

FEEDBACK

AUSTRALIA

The Melbourne Anarchist Centre has closed its doors. Lack of support — practical and financial had forced the closure. *Affinity* will still be published and ideas for setting up an anarchist cafe along the lines of Kropotkin's Cafe in Brisbane Queensland are being discussed. Further news when available. Melbourne Anarchists can still be contacted at *Treason*, Box 37, East Brunswick, Vic. Australia 3057.

CLASS OF '68

Refract would like to make contact with readers who were active in the sixties and early seventies and who are willing to let us have their recollections and impressions of the period. We shall be drawing up a questionnaire to send out to respondents to stimulate their memories as to how they felt about events, people and groups at the time, and how they view this period in retrospect. Please write to: *Stuart Christie, Refract Publications, BCM Refract, London WC1N 3XX*

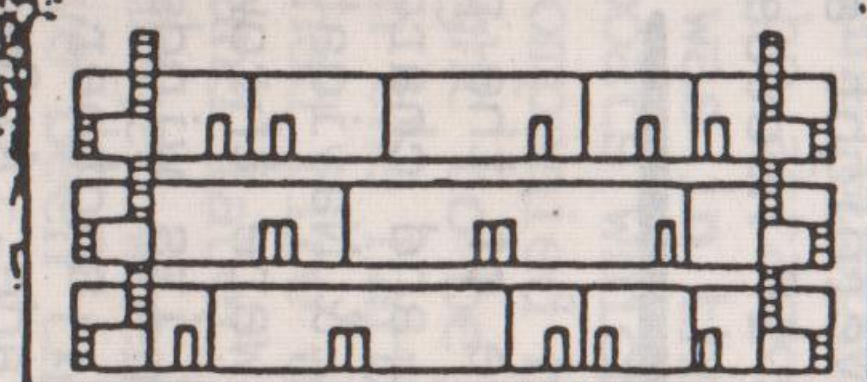
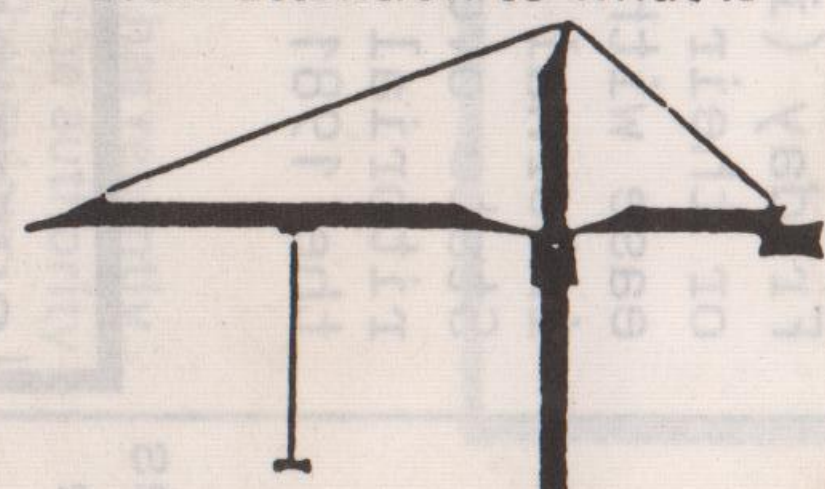
ANARCHIST COMPUTER MAGAZINE

Anyone interested in doing an anarchist computer magazine (on cassette) to run on the ZX81? If so get in touch via Black Flag.

WAR HQ RE-OCCUPIED

On 26 March 1984 the UK Air Primary Static War HQ, under construction (on National Trust Land) at Naphill near High Wycombe, Bucks, was re-occupied by people from the Brighton area, after having been occupied three weeks before.

The bunker, costing £400 million will become the HQ for both RAF Strike Command and for all NATO U.K. Air Forces. It was occupied to draw attention to what is going on at Naphill.



PUBLICATIONS

TINTA NEGRA Feb 1984 No. 38. Bulletin of the Union of Graphic Arts and Information CNT-AIT c/o Tinta Negra, c/ Puertaferrisa No. 13, int. Pral., Barcelona-2.

AGORA — French Libertarian Review appearing every 2 months. Subscription rates — 6 numbers 85F. Address: Agora, BP 1214, 31037 Toulouse Cedex, France.

Benefits for Anarchist prisoners are being organised, socials, picnics etc. Those willing to help out/attend please contact your local anarchist group. In London c/o 121 Railton Road, Herne Hill, SE24 (01)2746655

PROPOSED ACTION AT COMISO

The Ragusa Anarchist Group write:

With a few other anarchist and libertarian comrades we were at the 1983 National Assembly of IMAC (International Meeting Against Cruise) held at Comiso in Sicily on 29th December. Before a meeting in which there was a massive presence of militants from autonomia, we stressed the proposal to occupy the Magliocco Airport missile site as the objective around which the activity and the struggles against the installation of Cruise must come together. This assembly, noteworthy for the different political positions held by the participants, nevertheless launched a proposal which we took up which ought to be seriously considered by the whole movement: a 50,000 strong demonstration at Comiso in the Spring which will aim at a mass occupation of the base.

Umanita Nova, Viale Monza 255, 20126 MILANO, Italy.
To contact the Ragusa Anarchist Group write to:
G. Gurrieri, via G.B. Odierna 13, 97100 RAGUSA, Sicily.

ARMAGH PICKET ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 10th & 11th MARCH

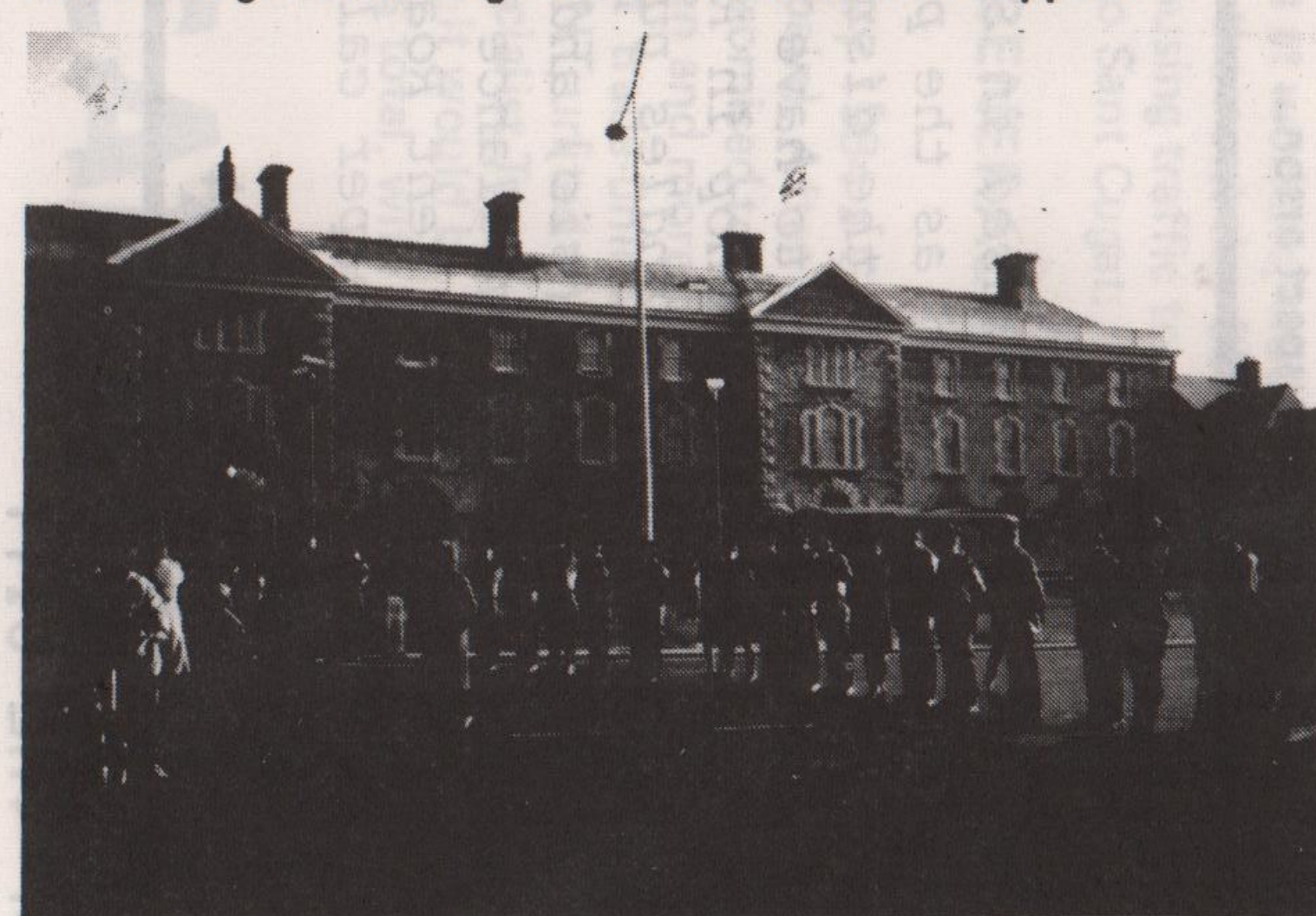
A large group of women from different parts of England went to Belfast or Derry for a weekend, the main event being a picket outside the women's prison in Armagh. Various subjects like super-grasses, the use of plastic bullets, strip-searches etc. were discussed in workshops the day before the picket, and that went well.

However, it seemed to me that the general atmosphere in the delegation was like when a school goes on a daytrip to the zoo. A lot of energy was spent in trying to associate with the 'right' people in the group, and because you're only away for such a short time, you're like a tourist that gets no personal feeling or understanding of what it's like to actually live there and have to cope with all the things that you're discussing, every day. You may get a bit of a personal angle from staying with a local family for two nights, but that's still such a short time.

I think the aim of going there is first of all to support the women in Ireland, especially those inside, in their struggle against all their oppressors, but in order to feel the incentive to continue the support once you go back, you have to actually feel the seriousness of what goes on, and it was this understanding that I kept feeling was lacking. It is not all just a film on TV that you can switch off when it gets too much. The only way to get rid of it is to fight against it.

My impression was that although a lot of women went along out of commitment, many went because it was a trendy thing to do, which I think is pissing on people that are sacrificing so much to get rid of their oppressors. If you don't feel strongly about your own repression, the repression and suffering of a people like the Irish becomes something impersonal as well. All this was illustrated at the picket, where there was an evident lack of enthusiasm from the English women.

In any case I am critical as how much you can get out of going somewhere in such a large group, and for such a short time. But I hope that all those that are seriously willing to fight against the state, both here and consequently in Ireland as well, will continue to encourage others to go there and show their support.



Armagh Womens Prison Nth Ireland.

Photo: T.

BLACK FLAG

FORTNIGHTLY NEWSBULLETIN VOL VII 5F No.110 25p
9th April 1984

STOP THE CITY



News is coming in all the time, but here is a brief resume of information received so far. ... Around 1500 took part, there were less cops around at the beginning (busy day — miners pickets and GLC protest even the Cruise Missile road trip at Greenham). Things started to happen from around 9 onwards. From the beginning, the police moved in with snatch squads picking individuals at random. There were some attempts to defend comrades but there was many instances of protesters standing by allowing the cops to do what they want. Around 11.30 about 500 stormed up a street smashing bank windows. Altogether about 40 plate glass windows were broken (estimated damage £10,000). Lots of waste-bins and skips set on fire, tyres slashed, graffiti in chalk/pen/paint, locks glued etc.

There were many reports of people being followed by plainclothes cops. We heard of one undercover cop who was following a group around for several hours — he had also been seen the previous day, in the end the cop was chased into a wine bar and punched in the face. He won't be seen again.

We heard reports of some cars being overturned. One Rolls-Royce had its windscreen kicked in while the owner inside panicked!

Altogether the number of arrests were high — around 450 (this includes people who were arrested in the early evening protesting at the Cruise Missile manoeuvres in Trafalgar Square near Paul Raymond's Theatre of War.) We later heard that the police were thinking of charging some of those arrested under the firearms Act for throw-

ing smoke cannisters. One protester was arrested and threatened with conspiracy to riot. At the police station he was accused of organising the STC protest, merely because at the time of his arrest he was carrying a CB and, possibly, because police infiltrators remember him from a planning meeting. He had several injuries: 3 cops got him in a strangle hold and carried him to the police van by his throat. In the police van they got hold of his breathing device (he's an asthmatic) and dangled it in front of his face, which was by now turning blue. At the police station he collapsed, in the cell, and had to be seen by a doctor. Fellow prisoners demanded he be let go. The cops thought he was dying, so they let him out without charging him, and told him to die 40 yards away, not here.

Finally we hear that one group of squatters was visited by plain clothes cops the day before STC. They were refused entry and later that evening they were visited by a young man looking for somewhere to stay for the night. He didn't explain clearly how he knew about the house, he also came out with some bullshit about how he had some gelignite and how he had been in the Swedish Army (he was too young). Later he was confronted and ordered at knifepoint to remain in the house overnight and to get out of the area in the morning. This agent-provocateur clearly hadn't done his homework.

More overall coverage of STC will follow in the next News Bulletin, please be prompt with news and photos if you wish to contribute.

BLACK FLAG/BLACK CROSS
c/o Box ABC, 121 Railton Road,
London SE24 (01) 274 6655

Published, typeset & layout by
Black Flag Collective.

Shop and bulk distribution by
A Distribution, 84b Whitechapel
High Street, London E1.

editorial

The National Reporting Centre at Scotland Yard was last used to coordinate police movements during the 1981 nationwide riots. Today it is being used to coordinate over 8,000 police seconded from various local authorities to break the miners strike. The miners have responded by going on the offensive: blockading motorways and major roads, picketing major customers (steel plants, etc) and docks (to stop imports). As a result several major unions (steel, rail, transport and general, seamen) have offered solidarity. It is a reminder of the great Triple Alliance of over 70 years back. In response to the Triple Alliance Lloyd George mobilised the troops and set up the Supply and Transport Committee to protect essential services in an emergency. That same committee exists today but in another name: the Civil Contingencies Unit (further details of which will appear in the next *Black Flag Quarterly*).

If the strike escalates, the CCU will be bought into operation. The CCU has powers to recommend the use of Police Specials in strike breaking. Already the Army has been brought into play: police have been billeted at Army camps in key areas, so that they can be near to the major flashpoints.

On Thursday 29 March the police found themselves overstretched: between 10,000 and 60,000 marched in London to support the GLC and other Councils that are to be abolished; also 1500 anti-militarists helped bring the City to a standstill. Clearly if similar actions (but not necessarily on the same scale) to Stop the City took place on the same day in several cities, then police resources would be overstretched even more. Solidarity need not always be a defensive manner as the miners have shown. Major rioting coordinated with massive strike action would just about break the National Reporting Centre.

While the NUM, as we go to press, is still very much split on the strike, support is coming in thick and fast from many quarters: nurses in South Glamorgan joined pickets outside the Port Talbot steel works, Kent miners collaborated with railworkers to prevent coal being transported to Didcot power station in Oxfordshire, seamen in Liverpool prevented a ship due to pick up coal imports from leaving, a colliery weighbridge was seriously damaged by fire at Hem Heath Pit and police suspect arson...

STC - TIMES LIES

...Anarchist groups based in South London squats emerged as the prime movers behind much of the disruption, their activities seem to have centred on the Anarchist Bookshop in Railton Road, Brixton which handles publication such as 'Black Cross'(sic) and 'Free London' (!) and the Ambulance Station Collective in the Old Kent Road, which produces (sic) a newspaper called 'Crowbar'.

Times 1/4/84

STOP THE CITY

14th April. Defendants day, bring photographs, videos etc. Solicitors will be available.

15th April. General discussion on how we stopped the city. 32 Alexandra Rd. N8 Turnpike Lane Tube. Overnight accommodation will be available if necessary.

RAMPAGES

11am: a crowd got free of the police lines at the Royal Exchange and charged Aldgate Way smashing Barclays & Navigation House windows. Smoke bombs were thrown, paint splashed, a Rolls had its windscreen done in and tyres deflated, another car was put over for a barricade. A Securicor van was tried but it was too heavy. Arrests were minimal as only 15 cops could keep up. The winging birds of the coming storm.

STOP THE CITY

BANZAI GEORDIELAND

How is Japanese capitalism to "save" Tyne & Wear?

And what are to be the methods of liberation?

North-East England is regarded as favourable territory for colonization because of its 'good labour relation'. Naturally, with the huge rate of unemployment, deliberately fostered by the government as a matter of economic policy, with enforced idleness leading to total desperation of ever working again, 'jobs' are welcomed, strikes are avoided, wages are at a minimum and 'good' labour relations prevailed.

Where labour relations are 'bad', as for instance in the 'notorious' state of Fleet Street print workers, jobs are taken for granted, strikes are readily resorted to, wages at an all-time high. As the end-product is despised for its own sake, nothing has to be yielded to the employers who are generally on their best behaviour in proportion to the degree of 'bad' labour relations. Even the block-buster of closing *The Times* did not succeed.

How this contrasts with Newcastle-Sunderland-Durham, which has been run down to the fittings on the walls! Naturally they 'welcome' the Japanese invaders even more than the Burmese did at first!

Looking a gift horse in the mouth?

Nissan comes prepared, with smiling faces, to do business on its own terms. But who is paying for it? Is it the savings of hundreds of small investors saving their yen each week? On the contrary, the money is being raised from London. Framlington Japan & General Fund have opened a "new unit trust aiming for all out capital growth" through "investment in the Far East, primarily in Japan".

FRAMLINGTON

Framlington Unit Management Limited
3 London Wall Buildings, London Wall
London EC2M 5NQ Telephone 01-628 5181

The Japanese economy is strong and we believe the prospects for further growth are good, particularly for the many companies which are committed to the aggressive marketing of advanced technological products. With the Japan & General Fund, we will be following the same investment policy that has served holders of other Framlington unit trusts well in the past. We will be seeking to identify growth companies in Japan, and elsewhere in the Far East, at early stages in their development — before other investors have fully recognised their potential.

Yours sincerely,

T.P.F. Miller
Group Managing Director

GRAND NATIONAL NEWS

Following a previous arson attempt on Beechers Brook at Aintree, and threats from Animal Rightists to sabotage this year's spectacle, the Directors of the Course (one being an ex-Army officer) decided that the usual forces of Law & disOrder weren't enough to guarantee this year's profits. Troops from an unnamed regiment were deployed over Friday (its not know if they were armed or their powers of arrest), showing the ease with which the Army can take over internal State security. Remember the State overstepping the mark when a Territorial Army group was mobilised during the 1981 riots?

M.B.

QUESTION AND ANSWER ON ANARCHISM

Q: How and why did the State and capitalism come into existence? If the State protects the ruling class, i.e. class society, how did the State create it? Presumably a State must already mean a class society.

A: A primitive, generally pastoral, society doesn't have a State. Only when it takes prisoners does the State come into existence for the first time. The ruling class creates a State in order to make others work for them. The early ruling classes have military power or are capable of making themselves accepted as rulers by divine right. Capitalist

Aggressive growth

Framlington assure British investors that by 'identifying growth companies before the rest of the market recognises their promise, we can achieve exceptional capital growth performance'.

The rising market in Japan is not based on the construction of pagodas or tea shops with geisha girls or skyscrapers in the South Sea Islands. The capital growth is the investment abroad with the help of a lively capitalist class and a work force indoctrinated with 'traditional' ideals of subservience, partly by religious indoctrination and partly by a consistent policy over the years of chopping off the heads of people endeavouring to indoctrinate the work force with ideals of independence.

It is not at the moment intended to chop off heads in Tyne and Wear. Alas, the decadent West disapproves! But the Nissan Directors are hopeful of putting across the policy of Rising Sun capitalism. As the union leaders locally are prepared to commit harikiri, they may abandon their ideal of having no union and having a single union — so as to avoid tension between union officials, not so as to strengthen the bargaining power of the workers! You must show you "want to be a Nissan worker"! The Japanese parent company has continual keep fit classes, indoctrination classes, voluntary unpaid overtime, they even cut their holidays if it interferes with production. If the Geordies can't be persuaded to kowtow to the management, at least a good number of them can be persuaded to accept the 'work and be contented' ethic that pervades the Nissan and most large Japanese companies. Why are they so persuaded? Because the Japanese are putting up the money. But where are the Japanese getting the money to put British workers to work? Precisely from the British investor whom Framlington and others are taking the large amounts now available from redundancy pay!

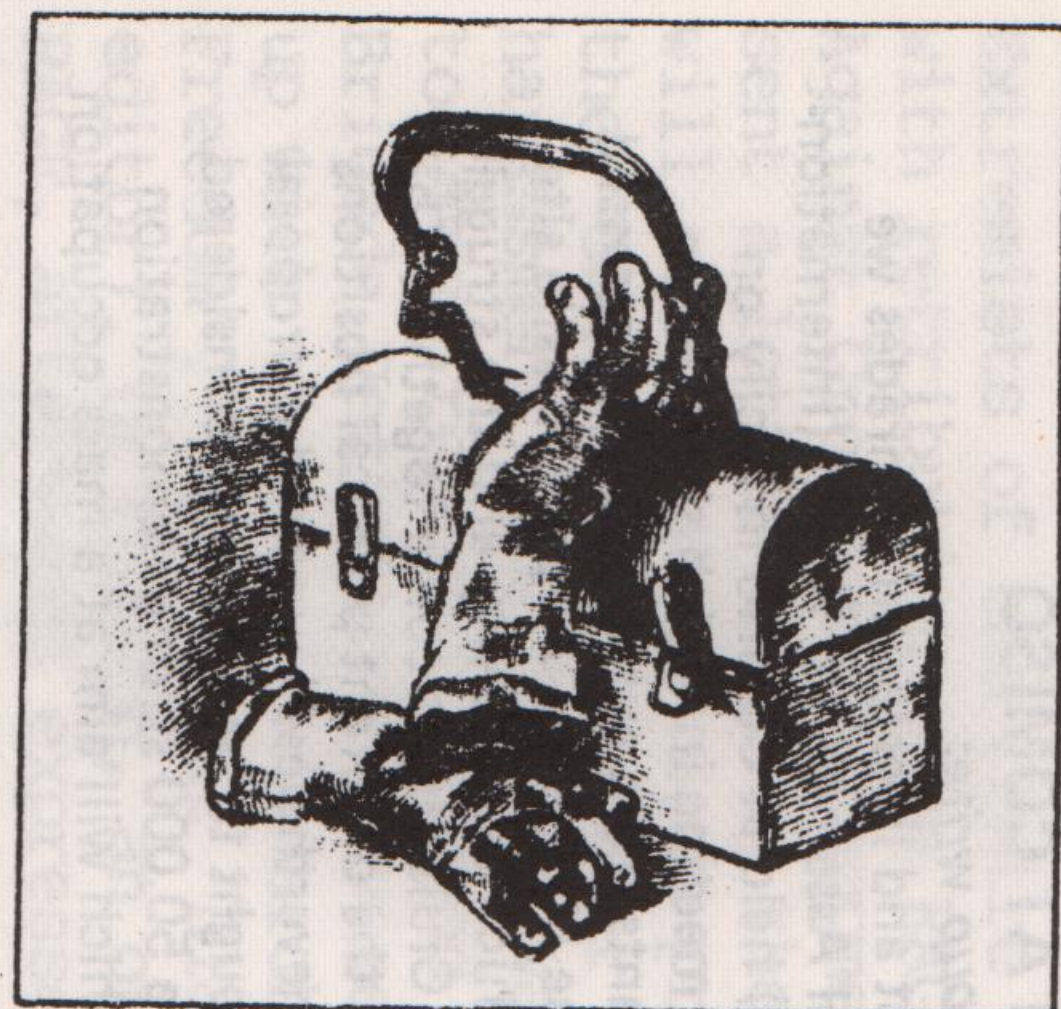
The Japanese workers meanwhile have their livelihood threatened because no sane capitalist is going to employ them when there is a pool of colonial workers the other same side of the world where the capital is provided for the sake of turning up and taking it up — unless of course they will work for considerably less, as they will have to.

We suppose most Tyne & Wear workers will not be conned — least of all, one supposes, any veterans of that great industrial enterprise the Burma Railway. The Japanese capitalists have not become democratic since 1944, they have just transferred the obedience cult from the Army to industrial life and achieved the fascist state with parliamentary trimmings. What however is the worker — between the devil of unemployment and the Rising Sun of Mikado capitalism — to do?

The most immediate answer is to wait until they've sunk enough capital into the plant and then grab as much as possible: and to do this one should never abandon solidarity. No scramble for jobs, no desertions of labour traditions dating back two centuries. It isn't the capitalist who 'gives' the worker jobs, it's the worker who supports the capitalist. In this case it is transparent that the worker is putting up the capital as well. This is the monetarist dream of full employment, in which the "unemployed" are used as bait.

P.S. Don't forget solidarity comrades. K. Omori the Japanese Anarchist facing the death penalty and appealing against this threat to his life by the State needs support. Protest telegrams, phonecalls, letters should be sent to the nearest local Japanese Embassy.

Following the announcement that Nissan had chosen a site in Washington New Town for its car plant, the Tyne and Wear Council offices placarded a huge WELCOME NISSAN WE LOOK FORWARD WITH YOU TO SAVE TYNE & WEAR.



FRANCE

In the province of Lorraine there has been extensive rioting because of the threatened cut-backs in the steel industry. Over 25,000 jobs are threatened. Government and municipal property was attacked, buildings set on fire and damaged. A march to Paris is, as we go to press, planned for April 4. Over the last few years around 50,000 jobs have been 'rationalised' away and workers have clearly had enough. It is thought that miners will also join in the protest — they too are threatened by massive redundancies.

society comes into being when there is a build-up of property making it possible for some people to live on profits. They come into conflict with the State but manage to take it over. So far Marxists and Anarchists generally agree. However, Marxists, stressing the economic factor, think that if the working class can displace the capitalist class, they will eventually not need State power as there is no economically oppressed class remaining. Anarchists say that rule for its own sake means that while there is a State, people will use it to dominate others. Bureaucracy can replace class. Since Stalin, many Marxists have to admit this, but blame it on Stalin's personal wickedness, rather than foregoing the prospect of State power for themselves.

MINERS

BALLOT?

The liberal call for a national ballot on whether or not to strike against pit closures, can only be treated with derision and contempt. If a pit closes, a whole community dies. You only have to look at what were pit villages in the north-east and South Wales to witness the utter devastation and dereliction that are the result of pit closures. So the call for a ballot of people, some of whom do not even live in mining communities (particularly white collar staff) to decide on the life or death of that community is an anathema. Such decisions should lie with every man, woman and child in that community and the people in the pit villages are well aware of this and in the past few weeks have been working shoulder to shoulder with the miners to defend themselves against the attacks made upon them.

Their actions are mainly ignored by the media who are only interested in those opposed to the strike, e.g. some Nottinghamshire women. Little has been said about the Yorkshire women standing with the men on the picket line; making collections of food and money to help each other out as there has been no social security payments as yet; setting up kitchens; taking food to pickets; producing news bulletins. Nor about the school children who have demonstrated in solidarity with the miners in Edlington and Mexborough schools near Doncaster. Nor about the Barnsley nurses who have voted to have a rota of women to stand with the miners on the picket lines. Nor about the local trades people who are selling fish and chips cheaper or giving food to the women's action groups.

The fight against pit closures is a fight that concerns all the people who live in the mining areas.

POLICE STATE

The police operations during this strike have struck alarm into the hearts and minds of the liberal establishment. The co-ordination on a national rather than regional level has been seen as the embryo of a national police force. The speedy mobilization as a threat to 'democracy'. Their tactics an affront to freedom of movement. Perhaps these are all true, but as anarchists they are what we expect.

What has happened has helped to open the eyes of many to the repressive nature of the state. For the first time many people are finding themselves in direct confrontation with the police merely by travelling, picketing and even in one case having a drink in a local pub. In reality the police actions are just the tactics they have used on some demonstrations on a much larger scale, and a watered down version of what they do every day in the north of Ireland.

So, what have they been doing? The stopping and turning back of pickets is common place, many are given a warning the first time and arrested the second. This is done on a thorough basis, with police road blocks, and when pickets have tried to walk to pits still working, lines of policemen standing across the road. A good example of the thoroughness and effectiveness of the police operation can be seen in the following example. A miner from South Yorkshire, contacted his brother who runs a pub in Nottinghamshire saying he was coming over to stop the night so he could go picketing in the morning, and so if the police contacted him to confirm it. The miner and a friend then dressed themselves up as if they were going for a drink. After entering Nottinghamshire they were stopped by the police, the story was given and checked up on, but they were still turned back on the threat of arrest.

The police have smashed windscreens, held miners on minor driving offences, arrested many and beaten some up; just to stop them reaching the still working pits. Four miners from Bently pit, north of Doncaster, were arrested while having a drink and a game of darts in a village pub.



"March while its still legal." Photo: M.
"My friend wanted to come but he lives in Kent." GLC Demo March 29th London.

The police have mounted roadblocks and convoys of vans constantly cruising up and down motorways in order to stop the recent tactics of causing congestion of main roadways.

The police have also been questioning arrested pickets on their political views, but again this is nothing new. Finding out what people think, who they vote for and what they think is the major function of the special branch and MI5, whose job it is to keep an eye on. It is clear that the police have mounted an efficient means of control, but it is only a fraction of what they could do and their tactics and repression have only been a part of the methods they could use.

DIVISIONS OF LABOUR

The Coal House in Doncaster has become a battle ground in the miner's strike, not only because it is still working but because it is where the wages for the Nottingham scabs are made up.

The Coal House is the main administrative centre in the region and employs some 1,800 workers, who are divided into 3 unions BACM (British Association of Colliery Management), APEX (Association of Professional Executives and Computer Staff) and COSA/NUM (Colliery Officers Staff Association).

There is traditionally a resentment of the office staff by the miners, and since the introduction of the bonus system this has greatly increased. The bonus system works on an area, pit and face structure, face workers are paid the bonus on the production from their face, other pit workers get paid on the production from their pit and office workers are paid a bonus on the overall production of the area. What this means is that office staff are paid a bonus which is higher and more constant than the other workers. If a face stops production for reasons which are no fault of the face worker such as mechanical or geological, the face workers lose most of their bonus, whilst still working a full shift in situations that are just as hard and dangerous.

So the bonus system means that office staff earn their bonus not on their own work but from the toil, blood and sweat of the pit workers which makes the resentment more intense. The National Coal Board Policy is to employ people who are relatives of people already employed by them, which means you have men on picket lines while wives working in the office are crossing the picket lines. You even have the case of picketing men driving their scabbing wives to work.

THE THIRD WEEK OF THE STRIKE

On the Monday at the start of the third week of the strike the Coal House became a target for pickets from the Doncaster area; up to this time the only pickets had been a handful from the Coal House and their effect was minimal. There were around 200 pickets, mainly miners who had been turned back from the Nottingham border, but they were supported by members of the Hatfield Women's Support Group and a handful of unemployed workers. On arrival at the Coal House there were only 20 policemen but these were soon reinforced by others from the police station next door, bringing their numbers up to about 100.

There was then pushing and shoving to occupy the entrance to the building, and although the pickets could not hold it all the time, the police couldn't ensure the 'safety' of the scabs, the majority of which were being held at the police station. After a couple of hours when only a smaller number of workers had braved the pickets the management agreed to close the place down for the day.

Although the press has attempted to highlight any 'violence' of strikers towards scabs, this encounter showed there is little violence directed at the scabs; this is obvious when all the pickets and scabs are face to face. When a non-striker stops to talk and argue their case, even if they are surrounded by pickets there is quiet to allow them to talk. When the police lines are outflanked, a group of 50 pickets ran towards the workers being held at the police station; even though there was only a couple of police there, the pickets stopped short of the scabs and shouted pleas for solidarity. It is only when the pickets are held back or pushed around by the police that abuse and aggression is directed at the scabs.

The next day the police were better prepared and when the pickets arrived at the Coal House there were already 200 officers around the entrance, but as more and more pickets arrived they were re-inforced by bus loads of police from the barracks in Nottingham. There were about 500 pickets facing 500 police many of whom came from outside South Yorkshire.

The scabs were again held at the police station while the police and pickets fought for control of the entrance to the building, but the police managed to form a cordon. One of the weaknesses of the pickets was the reluctance to risk arrest. At one point when a surge was taking place further down the line, it was only the action of the women who held their ground while the men fell back, which gave the more militant pickets time to run over to out-manoeuvre the police.



VISIT SCENIC YORKSHIRE Photo: M.

Odd items were thrown and a window broken; at one point, when the police allowed a car to drive into the mass of pickets it was attacked and rocked and the woman inside thumped, but she was not a scab, she was a magistrate going to the court. But it was not these events that the press focused on, but the passing out of a policeman. During a lull in the pushing and shoving a policeman was 'overcome by the occasion', nothing was thrown and he was not pushed, an ambulance arrived which had a blue light smashed and the policeman was taken to hospital. This event gave the press their headlines and front page photographs.

After the closure on the Monday and the near run thing on the Tuesday, by the Wednesday the police were making no mistakes. The police started by occupying all the ground as they out-numbered the pickets by around 600 to 400 the result was a police training exercise.

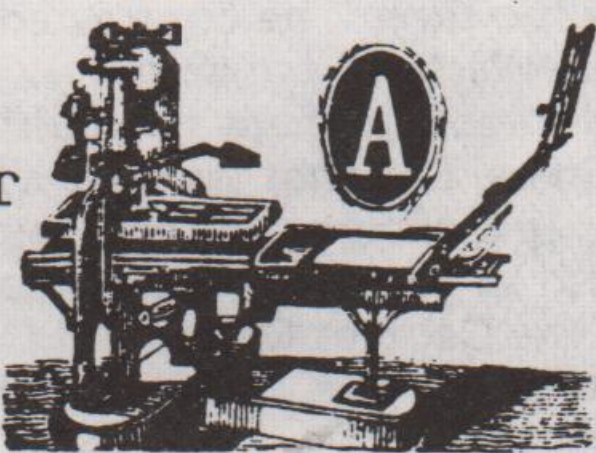
The pickets attempted to block a main road that runs next to the Coal House, but were soon dispersed. As it came nearer to the time for the scabs to be escorted in, the number of pickets fell further as miners left. A small group, consisting mainly of the women of the support groups, attempted to stop the scabs reaching the police station, but they were also pushed back by the police. The police managed to keep the pickets at least 40 feet from the entrance and the scabs were escorted in with ease. It was after the scabs had been taken in and the miners were about to disperse, as they had done the previous day that the police line opened up and a snatch squad burst out to make a few indiscriminate arrests.

The next day the bulk of the pickets changed to picket the power stations which is just as well, because there was a bigger police presence than the day before and were in a position to squash any attempt to disrupt the scabs going to work in Coal House. The ability of the police to build up their forces and to preposition them (learning from the previous days events) makes it extremely difficult for pickets to permanently close a place of work, which is one of the reasons why the miners are being forced to move from place to place in an attempt to catch the police unaware. The days of the early seventies and the mass pickets that closed the Saltby coke works are over as the police are now better trained and more willing to take on large groups of pickets.

CONTINUES OVER THE PAGE

Doncaster @narchists have been printing leaflets for free for Hatfield Women's Support Group and need help, donations etc to:

DAG c/o John Creaghe Society
PO Box 217 Sheffield S1-1FD



MINERS

LA-BORE HYPOCRITES

The Labour Party is giving its full support to the miners in their fight against pit closures, but as with all things their words in opposition and their actions in power are two different things.

The present run down of the industry is very similar to the run down that occurred between 1964 and 1970 under the Labour government, where in South Wales alone 50 pits were closed, one every 7 weeks, and 34,000 jobs destroyed. In the 60's oil was very cheap and power stations were changed from coal to oil. This is similar to today where nuclear power is seen by many as a cheaper form of power, mainly because it employs less workers, which makes it less vulnerable to industrial action as most of the workers are specialist technicians and management.

After the oil producing countries pushed up their prices and the oil crisis led to the 3 day week, coal was back in favour, power stations were switched back to coal and the new Labour government of 1974 launched 'The Plan for Coal'. But even now the coal industry was being run down as nuclear power is to be the power of the future. In South Wales alone between 1974 and 1979 4,000 miners jobs were destroyed.

Tonny 'Lefty' Benn, the Energy Secretary between 1975 and 1979, not only supervised the 'Plan for Coal', in order to offset the pressure from the oil countries, he also lunched a plan for nuclear power, giving the go ahead for many more nuclear power stations, which then as now was seen as the alternative to coal. Tony Benn also proved that the nuclear power stations are easier to control when he broke a strike at one plant by threatening to send the troops in.

Thatcher may have a hatred of the miners and the power they are within the working class and a love for cuts and monetarist purity which the Labour Party is dead against but for whatever reason they act, over the last decade both labour and tory government have meant one thing and one thing only for the mining industry, CLOSURES.

The miners are split in the fight against pit closures, a split that will probably be the death of the strike and the death of many pits. Because of the massive stock piles, especially in the power stations, the miners cannot win without the support of other workers, and they cannot win without the support of each other. The divisions within the miners union cannot be healed by ballots or by executive officers mending their differences, they can only be healed by destroying all the things that divide miners against miner. The first target must be the bonus system, which must be eradicated, but it is not only the divisions that are imposed on the miners by the NCB that must go, but the divisions that the miners force on themselves.

Only by creating a free union, free from full time officials, bureaucrats and other trappings of inequality. Only when every organiser is a worker, and whether national president or pit secretary is unpaid and does union work in their spare time, will the miners be free from their own bureaucrats. Keeping the officers in the pit not only means that the miners replace them when dissatisfied, it means that the militants are left where they can educate all miners of the need to fight and work together.

But it is not only the burden of full time—paid officials that miners must free themselves from, it is from any entanglement with the NCB. All agreements allowing people time off to do union work must be scrapped; liaising with the NCB over the pensions and the running of the Miners Welfare Clubs must be destroyed in order to free the miners from the tentacles of the NCB. All pensions, clubs, union offices etc must be run and owned by the miners without the NCB.

Thirdly the miners must free themselves from the restrictions and divisions that the law puts on them. All laws such as the one restricting the transfer of cash into the strike fund from other sections and the divisions of pickets into official and unofficial must be ignored.

When the organisation of the union is free from all hierarchical and bureaucratic structures and the union is made totally independent of state and company can the solidarity evolve that is required to destroy the power of the state.

J.M.

HYPOCRISY OF THE POLICE

Speaking on the miners' pickets to a seminar on police discipline, and predictably praising the operation as a 'victory for traditional policing methods', Eldon Griffiths MP (adviser to the Police Federation) said they had prevented 'violent men' from intimidating those who wished to work. He contrasted it with the teargas of the American police, the lathi charges of the Indian police, of the water cannon used by the Germans and Japanese. (No mention was made of Iron Curtain countries for fear the comparison would be too direct; he contrasted the bad against the worse in terms of the 'Western' police only). Taking the same facts and terms of reference, perhaps he could have praised the restraint of the miners. But that was not what he paid for.

In a curious aside he said 'any attempt to obstruct those who wish to go to work is a breach of criminal law'. Are arrests pending in the Cabinet Office and Coal Board? The strike was over the closure of pits, thus preventing those wishing to go to work from doing so.



"Thats what you get for not paying Rent!"

93 Effra Parade, Brixton 4.30am Landlord Time.

EFFRA PARADE BATTLE

Monday 25 March 4.30am

Brixton. After a 'tip-off', 100 squatters wait in Effra Parade for the arrival of the bailiffs and removal vans. Two removal vans are chased off — the cops turn up. An empty house bursts into flames as a car is put on its side, and corrugated iron is torn down for barricades each end of the street.

More cops, this time in vans — people go into the houses to fortify the doors and go up on the roofs. The heavy mob — 200 riot police, arrive with shields, helmets, truncheons, searchlights, night vision scope cameras (straight from Northern Ireland) and sledgehammers to smash the doors.

Bricks fly — the cops go for the crowd in the street and people split up. People on the roofs sit waiting for the doors to break down — the sickening thudding goes on. It takes them some 10-15 minutes to get through, as the 'accros' and scaffolding holds well.

Finally they do, and to everybody's surprise, restrain themselves from giving people inside the door treatment, and tell them to get out, or else!

Skirmishes around side streets — bricks at 'community' cops. One hit on the head, one arrest and three more as others try to prevent the seizure.

Fire engines put out the fire — cops 'secure' the area like a curfew. You cannot leave your house/flat, or go in or out of the street.

Scabs move in — wreck the roofs and set fire to our old doors and furniture. The gas and electric vans come and turn off all the sources, but water spurts out unchecked from broken pipes.

STOP THE CITY GLASGOW 22nd MARCH

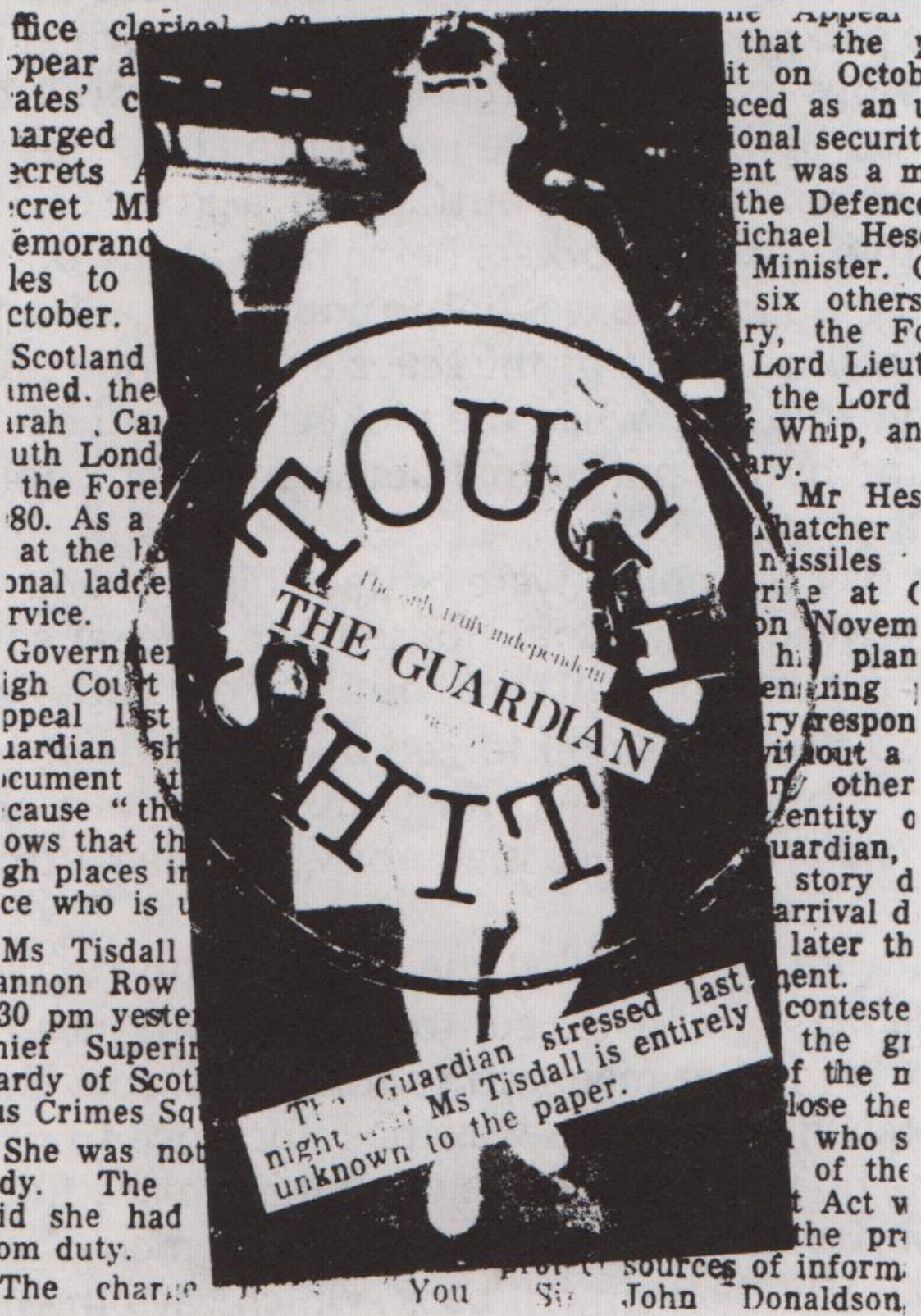
Thursday 22 March, forty people participated in the first anti-war protest of its kind in Glasgow, drawing attention to the links between Big Business, Arms Trade and Third World poverty.

Protestors assembled at the Bank of England office, at about 8.30, then moved on to the Stock Exchange, closely followed by two Special Branch officers. Fifteen people entered the building, whilst others remained outside, to leaflet, and talk to employees and passers-by. Police arrived quickly in three vans, three cars and two motorbikes. Inside, the protesters were given a hostile reception by the shocked staff. Physical violence was directed against two protesters and a freelance journalist present.

Moving on from the Stock Exchange protesters split into smaller groups in order to leaflet and occupy nearby banks, with special attention given to Barclay's Bank and South African Airways.

After a meeting at the Art School, protesters slowly marched down Souchehall St and Buchanan St, carrying banners, chanting, playing instruments and leafletting, culminating in a die-in in George Square which generated strong interest. Various groups then moved off, one to the Canadian Embassy to protest this year's seal-cull, while another group entered the nearby Army Recruiting Office where we were prevented from speaking to prospective recruits. Moved on again by police and an abusive Army Sergeant. The next action was at the Navy office in West Nile St, where we were again joined by our friends from Special Branch who were given particular attention by a group of protesters.

The day was closed by the occupation of the City Council Chambers in George Sq., where a group of twenty-nine protesters formed a circle, chanting. Three Labour councillors expressed sympathy with the demonstrators. Although police closed the entrances, other protesters joined in the chant from outside thereby drawing attention to the action.



Sarah Tisdall Card: South Atlantic Souveneurs

Monday 6pm Kennington Police Station. One squatter is still being held. Our fog horn hooters blast away as we yell out — he heard us inside — and we get support from people on the nearby housing estate, who had just heard about it on the TV news. We leave, and six cops even follow us on to the bus to make sure we pay our fares!

People go to the Lambeth Council Planning Meeting on the same night (!) but they don't discuss the demolition or what will happen to the site. We stare at them all, and suddenly a stink arises. They open their windows — if they put up with each other such a stink is nothing really. The NALGO union heavy gets abuse. This council shits on the residential workers, and the residents too... he should be ashamed, but he just shuffles his papers. The glorious 'Red' Leader Ted Knight leaves glaring at us.

Elsewhere in Brixton, a councillor gets a stink bomb through their door, and in the next few days the scabs have problems with punctured tyres... Two of the houses are fired.

Next night there are less cops about so the corrugated iron fence comes down on one side, and graffiti reminds the scabs that booby traps and bricks await them. 'Just doing my job — signed A. Nazi'.

Effra Parade lies in ruins but the people who lived there still resist on other fronts, and squatting will continue to be a thorn in the side of power-mad bureaucrats, 'left' and 'right'.

*Note: While no watercannons were present there were armed policemen to accompany every police group that went into the houses.

Leaving the chambers, protestors formed a human chain between the chambers and the cenotaph, two mounted policemen then spurred their horses into the chain in an attempt to clear the road, protestors sat down; one lane of the road was forcibly cleared, with two demonstrators being struck by horses' hooves. This action progressed to a sing-in in the middle of George Sq.

However, this festival atmosphere was soured when two men were arrested after erecting a large banner on the cenotaph, which bore the legend, '1984 BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.' After a long day without arrests and the expenditure of much effort, police tempers were obviously frayed, and a woman protesting the brutality of the arresting officers was herself bundled into the van, and later charged with obstruction.

Throughout the day, the peace bus co-ordinating the action was followed by a succession of police officers in un-marked cars, and was held over by traffic police threatening to impound it, initially on charges of obstructing the city centres. However, this charge was dropped when the driver pointed out that he had been parked for the previous ninety minutes, and cited as witnesses the police 'tail'. A further charge of un-road-worthiness was also later dropped.

Glasgow police attempted to follow the example of their Edinburgh colleagues, in confiscating leaflets, using the threat of forgery charges, as some leaflets bore a photocopied £1 note on one side.

At the end of the day, energy was high, the feeling being that the actions were successful, if only as a prelude to things to come. With approaching ten thousand leaflets distributed, we can properly claim to have made a real impact on Glasgow's 'City'.

The Impressionists 1984

FOOTNOTES:

Many Bank and cash card machines were superglued. In all, nine people were arrested. Two of these are being held on remand for breach of the peace and obstruction for 10 days and 2 weeks.

SARAH TISDALL AND THE GOVERNMENT

Sarah Tisdall was a Foreign Office Clerk who noted an outrageous document on Sir Geoffrey Howe's papers. It gave details of the arrival of cruise missiles in England, which was being kept secret from the public.

Miss Tisdall leaked it to the *Guardian*, who published it: the Government demanded to know where they got their information, and the editor weakly handed over the document received.

The Government wanted to show that nobody should dare do such a thing again, and Miss Tisdall, identified as passing the document, was made the burnt sacrifice: she gets six months imprisonment (in criminal conditions: 'we do not have political offenders in England' is the parrot cry). 'You enabled people fanatically opposed to the introduction of cruise missiles to obstruct them', the judge told her. Not the potential State enemy be it noted. The *real* enemy: the People.

FOOTNOTE: An indignant piece of graffiti opposite Farringdon Station (the nearest tube to the *Guardian*) asks 'Guardian workers — have you no conscience?' This, for all its good intentions, seems muddled. Press workers, like any other workers, are never consulted. This is a case reflecting on professional middle class ethics. The editor lacked the guts to tear up the document, after using it, and tell the police, 'Sorry, it's been lost in the filing'.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ITALY

ITALIAN WORKERS RESIST WAGE CUTS

16th March 1984. Veneto, Italy.

Short strikes are continuing to break out all over Italy in opposition to the Government's attempt to reduce all workers real wages. Craxi (Socialist) and Co. are implementing a further cut in the 'Scala Mobile', which partially projects wages from inflation by automatic increases every 3 months. These rises are related to, but less than, the inflation rate. The Governments move is a step towards the ruling class' aim of getting rid of the 'Scala Mobile' altogether.

Workers resistance has involved local one day general strikes, effective wildcat railway strikes and blockades of railway lines, roads and motorways. However it's not yet clear if the strikes can develop any further to pose a real challenge to the Governments austerity plans — or if the Communist Party Union Leaders will succeed in channelling the discontent into ineffectual gestures of protest, as a prelude to a compromise sell-out.

2 of the 3 main trade unions support the Government and totally oppose the strikes. The C.P. Leaders of the biggest union, the CGIL, 'support' the strikes, while issuing orders to try and limit their effectiveness.

The strikes have largely been called and organised through workplace assemblies and Factory Councils, on which sit workers elected by Members of all the unions at their workplace. An ambiguous form of organisation. Certainly not an expression of the proletariat organising as a class, free from Union restrictions and divisions. But certainly not (yet anyway) totally integrated into the official Union structure.

Autonomists and anarchists here are advocating a general strike to increase real wages and to reduce working hours without loss of pay. And, through the dynamic of such a massive struggle, to overcome the divisions such as employed/unwaged, and thus bring nearer the possibility of the overthrow of power and liberation from all bosses.

Rome, March 24th saw a huge national demo against the wage cuts...afterwards a national assembly of Factory Council delegates have on their agenda the question of a national general strike.

AFRICA

The Nationalist regime in Mozambique is now actively collaborating with the South African security forces to wipe out ANC resistance. After the recent concord between the two countries it is clear that the Maputo government will cooperate extensively with Pretoria if this will ensure the security of Mozambique's border. Two weeks back Mozambique soldiers took part in extensive raids on ANC sympathisers; arms were confiscated and funds expropriated. Last month South Africa and Mozambique signed a non-aggression pact and are currently engaged in a bilateral commission to tighten up security between the two countries. So far the Frelimo have refused to extradite ANC members and other rebels to South Africa, but these are but early days.

For their part the South African government has withdrawn support for the MNR — the anti Frelimo guerrillas operating inside Mozambique. As a result many MNR guerrillas have surrendered to government troops. South Africa's new policy is to neutralise all resistance in the region by securing the support of other nationalist states who themselves are under attack by rebel forces. Lesotho is next on the list, but so far has refused to sign a pact with South Africa. The ANC has put out a statement saying that Mozambique should now be regarded as a satellite of Pretoria.

CHILE

About 4 weeks back, far-right death squads spent several evenings roaming the streets of the shanty townings looking for possible targets. In the event there were no deaths, but many houses were burnt down. Pinochet blamed the arson attacks on communist guerrillas and was able within a couple of days to pass new anti-terrorist legislation. About a week later, and only two days prior to another day of action, two leading figures — General Contreras (former head of the DINA) and Jorge Lavandero, a Christian Democrat leader — were attacked. Contreras escaped a bomb attack (two magnetic bombs were fixed to his car); Lavandero was attacked by 10 assailants and was severely beaten up. Contreras is thought to be responsible for organising the murder of Allende; he is also known to control a private army who specialise in murders and arranging disappearances.

On the day of action one demonstrator was killed after riot police pursued hundreds of protesters. Many workers came out on strike. Altogether the protests continued for 3 days. Many were wounded. There are now plans for a general strike.

SPAIN

PURE TERRORISM

Three redundant workers of the "Huecograbados Francino" Company in Rubi (Catalonia) suffered facial burns when they were shot at by a Company Director on 3rd January 1984.

The incident happened as several Directors, following workers leaving the factory at the end of the day, confronted a crowd of redundant workers protesting outside the factory doors. During the confrontation one of the Directors, Jose Antonio Bas, took out a flare-gun and fired off several shots at workers, wounding three in the face.

In protest the next day 800 people marched through the town, causing traffic to stop for two hours on the road from Rubi to Sant Cugat.

Tinta Negra.

GENERAL STRIKE

On 2 February 1984 a General Strike was called in Gijón (Northern Spain). After a year of 'Socialist' government (which had promised to reduce unemployment) unemployment has risen and more factories have closed.

In protest trade-unionists, including the anarcho-syndicalist CNT, united to demonstrate their disgust. Only the UGT (Socialist Trade Union) failed to join the strike, insisting that it would be counter-productive. Despite this, the strike was total, with 80,000 people attending a rally at midday.

Source: Solidaridad Obrera

NICARAGUA

While attention was focussed on the election farce in El Salvador, Nicaraguan ports came under naval attack. 'Contra' gunboats opened fire on Sandinistan vessels in the port of Corinto. The Nicaraguans suspect US coordination behind the attack: apparently a US frigate was in the near vicinity of the gunboats which, incidentally, were also accompanied by two aircraft which are thought to be involved in mine-laying in the harbour mouth. The gunboats also opened fire on foreign merchant vessels and later a cargo ship was badly damaged when it struck a mine. There have been three other similar incidents of foreign cargo ships being hit by mines in the past month. The mines are of a sophisticated design: they explode not on contact but are detonated acoustically by the sound of a passing ship. The Nicaraguans believe that they could only have been laid by US subs or aircraft.

FRANCE

MESSAGE FROM THE PARIS SQUATTERS MOVEMENT:

On Friday 25 November, 1983, the socialist government and the Municipality of Paris, in an Unholy Union, decided to evict 4 collective squats: 105 Rue de Crimée, 38 Rue de L'Ourcq, 19 Rue Leon Giraud and 116 Rue des Pyrenees. In other words about a hundred people altogether, without any offer of rehousing; although it was already a few days into the severe winter of that year.

Behind this unprecedented police anti-squatting operation lies a deliberate attempt to eradicate what the Govt. sees as a threat to its credibility.

Two socialist Parisian MPs, Messieurs Billon and Escutia laugh at the idea that the evictions are the responsibility of anyone except the local municipality, knowing full well that the responsibility for a large scale operation of this kind lies with the *Prefecture de Police*, in other words the government.

The socialists claim to want to develop collective life, so in one morning they evict premises which are being used by fifty collective organisations around Paris, some of which already had government subsidies.

The socialists claim to have a strong rehousing policy, so throw a hundred people onto the street in order to make their homes disused wasteland (as was the case with 182-184 Rue de Crimée, evicted last August).

They call themselves guarantors of the Law and then piously throw legality out the window. What could be easier than to evict 116 Rue des Pyrenees with an old order referring to the previous inhabitants? What more legal than to ignore a Court order demanding a weeks consideration on the case of 105 Rue de Crimée?

Madame le Juge, the government laughs at whatever you decide!

The socialists claim to be anti-racist, and have just destroyed 105 Rue de Crimée where an exhibition of anti-racist painting was being held, and where anti-racist local groups held their meetings.

Just by the by, the day before the eviction, one of the organisers of the groups, a friend of the MP Escutia who knew what was going to happen, came along and carefully removed all his papers, posters and files, just so no harm came to them you understand!

The socialists claim to protect minorities and then go and evict immigrants and squatters. Worse still, the 'pink' police are permitted to damage and throw around much of our property and in the case of 38 Rue de L'Ourcq, to confiscate it.

In an unprecedentedly bad time as regards housing in Paris (yet 192,000 places stand vacant) the Govt. has taken the risk of confrontation with a new front of all the evicted in Paris, all those who wish to set up new ways of living in the capital, as well as a good number of artistic, collective and political groups. WE WILL NOT STAY IN THE STREET, PLACES EXIST, WE WILL TAKE THEM.

Translated from AGORA magazine.

PERU

A state of emergency has been imposed and was instigated only one day prior to a day of action when a general strike was planned for. On the eve of the strike six bombs were set off in various parts of Lima. Attacks were made on the Palace of Justice, the Police Investigations HQ, banks and offices. As demonstrations were banned the government forced the response to be clandestine. In the capital police and troops were everywhere and many were used to take over essential services, such as public transport.

USA

A series of anti-transient (vagrant) ordinances has recently given the police of Orlando in central Florida the authority to make more arrests. "We analysed transient behaviour and then made it illegal" — a local police officer.

RADIO PIRATES

Tangerine Radio, a pirate rock station playing music and anti-authoritarian newscasts, has begun operating in the Florida area. Presently the signal is rather weak but we hope to upgrade the equipment as time goes by. The broadcasts are heard sporadically on 7425 or 7430 kilocycles.

The free radio movement is picking up momentum in the United States; there are about 25 free stations operating on shortwave, although most of them just play music and have no social awareness.

Orlando ABC

PRISONS

Stuart Blackstock is fighting a one man battle all on his own. In September 1982 Blackstock was given a 20 year minimum sentence for wounding a cop. Since being inside Blackstock has resolutely refused to undertake menial and degrading work and has threatened arson on prison property. He later managed to make some firebombs out of bottles filled with metal polish and turpentine. At the subsequent trial Blackstock refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the hearing, protesting that he had not been allowed to legal files or interview witnesses. He was given an extra 3 years on top of his existing sentence. His comment afterwards was that it was obviously a show trial and that the authorities can give him nothing that affects his sentence. He is currently in Hull.

A couple of months back the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire decreed that remand prisoners will no longer have automatic access to solicitors as prison staff are insufficient in number to make such visits possible. More recently the same excuse has been used by prison authorities up and down the country to prevent remand prisoners from attending bail hearings. In one instance prison staff at Rochester Gaol turned down a request from a magistrate for a certain prisoner to attend a hearing. The magistrate intervened four times and on each occasion the demand was ignored. The prison authorities are clearly boycotting production orders so as to add weight to their own demands for more staff and more resources. It has been shown that neither magistrate or judge has any power to force prison staff to obey the court orders.

On Sunday 18 March fifteen prisoners escaped from the remand block at Schevinger, Holland. A gun had been smuggled in and a screw overpowered. Many screws were locked in the cells. As the fifteen were leaving they handed the keys to other prisoners so that they too could get out. There was an opportunity for a mass breakout. However the prisoners who had been handed the keys chose instead, for some inextricable reason, to let the screws loose. Within days of the escape five of the prisoners had been re-captured. Several accomplices were also arrested. As we go to press the 10 remaining escapees are still at large.

FASCISTS

The National Front has been up to some apparently strange things just lately. Not content with courting left fascism in their application of the Strasserite strategy (see the last Black Flag News Bulletin), some of their cannon-fodder are now so utterly confused with what their leadership are up to, they've found themselves siding with Asian Rachmanite (Rachman was a notorious 60's landlord, who specialised in extortion and brutality) businessmen in the defence of private property.

Mr Ram Das Sharma was a landlord with several properties, who was charging exorbitant rents on delapidated houses. His tenants were both other Asians and also whites. Sharma wished to forcibly evict one lot of tenants in a Leytonstone house, so he searched around for some hired thugs to throw them out. Local NF's - around twenty of them - offered their services. The attempted eviction took place last September, but it was not the NF's who eventually found themselves in court, but the seven tenants who tried to defend themselves. The seven were afraid for their lives, so they made up some molotovs. But in court they were acquitted on charges relating to the possession of firebombs. A clear case of self-defence is no offence.

After some of their confused brethren had demonstrated that for them the protection of private property is of greater priority than their preoccupation with racism, the NF leadership compounded this confusion even further in appealing to a well known Jewish libertarian for his assistance in the defence of their legal rights. Larry Gostin, general secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties, agreed to advise the NF on their rights after being approached by them about the raid by Special Branch on the homes of two NF cronies, Ian Anderson and Joe Pearce. Gostin is following the steps of the American Civil Liberties Union, who took a more middle ground in their politics and defended the right of nazi's to march openly through the streets. The NCCL had better learn quickly: fascists have no rights, they will take whatever opportunity they can to get what they want. It was the tolerance of people like Mr Gostin that helped to pave the way for 'radical national socialists' to take power in Germany in the '30's.

BULLSHIT BRIGADE ?

Extremists of the centre were threatened with retribution when RAGE (Residents Against Greenham Encampments) were sent a letter warning them that they will suffer attacks on property if they continue with their campaign of harassment. The letter was, according to press reports, signed by the Angry Brigade Resistance Movement and ended up with the words 'Anarchy, Peace, Freedom'. (Wot about 'Black Flag' - editor). Dr Gibson, an organiser of RAGE, afterwards expressed some sympathy for CND and described CND as the 'genuine' peace movement and not the 'undesirable hangers-on'. There were, apparently, a number of letters sent by the ABRM, including to a local Newbury newspaper that published ads on behalf of RAGE. So far, despite the continuation of the evictions, ABRM have failed to do anything about their threats. (Perhaps it's that dastardly lot, the violent pacifists again, who are doing the bullshitting.) If pacifists threaten violence, are they credible pacifists? If anarchists resort to bullshitting, who benefits? - not us!

BRISTOL STC

Wednesday 21st in Bristol found groups of people spraying banks, insurance co. pornshops & furshops. Locks of banks in the "city" area were glued up along with a few jewelers & butchers.

Thursday 22nd am, during leafleting in the "city", 8 @ students arrested on suspicion of criminal damage. 11am the letters to spell CORRUPT were stuck on the side of Aron House (the Council building) they stayed up drew plenty of attention. More leafletting by various groups and a march ending up at the Police station got us publicity and further attention. Many passers by expressed support.

The local CID visited the Peace Centre looking for our "Leader" in the end the cops went away after buying a Big Brother poster for their office.

A free gig in the evening ended the day off well.

Bristol @narchs.

Further regional actions we hope to be able to cover.

GLC FUTILITY

At least one national newspaper recently featured a story that deserves repeating for those who missed it. In March 1979 there was a debate at London's County Hall on the Marshall Inquiry of that time, into the future of local government and the GLC.

'Sincerity Ken' Livingstone described the GLC as an "appalling show" whose abolition would have been a 'major saving' releasing 'massive resources for more productive use'. He did express concern that adequate powers should devolve down to the Boroughs and not be absorbed upwards by Central Government, but Ken said 'I do not believe you need two tiers of local government'. When confronted by these views this February, Sincerity Ken justified his comments not with talk of changing his mind etc., but by saying that at that time the Tories were in power, and jobs and housing spending were being cut back. Crocodile tears in Opposition, ruthless in power aren't all politicians?

MINISTRY OF TRUTH

In the letters column of the *Daily Telegraph* (23.2.84) a Mr Russell Haddon advocates calling the Provisional IRA "Communist terrorists" instead of the Irish Republican Army to avoid the emotive emotive appeal in the words.

This would have the neat effect of tarring two sets of people he doesn't like with the same brush. If a Ministry of Truth made this obligatory, it would not need to distinguish between the "Officials" who are Communists and the Provisionals, who are not. The Officials (whatever they may think or do about Afghanistan or Nicaragua or Poland) take a pacifist policy on Northern Ireland and have been eclipsed by the Provisional IRA in consequence.

The fact remains that whether they are terrorists or not - which entirely depends upon one's viewpoint - they are Catholics and Nationalists and their support comes from the Catholic Irish in America, not Russia.

A.S.