have an opportunity to advocate Socialism.

“It may seem ... harmless .. but it proved the undoing of Socialism. Because nothing is truer than the means you use to attain your object soon themselves become

your object ... [So] there is a deeper reason for this constant and regular betrayal [than individual scoundrels being elected] ... no man turns scoundrel or traitor overnight.

“It is power which corrupts ... Moreover, even with the best intentions Socialists [who get elected] ... find themselves entirely powerless to accomplishing anything of a socialistic nature ... The demoralisation and vitiation ... take place little by little, so gradually that one hardly notices it himself ... He appeals to the voters to elect more comrades... Years pass ... [a] number ... are elected. Each of them goes through the same experience ... [and] quickly come to the conclusion ... [that] They must show that they are practical men ... that they are doing something for their constituency ... In this manner the situation compels them to take a ‘practical’ part in the proceedings, to ‘talk business,’ to fall in line with the matters actually dealt with in the legislative body... Spending years in that atmosphere, enjoying good jobs and pay, the elected Socialists have themselves become part and parcel of the political machinery ... With growing success in elections and securing political power they turn more and more conservative and content with existing conditions. Removal from the life and suffering of the working class, living in the atmosphere of the bourgeoisie ... they have become what they call ‘practical’ ... Power and position have gradually stifled their conscience and they have not the strength and honesty to swim against the current ... They have become the strongest bulwark of capitalism.” (What is Communist Anarchism?, pp. 78-82)

Will history repeat itself? It did with the German Greens in the 1980s. We doubt that the SSP will be immune to the corroding effects of electioneering - but, of course, every party that stands for elections assumes that it is. And Marxists call anarchists utopian, a-historic and idealists!

Talking of history, those of us in the Poll tax campaign will remember Militant (what later became the SSP) arguing that standing anti-poll tax candidates would split the Labour vote and let the Tories in. We wonder what has changed in the last

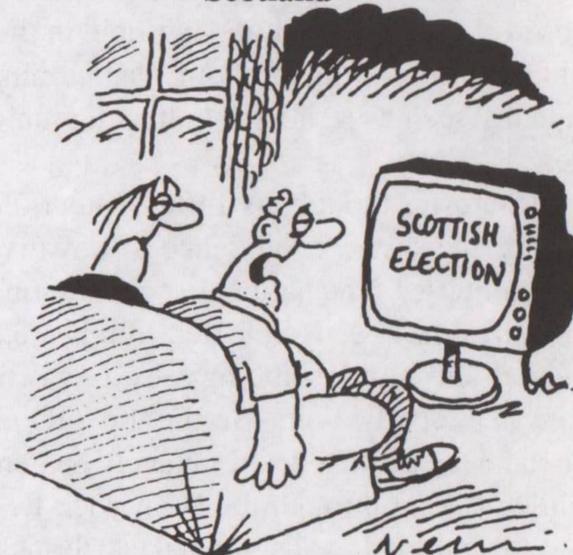
ten years. Or does standing Socialist candidates not split the Labour vote?

On a more positive note, Anarchists in Glasgow have produced a “Declaration of Autonomy” concerning devolution and the issues it raises. The declaration argues that to claim that devolution or independence could “‘tame’ capitalism and significantly alter our lives” is “leading people up the garden path.” It also points out that real independence and self-determination is impossible within capitalism:

“To invest our hopes for the future in political change, confined to the level at which we are governed and taxed, without a clear approach to the economic dynamic of capitalism, which continues to ravage the planet and exploit us all for profit, is frankly misguided. Independence and self-determination is an illusion within capitalism. No amount of fervour for a Scottish republic can escape this reality. We cannot take our desires for reality within the world as it is.”

Rather, we must work in a wide variety of workplace, community and environment struggles in order to create real change by the only effective means we have - direct action, solidarity and collective struggle. The “declaration” is well worth reading and presents the only real alternative to both electioneering and the current system - namely anarchism.

The “Declaration of Autonomy” can be got from: CI (The Anarchist Circle)
c/o 28 King Street
Glasgow G1 5QP
Scotland



“It’s the first time in 300 years we’ve been able to register our apathy”

Victory for Full Sutton 'mutineers'

January 1997 saw the biggest revolt to date against the claustrophobic and brutal regime at Full Sutton maximum security prison. May this year saw eight prisoners acquitted of Prison Mutiny.

In 1995, using the Whitemoor and Parkhurst escapes as a pretext, security and harassment were massively stepped up. At the same time the Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme and prisoner compacts were introduced and it was announced that Full Sutton would host the pilot for the pin-number phonecard system. In this, prisoners have to register numbers they wish to phone and have them cleared by security before they can call them. In November 1995 E-wing staged a 3-day work-strike against the new measures. Riot squads broke up this peaceful protest.

More and more petty restrictions fuelled the discontent. On the afternoon of 20th January, 1997, Dessie Cunningham was taken to the segregation unit, already full of prisoners there on spurious pretexts. Dessie was a popular prisoner and when he was dragged away and beaten all the way to the block, the tolerance of prisoners on his wing finally snapped. When C-wing was unlocked that evening some prisoners smashed up showers, TV rooms and other communal areas. The wing was barricaded and fires started.

The revolt on B wing began later the same evening when prisoners were ordered to bang up 40 minutes early. A far greater disturbance took place there, with the wing being entirely destroyed, leading to the flagship dispersal unit being jubilantly referred to as Half Sutton.

Prisoners began to congregate in the association area. Two prison officers beat a hasty retreat from the cleaners' office when two masked prisoners came towards them and began hammering on the perspex windows with mops and buckets. The rest of the staff quickly abandoned the wing, leaving it completely in the hands of the prisoners, who quickly put up barricades, expecting an imminent attack by the riot squad.

'Access to the exercise yard was gained by battering down the steel gate with a wooden door. A large fire was quickly lit

out here... it was now possible to .. access the rest of the wing. All the files and papers were seized from the screws' offices and the offices gutted. We knew that we'd all be shipped all over the country and might not see friends for some time... an impromptu barbecue party was held... with cooking done on smouldering prison files and decisions made on what to do.'

'The tactics of guerilla warfare are hit and run and the circumstances were such that by that point little would have been gained by confronting the riot squad. So, eventually we banged up two or more to a cell, to defend ourselves better against the brutality we expected to come. But it didn't. The screws were badly shaken by the scale of the damage. We could hear them saying incredulously "Where did they get the tools from to do this? They can't have done it with their bare hands."

'We were expecting a good kicking but I remember lying on the bed in the cell, howling with laughter. There was still an atmosphere of defiance and celebration. People shouted out abuse to the screws and jokes to one another. We were kept locked up all day and late in the afternoon they started to move people out one at a time. The screws were in full riot gear but they looked terrified.'

Prisoners from both wings were moved to gaols across the country. Masses of prisoners' property was deliberately destroyed by screws and there are still outstanding civil claims for damage.

In May 1998, after a lengthy police 'investigation', 13 men were committed for trial. William Edmonds, who the authorities were trying to finger as a main instigator, had been released on bail, attended the committal but did not turn up for the trial. On 27 August three C wing prisoners were convicted of prison mutiny and later sentenced to five years each.

This year the remaining nine, all of whom had been on B wing, stood trial at Newcastle Crown Court. There were seven acquittals and only two convictions. Paul Lyons and Michael Guest were sentenced to three and five years and both plan to appeal. Most of the seven acquitted were men the Prison Service wanted to settle old

Easter Uprising a success!

Over 50 anarchists and other libertarians attended the *Easter Uprising* conference in Glasgow over the Easter weekend. The conference was a follow-up to the successful Bradford May Day 98 event.

Like the Bradford event, the Easter Uprising aimed to bring together libertarian activists from all areas of struggle in a non-sectarian atmosphere for free and frank discussion of issues. There were general discussions on resistance to global capitalism, which naturally flowed into discussion of possible actions on June 18th. It was agreed that Scottish activists would organise an event in Scotland rather than traipse down to London. Other discussions focused on stopping the war in the Balkans, anti-consumerism and the current crisis of the global economy.

While not as well attended as the Bradford event, the Easter Uprising was very positive and constructive. The idea was raised of doing a similar event every year, giving the libertarian movement a space to develop our ideas and activities outside the normal channels. Hopefully this will be the topic of a meeting at this years Anarchist Bookfair.

Brian Higgins Victory

Regular readers may remember (*BF210*) that UCATT full-timer Dominic Hehir was trying to gag Building Worker group secretary Brian Higgins, with the collusion of the UCATT hierarchy, by suing him for libel. Hehir has now climbed down and withdrawn the action. Brian Higgins' position throughout has been that this should have been dealt with by the union's rulebook, not in the courts of the class enemy. His victory also shows that rank and file organisers under attack can beat attempts to silence them, something which will certainly be of interest to members of other unions.

scores with: Mark Gillan had been in the Risley uprising, Patrick Francis, the only black prisoner to stand trial, had been at Strangeways and Stewart Bowden at both Strangeways and a 'mini-mutiny' at Full Sutton in 1992. Another had previously escaped from Frankland and tried unsuccessfully to have the Prison Service action in holding him at that prison during the trial declared unreasonable and unlawful.

Brown Dawn over the Black Soil

The case of the Krasnodar Three



Maria Randina

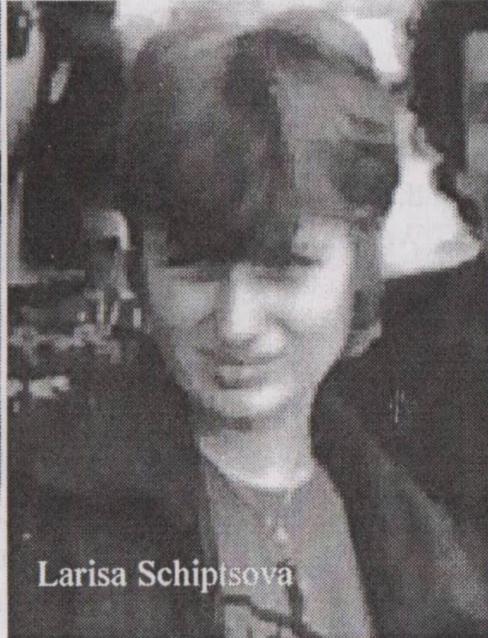
On November 28, 1998 at the station in Krasnodar, southern Russia, the police stopped and searched several young anarchist punks. Some explosives were purportedly found in the bag of Gennady Nepshikuyev. Police arrested him and two others, Maria Randina and Jan Musel, a Czech. Jan was released after the intervention of the Czech consulate, the others remained under arrest.

Little is known about what happened between their arrest and February 2nd, when two more flats were searched by the FSB (successor to the KGB) in Moscow and a third person, Larisa Schiptsova, was arrested. Questions directed at the anarchists included asking about the "national policy of governor Kondratenko".

Nikolai Kondratenko is the governor of the Krasnodar region. He is notoriously chauvinist and anti-semitic, and openly supported nazis in the Region. (Russia's largest fascist party, Russian National Unity, RNE, operates legally in Krasnodar). Southern Russia is a fertile ground for Russian nationalism. Right wing Cossack militias, usually racist and anti-Semitic, are trying to arm themselves and get recognition as a paramilitary police force.

The paranoid governor and his lackeys are presenting the case as an attempt on his life.

It is not surprising that the Krasnodar anarchists became the targets of Kondratenko's paranoid search for enemies. Kuban Anarchist Federation (FAK) was almost the only political group in the region with the courage to openly demonstrate against his nationalist policies and the thugs of RNE. Local anarchists fought the Nazis and constantly received death



Larisa Schiptsova

threats. the regional FSB, because of their active anti-fascist stance.

Although the three are formally charged with transportation and possession of explosives, and no charges of terrorism and establishing a criminal group were presented, the regional papers controlled by Kondratenko reported that an attempt to kill him was prevented.

Some serious difficulties have already emerged for the three. Usually, cases of carrying explosives are investigated by the local police, but the three were put into the regional FSB prison and the case is being conducted by the regional procurator's office and the Krasnodar FSB.

Larisa Schiptsova is suffering physically the most since she is pregnant (5 months as at May 99) and the food in the FSB prison is appalling. After 3 weeks of imprisonment her gums were bleeding and doctors found some problems in the foetus' development. However, her situation had improved a little after protests began.

Larisa's lawyer, Stanislav Markelov, also attracted attention from the investigators. Other anarchists interrogated at the end of February were not only questioned about the case, but also about Markelov. It is no coincidence that the flats of people whom Markelov met when he was in town were searched, even those who are not active anarchists and have no relation to the case. (Markelov also acted for Andrey Sokolov, a young Stalinist sentenced recently for blowing up a monument to the Russian royal family. His case was reconsidered in mid-March, he got a softer sentence for vandalism, not terrorism, and was

threats.

Maria Randina herself had resisted the establishment of the nazi-controlled University police in Krasnodar, for which she was thrown out of the Krasnodar University. For a few years Krasnodar anarchists have been under close surveillance by

released from prison.)

Maria Randina was initially pressured into taking a lawyer recommended by the investigator, but a new one has now been found.

Gennady Nepshikuyev, in whose bag the explosives were supposedly found, seems to have been too talkative and his words form the only evidence against the other two. It is believed that he tells the investigators what they want to hear, naming people, who cannot even be connected with the accused. Unfortunately, the FSB keeps his testimonies secret and there is no detailed information on that. Nepshikuyev is compromised and is not a feature of the defence campaign in Russia.

On March 30th anarchists and human rights activists picketed the Federation Council (upper houses of the Russian parliament) demanding the release of Maria Randina and Larisa Schiptsova. The protestors handed out leaflets, held large posters against the police state and called for the release of the arrested anarchists. On the same day pickets were organised in Yekaterinburg, St. Petersburg and Berlin.

There were very few reports of the case in the Russian media and now, with the war in Yugoslavia raising nationalist passions in Russia, there is even less chance that it will be picked up in the media. Not one journalist showed up at the demo on March 30.

What You Can Do

- Spread this information as far as possible.
- Demonstrate at Russian embassies and consulates.
- Send petitions to your Russian ambassadors.

Please, send protests to governor Kondratenko and the regional procurator's office, investigating the case:

Nikolai E. Kondratenko, governor of Krasnodar region

350014 Krasnodar, ulitsa Krasnaya, 35
Tel.(7-8612) 62-57-16, fax (7-8612) 68-35-82 & 68-45-38

Krasnodar regional procurator
A.N.Shkrebets

Fax (7-8612) 68-30-95

Donations to cover legal and other ex-

penses are welcome.

In North America, send cheques or money orders (made out to M.Laskey or S. Hyland) to: We Dare Be Free/International Solidarity Campaign,

PO Box 390085, Cambridge, MA 02139

(please indicate that your donation is for the anarchists arrested in Krasnodar.)

In Europe, send money to Postgiro Berlin BLZ 100 100 10, Sonderkonto K.Schmidt KtoNr 20610-106; indicate it is for 'Russland'

Information and contacts

You can contact the Moscow Group for counteraction against political repression at the following addresses:

email: koalabear@glasnet.ru

113208, Moscow, m-208, P.O.Box 80, Vladlen Tupikin

(please, don't write the name of the group, just a person's name on the envelope).

All of the information available on the "Krasnodar case" can be found at www.ecoline.ru/actions/bomba/

Most of the site is in Russian, but there are German and English sections as well. The site also features photos.

Source: AN-Press, AnPress@mail.admiral.ru

Late News: Maria Randina has been released on bail, but she must stay in Krasnodar

Another forced removal, another death

A Nigerian asylum seeker was killed during forced deportation by Austrian police on May 1st. Marcus O. had been chained "because of heavy resistance" and his mouth taped up. The 25 year old died on a plane from Vienna to Sofia. The three Austrian coppers accompanying him noticed twenty minutes before the plane was due to land that he had become quiet. He was unconscious on arrival, and all the Austrian Ministry of the Interior could say was that he had died, and they were "deeply sorry". The Bulgarian authorities have confiscated the Austrian coppers' passports and are carrying out an autopsy.

There are parallels between this case and that of Semira Adamu, murdered by the Belgian authorities last year, where the Minister responsible was forced to resign.

Please protest to the Austrian Embassy, fax no. 0171-344-0292. protests should be marked for the attention of: Eva Nowotny, or go direct to the Minister of the Interior, Karl Schloegl, and demand his resignation.

Karl Schloegl

Herrengasse 7

A-1010 Wien, Austria

Fax: 00-43-1-531-26-3910

in brief Life in Prison for stealing to eat

Homeless Gregory Taylor failed in his appeal to get his 25-year-to-life sentence reduced. He had tried to prise open the door of a church where he had been fed before to get some food. The court decided that the Church had valuable items such as a chalice, and that was what he was after. Taylor was sentenced under California's Three Strikes law, which requires a term of 25-to-life for any third felony. Taylor had two previous convictions during the 80s for robbery. Although one judge dissented, the majority refused to use their discretion under the law to reduce the sentence.

occupation in nantes

On May 1st, after a call by the Collective Against Expulsions, about 40 people occupied the Hotel Ibis in nantes, France. Ibis is part of the ACCOR group, who have been co-operating with the deportation of sans-papiers (immigrants without documents). Notably, they have allowed their premises in the Charles de Gaulle airport to be used as a detention centre.

cae44@excite.fr

May Day in Prague

Since 1990 Strelecky island in the centre of Prague has been the traditional venue for anarchists from all over the Czech Republic to commemorate May Day. However, this year, the Czech neo-nazi movement organised a public counter-demo with the slogan "Smash the Reds." Blood and Honour were also involved in organising this legal demo, for which permission was granted by the authorities.

Officially, the nazi demonstration was against communism and capitalism, but one of the organisers said, "relations between skinheads and anarchists have been quiet and calm (and) it is time to change this."

The antifascist demonstration began at 11am, the same time as the fascist demonstration, a mile away. Before this, a group of antifascists blocked the entrance to the island. Then at 10.45 the police attacked

the 100-strong blockade and violently removed antifascists from the bridge above Strelecky Island. Unfortunately the split within the antifascist movement meant there were only a hundred antifascists on the bridge and others at the island. After several speeches there, by Antifascist Action, Czechoslovakia Anarchist Federation and Federation of Social Anarchists, 400 marched off to the end of the bridge.

The police blocked the bridge, so everyone quickly moved through the city to the other end of the bridge and sat down on the road from there to the city.

Although the neonazis had not sought permission for a march, the police started to clear a way for them by attacking the crowd with tear gas, truncheons and horses. In defence, molotov cocktails were thrown. Nine police were slightly injured

and 21 antifascists were detained, four of whom were charged.

An article from a Czech paper, *Hospodarske Noviny*, described the events as the police "protecting skinheads right to demonstrate," ironic given that the nazis had claimed they would wipe the anarchists out of Prague on this day.

The paper reported that the skinheads wanted to cleanse society of "liberal democratic dirt" and "imported multiculturalism." It is clear who the Czech authorities regard as the real enemy.

**LATE NEWS -
CZECH ANARCHISTS
MICHAL PATERA &
VACLAV JEZ FREED!
see page 11**

Turkey, Öcalan and the Kurds

The capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan sparked an inspirational wave of solidarity actions by Kurds across Europe and a renewed level of struggle inside Turkey. The PKK are no anarchist organisation but the struggle for self-determination by the Kurdish people and therefore the role of the PKK is important for us all. After the disturbing scenes of self-immolation, the PKK issued a statement including the following: "All means of struggle must be employed against the fascist Turkish state. That is our legitimate right. Every Kurdish person must be self-consciously aware of how they can bring about an explosion in the heart of the enemy, of how the enemy, not themselves, can be burned, and in this way not abandon the victory to the fascist Turkish state." After his arrest the Turkish media ran stories saying that Öcalan has a heart condition. The PKK have strenuously denied this and point out that this could be a precursor to extra-judicial murder.

The following is taken from a statement by the 5th May Group, a Turkish/Kurdish anarchist group in the UK.

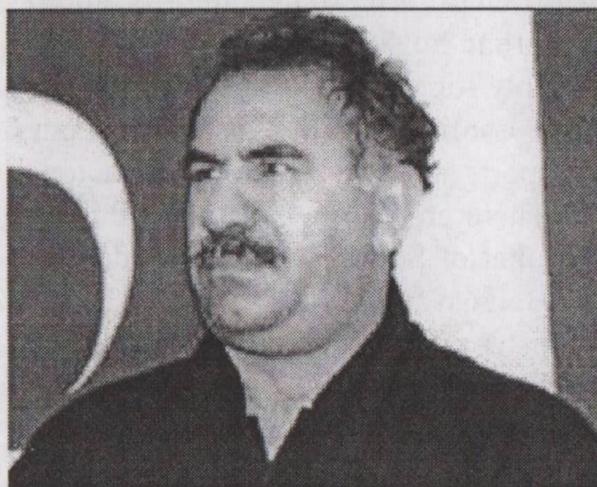
Resistance to the patriotic hysteria

The USA set in motion a new Middle East plan last year hoping to divide Iraq and isolate Saddam Hussein. They wanted to establish a new Kurdish state on part of Iraq's territory intending this new state to be led by two friendly Kurdish leaders, Barzani and Talibani. This pro-USA state in the northern part of Iraq would then give America a stronghold against local rebel states such as Iraq, Syria and Iran.

America started to put this plan into action towards the end of 1998 and around that period met with their preferred leaders. However Turkey saw a Kurdish state, even pro-American, on its borders as a threat. Turkey has a large Kurdish population and is fighting a war against PKK led Kurdish guerrillas.

In October 1998 with US backing, Tur-

key started international bullying and put pressure on Syria for the expulsion of Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the PKK. Öcalan left before he was extradited and sought asylum in a number of European countries. Because of US and Turkish pres-



sure these countries refused him entry. Russia and Greece, for their own national interests agreed to "protect" Öcalan but at the same time wanted no conflict with Turkey. We all know what happened next. Greece supported by Russia and other western states suddenly decided to hand over Öcalan to Turkey. Yet again it shows that governments put their own interests before those of political refugees. And yet again it should teach us not to put any trust in the governments (elected or unelected) of any country.

The PKK began their guerrilla war in the mid-1980s, when the military were still in power in Turkey, and looked as powerful as ever. The Kurdish masses responded positively to this war and gave active support to it. The most active support came from rural youth who had no possibility of employment and had lost all hopes of a better future under Turkish rule. This guerrilla war and the number of deaths on both sides reached its peak in the early 1990s when the Turkish state decided to fight the guerrillas, their supporters and followers with similar tactics and launched a counter guerrilla war. The state organised its own secret gangs, backed by the army, secret police and gendarmerie, to murder thousands of Kurdish people.

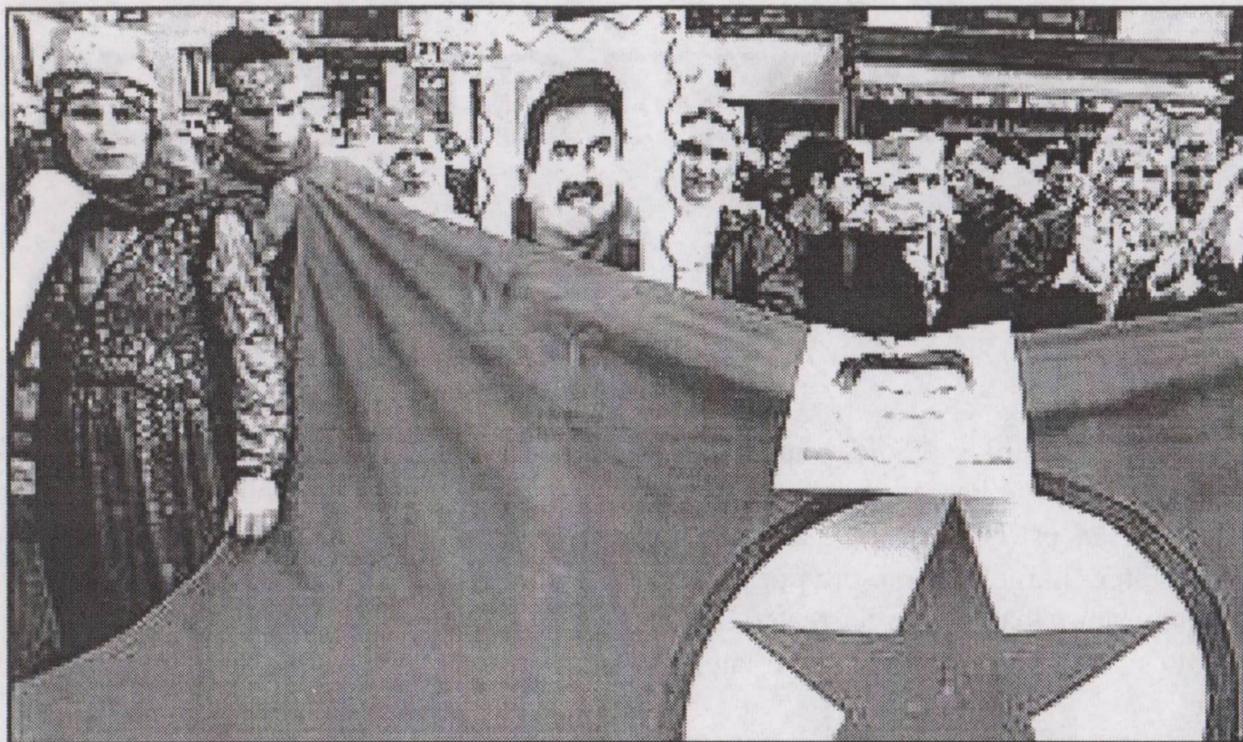
Between 1990 and 1996 thousands of villages in the south east were either de-

stroyed or burnt down. People were forced to leave their villages or were killed if they did not. Many "disappeared" and their murderers were sheltered and protected by the government. Despite this, the guerrilla movement continued to grow.

However after the Sursuluk scandal in 1996, when a car accident exposed the links between the police, the murder gangs, organised crime and pro-government Kurdish politicians, the PKK leadership seemed to believe that the military had shifted its policy and were now willing to give some concessions to the Kurdish guerrilla movement. The PKK sought to reach a compromise but have achieved nothing this way.

For the last three years Öcalan had tried to negotiate with both the Turkish state and its generals. He believed that the generals wanted to negotiate a peaceful settlement. Unfortunately for Öcalan this was not the case. Further, Öcalan put all his faith into negotiations with the state and ignored the Kurdish grassroots movement which could have been a useful ally. This was mainly due to his dictatorial behaviour and politics as a nationalist leader. To a large extent however the Kurdish cultural tradition allowed him to take this role upon himself. We also want to see an end to the war but not by compromising with the state and the generals. On the contrary we see the politicisation of the Kurdish people's grassroots movements and the escalation of working class struggles as the only way forward.

Now the Turkish government is preparing to execute Öcalan. Generals have instructed the government that his execution must take place as soon as possible. Turkey is in crisis both economically and politically. The state hopes to use the Öcalan issue and the popular patriotic feeling associated with this to take the heat out of these internal crises. They also hope the death of Öcalan will lead to the defeat of the Kurdish guerrillas and to the death of the Kurdish movement. To accompany this they are preparing a new law about "pismanlik" or "regretting" to be passed after the elections giving amnesty to guer-



rillas who surrender.

Now Öcalan is a prisoner of the notorious torturing Turkish state and we know the powers in Turkey want him dead. We will raise our voices against the collective paranoia and national hysteria, created by Turkish nationalists and the Turkish state which tries to show Öcalan the devil for everything bad that's happened. The Turkish state is also trying to oppress any opposition to Öcalan's arrest, so our opposition is even more important. The Turkish state's history is filled with ethnic massacres, such as that of the Armenians. Today it is the turn of the Kurds to be massacred. But this is also a race and class problem. While we will struggle against Turkish state

repression we do not support Öcalan's nationalistic notion. However we do support the Kurdish people's struggle against their race and class repression.

Yes, the Turkish leadership hope to destroy the Kurdish movement and all other opposition, with the capture and probable execution of Öcalan, but it will not work. The Kurds will continue their opposition which will lead to further state repression. On Newroz, a Kurdish holiday, Kurds stood up as a body, children, women, young and old and fought against the Turkish police sent in to disperse them. In Istanbul alone, in its poorest suburbs, over 1500 people were arrested and beaten. Wherever there is repression there will be resistance.

VÁCLAV JEZ AND MICHAL PATERA FREED!

On May 14th, Michal Patera and Václav Jez were released, both apparently on bail.

Michal was accused of attempted murder after defending himself against a gang of neo-nazi skinheads. Václav was originally tried in a similar case of self-defence, and was serving a two year sentence for militant anti-fascist activities.

We should not underestimate the travails faced by our Czech comrades. In December 1998, Vladimir Patera, Michal's brother, was acquitted of assaulting a police officer. In the eastern town of Zlin there are 10 anti-fascists and anarchists accused of public disorder, and we can be sure that the police will try to jail more from the arrests on May 1st (see p.9).

For more up to date information, try the Czechoslovak ABC website, <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/1211>

or write to them c/o FSA-IWA, Box 5, 15006 Praha 56, Czech Republic.

Money continues to be collected, and a largely successful benefit was held on May Day in London. Donations can be sent via the SF International Secretariat, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE

More News From Turkey

Last two issues of the Turkish anarchist newspaper, Efendisizler (masterless) was banned by the state because of articles about the Kurdish issue. They took all of the newspapers from the printing house twice. Efendisizler say "our newspaper survives on sales. When they took the third issue, we collected some money from our comrades, but after the fourth issue, we couldn't find money for the fifth issue. So, we need solidarity again."

efendisizler@hotmail.com

José Luis Geresta

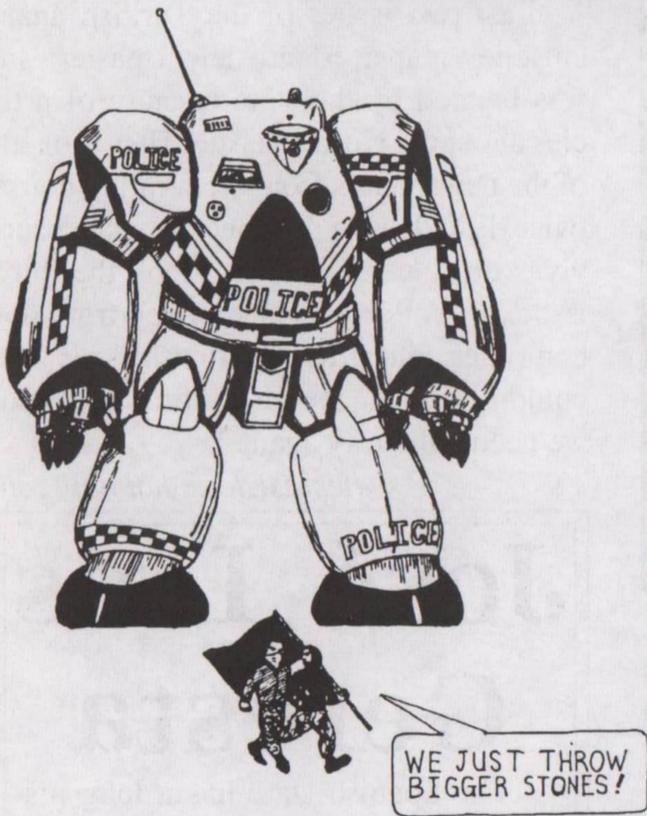
The Spanish state has a long history of extra-judicial murder. The *ley de fuga*, whereby prisoners are assassinated on the pretext they tried to escape, originally introduced to murder anarchist militants in the 1910s, was extended more recently to ETA volunteers in "modern" Spain. The Basque movement has now encountered a new refinement of this technique - state assisted suicide.

ETA volunteer José Luis Geresta was found dead in a field near the town of Orereta, in Gipuzkoa. According to the state, he killed himself. The forensic evidence doesn't bear this out. The positioning of his body was incompatible with that of someone who purportedly shot himself in the temple. He was found lying on his back, with his arms stretched alongside his body. The gun used was a foot to his left, the bullet wound was on the right side of his head. Although Geresta was not wearing gloves, there were no fingerprints on the gun. His jaw was broken and two of his back teeth had been extracted before his death. Three days prior, he had told a cousin he feared the police were after him.

It seems that the Spanish state's response to ETA's moves to establish a "peace process" has been to return to the tactics of its "dirty war" period.

The newspaper *Gara* and José Luis Geresta's family ask for international support to establish the truth of his death.

Bad behaviour in Greece



Since November, a wave of school occupations and pupils' mobilisations has shaken Greece. Pupils are taking action against the application of the "2525/97 act", which connects education to the needs of the economy. The act had been announced as a "broad reform of the education system." In the eyes of the pupils, it means intensification, rivalry and total loss of their free time. The pupils' reaction was spontaneous, and massive, although somewhat delayed, as the act's first application happened a year ago. Then it aimed to spread rivalry among the unemployed teachers. The reaction of the latter culminated last June, with four days' clashes in many cities in Greece. In these clashes, there was a very small pupils' participation. During these clashes, anarchist Costas Mitropetros was arrested. Last November he was imprisoned until his trial. In the middle of December, over a thousand schools were occupied throughout Greece. The government hoped that the pupils' mobilisations would end during Xmas vacations. On January 11th, by the end of vacations, 800 schools throughout Greece were occupied. The government threatened to prosecute pupils who participated in the occupation of schools. A wave of terror and threats started to spread.

On January 15th, demonstrations took place in almost every city of Greece. The pupils were angry rather than scared. In Athens, 14 people were arrested. Two of them, Arban Belala, a 17-year old pupil-emigrant from Albania- and Vasilis

Evangelidis, a 30 year old anarchist and unemployed teacher, were charged with heavy offences. The rest were set free, facing lighter charges. Two more pupils-emigrants from Albania- were arrested during clashes in Thessaloniki and were later set free.

On January 16th, V. Evangelidis was interrogated. Vasilis declared: "I deny all charges. I inform you that I participate in the mobilisations against "2525/97 act" since it became law. As an unemployed graduate of the School of Philosophy, I participated in last year's struggle of the unemployed teachers. That struggle today continues with the pupils' movement, to which I declare my solidarity, also as an anarchist. As one of the 25,000 people who took part in Friday's demonstration. The charges against me are fabricated, I refuse them and I protest." The interrogator, with the agreement of the public prosecutor, ordered Vasilis' imprisonment until his trial.

On January 18th, Arban Belala was also brought in front of the interrogator. He denied the accusations. He was also imprisoned until his trial.

On January 19th, Vasilis Evangelidis announced that he started a hunger strike: "I don't beg for anything. From this day on I am on a hunger strike against my imprisonment, which was decided by the repressive machine of the State. They put me in jail (in Chania, Crete) because, I am charged, among other things, with an arson attempt. This accusation is fabricated, based on fake evidence. I deny all charges and I demand my freedom. I declare my solidarity with the pupils' movement, with the uneasiness of the pupils in resistance. Their struggle is closely tied to the struggle for the abolition of the system of exploitation and oppression. The schools are fencing the youth, in order to produce servants deprived of passion, human machines who give up their lust for freedom. When the struggles go beyond passivity, compromise and trade unionism, then the system reveals its real face: terrorism, violence, repression. In such moments, only solidarity from the other oppressed and exploited

can deter suppression and slander. Therefore, what is most important today is the continuation of the struggle, the solidarity with the occupied schools, the coming together and the communication of all people in struggle".

**Solidarity with schools' occupations!
Freedom for the imprisoned comrades!**

The afternoon of the same day, another big demonstration took place in Athens, accompanied by minor clashes.

On 21 January, demonstrations against the Act took place in many cities. More than 40 people were arrested after clashes.

THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR SOLIDARITY! Organise demos in front of local Greek consulates and embassies. The whole situation needs maximum publicity, which will encourage our struggle here. We'd also like solidarity e-mails and/or faxes for our imprisoned comrades at: +(3031) 257364 or nautilus@otenet.gr and we'll pass them on to them. Also fax the Ministry of Justice: +(301)7796055 Keep us informed about every action of solidarity.

THE CASE OF KOSTAS MITROPETROS

The anarchist Kostas Mitropetros was arrested during the clashes of June 18th. After 3 days of continuing clashes, a troop from the neo-nazi band "Chrisi Avgi (Golden Dawn)" attacked 3 students-members of a left wing group and caused severe injuries to all three of them. The reaction was rather mild, as far the leftists are concerned, but a group of about 30 comrades attacked the police and cameramen with stones and molotov cocktails. K. Mitropetros participated at the demonstration and had to pay the price as the only one who was arrested. His main crime had been his anarchist beliefs, along with his solidarity with groups of immigrants, pupils, teachers and all groups who resist nowadays.

*Self-managed Social Centre
NAUTILUS, Thessaloniki*

No Easy Answers

Looking at the Balkans War

It's too easy to write crass commentary on the bombing of Serbia, condemn NATO and imperialism or proclaim abstract solidarity with or self-determination for the Kosovans. We don't want to dwell on the weaknesses, political or numerical, of the anti-war movement here.

There are several resources to hear voices from ex-Yugoslavia, the most valuable for us being the Zaginflat project (see page 17 for addresses). This is run by a Zagreb based Anarchist/anti-militarist group who circulated discussion and news on the war from many sources across the Balkans. (Some of the messages are featured in the boxes). Serbian emails seem to have dried up recently. Uncensored news is unavailable and as some of the contributions to the site make clear, very necessary in making any sense of what is going on at all.

In London a group of activists across the anarchist and left spectrum is meeting, mobilising and discussing the war and how to resist it. "No War But the Class War" can be contacted through escape c/o PO Box 2474, London N8 0HW or e-mail escape6@hotmail.com

Here we feature an article by a member of International Workers Aid, plus news on the much more heartening anti-war movements in Greece and Italy.

Nato cannot and never will stop fascism in Kosova or anywhere else: act now to support the appeal from Kosova to break the blockade

by Bob Myers, Workers Aid

I have written this article about the war in Kosova and Serbia at very short notice. A lot of what needs thinking about can only be acknowledged here - above all about the crisis of social control confronting capital with the break-up of the Stalinist empire, as a component part of the structural crisis of the capital system, and the inability of the capitalist class to adequately replace its method of social control with any new, stable form of rule.

The day before I wrote this article we received information from friends in the Kosova mining town of Mitrovica that paramilitaries were rounding up trade union and community activists. Some had been executed. Miners' leaders and their

families are missing-gone into hiding or dead? We have a leading member of the Pristina students Union, who has been on a speaking tour round UK universities, now unable to get home. The President of the Education Union who was on a Workers Aid speaking tour in Spain is also unable to return to his wife and children in Pristina, where fascists are going from house to house rounding up people. Here in the UK, Workers Aid members are ringing up asking, "What are we going to do? We must do something."

I walked past the SWP paper sellers yesterday. They were shouting out 'Welfare not warfare, stop the bombing'. But what about the Albanian working class: what about their "welfare"? The question that has to be answered, or begun to be answered, is the question on the lips of the Kosova Albanians and all those people around the world who sympathise with their plight: how is the nightmare of ethnic persecution going to be stopped? For most of these people there is no apparent alternative to NATO however much they criticise its delays and prevarication.

Much of the left is shouting 'No to NATO bombing' but by and large they have said nothing about genocide in Bosnia or the ten-year persecution of Albanians in Kosova. "No" to this, "no" to that, but not a word about what to do or only a few meaningless abstract phrases like "Albanian and

Serb workers unite". The war refuses to fit into all the dogmatic recipes of the "left" and the implications of this rapidly developing explosion escape all those who try to fit it into the old categories. Who is closer to real concern for the future of humanity - the Marxist who shouts "No to NATO bombing" and leaves it at that, or the person who, with all kinds of doubts, supports bombing because they can see no other way to stop the ethnic cleansing?

What does it say about the "left" when people like Tony Benn and many others present an opposition to NATO actions with exactly the same arguments as Russian ultra-nationalists and fascists. What does it say about their "socialism" when within it there is still a residue of support for the "socialist Yugoslavia" that is organising the massacre of working class activists in Kosova.

The war in Kosova did not start with NATO bombings. It started in 1989 when Yugoslav (effectively Serbian) tanks rolled into Kosova and crushed all democratic institutions and began a policy of ethnic

I feel like I am on the third side (as usual) and that there are not many of us.

cleansing - at first mainly through economic and cultural pressure with sporadic violence and then from the end of 1997 with the burning and clearing of towns and villages. This was the end of Yugoslavia - a federation of different nationalities.

All of this took place with virtually no response from any of the so-called representatives of the working class movement outside of Kosova. This shameful silence was, and remains, total subservience to imperialism and is the main block to any independent working class support for the people of Kosova.

Even today, as the fascists gangs go from house to house, there is hardly a sound from the leaders of working class organisations. In many countries the first demonstrations to be held concerning Kosova will be in opposition to NATO

bombing of Serbia, not to the plight of an oppressed people. The Kosova Albanians have the right to call for NATO actions.

As the military onslaught advanced throughout last year who else could they possibly see as a force capable of ending their torment other than NATO/UN? The working class? Ten years ago the Kosova miners staged underground hunger strikes to try to warn the Yugoslav working class that the rise of Serb Nationalism would destroy Yugoslavia. Who responded to their actions? They received only one message of support from the entire world - from the Durham miners. For ten years their hell has grown worse. Who came to see them? Union leaders? Socialists? No, only the envoys of imperialism who for their own reasons of intrigue courted the Albanians.

The Albanians ask for NATO action because they see no other force capable of stopping their genocide and they are right. There is no working class organisation ready and able to defend them. Albanian cynicism and anger at the UN/NATO has grown over the years. They watched Bosnia, they heard the endless final warnings to Milosevic, they saw the refusal of the "Great Powers" to support their right of self determination, but in a hope born of desperation they appealed to the western powers to save them. Many of them understand NATO colonial plans but they prefer to deal with that problem in the future rather than be dead now. Where else should they have turned?

So the Kosova Albanians are caught in a terrible dilemma. They need an ally and the only one they can see is NATO while the bitter truth is that NATO not only has no intention of defending them, it is collaborating in the attack on them. So this desperate people, overwhelmingly working class, impoverished and unemployed are left isolated and defenceless as the NATO jets scream overhead pursuing their own agenda, and on the ground in Kosova the fascists continue their butchery.

Instead of getting so agitated about NATO bombing and condemning it without any alternative to stop genocide, socialists, working class organisers and democrats need to answer the question, in thought and action, "how will we stop the rise of fascism", and only in doing that can it usefully be said to the Albanians and

their sympathisers world-wide that "NATO cannot and never will do the job".

What is NATO's policy? Following the collapse of the Soviet empire the capitalists have not been able to establish their 'new world order' which was supposed to replace it. Stalinism was a necessary part of the global repression of the working class and cannot easily be replaced. Their great difficulty is capitalism's natural (preferred) form of control over the working class - economic and ideological - difficult to establish when it simultaneously becomes im-

Just 15 minutes ago madmen hit the buildings in the center of Belgrade close to the bridge over Sava river. We are afraid that many people are killed - this part of city is heavily populated. I know this part of Belgrade very well. Only 200 meters away there are about 10 hospitals and clinics, full of civilians. NATO's propaganda machinery number 1 - CNN - transmitted pictures where big flames are visible. Very big flames. I can see in my imagination how people in Montana US, Den Hag, Lyon, Birmingham, collected with their families for Easter, are sitting in front of TV and looking. Enjoying? Oh, yes, those buildings where headquarters of police. Do you have police in your country? Was the police HQ in Beijing, China, destroyed after the massacre of students on Tien An Men square ?

possible to stop the collapse of vast areas of human productive activity and millions starve.

The wars in Yugoslavia are not the result of ancient ethnic feuds. The outer form is ethnic in appearance, but the inner content is entirely modern. Social tensions explode along old ethnic fault lines but these are not the cause. The barbarity of Milosevic's ethnic cleansing is not so much a testimony to old hatreds but more a signal of the strength of the Yugoslav working class and intellectual opposition to his nationalism, however confused and lacking a coherent perspective that opposition is.

The violence in Kosova cannot be understood by tracing old ethnic feuds except in the present context of the restoration of the rule of a capitalist class being pursued equally by the Serbian regime and NATO. Western powers have tacitly supported Milosevic throughout his recent years. They supported his attempt to illegally seize control of the Federal Parliament of Yugoslavia. They gave the green light for the invasion of Slovenia. They intervened in the Croatia war only when it looked like the Croatian army would destroy the

Serbian nationalists. They stood by for three years in Bosnia and again only intervened when resistance to ethnic division proved too strong for both the Croatian and Serbian nationalists and threatened to turn the tables. And throughout the whole period they have refused to condemn the illegal annexation of Kosova. Tony Blair claims that the NATO bombs are Seeking a "just peace". Only a week before, the foreign secretary, Robin Cook, held a gun at the Albanians' heads at the peace talks and let it be understood that if they did not

renounce their claim to self-determination, the great powers would allow the massacres to continue. The Western imperialist leaders have backed Milosevic as the strongman they needed to control the territory of former Yugoslavia. They have supported ethnic cleansing as a battering ram against the working class and many of the key players in the diplomatic game have direct financial links to enterprises in former Yugoslavia. The Albanians are paying a heavy price today for the failure of the international working class to

come to their side. Forced into reliance on NATO their leaders are now being slaughtered in an entirely predictable manner that suits Milosevic and NATO. NATO's present actions have nothing to do with "humanitarian or just peace" solutions. From 1989 to 1997 the west gave the Kosova leadership plenty of reasons to believe that they supported their aim of independence. The west urged the Kosova leadership to continue to pursue "passive resistance" as the best way to win. Indeed, from 1992 to 1996 the west were particularly keen to maintain a passive Kosova; they knew Milosevic had more than he could deal with in Bosnia. Throughout this period ethnic cleansing continued in Kosova. Tens of thousands of people were driven out through economic pressure and arbitrary violence. There was no UN/NATO action then. Then in 1997 the patience of the younger generation of Albanians ran out. The students took to the streets again as they had in 1989. At the same time NATO leaders made it absolutely clear to Milosevic that they would not tolerate Kosova independence. This was the green light for Milosevic to be burning town after town and cleansing huge areas

of Kosova. NATO's present actions have nothing to do with massacres, humanitarian crisis or democracy. As in Bosnia they have taken the present action because they fear things getting out of Milosevic's control. When the Serb army attacked in 1997 the Albanians dropped their passive resistance and embraced the UCK (KLA) which up till that time had been a small group of exiles. The Albanian resistance and the orgy of ethnic cleansing is creating a potential explosion amongst Albanians across the Balkans. Imperialism had to rely on Milosevic and ethnic cleansing to break up a unified pan-Yugoslav mass movement, seeking to take matters into their own hands after the collapse of Stalinism - but the forces behind ethnic cleansing have an uncontrollable logic of their own and cannot just be switched on or off at NATO's bidding. The stability of Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Greece and Turkey are now in question. Even more than it did in Bosnia, ethnic cleansing in Kosova threatens to create a general war across the Balkans as more than a million refugees are sure to be pushed out of Kosova. To some people this symbiotic relationship between NATO and Milosevic is incomprehensible. To both support and attack? But isn't this the same as in Iraq? So, as in Bosnia, rather than responding to western public outcry over ethnic cleansing NATO is using it as a cover for advancing its own plans for control over the whole region just as they did in Bosnia. When Milosevic and Tudjman had reduced Bosnia to rubble but couldn't finish the job, NATO went in. However, in talking of NATO's "plan", it must be understood that the plan is riddled with unanswered questions and unsolvable problems for capitalism. Do not give them too much credit in the foresight department. They play the game day by day, hour by hour, feeling their way. They need a strong ruler in the Balkans but this produces resistance which cannot be dealt with except by open NATO intervention. But how many countries can NATO end up governing?

Bosnia is now a colony. Three weeks ago, the "governor", 'the contact group high representative Carl Westendorf, sacked the president of the Srbska Republic because he would not comply with NATO wishes. This has attracted little attention, because the president was a 'bad' guy. The point is that Bosnia is controlled and run by about 50,000 western administrators - not a very economic solution and

not a very stable one. Capitalism needs to create functioning local administrations but cannot do so. The tensions between the aspirations of the Yugoslav people and the needs of capital are on collision course and the greatest fear in the west is the social explosion this is creating across the region and above all inside Serbia itself.

The UN Bombing in Bosnia was purely cosmetic. No significant targets were ever hit. It remains to be seen what will happen in Serbia. It is now clear that Dayton Agreement, secret agreements were made between the US, Tudjman and Milosevic. It may well be that the same has been done

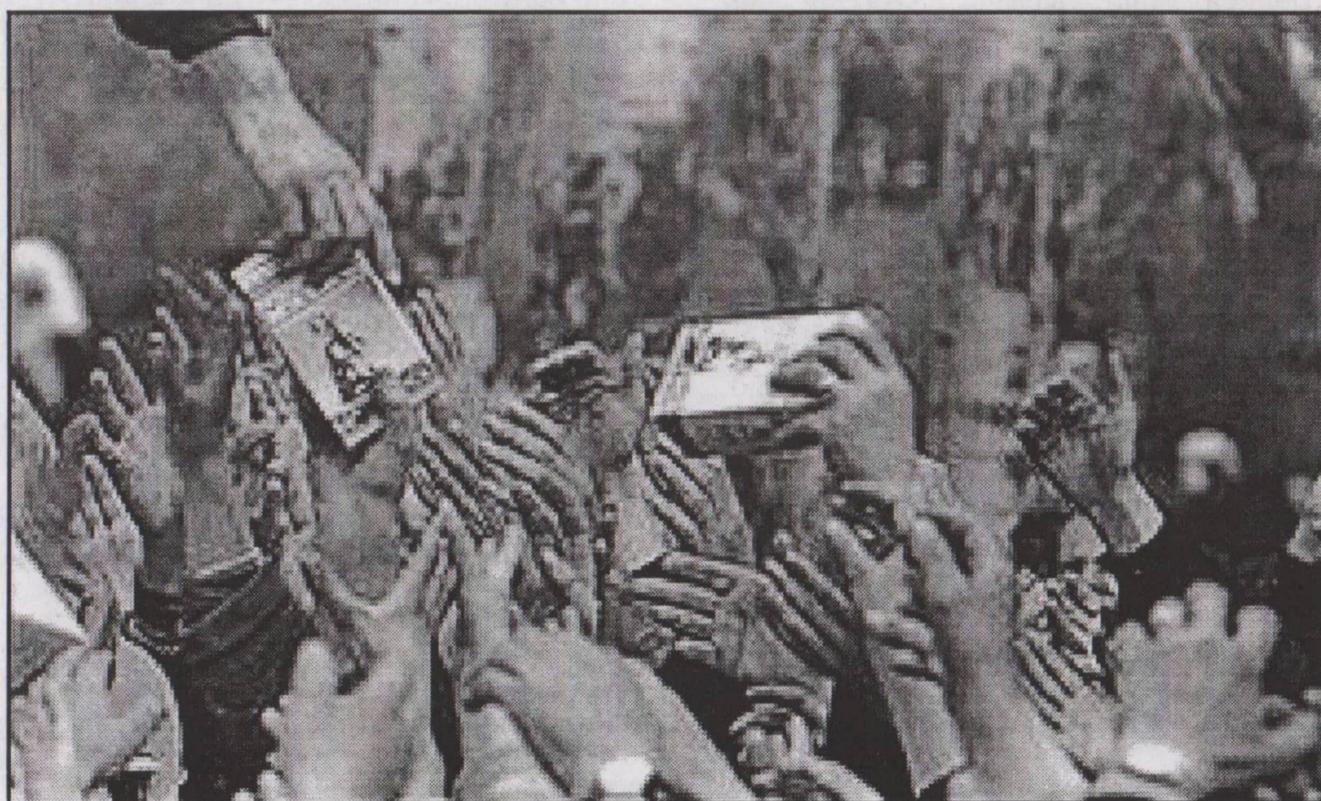
Will somebody find few minutes.... and explain to me, stupid me, how the death of a child in Vojvodina, 600 km (400 miles) north from Kosovo will help suffering Kosovo children?

now. Milosevic may take half of Kosova - above all the mineral wealth of Trepca - and then a new peace conference will accept this fait accompli and the west will oversee an Albanian ghetto in the south. Or there may be some other scenario. But nothing can alter the fact that NATO and

and atomising the Serbian working class. While the bombs falling on Belgrade do absolutely nothing to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosova they certainly help the nationalists and fascists in Serbia silence and break up any working class opposition.

In the midst of this carnage, how to find a way to begin to mobilise the working class? In Workers Aid we have been through this situation in Bosnia several times, where utter barbarity produces a desperate situation, in which people want to do something, now, to stop it. For example after Srebrenica. The truth is: we cannot. But what we must do is stick to our guns; we must not abandon our campaign for internationalism and working class solidarity which we have been developing in collaboration with some sections of Kosova society since 1996.

Talks between Kosova representatives and Workers Aid in March resulted in the appeal (see below) for action from Kosova trade unions and student union. This appeal has even more significance now. While the butchery is going on inside Kosova its external borders blocked by Serbian troops who sit on one side of the fence while tens of thousands of NATO troops sit on the other. What an image of collaboration, what a powerful confirmation of why Europe can



Milosevic have the same military objective in relation to Kosova - to stop the struggle for independence.

There is no doubt that in the future the NATO guns will be turned against the UCK (KLA). This is why the entirely predictable massacre of activists going on at present suits NATO just as NATO and Milosevic's aims converge on silencing

have no confidence in NATO to stop fascism.

The appeal to the working class to open up a corridor into Kosova is an appeal to the working class to act independently of NATO and the imperialists and it is around this appeal and other such initiatives that we must mobilise.

Italy - Striking Against the War

On Thursday 13 May, important sectors of workers took part in the strike against the war organised by the rank and file unions. Over 100,000 people demonstrated in more than 40 cities, and 1 million workers went on strike. The strike was significant despite its explicitly political nature, the media silence, the scanty support of many political and union forces who have declared themselves against the war, the sabotage of public administrations and employers' threats.

10,000 people, almost all of them workers, demonstrated in Milan. More than 5,000 demonstrated in Rome, while thousands took to the streets in Florence, Turin, Bologna and other cities. In Florence, the police set about provoking demonstrators,

firing tear gas canisters at head height. In Turin the administrations' sabotage was massive, and the media silence deafening. Despite this, the strike and demonstration were complete successes.

These facts allow us to conclude that:

- opposition to the war is broader than it seems, and seeks precise occasions to manifest itself;
- the self-organisation of struggle is the principal way to construct an effective opposition to war beyond Italy's borders, and to that which within Italy is being waged against workers through taxes, the reduction of rights and conditions, the limitation of political and union freedoms;
- this opposition must extend itself, strengthen itself, enlarge itself, and is in

need of places to meet and further ground itself;

- the initiative must be kept and pursued with new mobilisations, decided upon collectively.

For example, the Initiative Centre against the war in Turin called for a coordinated effort by all those forces which stand for:

- radical opposition to the war;
- refusal of all forms of nationalism;
- international solidarity between workers;
- rank and file direct action.

This was backed by the CUB (a rank and file union), the Base Committees and the Anarchist Federation.

Letter: to the people of Europe, particularly to Trade Unions and Associations, Student Unions, Democratic Rights Organisations and Humanitarian Organisations.

Dear Friends,

The people of Kosova desperately need your help. Ethnic cleansing has driven hundreds of thousands of Albanian Kosova citizens from their homes.

This violence and injustice has been growing since 1989 when Serbian troops occupied Kosova, which had the right of veto at the federal level, illegally crushed its parliament, constitution and all legitimate institutions, closed its schools, colleges and hospitals to all Albanians and sacked Albanian workers from their jobs.

We appeal to the people of Europe to defend us from this fascist violence. Please, come to Kosova with humanitarian aid, come to show your solidarity, come to see for yourself what is happening. We need you by our side or the Serbian regime's genocide is going to continue until they

get their ethnically pure state.

But if you want to reach us you will have to confront an obstacle - the Serbian regime will not grant visas to anyone who they think will tell the truth of what they have seen in Kosova and campaign for solidarity. There is a blockade around Kosova which isolates the suffering people from the outside world. We need you to break this blockade. We need a humanitarian corridor reaching from the outside world right into Kosova. Let the fleeing victims of ethnic cleansing escape their torturers! Let food, medicine, educational supplies, and everything else needed for a human life, reach the communities who are resisting ethnic cleansing. Let Kosova live!

Therefore, if you are to reach us you will need to organise yourselves to be strong enough to demand from the Serbian

to organise a convoy of aid and solidarity.

Your action will signal that the people of Europe will not sit back and allow ethnic cleansing and will not allow politicians to make the promise "No More Bosnias" become an empty words.

Your action will give hope and strength to all people in Kosova who want to establish a just and democratic society in which everyone can live and work in peace.

Please contact us, today, this minute - our future is in your hands.

Agim Hyseni, on behalf of SBASHK - The Union of Education, Science and Culture of Kosova

Ardian Kastrati, Students Independent Union of University of Pristina

Nediha Grapci, Humanitarian Association of Kosova "Helping Hand" The Independent Union of Health Workers of Kosova

Xhafer Nuli, the independent Union of Miners of Stari Terg, Kosova

25th March 1999

Contact Agim Hyseni on tel/fax ++381 38 26 112 or Ardian Kastrati email:

upsup@albanian.com

Workers Aid for Kosova tel/fax ++44 161-226 0404.

email: workersaid@redbricks.org.uk

.... I won't go to the shelter any more. I feel better to be alone in the house than to tolerate the new government in the shelter... 2/3 of people in my shelter are gypsies, and they are the only nice people there. You can sit down and talk with them, share some food... however, some freaks from the civil guards got the idea that they are now very important people, so they have put out their ranks and try to govern the shelter. Today one of those freaks brought a woman to recognize the person who has put shit on the door handle. When she recognized the person, they practically lynched him...

regime
the right
to travel
to
Kosova.
We ask
every-
one who
hears
this
appeal

Actions in Greece

There have been more demonstrations and actions against the war in Greece than anywhere else, and anarchists have been at the forefront of them.

Around midnight on the 27th April, a demonstration assembled at the gate of the rail terminus of the port of Salonica. Their aim was to prevent a train moving British troops and tanks to Macedonia. The demonstrators blocked the train, painted the swastika on the sides of the tanks, wrote (in English) the slogan "Killers go home" and started shouting against the soldiers that were in the train. They threw stones, thus breaking the windows and forcing the rather surprised soldiers to put on their helmets. Finally, with the help of the railworkers, who joined them, they forced the train back into the terminus.

The troops and tanks had to go via the road to Skopje instead.

The same day on the island of Corfu, there was a concert - demonstration against the NATO bombings, attended by about 10,000 people. After it was over, around midnight, the crowd walked to the airport, overcame the police force guarding it and stormed into the buildings. Then they moved out towards the runway and clashed with the police up to 3 o'clock. Eight policemen were injured and eight arrests were made.

A bomb exploded in front of the Athens Intercontinental Hotel, killing a 39 year old woman and injuring a man. The organi-

sation that planted it, the "Revolutionary Cells", had phoned a warning 30 minutes before the explosion. The organisation, in a letter to an Athens paper, said the bomb was to protest at a conference organised by "The Economist" in the hotel.

Nikos Raptis, writing for the US radical journal Z Magazine, speculated about "why only the Greeks, among all the European peoples are opposing the NATO bombing against Yugoslavia? The polls show that 98 % (!) of the Greeks are against the bombing. They express their opposition with massive demonstrations, almost every other day all over the country. In Athens the demonstrations end up in front of the US Embassy.... The Greeks are ANGRY against the US. They think that the war is morally wrong. They can see through the hypocrisy of Clinton and his puppets. They know who Milosevic is. They are not for Milosevic. They know the suffering of the refugees and the role of the bombing in this. Also, they know what is happening in Yugoslavia. There are dozens of Greek reporters in Yugoslavia and in Kosovo, who report honestly what is happening there, as much as is possible to do. They know that Greece has been under virtual US occupation since 1947. They know that any Greek government "governs" as a proxy of the US elites. ..."

Resources on the War addresses - both real world and internet

Zaginflatch
c/o ZAP/ARK, Gajeva 55,
10 000 Zagreb, Croatia
email: zap_zg@geocities.com
web site: <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/3707>

No War But the Class War page:

<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/guest/radical/ESKOSOVO.HTM>

This page features several in depth articles from a libertarian marxist/anarchist perspective about the war in Kosovo, above all attempting to understand why there is a war there, and to put it into a context of US and British intervention elsewhere this century.

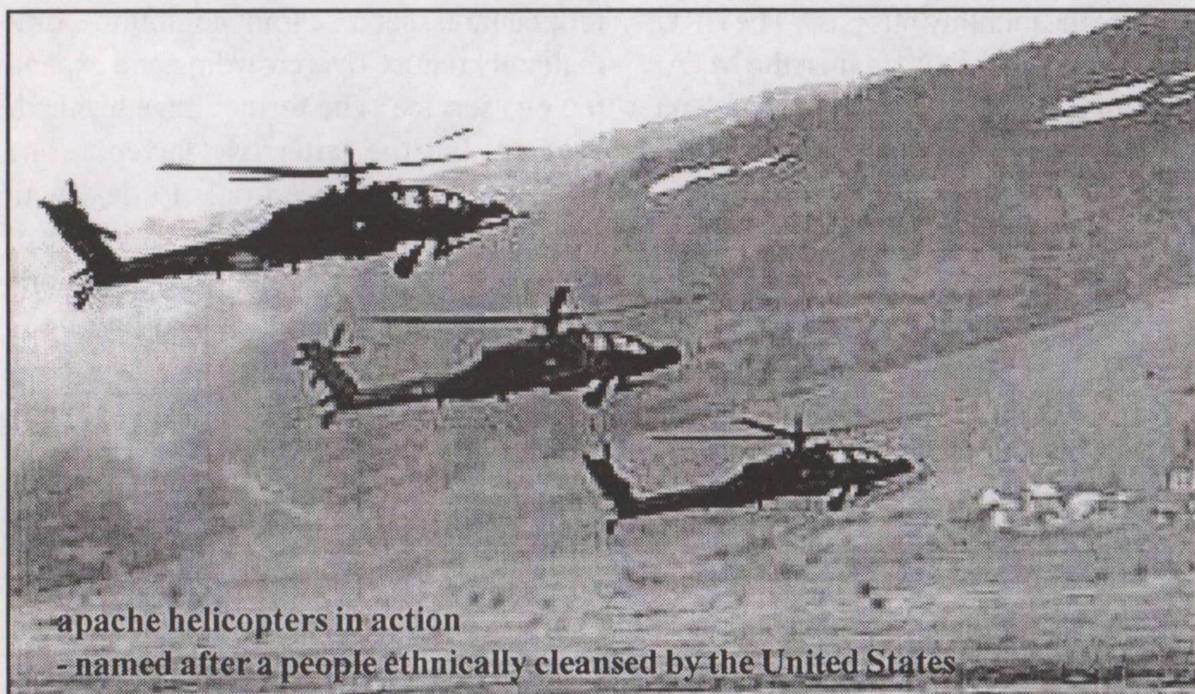
Z Magazine's website at

<http://zmag.org/ZMag/Kosovo.htm> has a large number of essays from various perspectives on the war, as well as a lot of links. Includes stuff by the likes of Chomsky, Pilger, Michael Albert, Robert Fisk. Z Magazine also comes out in hard copy via good bookshops and distros, so if you don't have access to the net, you can still catch up on things.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

TAJ & ROBERTO ARE FREE

Our last issue covered the cases of two anti-fascists jailed for self-defence against a fascist BNP candidate who was acting like a racist thug. We are pleased to say they are both now out. However, vigilance is called for as the BNP have circulated their NW Region with Taj and Roberto's names as well as those of their supporters.



Apache helicopters in action
- named after a people ethnically cleansed by the United States

Get on the Bus!

The story of LA's Bus Riders Union

When you mention Los Angeles, its not usually its public transport which comes to mind. Yet there has been a grassroots campaign on-going there for several years around this theme. The experience of the Bus Riders Union (BRU) in fighting for a better deal for passengers in America's most car-dependent city tells us a lot about the differences between organising here and there.

It might seem surprising to someone used to our congested roads and unreliable, privatised trains to find that the BRU is fighting AGAINST a proposed rail scheme, the Pasadena Blue Line, and for expanded bus services. This might seem crazy from an ecological point of view, but makes sense once you look at the geography of Los Angeles. Unlike most English cities, LA has no centre as such. There is a Downtown, which is full of office blocks and could be compared to the City of London as a financial and commercial district. However, patterns of daily travel - to work or college - do not follow any particular pattern. Someone might work in Hollywood, live in Inglewood and do a course in Long Beach - all miles from each other and very difficult to connect by public transport. A rail scheme would make sense if either the infrastructure was already there, in the form of old abandoned lines which could be rebuilt or re-routed, or if the pattern of movement was from several points to one central district.

The reason any of this is an issue is because for the last 15 years or so, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) has been planning and building light rail systems, of which there are currently 3 in LA. They were very expensive to build and various construction companies made a lot of money out of them. At the same time, the MTA built itself plush new headquarters Downtown. All of this is funded by a proportion of California's state sales tax. At the same time, the bus fleet has been run down and fares were proposed to go up in 1994. Which is where the Bus Riders Union comes in.

It doesn't take a genius to realise that in a city like LA, a car becomes much more of a necessity than in most other places. So, what of those people who either can't



afford one, or can't drive? Well, they have to get on the bus. Angelenos are served by a surprisingly extensive network of bus routes which criss-cross the city's grid. The trouble is, there aren't enough of them, they're not integrated, they break down a lot and are overcrowded.

The BRU was organised after the intervention of the Labor/Community Strategy Centre, which was itself formed out of the Coalition to Keep GM Van Nuys Open (a General Motors plant in north LA), and is a coalition of working class community activists struggling for "regional planning from below". It has been involved in the emergent movement for environmental justice and against environmental racism.

Since 1993, the BRU has been fighting against the MTA. Its members are drawn from multiracial working class communities throughout LA. In 1994, the MTA wanted to eliminate the monthly bus pass. The BRU took a civil rights lawsuit against the MTA, arguing that the Red Line and Pasadena Blue Line light rail systems were eating up the dollars allocated to MTA.

In most cities in the world, buses are the transport of the poor, and their status reflects that. Bus passengers are overwhelmingly poor blacks or Latinos. A much higher proportion of the light rail passengers are white. And because this is America, where discrimination on grounds of class is legal, but not on grounds of race, this fact became one of the key areas the BRU organised around. The BRU fought this campaign (and subsequent ones)

against what it termed "transit racism". The overwhelmingly white users of the Light Rail lines are subsidised much more than the overwhelmingly black and Latino bus users. This is patently unfair and amounts to racism. The suit in 1994 won, and stopped the MTA eliminating the monthly bus pass. Further struggles and legal battles in 1996 got the price of the monthly pass reduced to \$42, a new \$21 two week and \$11 weekly pass introduced (particularly useful for those too poor to buy a monthly), and a new 75 cent off peak fare. The BRU then was recognised in negotiations with the MTA, and in 1997 stopped cuts to late night services.

The struggle over what was to get the tax dollars was eventually dealt with by the legal system, and a consent agreement was signed between the BRU and the MTA. In it, the MTA agreed to four conditions; to reduce fares, set up a joint committee, dramatically reduce overcrowding and expand the bus service. The former have been addressed, but the latter two haven't. The BRU has brought proposals to deal with these, which total \$2 billion. The cost of constructing the Pasadena Blue Line alone totals \$1 billion - before any rolling stock or equipment is bought.

In October 1998 the MTA voted to buy 2095 new buses, the first 1200 of which will run on natural gas (LA does have a slight pollution problem, after all!). These buses will be low floored, with ramps for wheelchair users.

The BRU researched the overcrowding,

or load factor, and identified two main problems - the age of the buses and the fact that there weren't enough of them. Based on a model of the dispersed development of LA, the BRU also brought forward four proposals to expand the service. These are to have a freeway network of buses, thereby using the quickest and most direct route; to set up a rapid bus network; to have "stations" to change from long distance to local bus services; and to establish community circulators - shuttle buses that go around certain communities linking them with other bus routes.

Both these plans now sit before the court, as the MTA flagrantly ignores the agreement it signed. This is one of the things that is most striking about the BRU - it is similar to a union - it organises collectively, tries to enter into agreements with the other side, but is not at all surprised when the bosses (in this case MTA) try to ignore the agreement.

The BRU has responded by escalating, and is now running a "No Seat No Fare" campaign against overcrowding.

The first observation that needs to be made from here about the BRU is that the US system is very different, not least because, unlike the failing privatised British public transport system, the Americans recognise the need for subsidies - their argument is about how those subsidies are spent. The "End Transit Racism" slogan only really has meaning in an American context - if there was such a thing as class discrimination in the US legal system it would be called what it really is. Buses are undervalued everywhere because they are used by poor people first and foremost. The fact that the MTA has entered into agreements with the BRU and is now breaking them means that the courts can be used. It is unlikely that anything similar would happen here.

But if we look at where money is spent on public transport in Britain, it can be seen to follow the same pattern of investing in high profile capital projects like the Jubilee Line extension, where the same money

could have been used to create a bus priority system for all of London.

So, can we learn from the BRU and apply its lessons here? My answer would be yes. For a start, all the official passenger liaison committees have proved to be toothless in the face of bus and rail privatisation and the destruction of many services. This is hardly surprising - they are based on a few passengers "representing" their fellows in meetings with the transport authorities. Instead, a passengers union could involve all in fighting for better services. It would also be a very useful organising tool for Reclaim the Streets to look at - many people use cars because of how bad public transport is. RTS have already recognised that in their support actions for striking tube workers - perhaps the next step is to organise passengers unions. There are so many simple demands that would create a resonance with those of us who have to use the trains/buses/tube every day. The BRU won a decrease in fares - every year fares here go up more than inflation, and the whole fare system is a maze of complexity designed to protect the likes of Virgin and Stagecoach's profits. Fare cuts are a first step - the aim should be the abolition of fares and the redeployment of ticket collectors to guards and station attendants to make stations and trains safer. Buses should get priority at traffic lights and in busy streets and there should be more of them - more routes and more buses.

Workers protest in Mozambique

Thousands of workers took to the streets of the capital, Maputo, on May Day. They demanded higher wages and an end to mass sackings in privatised companies.

Many carried placards and banners expressing dissatisfaction at the increase in the statutory minimum wage. In percentage terms it was a large increase - 27 per cent - but the minimum wage is still only 450,000 meticaï (just over \$36) a month.

Workers from the ship repair company ENAMA protested they had been without work or pay for a year, due to the negligence of management, which allowed the company's sole asset, its floating dock, to sink, despite repeated warnings from the workforce about its condition.

Workers from another privatised company, DINUFA, which specialises in rubber goods, wore sackcloth and carried a banner announcing "26 months without wages, 15 months on strike".

Skychef Dispute

Last November 273 airline catering workers at Heathrow airport were sacked just three hours after going on an official one-day strike over worsening pay and conditions. People on holiday or sick that day were sacked.

The company LSG Lufthansa SkyChefs are the biggest airline catering company in the world serving 260 airlines with pre-tax profits of £2.2 million in 1997. Meanwhile sacked workers doing a 60 hour shift could expect a take-home pay of just £220 a week.

The strike, which has received virtually no press, is seen by many as a pointer to the future. If Skychef get away with it, then all their workers will eventually be forced to work under worse conditions for longer hours and less pay.

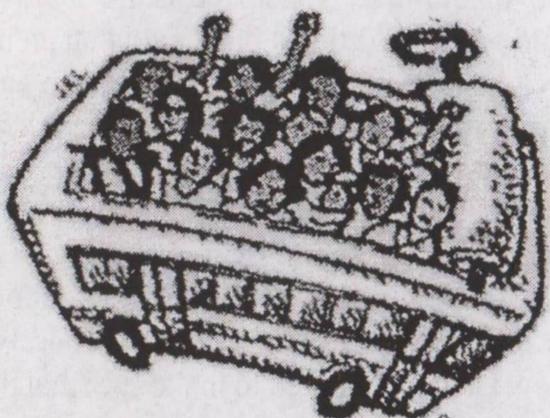
anarchy not a crime!

It's OK once again to be an anarchist in the State of Washington, USA. In May, a bill was passed repealing an 80-year-old law that had been passed to criminalise the Industrial Workers of the World, better known as the Wobblies.

Under the law, it was illegal to advocate anarchy, defined as "the doctrine that organized government should be overthrown by force or violence."

The law was passed in 1909 and updated in 1919. It never mentioned the IWW, but the union movement was the clear target. Washington State was the scene of two of the most notorious incidents in the history of the IWW. In 1916, a drunken sheriff opened fire on a contingent of Wobblies at the dock in Everett. The Everett Massacre left seven dead and 50 wounded. And in 1919, IWW members and American Legionnaires faced off in a gun battle now known as the Centralia Massacre. An IWW member was later pulled from jail and lynched.

However, those Wobs still on organising in the Pacific North West don't reckon it's such a great thing. According to one, the bill that repealed the law was not to get rid of what the government saw as a bad law, but rather to make it more effective. But then the IWW operated in Washington while it was effectively banned anyway.



Exterminate All the Brutes!

the origins of welfare as a means of social control

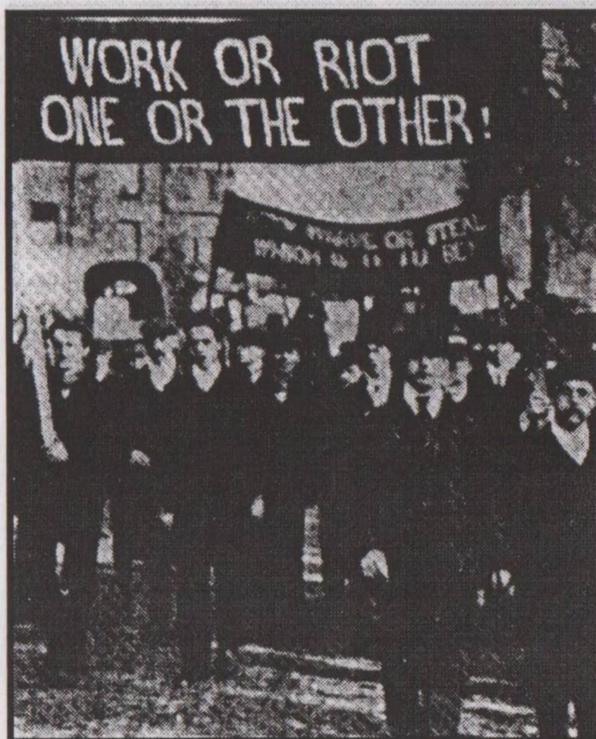
"Can't everybody see that there is nothing in the least bit admirable about idle remnants of the proletariat, that dwindling few with their hideous clothes, revolting food, trashy newspapers, filthy children, disgusting manners, vile wallpaper and violent and dishonest dispositions?"¹

Welcome to Blair's Britain. We're all middle class now-except for those of us too stupid to manage the transition.

The Office of National Statistics is about to abandon its current classification scheme for collecting data about occupation and class, to replace it with one where everyone from an operator in a call centre to the head of British Gas becomes "middle class."

Meanwhile, Tony Blair announced to a conference called by the Institute for Public Policy Research his intention to create a "middle class that will include millions of people who traditionally see themselves as working class." In a society where, according to the Child Poverty Action Group, 23% live in poverty, New Labour tells us we live in a "modern Britain" where "everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential." Those who remain poor, therefore, have only themselves to blame. The right wing sociologist Charles Murray spins a folk tale from his Iowa childhood to tell us what conclusions this ought to lead us to draw:-

"There were two kinds of poor people. One class of people was never even called 'poor'. I came to understand that they simply lived on low incomes, as my own parents had done when they were young. There was another set of people... These poor people didn't just lack money. They were defined by their behaviour. Their homes were littered and unkempt. The men in the family were unable to hold down a job for more than a few weeks at a time. Drunkenness was common. The children grew up ill-schooled and ill-behaved and



contributed to a disproportionate share of the local juvenile delinquents. To Henry Mayhew...they were the 'dishonest poor.'"²

Opportunity Knocks

So there's the deal. Everyone has the chance to be middle class. Anyone who doesn't make the grade has chosen a life of indolence, has opted to live at society's expense. Some of this may sound familiar. In 1971, in a pamphlet "Down With The Poor" the Conservative MP Rhodes Boyson observed "No one cares, no one bothers-why should they when the state spends all its energies taking money from the energetic, successful and thrifty to give to the idle, the failures and the feckless?" Boyson went on to become a junior minister under Margaret Thatcher and help to push through the social security reforms of the 1980s. The Child Poverty Action Group has described the ideological base of Thatcherism as being about "incentives and disincentives." But the Thatcherites saw financial incentives operating very differently on the rich and on the poor. According to their arguments, if the rich were not working and investing it was because they were not receiving enough financial incentives to do so. It was therefore essential to provide them with added incentives (for example, through cuts in income

tax and tax free investment schemes). "But if the poor were not working it was because they were receiving too much money from the state and lacked the incentive to work. And so, they argued, the poor needed financial disincentives to claiming benefits, to spur them on to greater effort."³

Inequality Rises

The Thatcher/Major governments pursued a strategy of inequality, primarily through changes in taxation, designed to make the poor poorer. The changes included reductions in the higher rate of income tax for the rich from 60% to 40% higher thresholds for inheritance tax for the rich, a shift from direct to indirect taxation (principally through VAT) which fell primarily on the poor, the introduction of the poll tax and the council tax. By 1991, 52% of the tax cuts implemented since 1979 had gone to the top 10% of income earners. The incomes of the poorest tenth in 1991/92 were 17% lower in real terms than in 1979. The society inherited by the New Labour government was a society premised upon the deliberate maintenance of inequality. During the 1980s, income inequality grew faster in the UK than in any other developed country bar New Zealand (which, under their Labour Party, out-Thatchered Thatcher in pro-market policies). Since May 1997 enough has been said and done to alert us to the fact that Blair's government is committed to the same strategy, and for the same reasons. As Trade Secretary Stephen Byers outlined, this is a government committed to "wealth creation" not "wealth redistribution." When the Bank of England's head, Eddie George, said that an increase in unemployment in the north east may be a necessary price to pay for low inflation, he did no more than illustrate New Labour's recognition that the preservation of a low wage economy in the interests of the rich requires a reserve army of labour to hold wages down. Labour's coercive New Deal is designed to make sure that the

unemployed do what they're supposed to do-take up low paid work.

New Labour's "Decent Society" will continue where Thatcher and Major left off. As Labour's former Social Security Minister Frank Field said on coming into office, "We are most grateful for what the last government did, but its the beginning of the story, not the end."⁴

So why are we being sold the myth of an expanding middle class, when clearly, poverty and insecurity are on the rise? Why is even the notion of self identification as working class greeted with a mixture of amusement and derision? Britain remains, as George Orwell described it "the most class ridden country under the sun", yet the working class as a class appears only as a hate figure in the popular press, the "layabouts and sluts whose progeny are 2 legged beasts" Spectator editor Bruce Anderson so frequently rails against.

Class Divisions Are Intensifying

In truth Tony Blair is shit-scared of the working class. Margaret Thatcher once observed that "Class is a communist concept... The more you talk about class-the more you fix the idea in peoples' minds." What Blair dreads is that ordinary people stop buying his middle class pipe dreams, and begin to act in their own interests. Journalists Andrew Adonis and Stephen Pollard note that "Far from diminishing, class divisions are intensifying as the distance between the top and bottom widens and the classes at both extremes grow in size and identity. This should be obvious to all. Indeed, we contend it is obvious to

almost all in today's Britain-except, crucially for much of the nation's elite, which for reasons of fear and self-interest is struggling to eliminate class from the realms of respectable debate. It is doing so by two sleights of mind. The first is the use of the term 'underclass' to denote a minority isolated from the mainstream majority. The second is the transformation of this mainstream into a 'classless society', defined by consumerism, mobility and meritocracy, operating on that quintessential British arena; the level playing field. This is myth and distortion in equal measure."⁵

Meanwhile, in 1996, the British Social Attitudes Survey found that 87% thought that the gap between those with high and low incomes was "too large", 66% agreed that "there is one law for the rich and one for the poor". A 1995 Gallup survey found 81% answered "yes" to the question "Do you think there is a class struggle in this country or not?" Enough to cause a few sleepless nights in Knightsbridge and Holland Park.

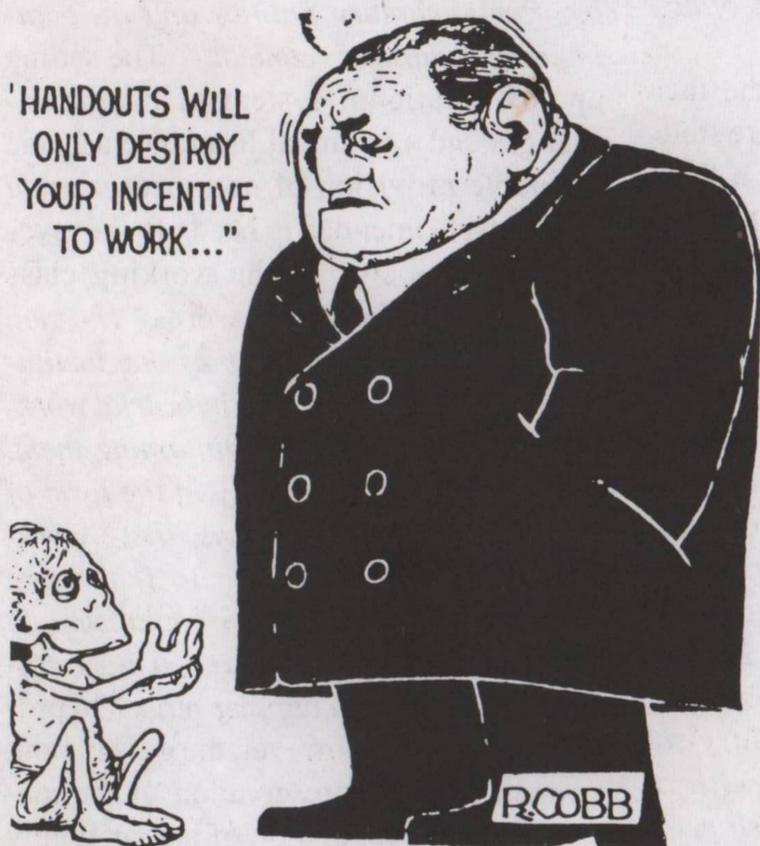
It is nevertheless the case that, by any usual indicator, the level of class struggle in the UK is at a low point-whether determined by work days lost to strike action, support for politics outside the status quo, or numbers on demonstrations. So what prevents a recognition of class inequality manifesting itself as a recognition of the need for working class people to act in their own interests? This article proposes that the main block to working class self recognition and self emancipation-the working class acting as a class "for itself"-is something which the "left" in the UK has seen as a gain for working people-the welfare state.

Marx, in Capital volume one, quotes from Bernard De Mandeville's *The Fable of the Bees* wherein we are told that "those that get their living by their daily labour...have nothing to stir them up to be serviceable but their wants, which it is prudence to relieve, but folly to cure." It is this ethos which guides the provision of minimal welfare by the state. The working class are kept from starvation and revolt, but not to such degree that they lose all incentive to labour. "The foundations of property are made more secure when no real grievance is felt by the poor against the rich," as Joseph Chamberlain noted in

1892. Provision of state welfare means that working class people recognise themselves as poor, or as working class, or as part of some "underclass" not in relation to each other, but only in relation to the satisfaction of their basic needs by the state. In his 1985 essay "Beyond Social Democracy", Ralph Milliband observed that "For most social democratic politicians, capitalist society (insofar as the existence of capitalism is acknowledged at all) is not a battlefield on which opposed classes are engaged in a permanent conflict, now more acute, now less, and in which they are firmly on one side, but a community, no doubt quarrelsome, but a community none the less, in which varied groups-be they employers, workers, public employees-make selfish and damaging demands which it is the task of government to resist for the good of all." We need to go further than this. If the modern welfare state is the crowning glory of social democracy it is also the precise means by which the working class is reduced from a class for-itself to just one more interest group. When the New Right talk about dependency culture, their main concern is to seek means by which the cost of welfare provision can be transferred onto the shoulders of the working class. The fact that those with least to gain from capital's survival are wedded to the state concerns them not at all. It should, though, concern us.

Before State Welfare

Prior to the introduction of the Liberal reforms which were the precursors of the modern welfare state, there was considerable debate within workers' organisations as to whether welfare proposals should be supported, or seen simply as means of evading just demands for higher wages and regular work. As the historian Pat Thane observed, "...the employers supported social reform because it was cheaper than increasing wages, the more so because 'welfare' would be paid for by the working class themselves."⁶ The Forester's Miscellany, journal of the Ancient Order of Foresters, the second largest "friendly society" in 1899, with 666,000 members, carried the following editorial comment, "The aim of the working class ought to be to bring about economic conditions in which there should be no need of distribution of state alms. The establishment of a great scheme of state pensions would legalise and stamp as a permanent feature of our social life the chronic poverty of the age." In 1899, the AOF recognised



that the purpose of state welfare would be the administration of poverty, not its abolition!

The abolition of feudalism which inspired the peasant revolts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries cut the peasantry adrift from the land, so that "freedom" became only the freedom to work or starve. As Marx put it *"When...the great English landowners dismissed their retainers who had, with them, consumed the surplus product of the land; when, further their tenants chased off the smaller cottagers...then...a mass of living labour power was thrown onto the labour market, a mass which was free in a double sense; free from the old relations of clientship, bondage and servitude, and secondly free of all belongings and possessions, and of every objective, material form of being, free of all property; dependent on the sale of its labour capacity or on begging, vagabondage and robbery as its only source of income."*⁷

Militancy and "reform"

The refusal of the dispossessed to accept their fate as a limitless supply of exploitable labour is the source of all state regulation of poverty. The first of the Poor Laws, the 1349 Statute of Labourers, was introduced because of a perceived "great scarcity of servants" and the fact that "some will not serve unless they may receive excessive wages, and some rather willing to be in idleness than by labour to get their living." In ordering that "every man and woman of our realm of England...not living in merchandise, nor exercising any craft nor having of his own whereof he may live, no proper land...and not serving any other...shall be bounden to serve him which so shall him require." In neither language nor coercive intent is there any real difference between the law of 1349 and the New Deal strategy of Labour today. In the 1920s, faced with rising unemployment and economic slump, the

government of the day introduced the Genuinely Seeking Work Test to ensure that the restructuring of capital took place with access to a pool of cheap labour secured. (Fear of working class militancy leads to concessions from capital as surely as working class docility is exploited. Following the 1886 Trafalgar Square riots, donations to the Mansion House Fund for charitable relief of destitution suddenly increased!)

The 1906 Liberal government is seen by many, not least among them Tony Blair, as one of the great reforming governments. It is clear though that whatever concessions it made to labour were predicated upon an attempt to contain working class self organisation (principally manifested through the formation of the Labour Representation Committee and the election of 29 MPs on a Labour platform in the 1906 election.) The formation of the Labour Party gave little real cause for alarm, however, as the pro-Liberal journal, the Independent Review noted; *"We heartily welcome the new Labour Party which is now to make its first bow to the House Of Commons...We cannot suppress a smile when noticing the alarm caused in a section of our press by the victory of the workers. The latter are asserting that the rich are now confronted with a grave peril...We hold a different opinion. Probably no less than 23 of the 29 new MPs will call themselves socialists. But their socialism is rather an ideal, a point of view, than a programme of action."*

(We should pause though, at the fact that the "restructuring" of the welfare state by New Labour is taking place at a time when even the "ideal", the "point of view" of a self-organised working class is absent from political life.)

The Liberals determined that the existing system of poor relief, while serving to regulate the necessary supply of cheap labour fostered also too great a degree of discontent. One commentator reflected *"It is not enough for the social thinker in this country to meet the socialist with a negative. The English progressive will be wise if, in*

this at any rate, he takes a leaf from the book of Bismark, who dealt the heaviest blow against German socialism not by his laws of oppression...but by that great system of State insurance which now safeguards the German worker at almost every point in his industrial career." The Liberals' assimilation of the socialist agenda was supported by the Labour Party itself and the state socialist Fabian Society. Within the wider working class movement, hostility to the state and state provi-

sion of welfare, remained alive, despite the eager surrender of the Labour Party to the seductions of Parliament. George Holyoake, a leading member of the co-operative movement, observed *"State socialism means the promise of a dinner, and a bullet when you clamour for it."*

Fear of the working class

The Liberal reforms were driven by fear of working class militancy. By 1908 unemployment had reached 8%. Violence broke out in several major cities. Anti-government demonstrations attracted massive support. On October 10th 1908 20 separate hunger strikes converged on London. When Parliament was forced to convene 2 days later it met surrounded by a cordon of 2500 police. *"That same year...saw the beginnings, in a strike and subsequent lock out in the textile industry, of a wave of industrial action that was to develop through many key industries into a movement of revolutionary syndicalism, rejecting Parliamentary politics and advocating direct workers' control."*⁸ The setting up of a national system of labour exchanges and a National Insurance scheme to enable provision of non means tested benefit were intended to head off the revolutionary impetus of the working class movement. In Churchill's words *"The idea is to increase the stability of our institutions by giving the mass of industrial workers a direct interest in maintaining them. With a stake in the country in the form of insurance against evil days, these workers will pay no attention to the vague promises of revolutionary socialism... It will make him a better citizen, a more efficient worker, and a happier man."* In providing a "stake", however, the government ensured also the preservation of the machinery of the regulation of labour supply



"Liberal social welfare legislation... were seen by many (British syndicalists) not as genuine welfare reforms, but as mechanisms of social control. Syndicalists took a leading part in resisting such legislation on the grounds that it would increase capitalist discipline over labour, thereby undermining working class independence and self-reliance."¹¹

British syndicalists' "vigorous campaign against the 'servile state' certainly disproves the notion that syndicalists ignored the role of the state in society.

On the contrary, their analysis of bureaucratic state capitalism helped to make considerable inroads into prevailing Labourist and state socialist assumptions that the existing state could be captured by electoral means and used as an agent of through-going social reform."¹²

which was the hallmark of the poor laws, and remains the unstated agenda of state welfare today: "The scheme should avoid encouraging unemployment, and for this purpose it is essential that the rate of unemployment benefit should be relatively low." It was Charles Booth who said that "our modern system of industry will not work without some unemployed margin, some reserve of labour". The purported "architect of the welfare state" William Beveridge, in 1909 explained that the establishment of a system of centralised welfare "is in essentials a problem of business organisation -that of providing a reserve of labour power to meet fluctuations in such a way as to not involve distress." The end result of a social-democratised left's consistently uncritical support for state welfare is a working class that, politically, exists now only as a "reserve of labour power" and not as a class with political weight, a class for-itself. As anarchist Joseph Lane had it "It is possible that the governing classes will make a show of legislating in the direction of palliatives; their doing so would certainly put off the revolution which we aim at. True Socialists, therefore, should not take up such cries."

The Future

So where do we go from here? With Labour determined to dismantle all but the entirely coercive aspects of the welfare state, and with so many now accustomed to having to seek the support of the state to survive, we cannot simply wish away the chains of welfare. Our task has to be to re-establish the concept of working class independence through practical interventions-establishing claimant unions to rebuild working class confidence and self identity in dealing with the welfare state, occupying community based projects

when they are under threat of closure so that buildings, services etc are not withdrawn by the state but maintained under community control. The Black Panther Party used to run breakfast clubs so that poor families had access to decent food, and to re-establish the notion of solidarity-of people taking care of each other instead of looking simply to the State for support. During the First World War, Sylvia Pankhurst's Workers' Socialist Federation es-

tablished a cost-price restaurant and co-operative workshop in East London. "Dinner cost 2d, or just 1d. for children, but those who could not afford that ate free. Around 400 people were served every day... Awareness of the conditions of maternity was stimulated by infant and maternity welfare centres such as Sylvia Pankhurst's Mothers' Arms, set up in an old pub called the Gunmakers' Arms. It included a baby clinic giving out milk and advice along with a day nursery using Montessori play methods of education."⁹

The last words written by Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's novel Heart of Darkness are "Exterminate All the Brutes." Conrad's friend, the Scottish socialist R.B. Cunningham Graham in 1897 published a parody entitled "Bloody Niggers!", which described the "lower orders" as a kind of "European nigger"- "the vilest of our vile, more vile than beasts." A century later the attitudes mocked by Graham are commonplace in the editorials of the highbrow press and made policy by politicians like Jack Straw. If those of us who call ourselves class struggle anarchists are to resist the cultural extermination of our class, we have to go back to basics, recover an earlier tradition of solidarity and working class self

emancipation and apply it with due vigour today. The contempt for our class manifest in the media is a reflection of the extent to which our class as a class for-itself has faded from view. If we want to respond to this agenda, we would do well to seize for our own ends a slogan used by the Spanish fascist Falange; "Let them hate so long as they fear!"

The cultural studies theorist, and former Marxism Today writer, Stuart Hall once wrote that the "statist oriented brand of socialism" had rewritten history to appoint itself sole keeper of a flame for which it "had to contend with many other currents, including, of course the strong syndicalist currents before and after World War I, and the ILP's ethical Marxism later with their deep antipathy to Labour's top-downwards, statist-orientation... One of the many tricks which the retrospective construction of tradition on the left has performed is to make the triumph of Labourism over these other socialist currents-the result of a massive political struggle in which the ruling classes played a key role-appear as an act of natural and inevitable succession."¹⁰ In recovering our history we can recover our identity as a class.

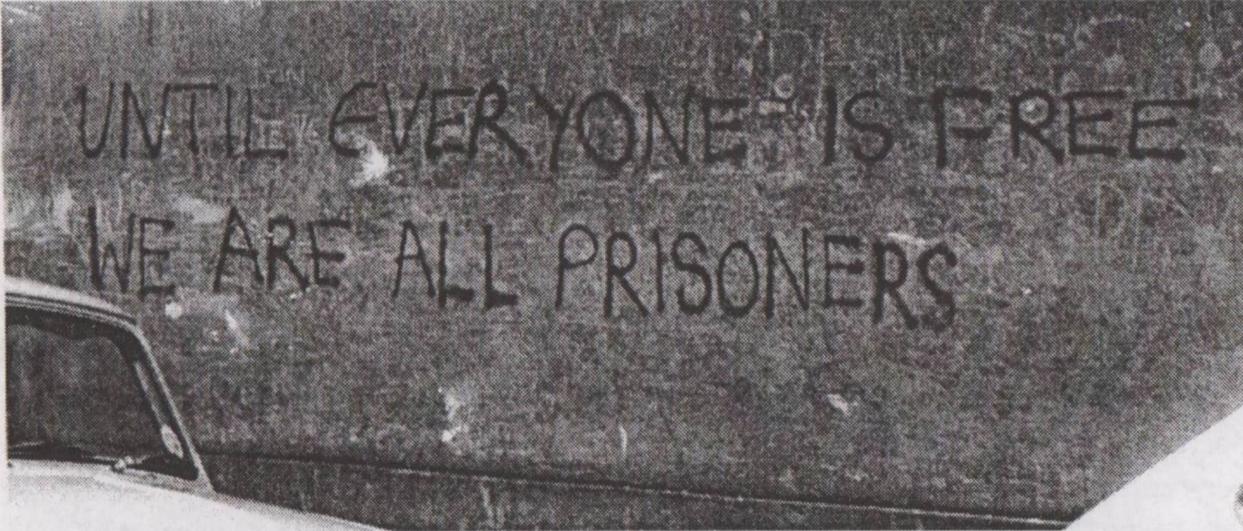
1. Daily Telegraph editorial
2. C. Murray-The Emerging British Underclass, IEA Publications
3. Dee Cook - Poverty, Crime and Punishment, CPAG
4. The Times 9/5/97
5. A. Adonis and S. Pollard -A Class Act, Hamish Hamilton Ltd
6. Historical Journal vol 7, no 4 1984
7. Karl Marx - Capital Volume 1, Penguin
8. Tony Novak - Poverty and the State, Oxford
9. Sheila Rowbotham -A Century of Women, Penguin
10. Sheila Rowbotham - Threads Through Time, Penguin
11. Bob Holton, British Syndicalism: 1900-1914, page 137
12. Bob Holton, page 204

Anarcho-quiz Questions

1. Who sang "So come back Emma Goldman, Rise up old Joe Hill, the barricades are goin' up, they cannot break our will"?
2. Who wanted to "shoot the pig and behead the sheep", and what was political about it?
3. The word "politics" is not just something hateful to anarchists in its sense of "affairs of state". What other word derives from politics that we hate just as much?
4. In his book, *Fathers and Sons*, Russian novelist Turgenev coined which descriptive political term?

Answers on page 38

Anarchists and the Prison Struggle Revolutionary Solidarity not Empty Rhetoric and Liberalism



A while back I read an anarchist magazine published about 18 months ago and was irritated to see in an otherwise reasonable article "prisoner support" described as a "single -issue" on a par with the campaign against the job seeker's allowance. The comment may have been merely thoughtless rather than anything else but the fact that it appears to have gone unnoticed and unchallenged reflects the poverty of current anarchist thought in relation to the prison struggle and the marginalisation of what was once very much a central issue for revolutionaries in general, and for anarchists in particular. While some anarchists regard the prison struggle as just another single issue, for increasing numbers of working class people prison is a central part of their lives.

The purpose of the British judicial and penal system is to lock up working-class people, something it does very well. Almost no middle class people go to prison and on the rare occasions that they do, they are given shorter sentences and treated markedly differently to working-class people. The middle classes happily call for longer prison sentences and the worsening of prison conditions in the safe knowledge that the likelihood of them or any of their friends or family ever going to gaol is just about nil (look at Billy Straw). Because of their (real) class position the people who dominate all political movements in this country (the middle class) see prison struggle as a marginal issue, and consequently the movements they infest are in turn marginalised from it. This is currently as true of the British anarchist movement as of the left in general, and in prac-

tice (painful to hear as it might be) the Anarchist movement are worse than some in this respect.

Despite what they may pretend, middle class pseudo revolutionaries still maintain most of the anti-working class prejudices held by their mummies and daddies. These prejudices manifest themselves in many ways, including their attitudes to prisoners. It is no coincidence that the British left and anarchist movement has generally been far more comfortable in publicising the cases of prisoners who are incarcerated far away. They may claim otherwise but most middle-class anarchists have innate prejudices when it comes to accepting that so many miscarriages of justice take place in this country, and few sincerely believe that the state fits people up, certainly not as a result of their activism - that only happens in other countries.

At the moment there may be genuinely few activists in this country that the state regards as a real threat (or at least a serious pain in the arse), which is a rather sad reflection on the state of revolutionary politics. Believe me, if and when anarchists become worthy opponents of the state it will be more than willing to play its part. Many working class people have found this out to their cost in the past, and whereas their class status insulates the middle-class pseudo-revolutionaries from all this, working class people are increasingly feeling the iron heel of the state. Prison is more and more a central part of working class people's lives, few of us are without brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, friends or lovers who have not been locked up, and often for fuck all. Sentences

are getting longer and it is getting easier for the police and CPS to fit people up.

The past few years have seen a wave of increasing repression in Britain's prisons, but despite many aspects of political struggle being at something of a nadir in this country, the struggle against oppression in prison continues to endure. Prisoners deserve support in this struggle. No isolated group of individuals can win a fight against a vastly stronger enemy, and in here we are as isolated as could be.

When it comes to prisoner support work too many anarchists believe too much of our own propaganda, which is at best wishful thinking, and at worst downright lies. The truth hurts but the fact is that among anarchists in this country today solidarity is a pretty rare commodity. I was part of the anarchist movement for 20 years before being fitted-up, yet for the first 4 years of my imprisonment I received little more than limited support from a few individual comrades.

Anarchists have long been big at encouraging active resistance in British prisons, yet they are rarely able or willing to provide the solidarity and financial aid required by prisoners who are brutalised and isolated for taking part in prison resistance. This mirrors the attitude of the so-called revolutionary left in general, big on slogans calling for militancy and revolution but left shocked and wanting by even relatively minor acts of resistance. They view any individuals with the bottle to back up words with action as dangerous lunatics. It is little wonder that many prisoners (like the working-class in general) regard politicians with suspicion and even contempt.

While we are told in some quarters that there have never been more anarchists in this country, the fact is that the organisations and structures that have traditionally made up the movement are in tatters, and the whole movement seems in ideological disarray, with many comrades so ashamed of the state of things that they have had enough. Even the ABC, in which so many anarchists take a part-time interest, has been reduced to a small number of tiny groups and individuals, something

which they are only just beginning to come to terms with.

The current disarray in the prisoners solidarity movement could not have come at a worse time for those of us behind bars, for we are at a critical point in terms of the British prison struggle. Battles are taking place which will decide the conditions of prisoners for many years. Inside, state forces are intent on stripping away the concessions to humanity they were forced to make in the eighties and crush prisoner resistance, while outside the Labour government is escalating its attacks on working class people by eroding civil liberties and building an increasingly undisguised police state, locking up more of us than ever.

The struggle behind bars is an intrinsic part of the wider revolutionary struggle, and prisoners need organisations capable of delivering concrete support and revolutionary solidarity, not empty rhetoric. If we are serious as revolutionaries we need to build an effective prisoner solidarity movement which will coherently oppose the increasing state repression and which is capable of effectively aiding prisoner resistance and even going on the offensive in support of it. In the words of anarchist prisoner Ojore N Lutalo, "any movement that does not support its political internees is a sham movement."

Mark Barnsley
February 1999
HMP Full Sutton, York YO41 1PS

Woodhill gets scrutinised

The battle of 4 cons against the regime at Woodhill reached the High Court in January. Woodhill prison was opened in 1997 as a new control unit designed to break "trouble-makers." The regime tried to break active resistance against the prison system by putting cons on what is called the "continuous assessment circuit" - being ghosted around every 28 days from one segregation unit to another, if it was felt you were not towing the line. This includes being banged up at Woodhill. Rifat Mehmet and Sean O' Conner are among those who have recently been on hunger strike there.

Regime exposed

The court heard how prisoners have been confined in their cells for 23 hours a day "in a brutalised and coercive regime ... [which] forces prisoners to use cardboard mattresses and go without books and other personal possessions." Warren Slaney is one of the other defendants at the trial who is still fighting back and shouting his innocence even louder. After his move to Wakefield he was beaten up by screws then charged with assault. Not to be defeated he ripped up the charge sheet in front of them and shoved it down the only decent place for it - the toilet!

Since the recent quashing of the judicial review, Warren has been returned to Woodhill. He is about to go on dirty protest so we are sure he would appreciate any messages of support:

Warren Slaney J82574 HMP Woodhill Tattanhoe Street, Milton Keynes MK4 4DA

Harassment of Mark Barnsley

Mark writes "With the repatriation of Irish POWs, political activists in British prisons are more isolated than ever." Throughout his imprisonment, before and after his trial, Mark has experienced harassment such as ghosting (being suddenly moved) and having legal documents destroyed and phone calls monitored. Five of 8 letters posted in February were stopped including one letter to *The Socialist* concerning Taj and Roberto, two men jailed for defending themselves in a racist attack. (see BF216). The campaign for Mark held pickets in December, including one at the *Sheffield Star*, which after printing sensationalist personal abuse about Mark in the past did not even mention the picket on their doorstep. There were other pickets in Dublin, Belfast and London and expressions of solidarity from as far afield as Greece and Malta.

A "convoy for justice" in London" is planned for September. Call Chris on (01453) 753909 for details of this. Contact: Justice for Mark Barnsley Campaign c/o 145-149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1JL. E-mail: snide@globalnet.co.uk

Satpal in Segregation

Satpal Ram has been put into segregation again (after another altercation with a screw) in Belmarsh prison. He is asking supporters to send a fax to the Governor of Belmarsh. Write a short letter and fax it for the attention of John Knight, Governor, HMP Belmarsh - fax no 0181-3172421.

Mention that you are concerned that Mr Satpal Ram E94164, has been put into segregation after he refused to be moved from a single to a double cell. Point out that this is an extremely harsh punishment for such a small matter. Politely ask him to return Satpal to normal location in a single cell, and that he is returned to HMP Frankland as soon as possible.

All Burned Out!

On 15th February, the North wing of Haverigg prison in Cumbria went up in smoke as 109 cons took control of the wing for three hours. The prison called in the MUFTI squad from every prison in the surrounding area - details are sketchy, and we have no further information other than all prisoners involved have been moved to prisons around the north of England. The last disturbance at Haverigg was in October 1993 with a similar uprising.

Source: abc bulletin

bent cops

Issue 215 featured an article about police involvement in drug dealing. On 19th March former detective Duncan Hanrahan was jailed for 8½ years after admitting 11 charges of corruption in the first of a series of prosecutions of bent Met officers.

Hanrahan admitted conspiring to steal a seized supply of 40,000 ecstasy tablets, to be resold, on the understanding that the proceeds would be shared with the cops who'd originally confiscated them. Hanrahan, a private detective since leaving the force, acted as a liaison between his criminal connections and serving officers on the take. On arrest, Hanrahan touted on over 50 of his former colleagues.

Our argument then, that the police's role is to keep the middle classes safe from crime by physically containing criminal activity within working class areas, so that crime becomes something the poor do to each other, and that within working class areas, police involvement in dealing of drugs is seen as a lucrative spin off of the job, still stands. Have a nice time inside, Duncan.

Revolutionaries Do Not Support State Executions

by Ali Khalid Abdullah, October 1998

Speaking to various prisoners about their political beliefs, I have found that there is a lot of ignorance when it comes to the issue of State executions, aka "death penalty" murders.

To my shock I've discovered (in the Michigan death camps) there are "revolutionaries" and "Black Nationalist" prisoners who are in support of State executions when it comes to executing white supremacists, skinheads or nazis. They also accept State executions of child molesters, rapists and for crimes against the elderly. However, what they have failed to realise is that State executions are unjust because the State is unjust. Proportionally, more non-whites have been executed by the State than whites, and that more non-whites are sitting on death row than whites. They also do not realise that innocent people have been murdered by the State. Police officers, detectives, prosecutors and judges have allowed fundamental rights of the accused to be trampled over, evidence to be covered up, and inadequate State-appointed attorneys to railroad people into prison by giving them substandard legal representation. Due to the Effective Death Penalty Act and similar legislation (such as the Anti-Terrorist Act), these inadequacies will affect death row prisoners' rights even up to the appeal process.

These people who support State executions do not think of how many prisoners on death row have been denied due process and have suffered/are suffering such violations as suppression of the US Constitution's first amendment rights, like Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Black man on death row in Philadelphia.

These so-called revolutionaries who support State sponsored executions for certain groups of people, have not studied history and noted that in the US those on death row are predominantly poor people, the uneducated, mis-educated, the unemployed or those employed at slave-wage jobs. Or they are those who stand on the left side of the political sociological and religious spectrum. These are the ones who wind up on death row and are executed by the State.

They have obviously not taken into account that this system is corrupt and inadequate to properly administer justice, because justice in American courts has many false faces. The judicial system is controlled not by the people, nor does it represent the people, but is controlled by big business, by the giant corporations who lobby politicians and support their lying campaigns for re-election, professing to be "tough on crime" but in reality seeking private aggrandizement. They have become the dictators of political interests, seeing to it that their own interests are always represented.

The media has successfully influenced not only the working class but also the prisoners who languish in prisons as a result of the "lock 'em up" mentality that has this country in a frenzy for more cops, more State control, more judges and more prisons. There is nothing coming from corporate-capitalist control but suffering, corruption, lies and cover-ups, excessive spending, war plans for Third World nations and hunger for power and dominance.

Understanding this, how can we support the state's claim of administering justice, especially when it takes the lives of falsely accused citizens? We can't, when we see that law enforcers and the courts themselves are negligent of the laws that are supposed to govern this society.

I am appalled that any person could support State executions regardless of whom the State has seen fit to murder. And it is even more shocking when Black prisoners (and non-prisoners) can stand up in support of a system full of racism, homophobia and the imbalance of justice. If we are going to talk about administering justice, then we must change the system altogether and not reform bits and pieces of it. Let there be PEOPLE'S JUSTICE! No government or political leaders should determine who lives or dies, simply because government and political leaders do not have our interests at heart. In fact, government and politicians are engaged in widespread global murder.

People, especially those who have been and are victimised by the State, should get out of the habit of believing any form of State murder is justifiable, regardless of who



it is carried out against. WE THE PEOPLE must administer justice, supervising and consenting to our own laws and rules. Any person who claims to be for revolution or autonomy for a particular group and who then turns around and claims support for any form of State execution/murder, is not a revolutionary.

Ali Khalid Abdullah #148130
Saginaw Correctional Facility, 9625
Pierce Rd, Freeland MI 48623 USA

Support Needed for Ali Khalid Abdullah

Regular readers will know Ali from his writings and our reports of his activities. Now this comrade needs our support. He has recently been denied parole again, along with many others, while the governor of Michigan pushes ahead with building more jails.

Prisoners eligible for parole who have been knocked back are now taking the parole board to court. Ali wants to do this, but needs the cash to make it possible. A lawyer will cost about US\$1000 to \$1500.

Ali deserves our support in this.

Contributions can be sent to: Cynthia Ritsher, PO Box 554, Lincoln, MA 01773 USA.

Or in Europe, send to PO Box 17773, London SE8 4WX (make payable to Red & Black Club and specify it is for Ali)

Rafa Ballarin Released

Rafael Ballarin, sent down in 1996 for defending himself from a fascist attack in Madrid, has been released from prison. The authorities in Spain had been bombarded with letters from all over the world.

John Perotti

Many of our readers will be aware of the case of John Perotti, barrack room lawyer and organiser, who has fought the prison establishment all the way, even organising a prison union a few years ago.

The following is from a letter John wrote dated: Feb. 26. 99.

"... It's been quite a while, but I've been fighting depression over the 10 year set back by the parole board. Also they now have me in the hole and recommended for transfer to the Super Max. Prison. However, I retained a local attorney who has filed a motion to attempt to get me probation for drug dependency - where I would be released to a drug rehab. center. We also obtained an affidavit from Mark McAllister (the former inmate who said I stabbed him 10 years ago) saying I didn't stab him and should be released from prison. So, we've filed a motion for a new

trial as well.

It is extremely critical that I get letters of support sent to this judge as they look at outside support as being one of the major features in granting a release...."

John goes on to say...

"If this doesn't work I'm about out of ideas. I have a lawsuit against the Parole Board, but that will take years and at the Super Max they (prisoners) haven't access to property..."

Please send letters as soon as possible to the Judge supporting John's release. Please raise the following points:

- John Perotti has served 17 years, more than enough time for his conviction.
- He cannot get any treatment for his chemical dependency in the prison, even though he has been found guilty of infractions of the prison rules for it.

- He has attended college while in prison, and won a scholarship from the Marion Davis Scholarship Fund enabling him to get a Degree in Paralegal Science.

- He admits he has a chemical dependency, but cannot get treatment.

Address your letter to:

Judge Lytle

Court of Common Pleas

Scioto County Courthouse

602 7th Street

Portsmouth, Ohio 45662, USA

quoting the following reference:

Request to grant Conditional Probation for Mr John W. Perotti as requested in STATE v PEROTTI. Case numbers CR 85-91/88 - CR 262.

It's important that letters are polite and that you don't make 'demands' for John's freedom as it won't do his chances of release any good if you piss the Judge off.

Write to John W. Perotti, Ohio State Pen., # 167712, 878 Coitsville-Hubbard Rd, Youngstown, Ohio 44505, USA

No charges in Alton Manning killing

CPS do nothing

On 23rd February the CPS announced their decision not to prosecute anyone for the "unlawful killing" of Alton Manning, a black prisoner in the privately run Blakenhurst Prison. Alton, 33, of Sparkbrook, Birmingham, died in December 1995 after being restrained by seven warders, one of them holding him in a neck lock, whilst removing him from his cell at the jail near Redditch.

Indifference

Initially the death of Alton was met with the same indifference by the state as was faced by Stephen Lawrence's family. The Manning family like the Lawrences, found out quickly that if they wanted justice for their son's death they would have to campaign for it. Demonstrations were held outside Blakenhurst prison, marches took place in Birmingham and local MPs also got involved. It took two years and three months of constant pressure by the campaign, before the case got to the Coroner's court. In March 1998, after 15 days of evidence an inquest jury returned a unanimous verdict of unlawful killing. Immediately after the decision, seven warders were suspended.

It took the CPS another 11 months of doing nothing to announce that they were going to do nothing. The CPS said that there was "no realistic prospect" of obtaining manslaughter convictions against officers allegedly connected with the remand inmate's death. Why then couldn't the CPS charge the 7 warders with "joint enterprise"? It seems to work quite well with black people. This decision by the CPS, once again shows that when a black person dies in a prison or police cell or on the street, it will not be taken seriously. Racism is not only institutionalised within the police force, it is the same in the armed forces, the prison service and the state itself. The Campaign for Justice for Alton Manning, though disheartened, are not giving up. Inspired by the perseverance of the Lawrences, they will continue to fight for justice.

**Campaign for Justice for Alton Manning, BRAMU, 339 Dudley Rd, Birmingham B18
tel: 0121-454 9500**

An appeal from Spain

The ABC/CNA group of Vitoria have informed us about the repression they are subjected to by the Guardia Civil, including confiscating their dogs when there was nobody in the squat, so as to be able to enter quietly and seize the material to aid prisoners they had prepared. They have also been stopped from visiting the imprisoned comrade Pombo Da Silva, under the incredible excuse of "questions of security." Please send letters and faxes to the Management of Penitentiary Institutes, to get this prohibition withdrawn and let Pombo Da Silva be visited by the comrades of the CNA.

Addresses:

Director General de Instituciones Penitenciarias,
Don Angel Yuste Castillejo,
C/ Alcala, 38-40
28014 Madrid
tel: (0034) 91-335 49 51
fax (0034) 91-335 40 52



Italian Syndicalism and Fascism

According to Bob Black, the *"Italian syndicalists mostly went over to Fascism,"*¹ referencing David D. Roberts 1979 study *The Syndicalist Tradition and Italian Fascism* to support his claim. Peter Sabatini in a review in *Social Anarchism* makes a similar statement, saying that syndicalism's *"ultimate failure"* was *"its transformation into a vehicle of fascism."*² What is the truth behind these claims?

Looking at Black's reference we discover that, in fact, most of the Italian syndicalists did not go over to fascism, if by syndicalists we mean members of the USI (the Italian Syndicalist Union). Roberts states that:

*"The vast majority of the organised workers failed to respond to the syndicalists' appeals and continued to oppose [Italian] intervention [in the First World War], shunning what seemed to be a futile capitalist war. The syndicalists failed to convince even a majority within the USI . . . the majority opted for the neutralism of Armando Borghi, leader of the anarchists within the USI. Schism followed as De Ambris led the interventionist minority out of the confederation."*³

However, if we take "syndicalist" to mean the intellectuals and "leaders" of the pre-war movement, it was a case that the *"leading syndicalists came out for intervention quickly and almost unanimously"*⁴ after the First World War started. Some of these pro-war "leading syndicalists" did become fascists. To concentrate on a handful of "leaders" (which the majority did not even follow!) and state that this shows that the *"Italian syndicalists mostly went over to Fascism"* staggers belief. What is even worse, as we will show below, the Italian anarchists and syndicalists were the most dedicated and successful fighters against fascism. In effect, Black and Sabatini have slandered a whole movement.

What is also interesting is that these *"leading syndicalists"* were not anarchists and so not anarcho-syndicalists. As Roberts notes, the *"syndicalists genuinely desired - and tried - to work within the*

*Marxist tradition."*⁵ According to Carl Levy, in his account of Italian anarchism, *"[u]nlike other syndicalist movements, the Italian variation coalesced inside a Second International party. Supporters were partially drawn from socialist intransigents . . . the southern syndicalist intellectuals pronounced republicanism . . . Another component . . . was the remnant of the Partito Operaio."*⁶

In other words, the Italian syndicalists who turned to fascism were, firstly, a small

"Fascism was a preventive counter-revolution... launched as a result of the failed revolution"

minority of intellectuals who could not convince the majority within the syndicalist union to follow them, and, secondly, Marxists and republicans rather than anarchists, anarcho-syndicalists or even revolutionary syndicalists. Anyone familiar with the history of syndicalism knows that not all syndicalists have been anarchists. There have been Marxist syndicalists too (such as Daniel DeLeon and Bill Haywood in America and James Connolly in Ireland) as well as revolutionary syndicalists who considered revolutionary unionism as a theory in itself. Anarchist supporters of syndicalism are anarcho-syndicalists and it is disingenuous to use Marxist-syndicalists to discredit "syndicalism" (given that the syndicalism in question is anarcho-syndicalism).

According to Levy, Roberts' book *"concentrates on the syndicalist intelligentsia"* and that *"some syndicalist intellectuals . . . helped generate, or sympathetically endorsed, the new Nationalist movement . . . which bore similarities to the populist and republican rhetoric of the southern syndicalist intellectuals."* He argues that there *"has been far too much emphasis on syndicalist intellectuals and*

national organisers" and that syndicalism *"relied little on its national leadership for its long-term vitality."*⁷ If we do look at the membership of the USI, rather than finding a group which *"mostly went over to fascism,"* we discover a group of people who fought fascism tooth and nail and were subject to extensive fascist violence.

Red Years

To understand the rise of fascism we must look at the near revolution which occurred in Italy after the end of the First World War. In August, 1920, there were large-scale stay-in strikes in Italy in response to an owner wage cut and lockout. These strikes began in the engineering factories and soon spread to railways, road transport, and other industries, with peasants seizing

land. The strikers, however, did more than just occupy their workplaces, they placed them under workers' self-management. Soon 500,000 "strikers" were at work, producing for themselves. Errico Malatesta, who took part in these events, writes:

*"workers thought that the moment was ripe to take possession once [and] for all the means of production. They armed for self-defence. . . and began to organise production on their own. . . . It was the right of property abolished in fact. . . it was a new regime, a new form of social life that was being ushered in. And the government stood by because it felt impotent to offer opposition."*⁸

During this period the Italian Syndicalist Union (USI) grew in size to nearly one million members and the influence of the Italian Anarchist Union (UAI) with its 20,000 members grew correspondingly. As the Welsh Marxist historian Gwyn A. Williams points out *"Anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists were the most consistently and totally revolutionary group on the left. . . the most obvious feature of the history of syndicalism and anarchism in 1919-20: rapid and virtually continuous growth. . . The syndicalists*

above all captured militant working-class opinion which the socialist movement was utterly failing to capture."⁹

Daniel Guerin provides a good summary of the extent of the movement:

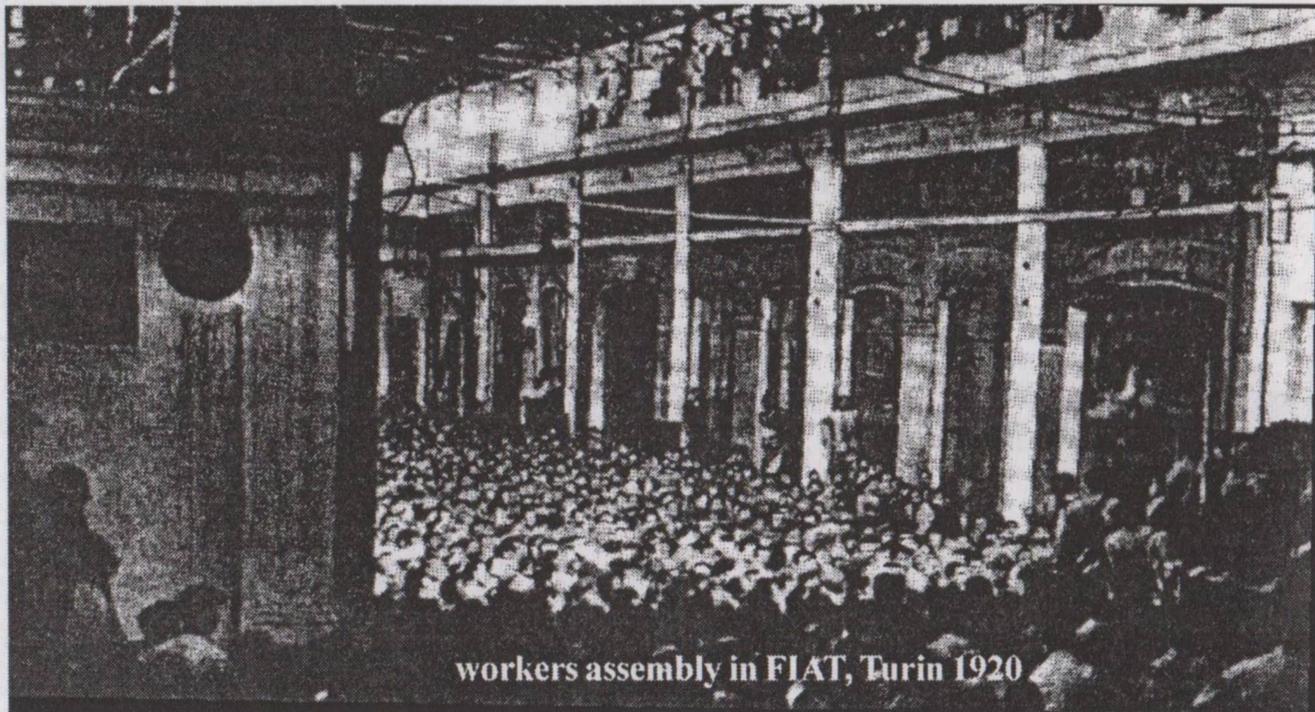
*"the management of the factories. . . [was] conducted by technical and administrative workers' committees. Self-management went quite a long way. . . the self-management issued its own money. . . Very strict self-discipline was required. . . [and] very close solidarity was established between factories. . . . [where] ores and coal were put into a common pool, and shared equitably"*¹⁰

Over the occupied factories, flew "a forest of red and black flags" as "the council movement outside Turin was essentially anarcho-syndicalist." Railway workers refused to transport troops, workers took strike action against the orders of the reformist unions and peasants occupied the land. Such activity was "either directly led or indirectly inspired by anarcho-syndicalists."¹¹

However, after four weeks of occupation, the workers gave up the factories. This was because of the actions of the Socialist party and the reformist trade unions. They opposed the movement and negotiated with the state for a return to "normality" in exchange for a promise to extend workers' control legally, in association with the bosses. This promise was not kept. The lack of independent inter-factory organisation made workers dependent on trade union bureaucrats for information on what was going on in other cities, and they used that power to isolate factories, cities, and factories from each other. This led to a return to work, "in spite of the opposition of individual anarchists dispersed among the factories."¹² The local syndicalist union confederations could not provide the necessary framework for a fully co-ordinated occupation movement, as the reformist unions refused to work with them; and although the anarchists were a large minority, they were still a minority.

Black Years

This period of Italian history explains the growth of Fascism in Italy. As Tobias Abse points out, "the rise of fascism in Italy cannot be detached from the events of the *biennio rosso*, the two red years of 1919 and 1920, that preceded it. Fascism



workers assembly in FIAT, Turin 1920

was a preventive counter-revolution... launched as a result of the failed revolution... made up of cost-of-living riots, strikes, land seizures and factory occupations that followed the Armistice."¹³ The term "preventive counter-revolution" was originally coined by the anarchist Luigi Fabbri to describe the rise of Fascism.

As Malatesta argued at the time of the factory occupations, "[i]f we do not carry

cratic trade union. Given this violence and that the USI had nearly one million members, if we accept Bob Black's claims that "Italian syndicalists mostly went over to Fascism" then, logically, we must draw the conclusion that the Fascist violence was (in part) being directed by the syndicalists against themselves! Of course, this was not the case.

In fact, rather than becoming fascists we discover that the USI was at the forefront of the struggle against Fascism. Even in the dark days of fascist terror, the anarchists resisted the forces of totalitarianism. "It is no coincidence that the strongest working-class resistance to Fascism was in . . . towns or cities in which there was quite a strong anarchist, syndicalist or anarcho-syndicalist tradition."¹⁵

"It is no coincidence that the strongest working-class resistance to Fascism was in . . . towns or cities in which there was quite a strong anarchist, syndicalist or anarcho-syndicalist tradition."

on to the end, we will pay with tears of blood for the fear we now instil in the bourgeoisie." Later events proved him right, as the capitalists and rich landowners backed the fascists in order to teach the working class their place. Tobias Abse correctly argues that the "aims of the Fascists and their backers amongst the industrialists and agrarians in 1921-22 were simple: to break the power of the organised workers and peasants as completely as possible, to wipe out, with the bullet and the club, not only the gains of the *biennio rosso*, but everything that the lower classes had gained . . . between the turn of the century and the outbreak of the First World War."¹⁴ This attack on organised labour involved the destruction of USI affiliated *Camera del Lavoro* (local trade union councils) along with those of the social demo-

Arditi del Popolo

The anarchists participated in, and often organised sections of, the *Arditi del Popolo*, a working-class organisation devoted to the self-defence of workers' interests. The *Arditi del Popolo* organised and encouraged working-class resistance to fascist squads, often defeating larger fascist forces (for example, "the total humiliation of thousands of *Italo Balbo's squadristi* by a couple of hundred *Arditi del Popolo* backed by the inhabitants of the working class districts" in the anarchist stronghold of Parma in August 1922.¹⁶)

The *Arditi* was the closest Italy got to the idea of a united, revolutionary working-class front against fascism, as had been suggested by Malatesta. This movement "developed along anti-bourgeois and

anti-fascist lines, and was marked by the independence of its local sections."¹⁷ Rather than being just an "anti-fascist" organisation, the Arditi "were not a movement in defence of 'democracy' in the abstract, but an essentially working-class organisation devoted to the defence of the interests of industrial workers, the dockers and large numbers of artisans and craftsmen."¹⁸

However, both the socialist and communist parties withdrew from the organisation, the socialists signing a "Pact of Pacification" with the Fascists in August 1921. The communists "preferred to withdraw their members from the Arditi del Popolo rather than let them work with the anarchists."¹⁹ As Abse notes, "it was the withdrawal of support by the Socialist and Communist parties at the national level that crippled" the Arditi.²⁰ The leaders of the authoritarian socialists preferred defeat and fascism than risk their followers becoming "infected" by anarchism. Thus "social reformist defeatism and communist sectarianism made impossible an armed opposition that was widespread and therefore effective; and the isolated instances of popular resistance were unable to unite in a successful strategy."²¹

Therefore:

*"The anarchists' will and courage were not enough to counter the fascist gangs, powerfully aided with material and arms, backed by the repressive organs of the state. Anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists were decisive in some areas and in some industries, but only a similar choice of direct action on the parts of the Socialist Party and the General Confederation of Labour [the reformist trade union] could have halted fascism."*²²

After helping to defeat the revolution, the Marxists helped ensure the victory of fascism.

Syndicalism and Italian Fascism

As can be seen, far from "mostly" going over to fascism, the Italian Syndicalist Union (and so the vast majority of self-proclaimed syndicalists) was at the forefront of resisting fascism and experiencing fascist violence. Bob Black's reference to support his claim is discovered to be lacking in substance, referring as it does to a few pre-war Marxist-syndicalist intellectuals and "leaders" who could not convince the majority in their own organisation of

their new found nationalism and left it. Far from showing that the "Italian syndicalists mostly went over to Fascism," it, in fact, shows the opposite - the syndicalists who later became fascists could not convince the majority of the USI of their ideas. The USI, rather than embrace nationalism, remained true to its syndicalist principles and resisted fascism. Like the anarchists, the syndicalist organisation experienced repression and, ultimately, destruction, at the hands of the Fascist gangs.

Rather than show a failure of revolutionary and anarcho-syndicalism, the events in Italy provide yet more evidence of the failure of Marxism as a revolutionary theory. Not only were the syndicalists who became fascists mostly Marxists, the Socialist and Communist Parties helped defeat both the revolution and the resistance to fascism. Unfortunately, rather than look at the actual history of the rise of Italian Fascism and its relation to syndicalism, Bob Black (and others) seem intent on slandering a whole movement based on the actions of a handful of so-called "leaders."

References

1. Bob Black, *Anarchy After Leftism*, CAL Press, Columbia, 1997. p.64
2. *Social Anarchism*, no. 23, page 99
3. David D. Robert, *The Syndicalist Tradition and Italian Fascism*, page 113
4. Robert, Op. Cit., page 106
5. Robert, Op. Cit., page 79
6. Carl Levy, "Italian Anarchism: 1870-1926" in *For Anarchism: History, Theory, and Practice*, David Goodway (Ed.), Routledge, 1989, page 51
7. Levy, Op. Cit., pages 77, 53 and 51
8. *Malatesta: Life and Ideas*, Vernon Richards (Ed.), Freedom Press, London, 1984, page 134
9. Gwyn A. Williams, *Proletarian Order: Antonio Gramsci, factory councils and the origins of Italian Communism, 1911-1921*, Pluto Press, London, 1975, pages 194-195
10. Daniel Guerin, *Anarchism: From Theory to Practice*, Monthly Review Press, 1970, Anarchism, page 109
11. Williams, Op. Cit., pages 241 and 193
12. Malatesta, Op. Cit. p. 136
13. Tobias Abse, "The Rise of Fascism in an Industrial City", page 54, in *Rethinking Italian Fascism: capitalism, populism and culture*, David Forgacs (Ed.), Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1986
14. Tobias Abse, Op. Cit., p. 54
15. Tobias Abse, Op. Cit., page 56
16. Tobias Abse, Op. Cit., page 56
17. *Red Years, Black Years: Anarchist Resistance to Fascism in Italy*, ASP, London, 1989, p. 2
18. Tobias Abse, Op. Cit., page 75
19. *Red Years, Black Years*, page 17
20. Tobias Abse, Op. Cit., page 74
21. *Red Years, Black Years*, page 3
22. *Red Years, Black Years*, pages 1-2

Mussolini & Syndicalism

Mussolini had been a radical, direct action-oriented socialist (though never a member of USI) before World War I. Indeed, when Mussolini was the fiery, charismatic editor of the Socialist Party's daily paper, he was immensely popular among the rank and file, especially the younger activists. He broke with the PSI in November of 1914 when he decided to support entry of Italy into the war on the side of France.

As he was developing the fascist ideology during the war years, he continued to advocate "heroic action" but he now saw this in terms of military action rather than in terms of workers revolution. He considered that the military struggles unfolding in Europe could have "revolutionary" consequences but saw this in terms of an improvement in the position of the Italian nation, as underdogs ("a proletarian nation") in comparison with the major imperialist powers such as Britain. (Note the similarity to the leftist ideology of "national liberation" -- in each case the interests of workers get subordinated to a ruling elite under the rationale of a nationalist fight against the imperialism of the major powers.) Mussolini was an opportunist whose motivation was that of making his own personal mark on history. The weaknesses of Italian socialism and the nationalist fervor during World War I convinced him that nationalism was a more promising vehicle for his personal ambitions.

Mussolini got very little support from the working class for his new patriotic, pro-war position. Working people in Italy had seen too many instances of troops and cops being used to repress workers struggles to identify the military as "theirs." However, Mussolini did succeed in convincing the main leadership of the USI of his patriotic position by early 1915. At the USI's congress in 1915, its general secretary, Alceste de Ambris, and other leaders such as Filippo Corridoni, tried, but failed, to sway the organization into a pro-war position. It is this event that gave rise to the myth of syndicalist support for Mussolini.

Armando Borghi and other anarcho-syndicalists were able to win the debate. The overwhelming majority of USI members rejected the arguments of the pro-war faction, who were only able to attract a few thousand members of USI to a new nationalist union, the Italian Labor Union (UIL).

From *Ideas & Action*, no. 11

Miguel Herberg's Story

A Native of Gijón who Wormed His Way into the Pinochet Camp

Miguel Herberg Hartung had a ring-side seat in the military coup that brought down Allende's government in 1973. This reporter and film-maker, a native of Gijón, wormed his way into the lower reaches of the coup plotters in the months leading up to the army revolt; he was also a witness to the national and international connivance that made the coup possible.

Herberg's tape-recordings in the Atacama concentration camps enabled Amnesty International to identify and secure the release of over 400 of the 'disappeared'.

Herberg recorded self-incriminating confidences from some of those implicated in the revolt against Salvador Allende's constitutional government, saw the influx of money used as a slush fund to destabilise the country and watched the bombing of La Moneda and the installation of a regime whose price was 2,095 dead and 1,102 disappeared.

He got permission to enter the camps at Pisagua and Chacabuco, where he filmed and recorded the testimony of the inmates. His film was not merely an indictment of the methods used by Pinochet's regime, but amounted to a safe conduct pass for more than 400 inmates whom the Military Junta could not add to the list of the "disappeared." The film gave a voice and a face to the nameless.

Herberg made seven separate trips to Chile. He was working for the Italian state broadcasters RAI, prior to that he had worked for RTF in France. He had reported on Vietnam and had already managed to film a report in East Germany.

He was drawn there by the Allende experiment and the rumours of sabre-rattling in Santiago. He arrived with Roberto Rossellini.

"I started by making contacts among the Chilean right. I passed myself off as a television producer. I was trying to make contacts that might help me to find out what was in the offing", he now recalls.

With an old Nikon, a Nagra sound-recording system and a 16 millimetre Arriflex camera with direct sound (and with which he shot 135,000 metres of film) he started collecting testimony.

"Nobody wants to know the truth, as I

see it. It looks as if the only desire is to see the buck stop with Augusto Pinochet and nobody else. But Pinochet was merely a stooge. Other people laid the groundwork for the coup.

Herberg contends: "The key men were General Alfredo Canales and a CIA agent by the name of Federico Willoughby MacDonald who acted as his liaison with the USA. But nobody mentions their names. Alfredo Canales was president of the far-right paramilitary group that set the preparations for the coup in motion. Canales and MacDonald set up the chain reaction that was to precipitate the coup. It was Pinochet who spearheaded it at the last moment, with the blessing - as my film testifies - of the Chilean archbishop Silva Henríquez.

There were two coups in Chile. The first was the Tacnazo, so called because it emanated from the barracks in Tacna. That revolt was engineered by General Viaux. But the highest-ranking figure in the Chilean armed forces at the time, General Schneider, set his face against it and proclaimed his loyalty to Allende's lawful government. Viaux ordered him murdered. The actual killers were two paramilitaries, Ivan Alverar and Erwin Robertson. I have the filmed confession of both killers and of General Viaux from when they were imprisoned in Santiago in Chile. They thought that I was one of their own. I handed the film over to Allende and it was used to bring them to trial. I have photos of Alverar and Robertson in their offices, with photos of Hitler and France and Falangist symbols on the walls."

Herberg's life has been one of extraordinary adventures. Born into a well to do family, from an early age he became active on behalf of "social" disquiets. He lived in Somió, in Llanes and in Madrid before Paris opened up a different vista to him. He admits that he is as much of an anarchist today as he was in his teenaged years and the mark of his youthful rebellion remains: he was ac-

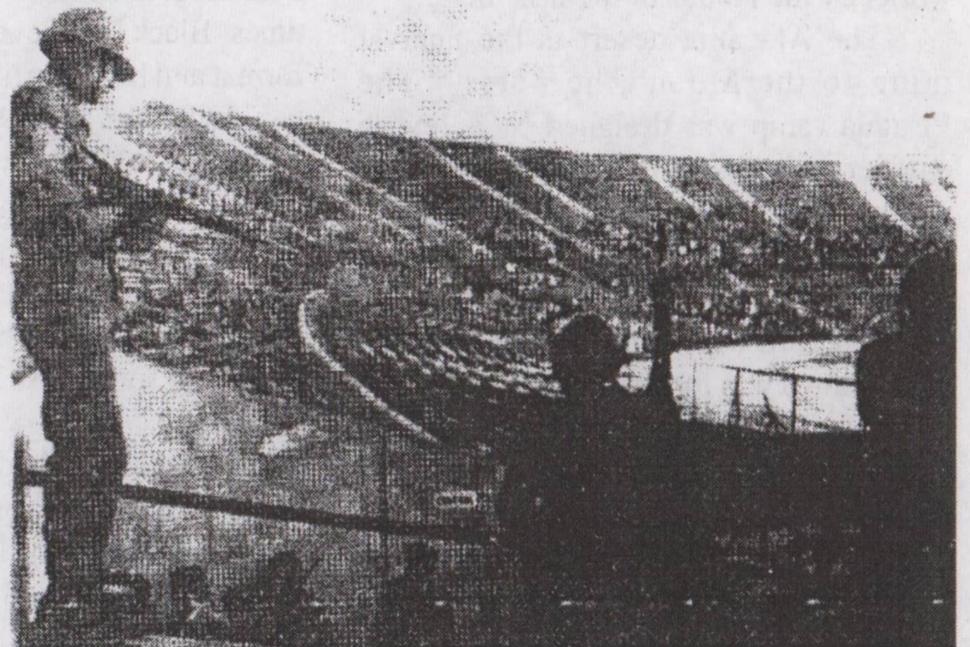
tive in the anti-Franco student movement, being arrested several times over by the Social-Political Brigade, dodged military service in the 1960s and in May '68 helped occupy the Odeon in Paris.

"The second coup, with Pinochet at its head this time, came three months after the Tacnazo. Viaux was let out of jail and moved to the Chilean embassy in Argentina, where he orchestrated the Condor Plan to arrest Chilean refugees there and Argentinian refugees in Chile. Up until the 11 September 1973 bombing of the La Moneda Palace, Herberg mingled with the far right circles conspiring against Allende. "I was winning their trust. There were no big secrets between us. I am trusting you when I tell you all this, even though we have never met before now.

It was the same in Chile. You make connections that open up other connections to you. The only ones aware of my true intentions were Salvador Allende, his daughter Isabel and one of his co-workers, Rodrigo Rojas, who was also killed. "In June 1973, three months before the overthrow, SergiÓ Onofre Jarpa, speaker of the Chilean Parliament, advised me to stick around until late August or early September because.. that was when the definitive blow would be struck. I have his words on tape. So Pinochet was merely the instrument of all those promoting that coup."

Herberg's ambition is to get the magistrate Baltasar Garzón to include his evidence as proof of the guilt of General Augusto Pinochet and his accomplices.

"I have nothing left to say now. My weapons are my cameras and what I filmed. My documents are at the disposal of the courts. But Pinochet... is not the problem.



The real problem is where the courts refuse to venture. If the documentation liable to incriminate not merely Pinochet but others as well is rejected, then there is no real desire to get to the truth, the nitty-gritty of the conspiracy. By my reckoning, all this fuss is just a way of drawing a veil over it all. There is no talk any more of what that regime was like... the talk now is exclusively of Pinochet."

Herberg is sceptical. "is anyone really going to dare to put Henry Kissinger on trial? Kissinger, President Richard Nixon, ITT, the copper multinationals like Anaconda or Kennecott, are implicated in the coup. I have photocopies of documents where ITT asks Nixon to sponsor the coup and a text from Nixon to Eduardo Frei, then president of the Christian Democrats, telling him that a coup must be prepared. But no one wants that to come to light. It is very easy to go after Pinochet, and of course what happened has to be denounced, but Pinochet did not act alone."

Herberg watched the bombing of La Moneda from the fifth floor of the Carrera Hotel, where he was staying. "Some carabinieri opened fire on the hotel windows where we photographers had stationed ourselves. Any photos of the outside of La Moneda were taken from there."

After the coup, he went back to Chile to film inside the concentration camps and collect testimony regarding. "They let me in because they thought that I was trying to show how humanely they were treating the prisoners. This was the camps in Piagua and Chacabuco, army camps with huts in the middle of the desert, in 60 degrees of heat."

In one of the films he made at that time "Chile '73 or History Repeats Itself," Herberg interviews the military commanders in charge of the camps, which were converted from some old abandoned nitrate works by the labour of the prisoners.

"The Atacama desert is the nearest thing to the Moon", he notes. "The Pisagua camp was designed by a Jewish engineer who had survived ... Auschwitz and went on to specialise in building prisons. Escape was impossible. Their only way out was to swim the ocean or cross the nitrate desert, which ends up burning you. All I wanted was for the inmates to give me their names and to film as many as I could so as to get the film out of the country and they could not claim that these people had simply disappeared. There were journalists there, and peasants, workers, Allende's

ministers, his personal physician Danilo Bartulin, leftwing militants .. It was the last thing I did. After that I made myself scarce."

He is reluctant to say how he left Chile and who smuggled him out. "I had been a war reporter for twelve years and had learned something about how to protect myself. Once the generals woke up to the fact that I was on the other side they sentenced me to death for "betraying the trust of the Military Junta." I made sure for the next three or four years that I took some security measures."

Back in Europe Herberg circulated his

film and handed the pictures over to Amnesty International and the Bertrand Russell Tribunal. From the BBC in London he interviewed Pinochet live. The general denied that anyone had been thrown into concentration camps.

"History" - Herberg says - "is always repeating itself: people trying to force others on to their knees and people who refuse to bend the knee."

Abridged from an article by Javier Cuartas in Nueva España, 7 December 1998, reprinted in Bicel No.8, organ of the Fundación Anselmo Lorenzo, March 1999, Madrid

How wrong can they be?

Issue 54/55 of Green "Anarchist" carried a laughable attack on us. "False Flag - An exposé of the Black Flag racket", suggested we might have a little problem with GA. Yes, we do, they persistently lie. We have corrected them on a number of occasions, but this latest crap looks like the stuff the Economic League used to pass off as "information about anarchists". Perhaps it's because GA reject rationalism that they do this. Or is it something more sinister?

They criticise us for carrying articles by Noel Molland, a member of the GA network and who they've just published a pamphlet denouncing. So, does that mean they think that Noel's article on MOVE we published was just filler? We don't.

They go on, "Black Flag was resurrected with AK money after anarcho-Leftism declined post early-1990s. Both the bogus Black Flag and the SolFed's Direct Action are AK-funded, both published using the same DTP-programme, both printed at the same place, .. and both are distributed by AK." We have corrected Paul Rogers/John Connor on this several times. Black Flag never died, it just changed format and had a particularly long irregular gap during the early 90s. Black Flag is not funded by AK, nor is Direct Action. Both have the same relationship with AK as such publications on GA's approved reading list as Anarchy A Journal of Desire Armed and Larry O'Hara's Notes From the Borderland - AK take some, distribute them and eventually pay a trade rate for them. DA and Black Flag are not laid out on the same software, and are not even printed in the same country. Still, why let the facts spoil a story? And as for the 1994 Bookfair, Albert Meltzer was on the Kate Sharpley Library

stall, and none of us were on AK's. Apparently in 1996/7 we also planned a London Conference to exploit the Class War split - news to us.

There then follows some stuff on Larry O'Hara and "Turning Up the Heat" and what they call the Paul Bowman Affair and us not covering the Gandalf case. Even a cursory glance through our last 10 issues show this to be bollocks. We spoke to Albert before he died about his theories on Leo Rosser's death, and have communicated that to Larry O'Hara. Whether he chooses to believe us is another matter, but the fact that he never asked us in the first place is sloppy.

Nor does publishing a letter from Fabian Tompsett mean we give him our stamp of approval, after all we've published letters from both GA's editors.

Their penultimate lie is that we don't support armed struggle - not true. We just discriminate between fascist armed struggle and real resistance movements. Paul Rogers wrote in BF215 that we should condemn the Neoist Alliance, whose arse licking of fascists must disgust genuine anarchists far more than Aum Shinrikiyo's bygone bad behaviour". It's an insult to all those who have dedicated their lives to struggle, armed or otherwise, to condemn a few arty posers more than a bunch of right wing murdering fanatics.

The conclusion of this sorry set of lies is that we are now run by *Attack*, with whom we have no connection. Rogers has been corrected on most of this, and anyone with any nouse who knows the scene could probably infer it. It does rather beg the question of what GA's agenda is in publishing it.

Dancing with the Devil:

on the politics of Green Anarchist, again!

In Black Flag 215, we ran a critique of the politics of Green Anarchist, "Irrationalism - Steve Booth Against the Machine", which attacked propositions by Steve Booth (in Green Anarchist 51) in favour of "acts of intense violence against the system with no obvious motives, no pattern". Booth stated that "The Oklahoma bombers had the right idea. The pity was that they did not blast any more government offices...The Tokyo sarin cult had the right idea. The pity was that in testing the gas a year prior to the attack they gave themselves away." Our polemic argued that Booth's Irrationalism is the logical endpoint for the "primitivist" project; that "the primitivists have not been able to identify any positive agent for the 'destruction of civilisation' and so their politics becomes a counsel of despair...With no rational agent for primitivist change, GA are left with...making Aum and the Oklahoma fascists vehicles for 'the absolute physical destruction of the machine.'"

In Green Anarchist 54-55, we get GA's "response." Two Articles, "False Flag" and "The Return of the Irrationalists", take on the task of replying to the Black Flag critique. Or rather, they don't. Black Flag is denounced as "opportunistic and power hungry" (the misrepresentations about the history and politics of the Black Flag Collective are dealt with elsewhere). GA also get excited about our question "would Booth endorse, say, the fascist bombing of Bologna railway station" (although their excitement is a bit misplaced, as they have a go at point scoring about how we appear to believe there were several Bologna bombings, when the article clearly employs the word "bombing", in the singular).

As to whether Booth would endorse such tactics, or whether primitivism has a concept of human agency in any positive sense, we're told that Booth, and GA, reject "all ideology", and hence the question is meaningless. Which begs 2 questions. If the GA project is "non-ideological" then why publish a paper, set up a contacts list, or reply to our articles at all. More importantly, if "Irrationalists" reject "all ideology" isn't it strange that Booth's non-ideologi-

cal examples of "resistance" were the Aum and the militias, not the IRA, ETA, the Angry Brigade, the Black Liberation Army, and so on? As we'll illustrate, this isn't just coincidence. The primitivist project rejects all notions of positive agency, of a human subject attempting to change the world, as "re-ifying" - alienative. Hence, any act of resistance which has a positive, "socialistic" goal (however poorly defined) has to be rejected, while groups which have purely negative or destructive goals are seen as "decivilising" and hence embraced. The logic of primitivism leads its proponents ultimately into the camp of those who would advocate "Long Live Death!"

We are not suggesting that GA are fascists; what we do suggest is that the method of primitivism, and the notion of the "non-ideological" lead precisely to a situation where questions of means and ends are buried beneath the desire for "the destruction of civilisation." That they can dismiss the question of whether or not they would, as we raised, "endorse, say, the fascist bombings of Bologna railway station, or a far right militia using poison gas on a black community in the US" as "ideological" suggests our concern, and anger, is justified. To argue that, as Booth's article "rejects all ideology, it necessarily rejects fascist ideology" is bullshit. Booth says the Aum had the right idea and that "Joe and Edna Couch Potato...can either join in somewhere or fuck off and die." It seems that his rejection of "fascist ideology" implies only a belief that the ideology of an organisation is irrelevant, so long as it is engaged in acts of "intense violence against the system." Booth (and whoever wrote "False Flag") don't reject fascism - they just deny that it matters whether an organisation is fascist or not.

Given this, we wonder if GA will conclude that the fascist bombers in London also had "the right idea."



Class an irrelevance?

We are told that Black Flag's contention that any effective resistance has to be grounded in an understanding of class is an "irrelevant 80s dogma", a "crude workerism." GA, apparently, call "for our actions to be unmediated through the working class." Class-struggle anarchism is a "secular 'religion of slaves.'"

Class, contra GA, whether fashionable in the 80s or irrelevant in the 90s, is the fundamental issue of our time - the relationship between those who own the means-of production and those forced to sell their labour to the property-owning class underpins every aspect of our society. The New Labour government has taken office committed to the utilisation of the welfare state as a weapon of coercion to drive the unemployed off the dole and into the workplace, to drag down wages, in the interests of capital. New Labour's attacks on working class living standards affect the majority of people in the UK. Irrelevant, though, according to GA. Environmental

crisis has as its cause the industrial/technological practices of capitalism-either in the form of production techniques used or pollutants sold to the consumer in the pursuit of profit. Still, who cares, eh?

So why is class important? Because class analysis indicates who has revolutionary potential, the potential to transform society. Thus the working class is not a potential agent of revolutionary change because its members suffer a great deal. As far as suffering goes, there are many better candidates for revolutionary agency than the working class: vagrants, perhaps, or impoverished students or prisoners or senior citizens. Many of these individuals suffer more than your average worker. But none of them is even potentially an agent of social transformation, as the working class is. Unlike the latter, these groups are not so objectively located within the capitalist mode of production. This means that they do not have the power to transform the economic system into a non-exploitative and libertarian one ("only a productive class may be libertarian in nature, because it does not need to exploit" in the words of Albert Meltzer). And without taking over the means of life, you cannot stop capital accumulating nor can workers abolish work.

It is undeniably true that trade unionism and social democratic reformism have, as GA assert, "emasculated authentically revolutionary currents." It is therefore, as Rudolf Rocker incited, the objective of "anarcho-syndicalism to prepare the toiling masses in the city and country for this great goal [social revolution] and to bind them together as a militant force." The class war has, too often, been mediated through reformism. It is part of Black Flag's objective to explore ways and means of making the working class, for capitalism, "the modern Satan, the great rebel" (to use Bakunin's phrase) again. In doing so, we do not intend to distance ourselves from questions of revolutionary violence, and our movement's embrace at times of the propaganda of the deed. However, to equate such acts as the assassination of the Empress of Austria by Lucheni, President Carnot of France by Santo Caserio, or the assassination of Alexander II by the Russian nihilists with the Aum's desire to murder a train full of Japanese commuters as GA does, is to reduce the propaganda of the deed to the pornography of the deed. As Emile Henry put it "we are involved in a merciless war; we mete out death and we must face it". The war, though, is "declared on

the bourgeoisie" - not Joe and Edna Couch Potato, Steve Booth's cynical dismissal of any ordinary person who's not part of GA's sorry little grouping.

Which helps explain why GA does not identify any agent for social change and instead relies on "irrationalist" acts. It is probable that the return to a "Hunter-Gatherer" style society would result in mass starvation in almost all countries as the

to equate such acts as the assassination of the Empress of Austria by Lucheni, President Carnot of France by Santo Caserio, or the assassination of Alexander II by the Russian nihilists with the Aum's desire to murder a train full of Japanese commuters as GA does, is to reduce the propaganda of the deed to the pornography of the deed.

social infrastructure collapses. Indeed it is tempting to insist that the primitivists have ceded the right to be taken seriously until they come up with a consistent response to the key question asked by Brian Morris of John Zerzan in Morris's article "Anthropology and Anarchism" (Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed 45): "The future we are told is 'primitive'. How this is to be achieved in a world that presently sustains almost six billion people (for evidence suggests that the hunter-gatherer lifestyle is only able to support 1 or 2 people per sq. mile)... Zerzan does not tell us." Green Anarchist's responses throw up too many issues, though, for us to embrace that luxury.

So, due to the inherent unattractiveness of GAs "Primitivist" ideas for most people ("Joe and Edna Couch Potato," in other words), it could never come about by libertarian means (i.e. by the free choice of individuals who create it by their own acts). Which partly explains their rejection of an agent for change as very few people would actually voluntarily embrace such a situation. This, we suggest, leads to GA developing a form of eco-vanguardism in order, to use Rousseau's evil expression, to "force people to be free" (as can be seen from the articles published celebrating terrorist acts). As subjective choice is ruled out, there can only be objective pressures which force people, against their will, into

"anarchy" (namely "irrationalist" acts which destroy civilisation). This explains their support for "irrationalism" - it is the only means by which a "primitivist" society could come about.

Maximalist Anarchism?

Printed alongside GA's articles attacking the "self-appointed moralistic anarcho-vanguard" (anyone who presumes to question the authority of GA!!) is an article by John Moore "Maximalist Anarchism, Anarchist Maximalism," a celebration by the author of "those forms of anarchism which aim at the exponential exposure, challenging and abolition of power." Moore is also author of "The Primitivist Primer." His "Maximalist Anarchism" is helpful, because it locates for us the theoretical bankruptcy of the primitivist project, the philosophical crisis which underpins the disordered musings of Booth and co. It has always been part of the anarchist project to oppose the dominion of man over man. That dominion, though, has always been understood as historically grounded in the development of the State as the guarantor of man's exploitation by man; the guarantor of property. Moore's conception of power, though, is a-historical, and anti-materialist: "Power is not seen as located in any single institution such as patriarchy or the state, but as pervasive in everyday life."

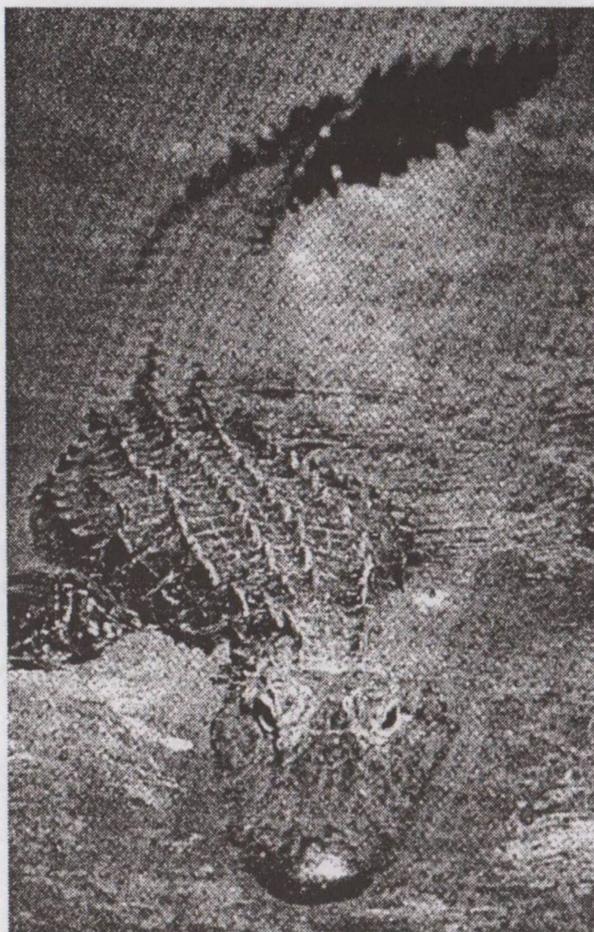
Remember the film "The Usual Suspects"? At one point in the film there's a voice over from Kevin Spacey along the lines of "The greatest trick the devil ever played was convincing the world he didn't exist." Moore's view of power as "pervasive in everyday life" is "The Usual Suspects" as political theory. The greatest trick that capitalism could play is convincing those oppressed under it that their oppression is natural, inevitable. Power is everywhere and all-corrupting. What does Moore mean? If Person A robs Person B and Person C intervenes to physically prevent him, is Person C's action as oppressive as Person A's? Is the state in seeking to murder Mumia Abu-Jamal no more or less oppressive than those who would seek to organise collectively to exercise the power to stop them? Moore conflates power, and hence agency, with oppression. Not all power is oppressive. The power to resist cannot be equated with the power to oppress. In 1793 the French revolutionary Jacques Roux petitioned that "Liberty is but a phantom when one class of men can

starve another with impunity." Moore would add that liberty is but a phantom when one class of men has the power to resist the fate delegated to it by the whim of another. Power, for Moore, becomes as one with our subjectivity, our power to act. What we are left with is bourgeois individualism dressed up as freedom. "Central to the emancipation of life from governance and control remains the exploration of desire and the free, joyful pursuit of individual lines of interest." Bakunin argued that "man only becomes man and achieves consciousness only to the extent that he realises his humanity within society and then only through the collective endeavours of society as a whole." Moore's "struggle against micro-fascism", the reduction of social struggle to the "anti-politics of everyday life", is a retreat from the collective struggle for a free society of Bakunin to the deconstructive agenda of post-modernism. As he concedes "The arts, due to their capacity to bypass inhibitions and connect with or even liberate unconscious concerns and desires, thus remain far more appropriate than political discourse as a means of promoting and expressing the development of autonomy and anti-authoritarian rebellion." This is not, then, a politics of resistance in the sense one might understand a politics of everyday life as embodying strategies of resistance to the encroachments of capital upon everyday life; resistance is substituted by play, artistic self-expression (why not shopping?) As Moore himself concedes; real issues of strategy and tactics in the battle to regain control of our lives are abandoned to "the very science fictional question of 'what if...?'"

Zerzan and Reification

Moore is not the only primitivist to have a problem with the issue of agency. John Zerzan, by far the most engaged and stimulating of the primitivist thinkers, in an article "Reification: That Thing We Do" (Anarchy 45) starts with an examination of the use of the term "reification" as employed by the Marxist Georg Lukacs "namely, a form of alienation issuing from the commodity fetishism of modern market relations. Social conditions and the plight of the individual have become mysterious and impenetrable as a function of what we now commonly refer to as consumerist capitalism. We are crushed and blinded by the reifying force of the stage of capital that began in the 20th century." Lukacs's obser-

vations are based on Marx's contention in Grundrisse that "Money...directly and simultaneously becomes the real community... Money dissolve(s) the community" His use of the term "reification" is historically specific. Zerzan argues "however, that it may be useful to re-cast reification so as to establish a much deeper meaning and



Green Anarchist - the politics of the swamp or just a crock of shit?

dynamic. The merely and directly human is in fact being drained away as surely as nature itself has been tamed into an object." It would be reasonable here to anticipate an attack upon Enlightenment views of the human subject, the Cartesian notion that we can "render ourselves the masters and possessors of nature." Zerzan goes much further. He argues that we are "exiled from immediacy" by our capacity for abstract thought, that "the reification aspect of thought is a further cognitive 'fall from grace. It is the human subject acting as subject that leads to our alienation from ourselves. 'objectification is the take off point for culture, in that it makes domestication possible. It reaches its full potential with the onset of division of labour; the exchange principle itself moves on the level of objectification.'"

Raymond Williams once argued that "communication is community", that man as social being is defined by interaction through language. Zerzan has it that "the reification act of language impoverishes existence by creating a universe of meaning sufficient unto itself." As Brian Morris describes it "All those products of the hu-

man creative imagination - farming, art, philosophy, technology, science, urban living, symbolic culture - are viewed negatively by Zerzan - in a monolithic sense." Zerzan is a committed activist and capable of writings of both insight and beauty. His writings against our "evermore standardised, massified lost world" stand as powerful indictments of modern life. Yet a contradiction stands at the centre of his thought. If the "dreadfulness of our postmodernity" is constituted by the "denial of human choice and effective agency" how can we go forward, how can we change the world, except by our own hands and how can it be possible to so change the world if by acting we "render ourselves as objects"? If what Cassirer called the process of creative destruction, of "man" as subject, "doubting and seeking, tearing down and building up" has led us to "these dark days" then there is no way forward. Power pervades everywhere, again. All that is left is to live quietly in the world, the "reverential listening" of Martin Heidegger, or "living-in-place" as the deep ecologists Berg and Dasmann put it. But living-in-place seems much like knowing your place, and not much of a recipe for change, and even Arne Naess acknowledges that "only look at" nature is extremely peculiar behaviour. Experiencing of an environment happens by doing something in it, by living in it, meditating and acting" (Ecology, Community and Lifestyle).

In practice, Zerzan draws back from embracing the notion of "living-in -place" in the here and now, faced with the rotteness of "place" as it stands. His best writings are full of celebrations of worker resistance to work life, luddism, the 1977 New York blackout looting and riots. For Green

"The future we are told is 'primitive'. How this is to be achieved in a world that presently sustains almost six billion people ... Zerzan does not tell us."

Anarchism though, it is not so simple. The contradictions of primitivism - Zerzan's theoretical abandonment of the revolutionary subject, Moore's bourgeois individualism - lead practical, direct action politics down a blind alley. We can't stand where we are - we can't go forward because power is everywhere and human agency is ultimately reifying. The dead end of primitivism lies precisely in the fact that there can

(cont. p38)

the committee

Sean McPhilemy (Roberts Rhinehart)

You can't buy Sean McPhilemy's book in any bookshop in Britain or Ireland, because those named in it as the overseers of Loyalist death squads have ensnared the book in legal proceedings. *The Committee* is the most important book yet written about Britain's of a shoot to kill policy in the Six Counties throughout the 1980s and '90s. It is also an exemplary lesson in how to conduct journalistic investigations. It is thoroughly researched, and, throughout, substantiates each of its main arguments with clear and convincing evidence. Any room for doubt is met with a substantial weight of fact.

The Committee is based on information provided by Loyalist activist Jim Sands in a series of interviews to Box Productions, researching security services collusion in assassinations of nationalists in the 6 Counties. Sands reveals that the assassination campaign is directed by a "coalition" set up after the Anglo-Irish agreement, on the basis that "the British government could not be trusted to prevent further moves towards the creation of a united Ireland." The Ulster Loyalist Central Co-ordinating Committee "had a membership of around 60 people, drawn from business... the professions, loyalist paramilitary groups (like the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Freedom Fighters, and, most significantly, from the higher ranks of the locally recruited security forces, the Ulster Defence Regiment, and the Royal Ulster Constabulary."

Sands names those centrally involved in the direction of The Committee as follows; William "Billy" Abernathy - a manager in the Belfast Head Office of the Ulster Bank and former RUC part-timer - of whom Sands says, "nothing happens except it goes through him, militarily or politically."; former RUC Assistant Chief Constable Trevor Forbes OBE, "former Head of Special Branch in Knock Headquarters (Sands also alleges that Forbes forwarded information to Frazier Agnew, Official Unionist former Mayor of Newtownabbey Council, with paramilitary connections); Reverend Hugh Ross, President of the Ulster Independence Party, outwardly head of a legal, "peaceful" but hardline Unionist party of whom Sands states "are you going to stand against people like Hugh Ross, because it will mean certain death"), David

Prentice, a Loyalist businessman; Richard Montieth, a solicitor with practices in Belfast and Portadown; Lewis Singleton, solicitor and member of the Ulster Independence Committee (and legal representative for David Trimble MP). As one RUC officer involved in subsequent attempts to cover-up The Committee's existence observes, those at the head of The Committee were "the aristocracy of Ulster".

Needless to say, the aristocracy of Ulster made sure they pointed the gun, but got someone else to pull the trigger. "The professionals as one might expect were not the people who got their hands dirty in implementing the Committee's decisions. Other less affluent, less educated and less squeamish individuals were assigned the task of eliminating those whose deaths the professionals had authorised and organised. The Committee's most important hitmen were Billy Wright (shot by the INLA in 1997) and Robin "The Jackal" Jackson. The political goal? An independent Ulster, "a Protestant state for a Protestant people," - a charnel-house for nationalists, a banana republic of Orange supremacy.

Sands, in his interviews, and McPhilemy, elsewhere in the book, detail methods employed by the Committee in grim detail. What follows are accounts of sectarian killings outlined in the book:-

DENIS CARVILLE of Lurgan, Co. Armagh, was killed while sitting with his girlfriend in a car park at Lough Neagh. The IRA had previously killed a UDR man at the same spot and the Committee decided to kill a Catholic in identical circumstances,

in retaliation. An RUC patrol checked registration numbers until a car from a Catholic area could be found. The Inner Force car then drove to the car park of the Silverwood Hotel, Lurgan, where Billy Wright was parked, waiting. Wright was escorted by the Inner Force car to the murder scene where he strolled up to Carville's car and shot him in the head. He was then escorted away again. Wright was sufficiently contemptuous of the nationalist community's feelings to turn up to observe his victim's funeral. He told Sands "I just came to make sure he was dead."

SAM MARSHALL was arrested with 2 others in January 1990 and charged with possession of ammunition, following a house raid. He was a known Republican. On 7th March 1990 he was, with 2 friends, attending Lurgan RUC station as part of his bail conditions. The three noted they were being tailed by a red Maestro- KJI 1486. When they reached the station, they noticed 2 men standing in the security post outside. When they had left the station they saw the Maestro again and signalled to it to make it aware they knew they were being followed. A few minutes later they noticed another car, a red Rover, which passed them, turned, then drove past them again. On its second pass the car stopped abruptly, and 2 men armed with rifles leapt out and began firing at them. Sam Marshall was wounded in both legs and fell to the ground. One of the 2 gunmen ran to him and shot him twice in the head. According to Sands the murderer was Robin Jackson, the driver of the red Rover was an Inner

Sabate - Guerilla Extraordinary

Antonio Tellez, Elephant Editions/AK (£5.95 from BM Elephant, London WC1N 3XX or via AK)

A reprint of the classic biography first published in English in the 70s. For those of you who don't know, Sabate was an anarchist guerilla who didn't stop fighting even after Franco "won". Most books on the Spanish anarchist movement concentrate on what Bookchin calls the heroic years, or the revolutionary years. Here is one to prove that wherever there is oppression, the spirit of resistance will find a way to show itself, no matter what the faint-hearted might say. One to be inspired by.



Force officer, and the Maestro was a security surveillance vehicle. It was clear that someone from the RUC station had to have leaked Sam Marshall's bail times. According to Sands, it was the RUC officer in charge of Lurgan police station, Inspector Alan Clegg. At the time of the murder, the RUC stated that the red Maestro had been eliminated from their inquiries.

In November 1993, Clegg was called to give evidence on behalf of the British government at an extradition hearing in California, for IRA escapee John Joseph Smith. Smith was opposing extradition on the basis that his life would be at risk. Clegg was cross examined about the Marshall killing and the red Maestro. He revealed that the Maestro had been eliminated from enquiries *because* it was a security force surveillance vehicle.

In the course of his research for the book, McPhilemy interviewed former Military Intelligence Officer Fred Holroyd. Holroyd told him, of "The Jackal", "while serving as a Military Intelligence Officer in the Special Military Intelligence Unit (Northern Ireland) in 1973-75, I became aware of a Protestant paramilitary called Robin Jackson from Portadown. Because of the need to know principle and the compartmentalisation of the Intelligence world, officers like myself often had great difficulty in understanding some of the anomalies in operating realities. One of those anomalies was Robin Jackson... The RUC Special Branch "ran" a number of Protestant paramilitaries in the Portadown area that I was aware of, some of them who operated with Robin Jackson... It is my view that Robin Jackson was a paid informer and agent of the RUC." Anthony O'Doherty, a double agent who worked for British Intelligence, told McPhilemy that he had been given counter-terrorist training at a Military Intelligence school at Pontrellis, North Wales, and that with him there was Robin Jackson. (We should remember here the case of Brian Nelson, the UDA Director of Intelligence, who was revealed by the Stevens investigation to be a British army agent. Among Nelson's claims to infamy are being involved in the procurement of major arms supplies from South Africa for the Loyalist paramilitaries, and using Army-supplied intelligence to target nationalists for assassination. Nelson kept a series of "P" (personality) cards detailing potential targets. One "P" carder was solicitor Pat Finucane, killed on 12 February 1989, a month after junior minister Douglas Hogg had stated in the House of Commons that

"there are, in the Province, a number of solicitors who are unduly sympathetic to the cause of the IRA.")

CRAIGAVON In March 1991 the Committee decided to target a mobile sweet shop owner, on the basis of Inner Force files showing him to be a member of the IRA. A six man squad led by Jackson was sent to the shop, escorted into the Drumbeg estate by the Inner Force. The owner was not present, so Jackson killed 17 year old Katrina Rennie, 19 year old Eileen Duffy and 29 year old Brian Frizzell, because they were residents of a nationalist area and happened to be there. The Inner Force then escorted them out of the area.

Following the screening of *The Committee* by Channel 4, all material, save the identity of Sands (Source A) and related materials, was handed over to the RUC. The RUC devoted all their time to court proceedings under the Prevention of Terrorism Act to determine Sands' identity. Once they had discovered who he was, he was encouraged to recant his evidence and state that the programme was a hoax. It is significant that 2 journalists, Barrie Penrose of the *Sunday Express*, and Liam Clarke of the *Sunday Times* acted as unofficial press officers for the RUC in spreading deliberate misinformation about the programme. McPhilemy, however, having sufficient evidence besides that gleaned from Sands, was able to defend the integrity of the investigation, and win damages from both papers for their smears.

One aspect of the Committee which merits further investigation is the role of David Trimble MP, hailed earlier this year as a "peacemaker" but also a known associate of Abernathy, Ross and Wright, and a friend of Monteith. Trimble swore an affidavit in defence of Monteith and spoke out against the programme in Parliament. Many of Trimble's Portadown constituents are implicated by McPhilemy in the Committee's workings. When Trimble acts as leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, on whose behalf does he really speak?

George Orwell wrote of journalistic cowardice in reporting the Spanish Civil War, "that kind of thing is frightening to me, because it often gives me the feeling that the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world." The wilful disregard of McPhilemy's findings by the mainstream media betrays objective truth in the same way. McPhilemy has shown us how far the "aristocrats of Ulster" will go to defend their interests. We would do well to heed his warnings.

International Industrial Unionism
Arthur J Miller (pamphlet)
US\$3.50 from Working People's
Library, c/o ITP-IWW, PO Box 5464,
Tacoma WA 98415-0464 USA

A 60 page pamphlet which presents an anarcho-syndicalist perspective from an IWW militant. The author shows how the One Big Union idea is relevant to all areas of life, and outlines tactics and methods which will help in our struggles. The main drawback to the pamphlet is that it is aimed at a North American audience, despite its title. However, there is still much of use for militants in Britain or elsewhere.

Remembering Spain - Italian Anarchist
Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War
Umberto Marzocchi £1 from Kate
Sharpley Library

This short pamphlet is a few years of the eventful life of Italian militant Marzocchi.

The Italian anarchists were amongst the first foreign comrades on the scene after the Spanish revolution erupted. Because their country was under Mussolini's dictatorship, they were accepted by the Spanish movement as fighters (the Spanish generally preferred comrades to work for their support in their home countries rather than join them in Spain, despite the publicity the Stalinists got from the International Brigades when they were formed).

The Italian volunteers won many important victories at no small cost, but found that the supply of arms and their orders were being manipulated to suit the Stalinists and Catalanists, who did not want news of anarchist victories without the necessary "discipline" required by regular soldiers.

The other chief area of Marzocchi's recollections is on the betrayal of the revolution and the murder of several Italian comrades, including Camillo Berneri during the events of May 1937.

Howard Zinn: A Peoples' History of the United States

The title of this new CD from AK is a bit misleading, as I expected an account of historical events from a class perspective and didn't get one.

However, it is an interesting account of how "academic" history functions to suppress the truth and promote pro-ruling class ways of thinking. The main advantage of having political theory on CD is you can do your reviews while doing a 5½ hour prison mailout simultaneously. Why did I get involved with politics?

No Gods No Masters; edited by Daniel Guerin, Book 1 AK Press, £11.95

Overall, this is a book I would recommend, but it does require a previous knowledge both of what anarchism is, and of history over the course of its development. It is most useful as a guide to the progression of anarchist ideas, starting with the much-maligned Stirner, through the equally maligned Proudhon, to Bakunin and Kropotkin.

My main complaint is the inaccurate transliteration of Russian names, thus Nechaev becomes Netchayev and the Marxist stooge Utin becomes Outline. Both are perfectly understandable to French speakers, but to someone in Asia, reading this with only Marxist texts as background, this might not seem immediately obvious.

As an anthology of writings, the advantages are that debates can be illustrated from both sides, for example the debate over communism or collectivism in the Jura Federation, or the inclusion of Marx on the Commune.

As well as the four well known thinkers, the book also gives flavours from others less featured, particularly in English translation, such as Guillaume and

Schwitzguébel, both important figures in the Jura Federation. Most importantly, Guerin puts these people and their ideas into a historical context in the shape of the great proletarian upheavals of 19th century France - 1848 and 1871.

The French bias is only to be expected - I'm not sure if Book 2 corrects this, but large and significant areas and important thinkers are left out. While I have no great quibble with leaving out the English liberals so beloved of the professorial school of anarchism, such aspects as the Haymarket Martyrs and the period of propaganda by deed are omitted.

However, the class emphasis is one of the strengths of the book. Guerin obviously spent some time arguing with Marxists, as Book 1 provides plenty of ammunition against Marx himself, rather than the much easier target of Lenin. The material around the break up of the First International gives a much clearer illustration of the mean-spirited side of Marx's character, and Guerin goes out of his way to be fair to him.

At £12, it's a bit pricey, particularly as it's one volume of a two book set, but get your library to order both, and if you're a bit weak on history read up first so you get more of a feel for the book.

MH

(Book 2 will be reviewed in the next issue)

green anarchist (continued)

be no positive agency for the primitivist transformation. All that's left then is what Booth and Co like to pretend is the "non-ideological". When Zerzan talks about the un-mediated/un-ideologized he means, as Paul Simons put it in *Anarchy* 44 "the participants in riots and insurrections throughout history; luddites, Regulators, Whiskey Rebels, Rebecca and her Sisters, Captain Swing, King Mob, the Paris Commune of 1871, Makhnovists, the New York City boogie till you puke party and power outrage of 1977, the MLK assassination riots, May 68 in France and so forth." In this, he stands as part of the best of our movement's tradition, anarchism as the voice of the "swinish multitude."

Booth's idea of "non-ideological", contra Zerzan, is not non-ideological at all. Both the Aum and the Oklahoma bombers had clear ideological ends. Booth wants to pretend their ends don't count (so why not, then, the FN or the BNP?).

As GA concede, (and in doing so concede their own irrelevance) "all Steve did was write." And it's all he's ever likely to do. There is an element of "The Irrationalists" which reeks of middle class posturing and vicarious rebellion. Nevertheless, their politics have some resonance within the direct action environmental movement and they have to be taken seriously to that extent. Booth's "Irrationalism" is the dead end of primitivism - the abandonment of any notion of positive human agency. Whether they like it or not, all that's then left is the passive surrender of "living in place" or looking to the forces of reaction to bring about the death of civilisation; the barbarism Rosa Luxemburg warned against.

letter

Dear Black Flag,

Normally I admire your excellently produced magazine. However I was disappointed to see the exploding policeman on the cover of issue 216. Exploding policemen release noxious vapours into the atmosphere. Readers might be interested in my self-produced pamphlet "Disposing of state agents the responsible way". I especially recommend a shallow trench which has the added benefit of producing particularly good runner beans,

F.Malone

Anarcho-quiz Answers

1. Former wild man of country rock, Steve Earle, in his song *Christmas in Washington*.

2. The Chinese boxer rebels in 1900. The Pig was Christ and the Sheep were Christians. The Boxer rebellion was an attempt to fight off western influence over China. It was bloodily suppressed by all the Western powers, who, a few years later would be fighting themselves.

3. The word police originally meant the civil administration of a city. It was first used in its current sense for the Marine Police set up in 1798 in the Port of London.

4. Nihilism. Many scholars believe he based his nihilist character Bazarov on Bakunin, whom he had met.

**PLAIN
WORDZ**

ANTI-AUTHORITARIAN ★
★ PRO-WORKING CLASS

FOR A FREE CATALOGUE PLEASE SEND AN
SAE, 20P STAMP OR IRC TO: PLAIN WORDZ
PO BOX 381, HUDDERSFIELD, HD13XX, U.K.

INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTOR
ALL PROFITS GO TO THE BLACK FLAG COLLECTIVE

contacts

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:

Solidarity Federation (anarcho-syndicalists)
PO Box 29, SWPDO, Manchester M15 5HW
(tel: 0161-231 8177)

Anarchist-Communist Federation
c/o 84B Whitechapel High St,
London E1 7QX

Class War Federation, PO Box 467, London E8
3QX

INDUSTRIAL

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

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

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

LOCAL GROUPS

SCOTLAND

Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh, 17 West
Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA

Glasgow Anarchists, c/o Transmission, 28 King
St, Glasgow G1 5QP

WALES

Aberystwyth, PO Box 17, Aberystwyth, Dyfed

NORTH ENGLAND

The 1 in 12 Club, 21-23 Albion St, Bradford BD1
2LI Tel: 01274 734160

Leeds Anarchist group, PO Box HP 115, Leeds
LS6 1UN

Liverpool Anarchists PO Box 110, Liverpool
L69 8DP

Sheffield Anarchist Group, PO Box 446, Shef-
field S1 1NY

Tyneside Anarchist Group, PO Box 1TA, New-
castle NE99 1TA

MIDLANDS

Birmingham Solidarity Group, PO Box 3241,
Saltley, Birmingham B8 3DP

Birmingham ABC, PO Box 3241, Birming-
ham B8 3DP
email: bhamabc@yahoo.com

Worcester Anarchists. c/o PO Box 3241, Bir-
mingham B8 3DP

Wolves ABC, PO Box 339, Wolverhampton WV1

SOUTH EAST

East Kent Anarchists, c/o Canterbury Centre, St
Alphege Lane, Canterbury

Haringey Solidarity Group, PO Box 2474 Lon-
don N8 0HW

Hounslow Anarchists c/o PO Box 87, Hampton,
Middlesex TW13 3TF

56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St, London SE17

Oxford Solidarity Action, c/o BM BCM 1715
London WC1N 3XX

Red & Black Club
PO Box 17773, London SE8 4WX

South Herts SolFed PO Box 493, St Albans AL1
5TW

Gravesend Resistance, PO Box 1 Gravesend, Kent
DA11 7NE

West London Anarchists & Radicals (WAR), c/o
BM Makhno, London WC1N 3XX

Love & Rage Info Project, c/o Box B,
21 Little Preston St, Brighton BN1 2HQ

@ Teapot, PO Box 4144, Worthing BN14 7NZ

EAST ANGLIA

Cambridge Anarchists, Box A, Arjuna, 12 Mill
Rd, Cambridge CB1 2AD

Norwich & Norfolk Solidarity Centre, Unit 13,
Muspole Workshops, Muspole St, Norwich NR3
1DJ

East Anglia Anarchist network, PO Box 87, Ips-
wich IP4 4JQ

SOUTH WEST

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

South Bristol Anarchists, PO Box 1076, Bristol
BS99 1WF

Cornwall Anarchists and Cornwall ABC
c/o LOFT, PO Box 19, Penzance, Cornwall TR18
2YP

West Country Activist, PO Box 478, Taunton,
Somerset TA2 7YR

South West Solidarity (SF), PO Box 741, Swin-
don, SN1 3UG
email: sws@re-creation.ndirect.co.uk

Somerset ABC, PO Box 478, Taunton TA2 7YR

Write c/o Black Flag for contacts in Plymouth

IRELAND

Organise!, PO BOX 505, Belfast BT12 6BQ

Belfast ABC, PO Box 505, Belfast BT12 6BQ

Workers Solidarity Movement, PO Box 1528,
Dublin 8 email: wsm_ireland@geocities.com

OTHER CONTACTS

Advisory Service for Squatters
2 St Pauls Rd London N1 (tel: 0171-359 8814)

Anarchist Black Cross (prisoner support) BM
Haven, London WC1N 3XX
email: londonabc@hotmail.com

Taking Liberties (paper of ABC), PO Box 446,
Sheffield S1 1NY

Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London
WC1N 3XX (archive)

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

Haven Distribution (books to prisoners)
27 Old Gloucester Rd, London WC1N 3XX

SUBSCRIBE!

Black Flag has no rich backers and is not linked to any organisation. If you like what we do, please subscribe.

- I would like to take out a sub from issue _____ and enclose a cheque/Postal Order/stamps to the value of _____
- I want to support Black Flag. Please send me a standing order form
- I want to sell Black Flag. Please send me _____ copies to sell *
- I enclose a donation of _____

Subscription Rates

Inland: 4 issues £6
Airmail: 4 issues £12
W. Europe, N America, Australia
Surface: 4 issues £8
S.America, Africa, Asia, E Europe
Surface: 4 issues US\$1

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

* for trade see box on page 2

KROPOTKIN



**The Anarchist formerly
known as PRINCE**