They present themselves as the spokesmen for a whole section of the proletariat; those who hate the rich, swear a lot and riot. Public anger without public strategy reminds us of Mao's theory of the vanguard swimming like fish swim in water.

Here's a brief scenario... Thanks to the Electricity Board's publicising where blackouts occur, we could assemble in a certain area at a pre-arranged time... At a pre-arranged signal upon the advent of lights-out, the mob could condense within seconds, swinging into action.... Headlines captured it wouldn't take long for the example to spread. Against this background we'd blend, time to add out political dimension... "we're not the vanguard...."

A dozen interviews in Time Out, New Society or the Guardian, which add up to bragging + a search for some kind of acceptability, aren't worth as much to those who oppose capital as a tin of cat-food nicked from Sainsbury's.

To use insulting images such as an aggressive arrogant pride in being streetwise is to stand in the way of radicalisation. An old copy of CW saw the defeats of the riots of July 1981 as mainly a problem of organisation. As if pious hopes or real efforts to spread ideas of getting organised would alone lead to "victorious" riots. No, revolution is the only form of war where victory is prepared by a series of defeats. There are long struggles ahead. Leftists with their manipulative practices and off-pat "solutions" ("Collectivise all mines outside Notts.", "Bash the rich", "Organise") only stand in the way. Organisation in organisation of something, it's true that riots and strikes must begin to be better organised, and that the most militant proletarians must organise as minorities explicitly to play a part in escalating the fights, but to confuse the two is pure and simple vanguardism.

Like all anarchists, Class War's supposed grasp of the key to the jihad to save humanity (in their case, getting rid of the rich and trendy — an aim with which we totally agree) leads them to a line of thought which is designed, in their case through the public anger of their paper, to make "ordinary" people realise the acceptability of what they already know but suppress. To accomplish the feat of coming across as serious, CW themselves suppress what they know; that the unions are always part of the enemy, that mass class-confrontations aren't anywhere near as close as they imply, etc.

It's the old con. Present yourself as allies of what's going on (which means opportunistically refraining from criticising what you know to be its weaknesses), and hope to add your "political dimension" once you've won confidence and been accepted as knowing the business.
Anarchism exposed!

...the 'lessons of history' seem to be largely wasted on the new generation, which often merely repeats in a more insolent fashion and with less sophistication the proven mistakes of the past. Instead of finding the orientation in the actual social conditions and their possibilities, the new leftists base their concerns mainly on a set of ideologies that have no relevance to the requirements of social change...".

Paul Mattick, 'Anti-Bolshevik Communism'

Anarchism, wherever it puts up a "revolutionary" appearance, and however violent or anti-hierarchical, is nothing but an ideology. It maintains a mixture of the philosophy of enlightenment which was necessary to the gradual evolution of the organisations and assumptions of the old workers' movement.

"Anarchy is not the ideal of some particular element or class, but of all humanity." - A. Bakunin, "Anarchism".

Active anarchists are always looking for fertile realisation of abstract absolutes such as "No authority", "the rights of the individual" or even "Total social harmony", always have a conception of them as existing outside themselves, as existing as an independent reality...".

"...Therefore the best way to put over anarchism is not by bludgeoning, but by proving ourselves as useful allies in the struggle...".


These two "properties" of practical anarchism are neither exclusive of each other nor exclusive to anarchism. They are the inevitable results of "revolutionary ideology", understood in the sense of a set of holy ideas which must be lived and felt.

When we say that anarchism is idealist, we don't mean that the destruction of the State, for example, is more in the sky. Quite the contrary, but has nothing to do with the realisation of any ideal.

The search by practical anarchists to apply their ideas has taken many forms. It has been a fusion of conceptions of the future as a matter of realising abstract absolutes (Justice, Heaven, Rights, Democracy) with ideas about the working class being led by an anarcho-syndicalist revolution to the intervention of self-sacrificial idealists, professional educators, or secret elites.

"Anonymous pilots in the centre of the popular storm, we must direct it, not with a visible power, but with the collective dictatorship of all the allies. A dictatorship without badge, without official right, yet all the more powerful because it will have none of the appearances of power." - B. Barnard.

Syndicalism

As a form of trade-unionism, syndicalism has been the traditional anarchist sowing-ground. It was in the syndicalist movement that workers grouping together as many workers as possible on the basis of trade and industry. It saw the working class through the eyes of the strike leaders, demands and workplace sabotage, being prepared for eventual social revolution of workplaces by an anarchist elite propagating the myth of the General Strike on some indeterminate Glorious Day. Present-day union cells, preferably grouping together all workers, would be the future become units of economic management of society.

"...The syndicate, today...".

Anarchism: the Dettol of Revolution.

"It would be a great and fatal illusion to believe...".

Many experiences of revolutionary moments have shown that the most adequate form for the organisation of working class communication and power is in the worker's council or mass assembly, neither a union nor a party. The possibilities for the flourishing of these assemblies has always come into conflict with the old organisations which has previously regrouped working class people in a non-revolutionary period.

It's not a coincidence that those who see mass revolutionary organisations existing before a revolution (which, by their very nature, would regroup many non-revolutionary proletarians) have also adopted theories of the necessity for crack hands of professional"revolutionaries" such as the Bolsheviks or the Italian Anarchist Federation.

Anarchism: the Betel of Revolution.

"It would be a great and fatal illusion to believe...".

Youths who want to fight and to win in the struggle against the working class people, but that would only be the first step towards the breakdown of this, and all, centralised state power...".

Angry.

The more political anarchists often have specific views on working class conditions and on the past and future developments of society. They are not openly anti-historical like the alternative socialists, and consciousness of work, activity and belief in the necessity of their own existence as bringers of their light (alliances).

Don't rock the boat of the bureaucracy.

Although we are anarchists, we have different ideas about labour organisation than the hierarchical structures of the NU and different political principles to people like Scargill and Taylor, this is not the fight we are engaged in. There is little that we can criticise them on during this strike. Both of them have thrown themselves into the frontline, both have been assaulted by the police, they like all other paid NU officials have given up their wages and during this strike have been nothing more than propaganda and symbolic figure heads.


Syndicalism and anarcha-syndicalism, like all trade-unionisms and other ways employed by the old workers' movements, have become definitively reactionary. There can be no mass revolutionary organisation without mass revolutionary struggle and consciousness. All other ideas rest on overt or veiled elitism, whether this means Leninist mass parties with their factory cells, or anarchist use of syndicalism as a means, a transmission belt.
anarchism exposed!

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Anarchists, wherever it puts up a "revolutionary" appearance, and however violent or anti-hierarchic, is nothing but an ideology. It maintains a mixture of the "philosophy of enlightenment" which was necessary to the bourgeois revolution, with the old workers' movement.

"Anarchy is not the ideal of some particular element or class, but of all humanity." — A.BERKMAN, "ABC of Anarchism."
The opposite to this is not spontaneous, or theories which oppose forming organisations until the revolution breaks out. The point is that the aim of revolutionary groupings existing before a revolution is not to gather people around them in order to build themselves up as a power within society. Such organisations, including revolutionary workers' groups, must know themselves to be a minority. Moreover, they must aim to dissolve when the power of revolutionary working class organisations comes to absolute, namely, at their moment of victory.

Anarchosyndicalists who were the most sceptical of the adequacy of traditional "revolutionary syndicalism" merely kept alive the old party/union theory of the old workers' movement. Malatesta in 1927 wanted anarchist organisations fighting "inside and outside" the unions, which is the line of most Leninists today. Malchev, Pett and Arkhipov in their "Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communities" of 1927 said, "We must enter into revolutionary trade unions as an organised force, responsible to accomplish work in the unions before the general anarchist organization and orientated by the latter...We must exercise our theoretical influence on all trade unions."

In other words, the union is one mechanism for the party.

Self-management

The Syndicalist Solution — Inhabit your own projects and frontiers.

"Also, there is no reason why it should be restricted to those mines in danger of closure. The whole industry could be collectivised, with each pit under the control of the local mining/coal/mine syndicate. If a few, such as the Nottinghamshire miners, wish to stay with their bosses, let them. That's their choice." Black Flag, Vol VII, 50 No.11.

The syndicalist solution — inhabit your own projects and frontiers.

"We need to give meaning to the statement that those workers who stay with the company will be re-educated and taught to understand the 'inherent democracy' of the capitalist economy. If it were a self-managed economy, it would be a matter of how they manage themselves."

Self-management theories rest on people running "their" factories, their "communities", etc. Mostly in order to market and sell "their" products, e.g. Proudhon, Kropotkin... Go and laugh at the article "Weighing up our Future" in Freedom, July '85. The descriptions of words are well worth reading, and the defence of the money/market economy should provoke itches in all revolutionaries' trigger-fingers. Consumerism is described as distribution according to demand (amongst other things, we would say). Collectivism and individualism, the anarchist answers, to Tweedledee and Tweedledum, are both described as a system of co-ops trading among themselves on the market, with consumption being according to money received according to work done. The only difference between these would be that collectivism gets rid of the right to repay others.

But self-managementists who oppose the market, like Kropotkin or the group "Solidarity" at the time of "As We Don't See It", are no better. They defend those awful separate "collective" factories which will not be attached to one particular kind of work. Even if this remained the case for a little while, revolution abolishes private property from the fact that working class is split into geographical or industrial portions, or have it managed by the workers. Revolution smash such social separations as exist between areas of the economy, as well as the separation between work and non-work. We want a society where one could say about this factory: "This factory belongs to the workers' collective."

Localism and federalism. Localism and federalism are a related sin of anarchism. Many local anarchist groups are only interested in struggles going on in their own towns, and see the struggle existing in all classes as a whole. They would be the most selfish and untrustworthy people. Many local anarchists today are attracted to anarchism out of a love of the "alternative". In other words, they have no time for people who think that the difference between capitalism and communism is the difference between bosses' management and workers' management. Yes, in conventional capitalism, workers will run everything, but the essential is the differing content of human activity. The beginning of free human creativity and experience doesn't mean running one's own factory.

Many anarchists adhere to the idea of Anarchy in One Country, where the conclusion of the revolution beyond what used to be State boundaries is to be too "authoritarian"! An article by Stuart Christie in a book called The National Defence says that an anarchist Britain would only trade with democratic nations.

Individualism. Those who see everything in the "autonomy of the individual" are only good for a laugh. They obviously know nothing about history. History in the history of classes. The suppression of capitalism depends on one of its classes, which it continually dispossesses, becoming a class for itself, which is the nation. The revolution, the abolition of the state, is nothing other than the re-establishment of the autonomy of the individual. Since, with the suppression of the state, there is no longer any need for an organisation of all classes.

The alternative scene. Many anarchists today are attracted to anarchism out of a love of the "alternative". In other words, they reject the non-conformist areas of capitalist society, where citizens can be "different" and proud. Over the years, different ways of living have survived under capitalism. We have attempted to justify themselves in terms of being more moral, liberal, conservative, trendy or "rebellious" than other ways. "Anarchist" anarchists identify with the supposed "security" of various compensations for poverty, such as "rebellious" fashions like punk, suburban protest, demonstrations, vegetarian, dropping-out, self-sufficient, group living, etc. The anarchist answer to Justin's: The alternative scene, like all "scenes", is rooted mainly in fear of the world of work, and to be attached to one particular kind of work. Even if this remained the case for a little while, revolution abolishes private property from the fact that working class is split into geographical or industrial portions, or have it managed by the workers. Revolution smash such social separations as exist between areas of the economy, as well as the separation between work and non-work. We want a society where one could say about this factory: "This factory belongs to the workers' collective."
The opposite to this is not spontaneous, or theories which oppose forming organizations until the revolution breaks out. The point is that the aim of revolutionary groupings existing before a revolution is not to gather people around them in order to build themselves up as a power within this society. Such organizations, including revolutionary workers' groups, must know themselves to be a minority. Moreover, they must aim to dissolve when the power of revolutionary working class alliances is absolute. Rarely, at their moment of victory.

Anarchosyndicalists who were the most sceptical of the adequacy of traditional "revolutionary syndicalism" merely kept alive the old party/union theory of the old workers' movement. Anarchists in 1927 wanted anarchist organisations fighting "inside and outside" the unions, which is the line of most Leninists today. Malchuk, Pett and Arkhangelov in their "Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communist" of 1927 said, "We must enter into revolutionary trade unions as an organised force, responsible to accomplish work in the union before the general anarchist organization and orientated by the latter... We must seek to exercise our theoretical influence on all trade unions." In other words, the union is one transmission mechanism for the party.

Self-management theories rest on people running "their" factories, their "communities", etc. Mostly in order to market and sell "their" products, e.g. Proudhon, Kibbutzim, etc. We want to use the coal as ammunition, just as miners in at least two villages used Kibbutzim not to build barricades but to build steel mills. We say "Run the mines yourselves", revolutionaries aim for a world where no-one works down them at all. The only purpose of defending jobs should be to make things a bit more bearable before we abolish wage-labour and social separations.

Social separations as exist between areas of the economy, as well as the separation between work and non-work. They want a society where one could be able to say "This factory belongs to these workers". Propaganda becomes a matter of addressing "local, personal" problems, of pandering to isolationist perspectives which many people have but which they generally try to break down when they are involved in struggle. The overbearing tendencie towards community in struggle.

Propaganda becomes a matter of addressing "local, personal" problems, of pandering to isolationist perspectives which many people have but which they generally try to break down when they are involved in struggle. The overbearing tendencie towards community in struggle.

Locality and federalism are a related aim of anarchism. Many local anarchist groups are only interested in struggles going on in their own towns, and see the autonomy of groups and individuals as a good thing. Locality and federalism are the twin aims of early-'70s libertarianism. On the contrary, a free society would develop so that one could cook in the morning, paint a house in the afternoon, and criticize in the evening, without ever being a cock, house-painter or critic. Community has nothing to do with latter-day Kropotkinism, who must decentralize self-sufficient "communes", or any other way to maintain social isolation. Whatever there is decentralization, there is a form of private property, e.g. "This is our little area, and we say what we do with what we produce".

Communism is the development of world human community, the abolition of all property, including localised self-managed property.

We look both forwards and backwards. Backwards, into the free city, with its guilds of craftsmen and groups of scholars, its folk-ways and local federal associations." — E. Christie/A. Netzer, Plagegates of Anarchy.

Individualism

Those who see everything in the "autonomy of the individual" are only good for a laugh. They obviously know nothing about history. History is one of the classes, which continuously dispossesses, becoming a class for itself, which subordinates the individual to the state, the capital, the state, the nation, the class, the present. This alone can abolish classes. Neither do individualists know anything about life. Or else, like true philosophers, they have their thoughts on suppressing what they do know about it, in order to fit it into some "idealistic" world. From the class struggle, we all experience desires in alienated form. Proletarians live in a society where real community is absent. We are fragmented individualists. These two problems will be solved together — by means of the class struggle. This alone can abolish classes. This is our little area, and we say what we do with what we produce."

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and want to feel at home everywhere, Tolerance of heroin amongst some squatting circles is a little different from the democratic myth of everyone doing their own thing. Participation or liberal permissiveness.

The necessity of total social revolution. Revolutionaries are those who don't feel at home anywhere. Participation or liberal permissiveness. The necessity of total social revolution. Revolutionaries are those who don't feel at home anywhere. Participation or liberal permissiveness. The necessity of total social revolution. Revolutionaries are those who don't feel at home anywhere. Participation or liberal permissiveness. The necessity of total social revolution. Revolutionaries are those who don't feel at home anywhere. Participation or liberal permissiveness. The necessity of total social revolution. Revolutionaries are those who don't feel at home anywhere. Participation or liberal permissiveness.

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WHO PUT THE "T" IN TRAITOR?

Just when you thought we'd stopped going on about anarchist opportunism.........

This is from a leaflet handed out by Clydeside Anarchists at a miners' gala addressed by Kinnock. Of course these anarchists know that it's absurd to describe a member of the ruling class as a scab or traitor but being regarded as complete waltzes by the small minority of miners who've broken with Labourism is a small price to pay for popularity.

We won't forget KINNOCK THE SCAB!

And talking of populism.....

US PARTY-BUILDERS ARE ALWAYS GETTING SLACKED OFF AS OPPORTUNIST..... ALL I'VE GOT TO SAY TO THESE WANKERS IS: "HOW MANY F*%KING PAPERS DO YOU SELL?!

"It's not the purpose of this artist to criticise" Saragil and the NIM. Sufficient to say that we demand not in any way class or political terms, but must be seen in the context of revolutionary organisations. The time for post-mortems will be after any well-out. But rather is it our task to refute other counsels. For their rightfull criticism.

"Finally, the most popular and famous anti-syndicalist anarchists in this country are the group "Class War". Whilst we know who we would prefer between them and Federica Montseny, a Spanish anarchist politician minister during the Civil War, as the perfect example of what's positive in present day anarchism, it's obvious that their paper is designed to rally around then any proletarians who hate the rich, defined as badly-dressed people + money hunger + middle class wankers + trendy moustachioed lefties from Hampstead. (What, right?) It doesn't matter if they're pro-Labour or pro-Labourism or pro-Candilis. Supporters of Irish republicanism and the Sandinista government in Nicaragua were allowed to speak at a Class War conference. What matters to them is numbers in the party, numbers of voters, numbers of working class people involved in violence with some anti-rich content.

For us it's not a question of setting up paper organisations, but of supporting and backing, helping create an attitude, combative in the extreme with flair and imagination. Our presence must be on the streets, at the brick, in one hand, flogging Class War with the other. Today's actions, seemingly trivial, could take on tremendous proportions some time in the not too distant future." Class War, issue with Kinnock, Thatcher and the scabs.

"It's obvious that their presence must be on the streets as the perfect reaction would be the first glimpses of fear flit across the faces of the rich as the rising tide of mass anger rallies at their front gate.

"For Joe Worker or Joe Housewife to say, "Class War's ideology of "Action" is knowingly one-sided. Traditional anarchists still indulge in ancestor-worship and worship of the past in places like Kremstaed and Spain, where supposedly pure anarchist experiences took place. They stupidly misread the syndicalist unions and the glorious general strike as the key to revolution, ideas which were already wrong when they were used in the past. Class War have rejected many of the stinking remains of anarchist ideology, but keep the less obviously modified parts of it."

The trade unions are the only workers' organisations that can protect us but are always going down a dead end."

Class War, issue with "Victory to the Hit Squad" on the front.

We too are for an increase in the numbers of working class people fighting in the streets. But experience indicates that the illusions of advances made merely because of the number of people involved in riots or identifying with violent rhetoric, always tend to disappear when it's revealed that this streetfighting wasn't part of a general including theoretical - advance in the pitch of class struggle. At the very least, one could not speak of real advances until previously demobilised sections of the proletariat were beginning to come together in riots and between riots.

If punks were violent hippies, Class War are punks with a greater anti-rich publicity. Front is the word, in two newspaper and "popular front". Apart from opportunism, they also embody the other side of practical anarchism, elitism. Witness the weirdly affected tone of articles with titles such as "I hate the rich", written as though throughout our lives we only experience poverty because we've been about and because we have less money than the rich. There is no doubt that readers of Class War are supposed to be recruited opportunistically. The perfect reaction would be for Joe Worker or Joe Housewife to say, "Class War is the only paper which really puts the verbal boot in against the rich in real working class language; they really know the business."

"We've got to make revolutionary and sexual politics the property of the working class, as it is. This is their "alternative" to intellectualism.

Theory is necessary to make transparent all the forms of poverty we experience. It's necessary to situate practice with regard to the overall trends, as well as to grasp what's positive in present struggles apart from violence. It's nothing but a set of conclusions from past and present activity to be used in achieving revolutionary aims. It's a new science drawn from abstract politicisation about the future results of its aims."

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we're not the vanguard.....
Class War, Charles and Di issue.

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The Red Menace, 84b, Whitechapel High St., LONDON, E1 7QX.