

*If we can be made into dogs,*

*lepers and wage slaves*



*Who is to say*

*that we can't make ourselves into people?*

**Long Live the World Revolution**

Proletarian Gob

Folder 19, 30 Silver Street,  
Reading RG1

No. 4, Autumn 1994

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# PROLETARIAN GOB

**THE TRUTH REVEALED!**



**DEMOCRACY BRINGS OUT  
THE DEAD  
IN ALL OF US**

**ONLY WHEN THE WORKING CLASS IS COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTROL  
WILL WE BE ABLE TO TAKE REAL CONTROL OF OUR LIVES**

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As you may have noticed *Proletarian Gob* has a new address. This does not mean the BM Makhno, London WC1N 3XX address has closed down, I was just borrowing it from the comrades who rent the box. The BM Makhno box-renters, therefore, still exist, but they are not *Proletarian Gob*.

*Proletarian Gob* appears every six months, in Spring and Autumn. The next issue will hopefully appear around March/April 1995.

**PROLETARIAN GOB**  
**FOLDER 19, 30 SILVER STREET, READING RG1**

BIG THANKS  
TO PAUL!



PROLETARIAN GOB is anti-capitalist, anti-State and anti-authoritarian. PROLETARIAN GOB is for the creation of a worldwide, free human community, which can only be achieved by the conscious actions of a revolutionary proletariat acting for itself and not at the direction of some 'Revolutionary Party'.

**DESMOND MORRIS - THICKIE OR WHAT?**

A while ago on the television there was a programme called "The Human Animal" by renowned TV personality Desmond Morris. *Proletarian Gob* did not see much of this programme because in its quest to live life to the full and without restraint it noticed that there was something far more interesting on one of the other channels. Reports of the programme from people who, in their shallow and boxed-up existence, couldn't find the will-power to turn over have proved to me that Desmond is indeed a sad-act clown full of borrowed ideas, stale clichés, and some nasty opinions.

I did in fact see some bits of the programme by accident and one of his sharp analyses really set me thinking. It was the part on humans originally being hunters and gatherers. Des was saying that "our" old hunting instincts were played out daily in our working lives. For example, stock brokers and the like resemble pre-history hunters enjoying the thrill of the chase and the kill; workers who have to dangle from tall buildings doing repair work are getting the same sense of danger and excitement as hunters close on the tail of their prey; and most laughable of all was a scene with a lot of workers together in a factory or something, and Des arguing wisely that workers being together recreated the camaraderie and co-operation that was needed on a hunt. What a load of pathetic crap! Poor old Des, for all his supposedly brainy insights into human behaviour he has managed to misunderstand how society is *actually organised*. This is what happens to people when they don't look at society in terms of class, when they don't realise that this is a society based on the brutal exploitation of the majority by a minority. We don't choose to do dangerous work, we don't choose to gather together in factories and offices so we can all have a good laugh, we are forced there and hoodwinked into believing that we have to stay there. We're not people on a pretend "hunt" everyday, we're proletarians living a shit life that is beyond our control.

So is dear old Des just really thick, or is he trying to get a job as a management consultant? No one will be more pleased to hear that workers can be convinced that going to work is as exciting as heading off for a hunt in the untamed wilderness as the managerial types who share Desmond's privileged position in this blood-drenched world society. Des, I believe, likes to see himself as something of an anti-establishment figure, how sad. Like a lot of intellectuals, philosophers, scientists, sociologists and other windbags he really doesn't have a clue. These intelligent morons serve the masters of our continued exploitation by obscuring the truth about our real situation, by feeding us fantasies and falsehoods which are designed to keep us in our place. If "the masses" must ask questions let them read articles by Michael Ignatiev or Neal Ascherson, books by any number of philosophers, or watch TV programmes by the likes of Desmond Morris, *so that the questions they ask will be the wrong ones*. Luckily, all these gits will get their come-uppance during periods of rising class struggle, when the blood on their greasy palms will be fully exposed.

In this society "intelligence" is treated as some sort of neutral gift, which, fortunately for its owner, bestows success, praise and decency. In fact, "intelligence" can only be gauged in this society by a persons ability to absorb useless facts, and to do a job that "proves" their intelligence, which means one that helps this murderous society run smoothly along. Save us from intelligence! I throw in my lot with the uneducated rabble, the uncultured mass, and the stupid proletarians who refuse to play their part.



## WHY WE HAVE TO ABANDON THE USE

### OF THE CONCEPT AND TERM: DEMOCRACY

So far democracy is the best political form of domination that capitalism has found. It far outstrips totalitarianism, which suffers from three major drawbacks. Firstly, that people in general resent it when their domination is too blatant and tangible. Secondly, that totalitarianism requires too much effort on the part of the State to keep people in line. And thirdly, totalitarianism, like feudalism or absolutism, stifles competition between capitalists or potential capitalists, which leads to a stagnation of the economy. What this means in terms of the class struggle is that the economy suffers because people work less hard and find multitudes of ways to dodge the system economically and politically. A democratic political system is far better for the economy (i.e. capitalism) because a great amount of workers are fooled into believing that they have a "voice" in politics ["If you don't use your vote how can you complain" !!!] and that the institutions of democracy will, ultimately at least, protect our freedom. These institutions are things like the legal system, the "free" press, parliament, the unions, and the armed forces. Workers are less discontented and lazy under democracy because our servility to the State and the bosses is not so obvious, after all we *are* free, but just what is this freedom that we are led to believe is so precious?

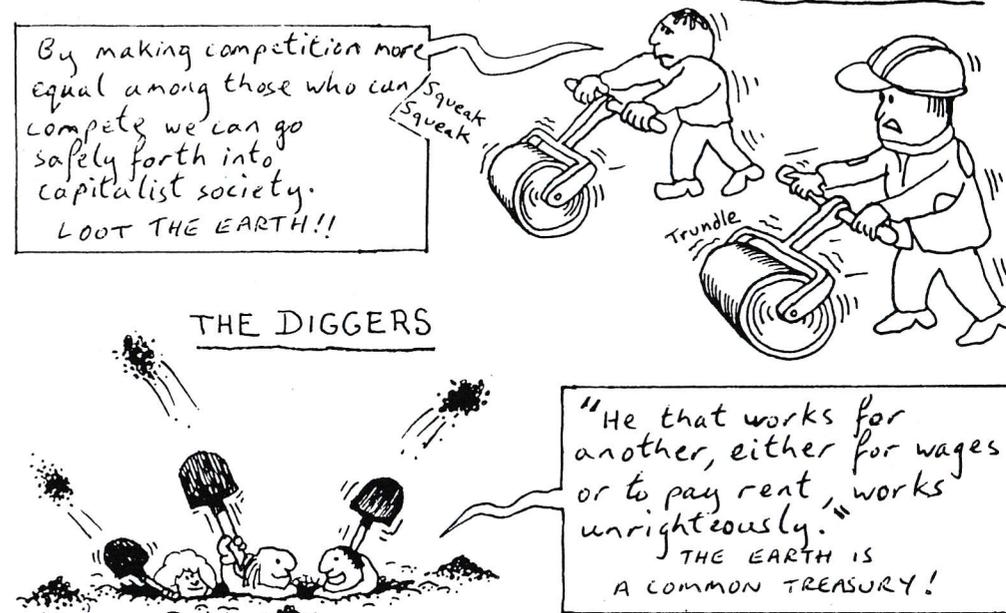
Let's see: we're free to work most of our lives so that our bosses can expand their power and amass fortunes; we're free to not work, and either starve or live as dole slaves; we're free to digest a multitude of opinions shoved in our faces by newspapers, television, radios, novelists, politicians, priests, advertising, so that we don't have to bother working things out for ourselves. We are free to be bored to death by routines and lives that are not of our choosing, free to accept the disguised [democracy] or undisguised [totalitarianism] discipline of Capital *or to die*.

The sign on the gates of labour camp Earth is the same one that hung over the gates of the camp at Auschwitz: Work Makes You Free. This is such a clever slogan because it is, and was, such a complete lie. Work doesn't make us free it makes our bosses even more free to exploit us in any way they choose. The only way we can get out of this labour camp is by becoming one of the commandants (i.e. a capitalist boss), which is not only virtually impossible but would be incredibly vile and nasty, or we have to completely smash it up so that no trace of it is left.

So much for democracy as it is today, but what I really want to do is show why we must not associate the term or concept of democracy with anything other than *political domination of our daily lives*. Too often we hear the words "real democracy" or "workers democracy" to describe the ways revolutionaries might act with each other now, and to describe how a future communist society will function. Using the term democracy in these senses not only shows a lack of understanding of the difference between a political society (e.g., capitalism) and a non-political society (e.g., communism) but it also serves to further obscure the real nature of democracy.

One of the places where modern democracy (i.e. as we know it now) was first challenged by a communistic vision was at its very inception during the English revolution of 1649. The philosophy and aims of the Leveller movement were democratic, while the aims of people like the diggers (e.g., Gerard Winstanley), and ranters were communist. The Levellers saw private rights as fundamental to human liberty, and they wanted to put in place laws which would protect those rights against any incursions of "bad government". Their plan included creating a bill of rights, as part of a written constitution, which parliament was forbidden to change. In general the Levellers wanted reforms that equalised civil and political liberties, abolished monopoly and opened up opportunities to equal competition. Theirs was a bourgeois political programme, aimed at breaking the power of feudalism and the monarchy. The freedoms they wanted enshrined in law were freedoms for the bourgeoisie (or, in fact, anyone with money or capital) to be able to compete with each other, and with the old feudal barons, fairly. Under feudalism success as an exploiter of the poor or as a rich bastard depended on favours from feudal lords or the monarchy itself. The Levellers wanted a democratic society based on

## THE LEVELLERS



equal competition. The diggers and ranters, on the other hand wanted a society based on mutual aid and co-operation, they saw the earth as a common treasury which was communally owned. Their communistic vision stood in direct opposition to the democratic, bourgeois nightmare of a society based on individualism, acquisitiveness and competition.

In essence, the difference between these two visions comes down to the difference between a political and a non-political society. In a political society (e.g., bourgeois, or capitalist society) politics is a separate force which exists over and above our daily lives, it is a way of dominating us and a way of making, justifying, and disguising decisions that affect our existence. The political and the social are directly opposed to each other, that's why a political revolution will solve nothing for the working class while a social revolution could solve everything. Under politics people cannot live socially or communally, they have to live politically, as individual units, as citizens in the political empire. We do not live as we want to but as politics forces us to, it doesn't matter if the politics is that of left-wing or right-wing capitalism, it doesn't matter in whose particular interests that politics is working (i.e. the bosses, or a Party, for example) all that matters to us is that our relations to each other are shaped not by ourselves, not communally, but by politics, by a domination that stands over most of our waking lives. We cannot understand democracy unless we see it as a political method and we cannot understand politics unless we look at it in relation to communist society or the movement for communism. The diggers understood this, but maybe they were helped by the fact that they hadn't had centuries of democratic ideology (bullshit) shoved down their throats from all sorts of saviours of capitalism (take, for example, any so-called revolutionary group that puts up MP's at election time, or believes workers can use the State to their benefit, or talks about "workers democracy").

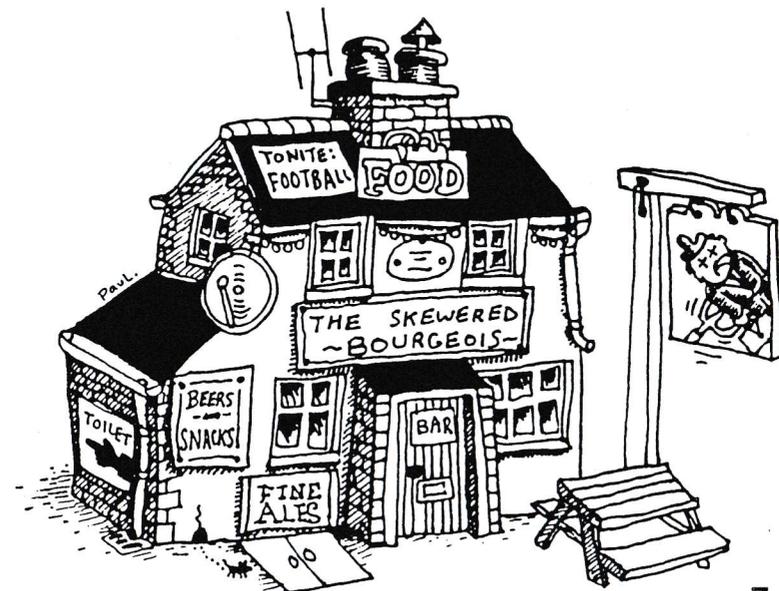
Democracy as a concept is very pervasive and sneaky, which is why we sometimes hear even the most hardened anti-capitalist propagandists say things like "real democracy" when describing how a revolutionary group should make decisions, or how a future communist society will make decisions. The problem here is that there is a confusion between the simple social act of a few, or more, people arriving at a decision, and making the actual decision-making process more important than the people involved in making that decision. If the ways of making decisions are set in stone and if everyone has to, or perceives they have to, abide by the final decision then we have let politics take over our lives again.

Take the example of three friends deciding which pub to go to. Two want to go to The Decapitated Journalist while the other wants to drink at The Skewered Bourgeois. Obviously the discussion can be resolved simply by the two or the one just giving in, or they can go their separate ways. This is not politics, this is just making a decision. It could become politics if the friends decided that to make these decisions it would be simpler to have a system which each friend would have to abide by. So they agree to make their decisions by majority vote. Now, it is fine to invent a decision-making process, we will have to come up with ways of coming to decisions in communism, what is dangerous is if these processes become more important, or even time consuming, than real life itself, and if people are, or feel, forced to comply with the decisions made. The three friends may after a while feel that they have created a little society, with its own way of making decisions, which they will see as law, enshrined in tradition. Although they don't notice it they have become victims of their decision-making system because their free will has been subjugated to it. Each friend feels that if they were to ignore the result of a vote and drink elsewhere their little society would collapse, they would be out on their own in the world, having to rely solely on their own ability to think for themselves. Not only that, but now, unrestrained by the law they created, the others in the society may become brutal savages, and no one will be safe. This, of course, is what democrats tell us will happen if we ignore the law and politics. But we know that it's a front, a lie to ensure our continued exploitation and their continued power and profits. Politics will be recreated in a communist society if we start believing, for whatever reason, that a decision made by the community is *binding*. The same goes for a revolutionary group: no decision made by the group will be binding on the group as a whole or on each of its members as individuals. The struggle for communism cannot be imposed on anyone. However, now, and in a communist society, enemies of humanity can be dealt with in whatever way is *necessary*, without laws and without judges.

The movement for communism is a social movement. It is the struggle of the proletariat against exploitation and all subjugation, by which I mean politics. Decision-making must, and will be, a social event, unhindered by laws or politics, and no one will feel forced to carry out the decisions made. You could say that communism is the struggle to live without democracy, without politics, and with each other.

**LONG LIVE THE WORLD REVOLUTION!  
LONG LIVE THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION!  
DEATH TO POLITICS!  
DEATH TO DEMOCRACY!**

[useful further reading: The Works of Gerard Winstanley, edited by G.H. Sabine, 1941, from which I plagiarised the parts about the Levellers and diggers. What is Communism, by Jean Barrot. The End of Democracy, by Max, (available from *Proletarian Gob* for an SAE, A5 sized).]





PG,  
Like the zine, agree with your anarcho-communist politics, but have a couple of points/questions for you.

Firstly, whilst I agree that the liberal left is a waste of time and consists of bogus woolly fakes paying lip service to selected causes, especially if they are safely far away in Africa or South America rather than dealing with what's going on in their own country, I don't think all that could be considered "Left" falls into this trap.

A lot of leftists, socialists etc. do not support any form of capitalism or nationalism and share with you and I a desire for international social revolution and a future society based on the destruction of Parliament, police, the military, business, and money. Shouldn't we count these leftist/revolutionary socialists as comrades? Check out the pages of Wake Up, Red Action and Open Eye to see what I'm talking about, or talk to people who may call themselves left-wing but are on our side to see what I mean.

Secondly, do you really believe that Nelson Mandela is "the darling of capitalism and the media"? Don't get me wrong - I'm not in support of the new ANC government or its policies. But it's patently obvious that both the US and UK governments are very anti-ANC, and the secret services of both countries are already planning covert actions against Mandela's regime. You don't believe what you see on TV do you? There may be propaganda in favour of the New World Order's "peace process" which compromised the ANC out of what could have been a black revolution into a watered-down left-of-centre farcical government, but since Mandela's politics are basically the same as those of Fidel Castro, the USA's most hated enemy, it is transparently absurd to claim that the ANC are loved by Western Capitalism.

On the subject of Ireland, I think it should be recognised that many in the IRA and in support of the Republican movement are extremely anti-capitalist and, of course, anti-Sinn Fein. Much guerrilla activity there is based on class struggle and the politics of James Connolly. In both Northern and the Republic of Ireland, there are anarchists, communists and socialists who see the IRA as the basis for an armed struggle against ALL States, whether they be British, Irish, Catholic or anything else. The IRA has some very reactionary, nationalist members, but also many who believe in their guerrilla tactics as a means of achieving revolution way beyond the capitalism of Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein. Northern Ireland is really not as simple as it is made out to be. Everyone should read *Breaking Free by Attack International* to get a better idea of what's happening there.

Apart from that, I hope PG keeps going and doesn't lose its sense of humour. Good stuff on students, by the way.

In solidarity,

Your Comrade in Aberdeen.

PG reply

Thanks for the letter. Mandela: yes I do believe that Western Capitalism loves him. When you say that the US and UK governments are very anti-ANC you've mistaken the working class for the ANC. What the intelligent members of the ruling class in Britain and the US have realised is that to avoid an escalation of the class war in South Africa the ANC needed to take control. If the ANC hadn't been given power then it was highly possible that not only would there have been a highly unprofitable civil war in South Africa, but more importantly, the ANC might have lost control of the working class they claim to represent. Long before taking power the ANC has had a distinguished history of suppressing class struggle, for example, over the street committees, and the schools boycotts. Any secret service missions to South Africa will aim to make sure that the ANC does not let the working class get out of hand, the only reason "the west" would want to get rid of the ANC would be if capitalism in South Africa could not be protected by them. The ANC do not plan to stop trading with the US or UK, they have guaranteed their business interests in the region. The reason the US supposedly hates Fidel Castro is because his government wanted to carry on its capitalist business without having the US in charge. The US is the sworn enemy of any movement that wants to limit US dominance in their affairs, that goes just as much for fascist dictators in Central and South America who in the past have tried to push out the US. The other reason Castro is made out to be a monster is because he is identified with communism, which helps in the propaganda war against the working class in the US.

When you say that the ANC were compromised out of what could have been a black revolution and that they have now formed a "watered-down left-of-centre farcical government" you seem to be implying that a black revolution (like in Zimbabwe?) would be a great thing for the working class, and also are you saying that an unwatered down, left-wing, serious ANC government should be supported by workers? The ANC has been an enemy of the working class since day one of its existence. Our interests do not lie in helping more governments to power, but in abolishing the economic system which makes control (i.e. government) of the working class necessary. We can't tinker with capitalism, it has to be destroyed.

On the subject of left wing parties and ideologues: we have to judge them on whether they are going to try to save capitalism from the working class. There are a few pointers to help us here. For example we look to see if they support any sort of national liberation, if they favour voting, if they think the unions are on the side of the working class, if they want to seize control of the State, if they believe in hierarchical organisation. Also things like do they aim to abolish all forms of money, laws, national boundaries and work itself. LEFT WING GROUPS + PUBLICATIONS ARE THE EXPONENTS OF

ideologies WHICH are, in the final analysis, anti-working class. This doesn't mean, however, that individuals involved in these groups won't become aware of the anti-working class programme of left-wing politics in time. But I doubt whether it's worth talking to these groups specifically. Hopefully they will be swept aside in a period of rising class struggle, whether members of these groups aid or hinder that struggle is up to them.

On the IRA. The first thing I have to ask is how can someone be "extremely anti-capitalist" and still support the IRA and the Republican movement? The IRA and the Republican movement are NATIONALIST, and nowhere in their programme is a plan to get rid of capitalism. If proletarians have learned anything in the last 150 years it is that all forms of national liberation are anti-working class. The working class has no country, we are a global class. Class struggle is the enemy of national liberation because it exposes the fact that all bosses, no matter where they come from, are our exploiters. You say that much guerrilla activity in Northern Ireland is (or was!) based on class struggle, does this just mean the IRA or are you talking about the Unionist para-military's also? The IRA knee-cap joy-riders, they control riots so that they don't threaten local pro-republican business or leaders. The IRA is Northern Ireland's new police in waiting.

The best I can say about someone who bases their politics on those of James Connolly is that they are living hopelessly in the past. Connolly was a mix of things, he advocated industrial unionism, he helped set up the Irish Labour Party in 1912, and he was nationalist. His retreat into Republicanism was crowned by Irish nationalists with his martyrdom in the Easter Rising.

If those you speak of really thought that the IRA could be used as the basis for an armed struggle against all States then why weren't they *in* the IRA, arguing for mass striking and looting, riots and the creation of workers councils across Northern Ireland? Perhaps because that would have been a threat to the Republican cause and they might have wound up knee-capped. And if the IRA is so radical (despite its "some very reactionary, nationalist members") why have they accepted the cease-fire?

Sadly, in Britain a lot of lefties get wet dreams from thinking about the IRA. And the writer of Breaking Free is no exception to this romantic tradition.

Dear PG,

In the last issue I was particularly interested in the stuff about "has capitalism got the lurgie" and all that "decadence" stuff. I think the orthodox "vulgar marxist" approach that you have to have "stages" in history and the triumph of capitalism before you can make a communist revolution is, of course, bilge. There have, as you point out, been communist revolts throughout history and communal arrangements would have tended to predominate before history. There are what you might call "stages" of sorts in history. But no stage is inevitable before it happens and each stage has an infinite number of possible outcomes within finite parameters. [Eh? - what I mean is that, for instance, primitive society can't immediately give rise to nuclear powered industry, obviously, but with a certain set of material conditions limiting the physical possibilities there is still an infinite number of variations as to the social arrangements that can result.]

You say in your article about education that there have been no more proletarian revolts since the arrival of mass education than before. In fact I think there has been a far greater number of proletarian revolts in the last few decades than ever before! But this is quite simply because the human population is far bigger than ever before and the proportion of the population that is proletarian is greater than before and growing. More than half the world's population is now urban dispossessed proletarians. Rural populations too are now increasingly dispossessed/proletarianised. One of the "vulgar marxist"

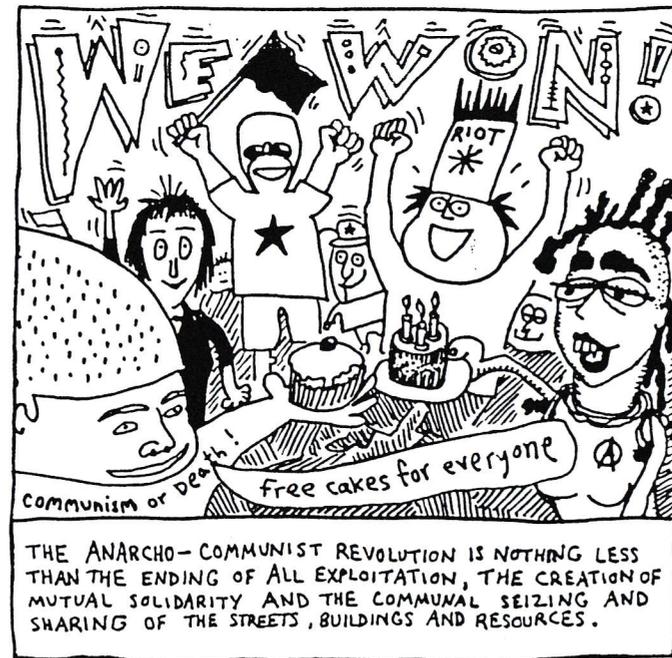


predictions, that the proletariat would grow bigger and bigger in proportion to the bourgeoisie and will be trapped in increasingly absolute poverty appears frighteningly true when looked at on a global level. Of course it is rubbish to attack the luddites for revolting against capitalist attacks as "reactionaries" as orthodox marxists would do. Proles in 1810 couldn't be expected to hang around until 1914 before struggling and trying to improve their lives or even just enjoy themselves. The possible significance of a date like 1914 or the turn of the century is that it is only since then that a consciously organised communist society has been possible on an immediately global scale. It has only been in the last hundred years or so that it has been physically possible to organise "one world commune" encompassing the whole human race in one go. Communism has always been possible before then but it would have been made up of different communities separate from each other and not able to immediately communicate with each other. Medieval communitarians in Europe were probably unaware of numerous primitive communities in America, Africa, Australasia, and so on. This leaves such communistic movements isolated and vulnerable to the hierarchical society surrounding it. It also creates the possible problem of misunderstanding and suspicion if two different, isolated communistic groups were to accidentally bump into each other.

The contradiction in the new world capitalist order is that it contains the possibility for imploding into the new world commune and global revolt. Contradictions in the system don't inevitably lead to the systems downfall but sometimes these contradictions are something we can exploit and turn to our advantage if we *choose* to do so.....

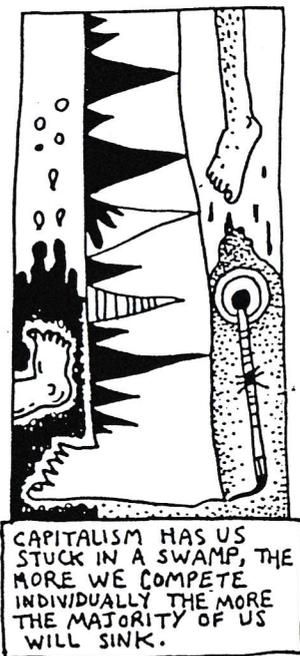
Yours, Erik the Vandal.

PG reply,  
Sounds fair enough to me!



## WHO IS THE BIGGER CRIM?

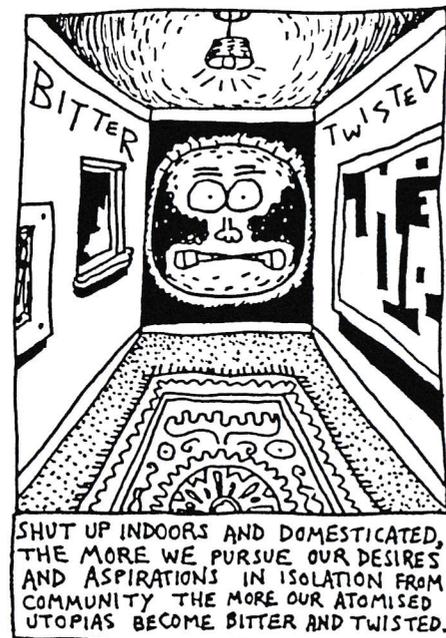
In the last few years there has been a lot of talk amongst anarchists in the Class War tradition about anti-social crime and the pressing need for working class people to face up to it and do something to stop it. I could be wrong but it seemed to start in this country at the time of the introduction of Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Rightly these schemes were criticised for being ways to whip up more fear of us unwashed and stinking proles in the professional class, and for helping the police both practically and in their image department. However, some people seemed to think that we workers and doleys should have our own neighbourhood watch schemes in order to clamp down on crimes that hurt working class folk, like burglary, mugging and drug dealing inspired gangland terror. Ominously, these concerns led onto debates about how we would "police" a post-capitalist society. [The problem with this sort of thinking is that, like all liberalism, it presumes that if people are not controlled by laws then they will become brutal sociopaths. A society in which the great mass of people are coerced, knowingly or unknowingly, into slaving away for their rulers needs laws to keep them in line, however, a society where everyone has only their own interests to satisfy does not need laws, only the realisation that their freedom relies on the collectivity.]



Anti-social crime is carried out by nasty and pathetic little shits, the same sort of people who become stockbrokers, management consultants, bailiffs and police. Anti-social crime, or rather behaviour, has been a fact of life for workers for hundreds of years, so have gangs who have exploited members of their own class. Anti-social behaviour is nothing new and it still serves a useful purpose for our rulers, namely in hiding the real crimes and the real criminals. The real crime, of course, is capitalism and class society and the real criminals are the bourgeoisie and their helpers. It is our powerlessness and atomisation that makes it possible for us to continually be the victims of anti-social behaviour by other members of the working class. And it is our powerlessness and atomisation that is essential to our rulers in their efforts to control us.

Of course anti-social behaviour needs to be resisted by those to whom it happens, but this is a banal point, all it means is "don't let everyone walk all over you". What we must not do is place so much emphasis on anti-social behaviour that the real, bigger, and everlasting enemies of our class are forgotten about. To say, for example, that 'the drug gangs in Moss Side are the most important enemy of the working class in that area', is wrong. This sort of thinking neglects class and capitalism and the need to do away with it all. Logically, it also leads to the assumption that any means (within reason) should be used to eradicate the gangs, like liaising with the police and council, and, more importantly, that when the gangs are gone everyone will be happy. On top of this there is the implication that proletarians can get rid of anti-social behaviour under capitalism. This is plainly false, we might be able to move it away from us, or move away from it, for a time, but there is no way that we could have so much control over our collective destiny as to cure anti-social behaviour once and for all while we are still wage slaves. If we can make everything lovely under capitalism then there will be no reason to get rid of it! Of course, this is nonsensical. Not only is capitalism completely nasty in itself but it engenders and promotes lots of other nastiness, like anti-social behaviour, sexism, racism, etc. Theoretically it might be possible to eradicate these things from society under capitalism, but it would have to be our rulers doing the eradicating. The only way we can escape from these aspects of society is by destroying society, capitalism, class, and creating a world in which we are all free. We wouldn't be the powerless class if we could decide how capitalism was run.

We have to be clear about who and what are our real enemies. Who is the bigger bastard, the mugger on the streets, or the management consultant/bank manager/Labour MP/journalist in their comfortable home enjoying their respectable life?



The duty to produce alienates the passion for creation. Productive labour is part of the technology of LAW and ORDER. The working day grows shorter as the empire of CONDITIONING extends.

In an industrial society which confuses work and productivity, the necessity of producing has always been an enemy of the desire to create. What spark of humanity, of a possible creativity, can remain alive in a being dragged out of sleep at six or seven every morning, jolted about in suburban trains, deafened by the racket of machinery, bleached and steamed by meaningless sounds and gestures, spun dry by statistical controls, and tossed out at the end of the day into the entrance halls of railway stations, those cathedrals of departure for the hell of weekdays and the nugatory paradise of weekends, where the crowd communes in weariness and boredom? From adolescence to retirement each 24-hour cycle repeats the same shattering bombardment, like bullets hitting a window: mechanical repetition, time-which-is-money, submission to bosses, boredom, exhaustion. From the butchering of youth's energy to the gaping wound of old age, life cracks in every direction under the blows of forced labour. Never before has a civilisation reached such a degree of contempt for life; never before has a generation, drowned in mortification, felt such a rage to live. The same people who are murdered slowly in the mechanised slaughterhouses of work are also arguing, singing, drinking, dancing, making love, holding the streets, picking up weapons and inventing a new poetry. Already the front against forced labour is being formed; its gestures of refusal are moulding the consciousness of the future. Every call for productivity in the conditions chosen by capitalist and state capitalist (Soviet) economy is a call to slavery.

The necessity of production is so easily proved that any hack philosopher of industrialism can fill ten books with it. Unfortunately for these neo-economist thinkers these proofs belong to the 19th century, a time when the misery of the working classes made the right to work the counterpart of the right to be a slave, claimed at the dawn of time by prisoners about to be massacred. Above all it was a question of surviving, of not disappearing physically. The imperatives of production are the imperatives of survival; from now on, people want to live, not just to survive.

The 'tripalium' is an instrument of torture. 'Labor' means 'suffering'. We shouldn't forget the origin of the words 'travail' and 'labour'. At least the nobility never forgot their own dignity and the indignity which marked their bondsmen. The aristocratic contempt for work reflected the master's contempt for the dominated classes; work was the atonement to which they were condemned to all eternity by the divine decree which had willed them, for impenetrable reasons, to be inferior. Work took its place among the sanctions of providence as the punishment for poverty, and because it was the means to a future salvation such a punishment could take on the attributes of pleasure. Basically, work was less important than submission.

The bourgeoisie does not dominate, it exploits. It doesn't need to be a master, it prefers to use. Why has nobody seen that the principle of productivity simply replaced the principle of feudal authority?

Is it because work ameliorates the human condition and saves the poor, at least in illusion, from eternal damnation? Undoubtedly, but today it seems that the carrot of happier tomorrows has smoothly replaced the carrot of salvation in the next world. In both cases the present is always under the heel of oppression.

Is it because it transforms nature? Yes, but what can we do with a nature ordered in terms of profit and loss, in a world where the inflation of techniques conceals the deflation of the use-value of life? Besides, just as the sexual act is not intended to procreate, but makes children by accident, organised labour transforms the surface of continents as a by-product, not a purpose. Work to transform the world? Tell me another. The world is being transformed in the direction prescribed by the existence of forced labour; which is why it's being transformed so badly.

Perhaps people realise themselves in their forced labour? In the 19th century the concept of work retained a vestige of the notion of creativity. Love of the trade and the vitality of an already smothered creativity incontestably helped people to bear ten or fifteen hours which nobody could have stood if some kind of pleasure had not slipped into it. The survival of the craft conception allowed each worker to contrive a precarious comfort in the hell of the factory. But Taylorism (deskilling and rationalisation) dealt the death-blow to a mentality which had been carefully

fostered by archaic capitalism. It is useless to expect even a caricature of creativity from the conveyor-belt. Nowadays ambition and the love of a job well done are the indelible mark of defeat and the most mindless submission. Which is why, wherever submission is demanded, the old ideological fart wends its way, from the 'Arbeit Macht Frei' of the concentration camps to the homilies of Henry Ford and Mao Tse-tung.

So what is the function of forced labour? The myth of power exercised jointly by the master and God drew its coercive force from the unity of the feudal system. Destroying the unitary myth, the power of the bourgeoisie inaugurated, under the flag of crisis, the reign of ideologies, which can never attain, separately or together, a fraction of the efficacy of myth. The dictatorship of productive work stepped into the breach. Its mission is physically to weaken the majority of people, collectively to break and stupefy them in order to make them receptive to the least pregnant, least virile, most senile ideologies in the entire history of falsehood.

Most of the proletariat at the beginning of the 19th century had been physically enervated, systematically broken by the torture of the workshop. Revolts came from artisans, from privileged or unemployed groups, not from workers shattered by fifteen hours of labour. Isn't it disturbing that the reduction of working time came just when the spectacular ideological miscellany produced by consumer society was beginning effectively to replace the feudal myths destroyed by the young bourgeoisie? (Keeping up with the Joneses. The more you 'consume' the happier you are supposed to be.)

Statistics published in 1938 indicated that the use of the most modern technology would reduce necessary working time to three hours a day. Not only are we a long way off with our seven or eight hours, but after wearing out generations of workers by promising them the happiness which is sold today on the installment plan, the bourgeoisie (and its Soviet equivalent) pursue people's destruction outside the workshop. Tomorrow they will deck out their five hours of 'necessary' wear and tear with a time of 'creativity' which will grow just as fast as they can fill it with the impossibility of creating anything (the 'leisure explosion').

Every appeal for productivity comes from above. But only creativity is spontaneously rich. It is not from 'productivity' that a full life is to be expected, it is not 'productivity' that will produce an enthusiastic collective response to economic needs.

To the extent that automation and cybernetics foreshadow the massive replacement of workers by mechanical slaves, forced labour is revealed as belonging purely to the barbaric practices needed to maintain order. Thus power manufactures the dose of fatigue necessary for the passive assimilation of its televised diktats. What carrot is worth working for, after this? The game is up; there is nothing to lose anymore, not even an illusion. The organisation of work and the organisation of leisure are the blades of the castrating shears whose job is to improve the race of fawning dogs.

