

issue 212

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editorial

THERE IS increasing interest in anarchist ideas throughout the world. To capitalise on this we need to be organised. But the purpose of this organisation is not to be an end in itself, but to spread our ideas to the wider working class, to encourage working class self organisation, and to fight for libertarian and revolutionary ideas within that self organisation. So, following on from last issue, we return again to the themes of organising, this time with a lengthy contribution from a comrade from the South African Workers Solidarity Federation, dealing with separate organisation. The article on anarcho-syndicalism in our last issue attracted a fair amount of letters, which shows that this is a matter of importance to our readers. What's happening with Class War is further evidence that some of the old assumptions about organisation are being challenged. As Blair and co break the handful of promises they made, and the Socialist Workers Party push for big lobbies of a Labour conference they know is the enemy, the task of long term work among working class communities is more and more being left to anarchists alone. The next few years will see serious fights over the destruction of welfare and benefits, and the removal of resources from working class communities. We need to be there, and so do you.....

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**Plus news, views and reviews from anarchists in the
UK and around the world**

1 in 12 celebrates success in campaign against CCTV

BRADFORD COUNCIL appears to have accepted the demands of the 1 in 12 Club and is to conduct a "comprehensive review" of its current public CCTV systems. The Club has been campaigning since February for a proper, open and independent evaluation of the Council's 50-camera, district wide, CCTV system, with the backing of the local Trades Council. They have successfully shown the cameras to be ineffective with regard to the stated aims of crime detection and deterrence, and focused attention on the dangers of such systems of mass state surveillance.

In an apparent complete U-turn, the Council announced on July 15th:

We will continue to develop CCTV in the District in locations where it will have a positive impact fighting crime and fear of crime. We will carry out a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of existing

CCTV installations in order to target future CCTV developments into locations where it will be most effective.

The Club remains sceptical as to the exact nature of the "review" and is currently pressing the Council for clarification. However, they acknowledge that the turn around is a positive result of a carefully researched 6 month campaign.

The club has collected much information about CCTV and full details of the campaign can be found on the 1 in 12 Publications web page at:

www.legend.org.uk/~brs



poles apart the magnet dispute drags on

350 WORKERS at Magnet Kitchens' factory in Darlington were sacked 3rd September last year. They had rejected the company's proposal on wages - £35 a week cut on average, after 3 years of a pay freeze!

Last year Magnet made profits of £27 million, and gave fat cat director Marion Anonini a pay rise of £750,000. The workers response was almost unanimous industrial action, to which Magnet responded by sacking 350 workers, nearly the entire work force. Strikers have been threatened and scabs have been hired at even lower wages and on short term contracts.

As the dispute drags on, and it is obviously hurting Magnet, it is clear that it is mainly anarchists who are actively supporting the workers there, much to the shame of the left. Aside from anarchist publications covering the dispute, there were various snide comments in the Stalinist Trade Union Review about a "loose collective" of supporters occupying a Magnet branch in the North East.

There are four unions involved, and their only response so far has been to call for a boycott. This is fair enough, but if, like me, you've spent a few hours picketing Magnet showrooms, you'll notice that not a lot of trade goes on. In fact, it's quite clear that the sort of consumer boycott that hits normal retail outlets won't work here. Instead what's needed is solidarity of the real kind, such as getting construction unions in Magnet's large customers (local authorities, hotel and catering businesses) to refuse to fit Magnet kitchens. This is an awful lot harder, and the biggest step is actually to talk to the workers in these places. It begs the question as to why the locked-out Magnet workers' own unions haven't done it, as it would be much easier for them to impose an industry wide boycott.

Magnet Strike Committee, 109
Jedburgh Dr. Darlington DL3 9UP
Women's Support Group, Lynn
Fawcett 01325 352357 (day)

docker beaten by police

ASACKED Liverpool docker was battered unconscious by Merseyside Police on the morning of 2nd July during arrests at the Alexandra Dock gate. Steve Stanton, formerly employed by Mersey Docks and Harbour Company at the Norse Irish terminal, was rushed to Fazakerly Hospital by ambulance after PC 7193 had deliberately banged his head against the pavement whilst attempting to handcuff the man. Five other Merseyside Police officers were involved in the attempted arrest, with around 20 officers in attendance.

Stanton was one of 37 pickets on the Alexandra gate when police arrested sacked docker Kenny Weston, who had been targetted following a previous incident on Monday. Sgt Farrell of the Port Police directed the Merseyside Police to make the arrests. Pickets had withdrawn from the gate before the arrests were made.

During the police charge towards Weston, officers grabbed Stanton and wres-

tled him to the ground. Whilst attempting to place handcuffs on Stanton, PC 7193 banged the man's head against the pavement kerb near a pelican crossing.

The Liverpool dockers have consistently condemned acts of violence by the Merseyside Police and particularly members of the Operational Support Division (OSD), who have acted aggressively whenever peaceful picketing has been taking place. Regular liaison meetings between Merseyside Police and dockers' representatives have taken place with the objective of avoiding such incidents. It now seems that agreements reached with the police no longer have any value.

It is important to note that when police arrive at the picket lines, the dockers have always undertaken to abide by instructions issued by the police. On this and other occasions, no instructions were issued and unprovoked violence was used against the peaceful demonstration.

jsa slave labour

PROJECT WORK, part of the JSA, is a way of bringing voluntary type organisations into the machinery of workfare. Forcing people into "volunteering" is slave labour and is used to undercut other workers. The managers of organisations benefitting from this free workforce try to justify the exploitation as "giving people a chance". Project work is being piloted in, amongst other areas, Bristol. Bristol Claimant's Action have published a list of those collaborating with Project Work - along with a list of those who have refused to collaborate and have opposed the schemes.

One of the main coordinators of the scheme are Instant Muscle [a '70s hanger now a key part of workfare] : Springside House, 84 North End Road, London W14.

- Two major charities involved are:
- PDSA Design House, 7 Great Minster Street, Winchester, SO23 9HA. [01962 868883]
 - National Trust [Regional Affairs coordinator] Eastleigh Court, Bishopstow, Warminster. BA12 9HW. [01985 8436000]

Charities/ organisations more local to Bristol include:

SS Great Britain, Great Western Dock, Gas Ferry Lane, Hotwells, Bristol BS8 6TY.

Westbury Wildlife Park, Trym Road, Westbury on Trym Bristol BS9 3ET

Trinity Day Care, Holy Trinity Church, Hotwells, Bristol BS8 4ST

However, MIND, National Federation of City Farms, Help the Aged, Oxfam, Tree Aid, West of England Centre for Integrated living, National Association of Volunteer Bureaux, Bath Community Service Volunteers, Service 9, the St Pauls Holiday Camp Project, the Aled Richards Trust and Bath CSV all refuse to collaborate.

Derek Tuitt of Trinity Day Care describes arguments against Project Work as "militant crap".

Organisations who collaborate with project work should be exposed and pressured to withdraw.

Volunteer organisations function because people want to do the work not because they are forced to. If these organisations persist in using slave labour they

july 4th demonstrations against the death penalty

sheffield

AT ABOUT 1 p.m. a publications stall was set up in the largely working class Markets area of the city. This coincided with handing out of hundreds of leaflets about US State Murder, Lorenzo Komboa Ervin's call for a Moratorium on the death penalty, information about specific prisoners and *Taking Liberties* - the newspaper of the Anarchist Black Cross. Many people showed interest and we spoke to a few ex-prison inmates who congratulated us on taking the initiative saying "there must be more done for people inside" - we couldn't agree more.

We then moved on to HMP Doncaster a shiny new efficient private prison - in fact so efficient that 7 people have died there since it opened. Providing the govt. with a safe means of execution of largely unconvicted and emotionally disturbed individuals.

After handing out the leaflets and *Taking Liberties*, the cameras were focused upon us and we were ejected from the prisons private road. They kindly gave us the recommendation to write in to the Director (note: not Governor) who they were sure would give us permission to hand out the leaflets as he was "a decent bloke".

Once again several people (relatives) spoke to us and were keen to hear what we were saying.

Mark

edinburgh

AROUND FIFTY people met at the city's east end this afternoon at 1.00pm and marched to the US Consulate Building in Regent's Terrace. Anti Death Penalty slogans were chanted and a number of people played noisy musical instruments including several different whistles and a large pair of cymbals.

Once at the consulate, the entrance door was redecorated with various anti-death penalty posters, leaflets and other literature. Several members of the press were present including a cameraman from Scottish Television and reporters and photographers from *the Herald* and *Scotsman* Newspapers.

The demonstrators stood on the steps and listened to a moving speech about the injustices of the death penalty and about a number of specific cases such as Mumia Abu Jamal and Kenny Ritchey, a man from Edinburgh who is on death row in Ohio.

An American flag was burned by one of the protesters as the others shouted and cheered. The demonstration then moved back towards the centre of town, where we paused to demonstrate outside the Disney shop. Some of the protesters entered the Disney shop and wandered around handing out leaflets to shoppers.

The demonstration continued to march along Princes Street, still chanting, making a noise, handing out several hundred leaflets and collecting signatures on a petition. When we reached Castle Street, several demonstrators were stopped by the police and asked to give their names. One demonstrator who refused (legally) to give her name, was seized violently by the police and detained before being released without charge.

A number of the protesters who avoided the police, continued to the American Express shop on Princes Street, and continued to hand out leaflets and obtain signatures for the petition.

Saturday 5th July - *The Herald* (national Scottish newspaper) carried a report of the demonstration featuring a large colour photograph of the flag burning.

should suffer financially. As Bristol Claimants Action put it: Actions which impair fundraising would be particularly effective. The longer and more impressive list of organisations refusing to collaborate shows what has already been achieved.

Contact Bristol Claimants Action for more info.: PO Box 77, 82 Colston St,

Bristol, BS1 5BB

For an account of leftist shit for brains behaviour and a good analysis of part of the anti JSA struggle read the "Open Letter of Resignation" from the [ex] secretary of Wales Against the JSA in, amongst others, Subversion 22 [Dept 10, 1 Newton Street, Manchester, M1 1HW]

arnaouti bakery workers strike

THE FIVE week strike at the Arnaouti pitta bakery in Tottenham, north London in April/May this year has to be seen in the context of other disputes in this area including the sustained JJ Fast Foods dispute in 1995/6. These disputes and several short-lived walk outs and a factory occupation (Tudor Gold) have taken place amongst low-paid immigrant workers.

Wages and conditions at the Arnaouti factory were appalling-£3.37 an hour for day workers and a 37p addition for the night shift. A contracted 72 hour week consisted of six 12 hour shifts. If work ran out workers were sent home without pay. Permanent staff got two weeks holiday. There was no sick pay or pension.

The strike was provoked by management trying to cut a tea break. The workers walked out on the evening of April 13th and refused to return to work on the Monday. In all, 65 workers joined the strike, the majority of whom were "casuals". The active strikers were mainly Somali. Some of the strikers were members of the bakers union (BFAWU), but the union played no part at the start of the strike, and the union official was on holiday for the first week of the strike.

The local "left" picked up on the strike and the Socialist Workers Party visited the picket line, helped make placards and drew up a list of demands as an SWP leaflet. Through Haringey Trades Union Council, which they dominate, they set up an account and did a collection sheet.

A mass picket was called for the following Monday and the SWP contacted Haringey Unison (which includes members of the Haringey Solidarity Group) for support. About 40 people attended the mass picket. Members of the Solidarity Group and the Socialist Party approached the SWP about starting a support group and were told "a support group already exists-its called Haringey Trades Council."

My second morning on the picket revealed some of the weaknesses of the strike organisation. The strikers didn't arrive until after 9am, after several scabs had gone in. When they did arrive they seemed reluctant to picket vehicles or scabs going into the factory. Many delivery drivers were

sympathetic but said theyd be sacked if they failed to make deliveries.

The SWP took strikers to visit the TESCO distribution depot in Harlow to meet USDAW members. Tesco's buys 90% of Arnaoutis pitta bread. Tesco's management went "ballistic", resulting in the USDAW full timer distancing himself from the strikers.

When the Bakers Union official returned, he contacted the employers federation (National Association of Master Bakers), Tesco's (to ask them to "distance themselves from Arnaouti") and put out an appeal to set up a hardship fund. A demonstration called for 2nd May was opposed by the SWP because "everyone will still be celebrating the election result"!!.

By now the strike-and the possible loss of the Tesco's contract had forced the boss to negotiate. A meeting was arranged with a committee of 4 of the strikers at ACAS, and Arnaouti offered a return to work on

strikes to get "out of control".

What is our role in such strikes? For us, the issue is solidarity. Strike support work often feels very difficult since we are not the main players. Its hard watching strikes go down to defeat, although we shouldn't overstate them. The strikers I have met since have found other jobs on similar wages. Our job isn't to make life at places like Arnaoutis acceptable "longer chains, bigger cages."

The SWP had learned from the JJ Fast Food dispute, where a support group was set up outside their control, and used their control of the trades council to control the nature of support work, opposing a local support group and a consumer boycott proposal as "community action". A boycott campaign would have given the strikers the opportunity to publicise the strike more widely, and Arnaoutis had already been seen to be vulnerable over the Tesco's contract. It may also have provided a chance



Photo: H. Redwood

the pre-existing terms. The strikers rejected this but agreed to meet again on 2nd May and the demo was then called off by the union as a "gesture of goodwill."

On 2nd May at ACAS the boss asked for a list of strikers. Despite warnings from the union and the trades council, the names were handed over and letters of dismissal were sent out over the weekend. The sackings triggered the effective collapse of the strike.

What lessons are there for us, as libertarian socialists and anarchists to learn from the strike?

Firstly, there will undoubtedly be similar strikes amongst low paid immigrant and refugee workers. These workers face multiple problems - of language, of legal status, of isolation, of racism. They are unlikely to know their legal rights-or lack of them. On the plus side, they are likely to have little "loyalty" to the official labour movement-and there is some potential for

to carry out solidarity work outside of the remit of the official union.

For ourselves, we struggled to co-ordinate our involvement. We couldn't get a HSG meeting together to discuss the strike, which meant the bulletin was produced without any discussion and without there being a forum to discuss it with the strikers. Nevertheless, comrades in the Turkish anarchist group 5th May translated it into Turkish and it was distributed nationally and at the May Day Festival in Finsbury Park.

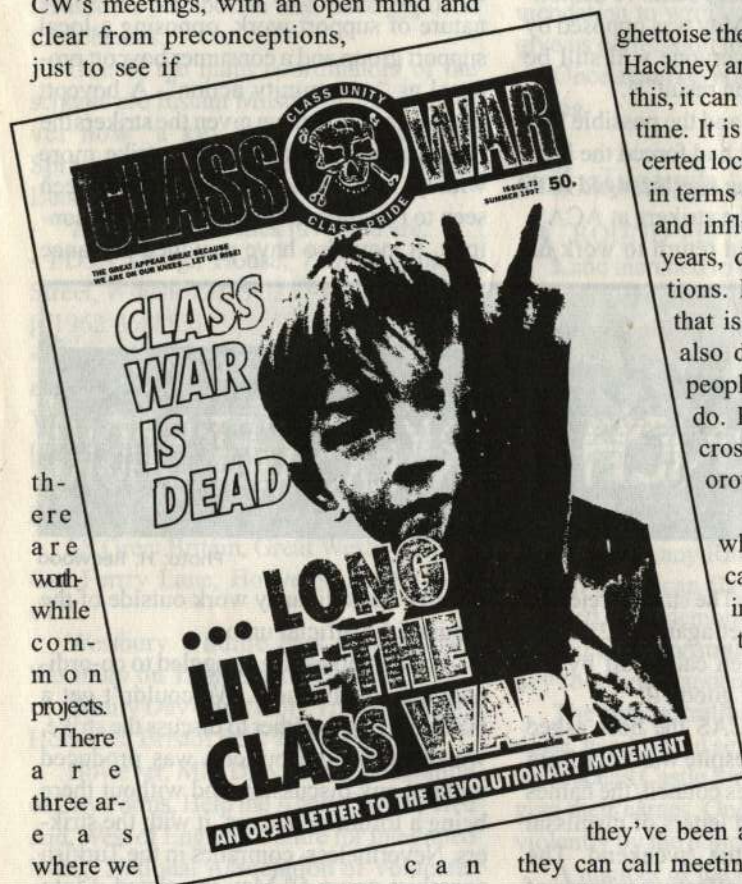
Before the election I was called a "middle class individualist" by the SWP for advocating "not voting". During the strike they persuaded the strikers to write to Tony Blair and Bernie Grant MP. I doubt if either replied. Faced with a Labour government likely to be as anti working class as the last, we need to learn quickly that we will have to rely on ourselves if we want to change things.

class war 73

IF THEY ARE to be believed, this is the last issue of CW, though no doubt someone will republish it, just as all the ageing punk bands who still provide the inspiration for one half of CW always stage comebacks - welcome to the old timers, but offering nothing new.

That said, there are positive things to say about this paper. To quote, "We need to find new ways of organising ourselves that can appeal to all the working class, male and female, young and old, black and white." We wholeheartedly agree.

While this is not the first time these ideas have been aired, or that CW not is the first organisation to look at it's progress critically, what matters is what we have in common, and what we can achieve together. So we recommend people do go along to CW's meetings, with an open mind and clear from preconceptions, just to see if



there are worth-while common projects.

There are three areas where we work together, in the locality, in the workplace, and around issues. Here are some of our thoughts.

Working locally is the most important and most neglected. It is in the local area where you can have the greatest impact and greatest visibility. And visibility is important, it's the only reason anyone ever joins the SWP. However, local activities do have their problems. The reason many anarchists don't prioritise local activity is often, we suspect, because they don't feel connected with the locality, especially in cities like London, where many anarchists tend to

ghettoise themselves in areas like Hackney and Brixton. Allied to this, it can be dull, and will take time. It is fair to say that concerted local work will pay back in terms of members, success and influence after 5 to ten years, depending on conditions. For young activists that is very daunting. It is also difficult at times for people to work out what to do. Fighting for a zebra crossing isn't very glamorous, is it?

A good example of what can be done locally is the Bradford 1 in 12 Club, who have the confidence in their politics and the influence (and know a lot of the local politicians and bureaucrats because

they've been around as long) that they can call meetings, demand that the council sends someone to answer questions, and the Council does! This isn't to buy them off, it's because the Council has learnt the hard way the price of ignoring them. Bad examples of local activity are legion.

Local groups do not have to be based around a social centre, though it obviously helps. They do need to have an understanding of what's going on in their locality, and this is one of anarchism's advantages over the 57 varieties, so why don't we make more use of it? Perhaps we're afraid of people breaking up our cosy world, or perhaps we scare people off with jargon or

loads of work, as the victims of burnout see new members as a chance to find a life.

Workplace organisation is just as essential, though obviously not everyone is in a position to do it. That many who are in such a position don't is a result of confusion about unions and their role. Put simply, there is a difference between defending your rights at work and becoming general secretary of the TUC. There is not the same opportunity here as there is in local organising, but the two are complementary. If someone is victimised at work the local group can support with pickets, solidarity and doing stuff for organising campaigns where the workers want to remain anonymous. With the JSA and the quick succession of temporary dead end jobs many are now faced with, having a local is vital. It is worth being a shop steward or union rep, both for the knowledge and skills you will learn as well as the satisfaction of fighting the bosses at a small but meaningful level. In our opinion union positions outside the workplace, such as branch secretary and so on, while someone needs to do them, are not the best places for anarchist militants to put their effort into.

Successful workplace organisation needs two things - local support in terms of numbers and solidarity and advice from others in the same industry. These require both a local organisation and an industrial network of like-minded militants.

Issue based campaigns are perhaps the most problematic. We'll start with a good example, the Anarchist Black Cross (ABC). The ABC has no problems in terms of members / supporters agreeing on political principle and on what they want to do collectively (it is a voluntary organisation after all). It is also not bound by geography or circumstance - if you are the only anarchist on Rockall you can still write to prisoners.

What get called single issues are usually not single issues. The problems associated with them include working with other people who not only do not share your politics, but are openly hostile to them, such as Trots and Stalinists. Our belief is to get something down in writing agreeing what you are going to do and how you are going to do it, the Spanish CNT call these pacts, which can help when the more unprincipled leftists break it.

We are clear that we are not talking about a new organisation; there is no need for one. Our energy is better spent in organising than in another organisation.

These meetings are to be welcomed.

the dawning of a new era

HOW MANY TIMES since 1st May and the landslide election of Tony Blair's Labour Government have you had conversations with punch drunk lefties that begin "What was your favourite memory of election night 97?". Maybe it's a sign of political illiteracy that party manifestos are so dull that no one bothers to read them anymore, but it seems that the media euphoria and the popping of champagne corks at Walworth Rd have served to obscure the fact that New Labour was supported by *The Sun*, *The Times*, *The Financial Times* and *The Economist* and the New Labour Manifesto set out its aims as follows:

"In industrial relations we make it clear that there will be no return to flying pickets, secondary action, strikes with no ballot or the trade union laws of the 1970s."

In their book *The Blair Revolution* Peter Mandelson and Roger Liddle set down in detail what Labour's pledges to "crack-down on petty crime and neighbourhood disorder" and "stop the growth of an 'underclass' in Britain" will actually mean.

On crime: "To improve the effectiveness of the police, so they catch more criminals....The issue is not just more bobbies on the beat but how the police best organise themselves to exploit technological advance - from genetic identification techniques to the use of video recorders, to data matching systems."

"...To increase the likelihood of convictions in the courts and through reform of our criminal justice procedures, reduce the number of technical acquittals."

On the "underclass": "It is not right that some people should collect the dole, live on the black economy and then refuse to co-operate with society's efforts to reintegrate them into the labour market. It is dishonest and corrosive of our attempt to build a sense of mutual obligations in the community. In the circumstances where new opportunity is being offered and refused there should be no absolute entitlement to continued receipt of full social se-

curity benefits."

The Economist and *The Sun* both backed Labour because they read between the lines and anticipated what lay behind all the cheery grins and photo opportunities.

European capital cannot afford the cost of the maintenance of the welfare state. Germany's unemployment stands at 4.5 million, French unemployment is over 3 million, Britain's around 3.5 million. The cost of unemployment is borne through the provision of welfare benefits. The welfare state is a drag anchor on economic growth. If European capital is to compete with the Asian economies and the US economy, it requires labour market flexibility to hold down wages so intervention by the state to sustain the labour market as a way of reducing unemployment is out. The only remaining solution is to dismantle the welfare state itself. The *Financial Times*, in calling for support for Blair, recognised that the party best placed politically to dismantle the welfare state is the party which gave birth to it. Blair's vision, which he has sold to the CBI, *The Economist* and a

host of other business forums, is of a hi-tech, low wage economy. As Mandelson describes it "John Major presided over a massive boost to government spending in the run up to the 1992 election. Public spending rose by 5.7% in the election year alone.... Public borrowing has too often absorbed too high a share of the country's savings. Government policy must ensure

that the nations savings are put to productive purposes, rather than immediate public or personal consumption."

The vote cast for Labour on 1st May was objectively a vote for the dismantling of the welfare state, slashing of public sector pay, workfare and a high tech police force to save the middle classes from the disorder likely to result. Does anyone still need to ask why Labour didn't oppose the Criminal Justice Act?

Whatever subjective intentions Labour voters had, the end result was the replacement of a weak, divided anti-working class government with a right wing anti-working class government with a massive majority!

Over the next 5 years Labour will seek to drain resources from working class communities. The closure of schools, youth clubs, libraries and playgroups, and the selling off of housing stock and chronic disrepair which are the trademark of Labour in local office will be attempted on a national scale. Unless the resistance to this responds on the basis that Labour is the class enemy in office, and opposes it as such and fights from the basis that every school, every youth club, every council home, belongs to the community in which it is based and is not the property of the grinning Rachmans of Blairism, the Labour project will succeed, and the wholesale abandonment to 3rd world levels of

poverty of whole sections of the working class which is the legacy of Clinton in the US will be our fate here.

My favourite memory of May 1st? Well, mine was a week or so later, in *Socialist Worker*, with a headline "We Didn't Vote for This." Tough shit, comrades, you voted for it, campaigned for it and the rest of us are now going to pay for it.



holland

eurodemo!

JUNE 14th SAW about 50.000 people turn out for the march for social justice. The majority of the people there were protesting against the increase in unemployment and social exclusion, they wanted a socialist europe in which all would be included. So this demonstration was seen by them as an alternative to the eurotop, the name given to the euro-summit. Many people at the demo, however, reacted against the idea of a socialist europe and instead met at an earlier time at an earlier time to show their opposition both to this and to wage slavery.

Eurotop broken down to Eu rot op means EU fuck off in Dutch and this was taken by many as the slogan of the day. This contingent numbered only a few hundred and was completely marginalised by the socialist groups.

The demo set off about 3pm and the contingent of red and black flags was relatively close to the front. For the first half hour of the demo as we walked through the main streets of Amsterdam there was a strange scenario in that most people seemed to be standing on the sidelines simply watching, taking pictures and waving! As we continued the spectators diminished but nothing much happened until we got to the junction where if we turned left we would be heading to the bank where the Euro-summit was being held. Surprisingly enough the road was completely sealed off with riot vans, but it was only policed by ordinary cops.

Quite a few people stopped here and attempted to go to the left but there was absolutely no chance of that. In this time something was thrown at the police who responded immediately with a baton charge. This led to a hail of bricks, bottles and stones which did actually stop them for a short while, as they weren't in riot gear and so when hit were injured. One brick got a camera full on and it smashed to pieces. This caused a few other camera-

men to turn away from photographing the protesters in order to protect their equipment.

This situation did not go on for long as the police responded by driving the riot vans into the crowd at what seemed like full speed. There was a mad scramble down the street and the police had secured it again (not that it had ever been really threatened). At least noone got nicked.

The Dutch police were taking a very low key approach

From the start there had been no cops walking along with the protesters and that junction was the first time they were seen.

The next point of interest was as we passed a bank. Various hooded - and some stupidly unhooded - types proceeded to lob bottles at its windows but didn't manage to break them. This went on for quite a while as there were no police around, but people just got bored and left without finishing the job.

Then as we approached police headquarters people noticed an unmarked van parked outside. It had its windows put in and was then overturned. This time the police divided the demo with the use of long batons and threats of tear gas. Riot vans were again driven into the crowd but after about five minutes people were able

to join the rest of the march as the police disappeared into the back streets again.

A short while after this we ended up back where we had started. Whilst hanging around the square we heard that about 2000 Italians who had been on their way to join the demo were being held in Amsterdam railway station by the police.

It turned out that the police had arrested about 200 Italians and many of the others were now



protesting at their detention by occupying one of the main road junctions outside the station. They were joined by many anarcho-autonome types who had been on the demo but soon afterwards the police started moving forward with batons drawn in an attempt to clear the road.

At this people got up and started walking away, but kept together and moved away slowly. Though it was a retreat there was a real show of strength involved too. This mini demo ended back at the Dam where there were still things going on. Here one of the Italians got onto the stage and explained what was happening.

Many Italians could not afford the train

journey over to Amsterdam so they had all turned up at the station and squatted the train. The authorities tried to stop the train from leaving but they managed to take it anyway. On arriving at Amsterdam, however, the Dutch police had not allowed the to leave the station and had then arrested 200 of them for allegedly damaging a couple of the carriages. These people were still being held. In the meantime people in Italy had heard what was going on and occupied the Dutch embassy in protest at this. The final thing we heard on that day was that the Italians had all been deported.

Later that evening, back in Amsterdam, there were about 200 dodgy types sitting outside Vrankrijk, a squat bar. A limousine went by and was instantly trashed but then an ordinary van had things thrown at it as well. There was an outcry over the van being hit and the people who had done it were confronted by others. A call came to move towards the main police station and demand the release of people who had been arrested. About 100 people started walking and just before we got to the station five or six riot vans began approaching the demo from the front. People split up and dispersed and were criticised for not standing their ground despite being massively outnumbered. There were a few confrontations and people were beaten up and arrested.

Some of the arrests were by plain clothes cops. An attempt was made to de-arrest someone being held by plain clothes cops but they pulled out guns and started waving them around. This went on into the night.

The next day, Sunday, people met up at 12pm at the railway station for a street party. Four sound systems were already there and once people had massed they moved off together. The police tried to guide them towards a warehouse where a free party had been the previous night but people wanted a street party. So they got to Visserplein Square and the party started to go ahead. Within a short space of time the party moved to the warehouse as the sound systems had struck a deal with the police. A lot of people were disgusted with this.

At 3pm there was a sex riot in the Nieuwmarkt which consisted of a few people dressing up in extremely outrageous gear and others walking round with sex toys strapped to their heads and bodies. The media lapped it up.

The next thing planned for that day was an evening of chaos and fireworks starting

around 9pm. 9pm arrived but there were hardly any people around. 350 people had left the Vrankrijk to march on the police station again to demand the release of their comrades who had been arrested on previous nights. As the demo walked along police vans suddenly pulled in in front and at the back and cops sealed off the area around them. All the people sat down and the police arrested all of them. This took until 12.30. They quick cuffed everybody, herded them into buses and took them to police stations around Holland.

These arrests were under Article 140 which states that the police are allowed to arrest someone they believe to be a member of a criminal organisation if they suspect that organisation of planning criminal activity.

On Monday there was a demonstration at a refugee detention centre on the outskirts of Amsterdam. Tennis balls with solidarity messages taped on them and knotted sheets were thrown over the fences.

The detention centre authorities put on films and food to try and divert the detainees. At the same time 10000 Kurds demonstrated in central Amsterdam against Turkey joining the EC. There was also an ASEED demo against genetics. All passed off without any arrests.

Later in the evening people went around the various hotels where the heads of state were staying and about 100 people were arrested. The cops said they were being held for going into restricted areas. During these arrests the police cornered a few people by a canal and one enterprising individual escaped arrest by jumping into the canal.

ripped off from a leaflet by Brighton Autonomists.

euroflop uk

a report on the UK leg of the march

SATURDAY 4 June about 300-400 max marchers got together in Hyde Park. I put the term loosely. The venue had been variously billed as Marble Arch, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, and lastly Reformers Tree in Hyde Park.

I was the first to arrive, met a couple of other IWW members and waited. Members of the SPGB turned up followed by few people from Socialist Organisation and then some Spartacists who tried to "teach" me that what we needed was a Bolshevik Revolution along the lines of 1917!!

Two people arrived with a banner proclaiming themselves the Euromarch, walked straight to the centre of the Park, set up a megaphone and started making speeches. At the time they turned the megaphones on there was no-one around to listen to them. They had gone to a completely different place to the supporters of the march. Eventually we filtered over to where they were, listened to a number of boring contributions, laced with such homilies as "fight social exclusion" [a sociologists dream slogan I think] and waited for the mass march from Hillingdon Hospital to arrive. It did - there were no more than 30 on it! We then spent another while listening to more speeches and the march assembled and set off. [It was the smallest London march I had ever been in] At Downing Street a petition or something was handed in and a delegation of 6 returned cheering as if the revolution had started!

In retrospect the day was a complete waste of time although as the IWW we made a few contacts and sold some literature. I spoke with quite a few people who came along and it seems apparent that the attempts to totally depoliticise the march itself and the Euromarch in general had been so successful that no-one actually knew what the whole event was for!!! That in itself probably knocked participation totally on the head.

Kevin IWW Swindon

greece

framed anarchist freed

DIMOS CHRISTOFIDIS, 21 yrs, was accused of having planted an incendiary device at a McDonalds fast food restaurant in the centre of Athens, on 14 Feb. 1996. The device was ignited but soon discovered and extinguished.

Dimos was arrested the day after on a description by two McDonalds employees. One of them said he had seen him round the place but never entering the WC where the device was found. The other one, a woman named Fragaki also recognised him. She said that there had been two young men: One dark-haired and the other blond with long hair tied as a "ponytail" and a goatee beard. Dimos is blond. His hair though is (and was at the time of the incident) short cut. He also carries (and carried) a normal beard, covering not only his chin but also his cheeks. Dimos - who had been in jail for a couple of weeks and released on 1st March 1996 on a 500.000 drachmas bail - finally went to trial on 4th July at the court in Livadia (a city more than 100 kms from Athens). His defence managed to produce a pony tailed and goat-

eed photograph of him which had been taken one year before the McDonald incident in order to prove that the police had the photograph in their archives (since it was on an official permit of residence, issued in 1995 by the police, as Dimos at the time was a Cypriot national and only later obtained Greek nationality). And also to prove that Mrs. Fragaki had been shown the picture by the police; she had sworn that that was the man she had seen. A police inspector from the special State Security Branch, Thucidides Sakaraelos, who was also examined by the court insisted that Dimos had a ponytail and a small beard. He also accepted that he had known the accused for several years (since 1993, when Dimos had taken part in his school occupation and later on in 1995 when he was one of the 504 arrested in the Athens Polytechnic. The defence gave then the court a series of photographs taken during Dimos' trial for the Polytechnic's occupation in Dec. 1995 when Dimos was sentenced to forty months of prison and photographs and a video produced by the media the day when (15 Feb. 1996, a day after the

McDonald incident) when he was taken by the police to the prosecutors office, proving that his appearance was not the one described by Mrs. Fragaki and Sakaraelos (the cop). It was also proven that Dimos was under constant surveillance by the Special Surveillance Section of the police (a different agency from the one employing Sakaraelos and that's why the last didn't know that the accused's appearance had changed). In spite of the above, the public prosecutor asked the court to

declare the accused guilty of attempted explosion endangering life and property. However, the evidence was too strong for the 4 jurors and the 2 judges to reject it. They finally declared Dimos Christofidis not guilty and only the court president voted for the prosecutor's proposal.

What means that the court accepted the defence's arguments: The device had been planted by the police or McDonalds itself? (they were compensated by their insurance). Mrs. Fragaki was a witness set up by the police. Dimos Christofidis was framed because he was an anarchist.

bangladesh strike win

THE BENGALI National Garment Workers Union (NGWF) have cancelled their planned strike as the employers have accepted their main demands. At a meeting of the various garment worker unions and the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association the following agreement was made:

1. All workers will get Friday off. Emergency shippments can not be given out on Fridays.
2. Child care will be provided in all factories.
3. The May Day national paid holiday will be strictly implemented.
4. The government declared national minimum wage of \$23 a month will be implemented.

Up until now workers in the garment industry usually had to work 7 days a week, sometimes for as little as \$10 a month. Out

of the 1.5 million workers in the garment industry, only about 60.000 are organized; one third of them in the NGWF. While the county wide strike is cancelled, the NGWF will closely monitor the implementation of the agreements and take the necessary steps against any violations.

Members of the NGWF are discussing the possibility of setting up an IWA-section in Bangladesh, and representatives from IWA are invited to their November congress.

india solidarity needed

August 1, 1997

Dear Friends,

We are writing to you for support to wage-workers acting on their own.

Jhalani tools (India) Limited is a major manufacturer of handtools in the world and

has three plants in Faridabad. The management has not paid sixteen months of wages to its 2183 workers. The plants are in operation.

Realising that leaders and unions are hand-in-gloves with the management, workers in groups of eight to ten started activity on their own to obtain their outstanding wages. The number of such groups increased in May-June and by July two thousand workers became active on their own in groups of 5-10.

To counter this self-activity of factory workers the government machinery-management-union leaders have together started harassing, instigating and persecuting workers.

Please send protest letters to the Prime Minister of India through the Ambassador of India in the country of your residence demanding immediate payment of sixteen months outstanding wages.

Please do circulate this letter.

Sher Singh Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, N.I.T. Faridabad - 121 001 India

czech republic

anarchist charged with attempted murder

ON JULY 7th anarchist militant Vaclav Jez was arrested in the Moravian town of Blansko for attempted double murder charges and "keeping illegal arms". On July 6, Vaclav had been attacked by two nazi-skinheads while destroying some anti-anarchist slogans, sprayed by local fascists. The two nazis attacked him brutally with the intention of heavily injuring or even killing him. In desperation, Vaclav drew the illegally owned gun and fired in self-defence. One bonehead was hit in the shoulder and the second escaped.

Police immediately accused Vaclav of a "double murder attempt", claiming that well known Blansko nazi skinheads were just "ordinary youngsters" accidentally passing by and that the street fight was incited by Vaclav. The district judge sentenced him to preliminary custody awaiting trial. Vaclav faces a 15 year sentence for both "murder attempts" and 5 years for his illegally-owned gun.

Vaclav is one of the most active militant anarchists in all Czechoslovakia and a well known antifascist activist. He has al-

ready been framed by the Special Anti extremist Secret Police, which arrested him on the May Day demonstration 1995 and accused him of "verbal assault on a Police officer". Vaclav spent 5 months in jail and was freed only due to anarchist public protest campaign. He was investigated by the policemen, who were beating him during interrogation and demanding contacts and names of Czech anarchist militant scene. The false Police interpretation of his self-defence against two armed skinheads is another attempt to silence him.

Because legal assistance is extremely expensive in the Czech Republic, we urgently ask all anarchists all over the world to help us to provide a good lawyer for Vaclav. Because he is a "recidivist" according to the law, he can be also sentenced to "extraordinary punishment", which means 25 years or more. If you want to help, please, contact the International secretariat of CSAF <caf-inter@usa.net>.

Send protest letters to your local Czech embassy demanding the dropping of charges.

books for a lending library he's establishing for prisoners, contacts to network with the struggle and anyone willing to give a hand.

Christopher Lee Plummer
PP #677345, Hughes Unit
P.O. Box 21142 Gatesville, TX 76597

Jason is free

Jason Moreland who has had constant harassment from the Clayton County police department and the State of Georgia DA (see *BF210/211*) has had all charges against him dropped

agony

The agony website, hosting the web pages of the WSA New York, On Gogol Boulevard, the Anarchist Yellow Pages and lots more have moved to a new location:
<http://flag.blackened.net/agony>

turkey

anti-militarist arrested

THE TURKISH army, armed with heavy weapons, has launched a new Spring assault against the PKK guerrillas in Kurdistan. The army entered in to Iraq and killed many Kurdish guerrillas and Kurdish civilians. The Turkish army also had heavy losses. Every day, Turkish TV channels show soldiers' funerals, complete with patriotic music. Many have died on both sides. Turkish generals pay no attention to the losses-they think only of their shoulder straps!

Osman Murat Ulke is a conscientious objector and a member of the war resisters of Yzmir. Last year he refused to go to military service and refused to use weapons or wear a military uniform. Osman has demonstrated the effectiveness of refusal of military service as a means of defying Turkish nationalism. Osman has been in a military prison at Eskipehir for four months, awaiting a trial at which the military prosecutor will demand a total of 16 years imprisonment for him.

The Campaign Against Compulsory Military Service in Turkey first began 6 months ago, to support Osman. It has since enlarged its aims to resistance of all military action. We are trying to establish international contacts with peace and anti militarist groups. We also printed some leaflets and bulletins to encourage desertions from the army. At present there are officially 250, 000 deserters. We are trying to increase this number. Our campaign is especially important now, because of the Turkish armies ongoing assault in Kurdish areas.

The Campaign Against Compulsory Military Service in Turkey
Top Floor 2a Belgrade Road London N16 8DJ
Tel/Fax: 0171 254 3248

To write letters of Support:
Osman Murat Ulke
Military Prison
1st Tactical Station of Airforce
Eskipehir
TURKEY

Send letters of protest to the Turkish embassy

usa

anarchist needs support

CHRIS PLUMMER is an anarchist who was sentenced to 15-23 years in jail (!) for his alleged part in a raid against a Nazi skinhead house in Texas. He has already served one year in prison. Just recently, he was transferred to another jail and has already suffered several broken ribs, a broken jaw and cheekbone, scarred eyes, and other injuries at the hands of neo-nazi skinhead inmates. His situation looks bleak and he has already come to believe that he won't make it out of jail alive. He needs your assistance now.

As an outspoken prisoner, Chris has come under fire from prison administration and neo-nazi prison gangs for his organizing work and direct action with the United Anarchist Front & Cell One, a revolutionary prisoners' cadre. Chris has asked for

nigeria

the struggle against repression

NIGERIA IS increasingly a pariah in the international community, a rouge state which finds company with countries such as Libya, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Burma and Iran. The mere mention of the country's name evokes a typical image characterised by corruption, military dictatorship, debt, disease and disaster. Nigeria is living dangerously and this, even by Africa's long suffering standards, speaks volume for a country blessed with abundant oil and gas reserves, several solid minerals, agricultural potentials and overflowing human capital. Three decades of military rule have spawned the monstrous spectre of unfreedom, denial of fundamental human rights, violent subjugation and brutalisation of the psyche and spirit of the overwhelming majority of the population. The tragedy of Nigeria is underlined by the facts that the country continues to live well below her potentials; the economy is in ruins. The population is held prisoner by the barrel of military armour that has brought the country to its knees.

review of the AL's activities in 1996

1996 was both a trying and rewarding year for the Awareness League and its membership. As usual AL had several brushes with security operatives and the military membership. Two seminars/political education workshops put together by AL, one at Engu and the second inside the campus of the University of Nsukka, were disrupted by plain clothes police and men of the state security service (SSS), who claimed that they were acting on "orders from above". They said both meeting were illegal and were designed to sabotage the transition to civil rule program of the junta. They confiscated materials meant for the workshops, but made no arrests.

In response to the strike action embarked upon by lectures in all of Nigeria's Universities, the authorities initiated massive clamp down on the teachers and other

activists known to sympathise with the lecturers. Hundreds were arrested and detained, while the umbrella union of the teachers, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) was proscribed by military decree. Two lecturers, who are AL members were detained in the course of the general clamp down for a period of three months. They are: Comrade Ahmed Ojefia of the University of Uyo and Comrade Rex Denedo of the University of Jos. Interestingly, their incarceration has done little to dampen their faith and commitment to the struggle for a just and better society.

On July 26 1996, AL in conjunction with three other left groups organised a peaceful protest in Ibadan, about 150 kilometres Southwest of Lagos to press the junta to release all activists and journalists, incarcerated since Abacha seized power in November 1993, especially those jailed on trumped-up charges of coup-plotting. A follow-up week long anti-military enlightenment and education workshop slated for the second week of August, 1996 was called off as a result of a massive clamp down that followed a planned nation-wide strike by some oil workers unions. We later held our annual conference on October 29, 1996. The congress was attended by about 65 delegates.

The intensified repressive tendencies of successive military regimes have dictated a reassessment of tactics and strategies on the part of AL, without necessarily losing focus of the wider Libertarian objectives. To this end, AL in 1996 undertook a new initiative to establish cells and networks in select industrial establishments. Before now, AL's activities were concentrated in the Universities, media houses and the states' civil services. The focus of the new drive is to make AL's presence felt in other key sectors of the economy. So far, we have witnessed modest successes, with the establishment of medium size networks within the ranks of junior bank workers in Engu, Jos, Owerri, Benin Asaba etc. As well as among the radical wing of oil workers in Warri, Calabar and Port-Harcourt in

the oil devastated Niger Delta Region.

The implications of this development are immediately obvious: AL can directly participate in major oil and bank workers strike actions henceforth, in addition to the opportunity to enlarge its membership and bolster awareness about anarcho-syndicalism within the ranks of Nigerian workers.

AL'S admission into the IWA

The IWA secretariat in Madrid, Spain, via a letter dated 17th December, 1996, informed us that the XXth Congress of the IWA-AIT has admitted AL as the Nigerian section of IWA. We welcome our formal admission into the IWA fold, even though we have for sometime now been a part and parcel of the IWA family.

We would have loved to be there physically to witness the proceedings of the Congress but our efforts were thwarted by our inability to obtain the necessary Visa documentation. Our admission comes against the backdrop of ongoing efforts to build a viable organisation, and to propagate the concepts of libertarian socialism to an African audience. The task is, by no means, an easy one. AL will continue to count on the active support and encouragement of the IWA secretariat to be able to execute its programs.

Note: A book by the Awareness League, "*History of Anarchism in Africa*", is being published. We will send you more information about this later.

Last year, WSA launched a campaign to buy a computer and other office equipment for our Nigerian comrades. Send your contributions to:

Workers Solidarity Alliance
339 Lafayette St. - Room 202
New York, NY 10012, USA



australia

Lorenzo Kom'Boa Ervin arrested

Neighbours; the everyday story of Australian racists and a black man

ON TUESDAY 8th of July this year, black anarchist Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin was arrested shortly after arriving in Australia for a speaking tour.

Lorenzo had just finished a similar speaking tour of Europe where he had spoken to amongst others middle class white school girls in England and immigrants in Belgium. He was invited by the Australian anarchist group Angry People, to speak on several themes: his personal history, his life in the US prison system, the formation of a coalition to organise against the death penalty in the US, raising black awareness of autonomous organisation and the need to address racism within the anarchist movement.

Anyone reading this who spoke to him while he was in the UK may remember how keen he was to get to Australia. He told me "I would really like to meet those aboriginal groups in Australia and shake their hands, as they were instrumental in getting me released from prison".

Lorenzo was arrested after the first talk, in Brisbane, Queensland for a trumped up visa infraction. Apparently, Lorenzo had filled in an incoming passenger card properly, but because of his not so good eyesight, had missed the section concerning previous convictions as it was written in very small type. He had however made no attempt to hide his identity. Immigration minister, Amanda Vanstone, said on his arrest that Lorenzo was "now an unlawful non-citizen" and that he had hidden his identity and not admitted his previous convictions. The Prime Minister, John Howard added his weight to the lies by saying that if Lorenzo was allowed into the country, it would make the immigration process worthless. Lorenzo was labelled as being

"not of good character" by the Australian state, and for this minor offence he was placed in maximum security solitary confinement in Brisbane's Sir Arthur Gorrie Centre prison.

The minor visa problem was actually a smoke screen by the Australian government, what seems to have happened is this:

* The far right group Australians Against Further Immigration heard of Lorenzo's visit. They then contacted Queensland MP Pauline Hanson, who represents the far right One Nation Party.

* Hanson claimed that Lorenzo was there to "stir up racial hatred amongst Aborigines" (She should know all about that!).

* She pressurised the immigration minister to scrutinise Lorenzo's paperwork, and, the racist government together with the Queensland authorities, were determined to get him out of the country.

News came out after Lorenzo's arrest that the Australian government were about to ban the Black Panther Party (disbanded since the mid 1970s) as it was a terrorist organisation, and that any former members would be unwelcome and branded as terrorists. This statement was puzzling as in 2000 the country is hosting the Olympic games. Two members of the American Olympic Committee are former Panthers, what were they going to do when they entered Australia, throw them in solitary confinement like Lorenzo?

Lorenzo was also assaulted. After being inside just one day he released a damning statement from prison via his lawyers:

"I had gone to the immigration hearing in good faith, expecting the law to be applied fairly and impartially(I was) told that the decision to deport me had already been taken on the grounds of "national security"...the decision had been made at the "highest level of government" mean-

ing John Howard the PM. He went on to say...I am being mistreated in order for me to drop all legal proceedings, upon arrival at the prison I was thrown face first into a wall, smashing my glasses...I was dragged by my handcuffed wrists which were behind my back and thrown into a solitary confinement cell. I can easily see why so many Australian black prisoners have committed suicide, they have been driven to it by the Australian police state...I know how the prison system works, "do not complain unless you want more"...they want me to agree deportation to appear that I went along with my captors. I refuse, even though my refusal will worsen my situation...I do not favour the prospect, but I may be killed while in custody and have my death ruled a "suicide". Whatever the situation, I will not give up the fight"

It was plain to see that Lorenzo was under some considerable strain, and was unsure of his fate.

international pressure builds

Meanwhile, news had spread out of Australia that he had been imprisoned, and a spontaneous international response began voicing their condemnation by faxing, phoning and e-mailing.

In Brisbane 150 demonstrators protested outside the immigration department, according to Angry People. In Atlanta, seven groups handed over a letter to a shaky receptionist at the Australian Trade Commission. In Dublin calls to the embassy reached such levels that the main phone was diverted to an answer machine, and a demonstration was held outside the embassy. In New York people from Blackout Books "went into the Rockefeller Center Austral-

continued over

ian consulate and presented our demands plus Lorenzo's statement.

Action was also taken in Greece, Sweden, Italy and New Zealand. The free fax numbers of Australian MPs were passed over the net, and were bombarded with messages

trial by farce

On the 10th of July, a bail application was made in the federal court. The Australian Government were still maintaining that Lorenzo posed a threat to security, possibly succumbing to international pressure, the opposition party finally spoke in favour of releasing Lorenzo.

At the hearing, the government said that the court had no jurisdiction over ministerial decisions to revoke visas. Lorenzo's solicitors argued that since he had not wilfully or knowingly committed a crime, it was a moral outrage that he be imprisoned, and be deemed responsible for a bureaucratic bungle by immigration officials. The solicitor said that Lorenzo had not been accorded natural justice. At this point the governments team asked for an adjournment as they were not familiar with the concept of natural justice.

Outside court, the Seaman's Union in Brisbane were ready to ballot on strike action if Lorenzo was deported. A call went out to blockade ports and airports through which Lorenzo may be deported.

you can't keep a good man down(under)

On the 11th of July, the hearing was reconvened. The Chief Justice of Australia, Sir Gerard Brennan ruled that Lorenzo had

indeed not been accorded natural justice and granted him bail. Before adjourning, he said "There is an obligation to accord natural justice which has not been observed". Brennan added that it was of considerable importance that the QC for the government explain how natural justice had been applied to this case which had caused international reaction. The government was forced to withdraw a claim that the case fell outside the jurisdiction of the court. Brennan said "it was of the greatest constitutional importance that the court has the authority to review unlawful government decisions". The government was ordered to pay Lorenzo's legal costs, and all in all were thoroughly embarrassed. Lorenzo was also given a 90 day visa and carried on his speaking tour.

Lorenzo visited the NAIDOC (Government sanctioned indigenous peoples' celebrations!!) celebrations in Brisbane as a guest of the Murri (Aboriginal) people and gave a brief speech there, before travelling on to Lismore, NSW, then Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. Lorenzo and Angy People asked for an apology from the government but "weren't holding their breath".

After further threats from the government, Lorenzo cut short his tour without visiting Western Australia. On his return to the US I recieved a brief message from Lorenzo saying that it was a bad time in prison but he was glad about the international response and the ground breaking ruling in Australian courts. He has pledged to return to Australia, even though the government have stated he will not get a future visa. He has also launched a call for a boycott of the Sydney 2000 Olympics, which has been endorsed by the Nyungah Circle of Elders in Western Australia.

australia melbourne anti-fascism

NATIONAL ACTION, the Australian fascist organisation, opened a shop front in a racially mixed, working class area of Melbourne at the beginning of the year. Since then, they have plastered the area with anti-asian posters, in Italian and English. They have smashed windows of shops displaying anti-fascist posters, and beaten up people distributing leaflets against them. Resistance to them has been mainly local marches, 3 so far. At the first one the fascists took the novel step of dressing up as clowns and throwing streamers from the roof of the shop. Quite strange, as they mixed with hundreds of cops brought in to protect them, and the police cameramen who have filmed each demo, concentrating on the anti-fascists. 2 anti-fascists were arrested, and one fascist.

At the second rally some of the boneheads came out from behind police lines and during the punch-up that followed, 5 anti-fascists were arrested. Their cases have yet to come to court. On the third rally (31-5-97) there was no sign of the fascists, apart from a few in nearby streets. The shop was defended by the racists in blue standing in a semicircle outside the shop, with mounted police nearby. Local peoples' reaction has been supportive, though many are scared to show support openly.

Ben Alterman

ANARCHISTS IN Melbourne wish people to be aware that an ex-prisoner who received support while in prison is completely untrustworthy. He is also known as Ben Aldan, or Donald M. In Melbourne, he attempted to violently rape a local woman and has ripped off money. Claims to be Jewish/Irish and to originate in the UK. Small build 5' 5" with pot belly. Moves in punk, anarchist and socialist circles. Don't trust him!

venezuela

general strike

A ONE DAY general strike over low wages and gasoline price increases halted Caracas on August 6th.

The 12-hour protest strike called by the Venezuelan Workers Confederation was carried out without violence, although security forces kept guard outside government buildings.

The strike, the biggest single labor action in the past eight years, came 15 months after the government placed into effect an

IMF-approved economic readjustment program that included sharp increases in prices of gasoline and other basic goods. Public transport, stores and banks were all closed as 90% of union members stayed away.

Unions are demanding wage increases promised by the private sector last month when labor reforms were approved by the government. 3 million Venezuelans do not earn enough to meet their basic needs, which cost an estimated \$300 a month.

black autonomy

Recently, we met a member of Black Autonomy visiting London. Sister Nora is a student in Atlanta. We began by asking about the lock down of poor black communities that occurred during the 96 Olympics in Atlanta.

Nora: During the Olympics, thousands of homeless people were evacuated out of the city, and loads more arrested for no good reason, some spending months in jail. The police were everywhere, though people in Atlanta are used to seeing them as Georgia is a police state. Most working class people had jobs, but many in the African American community set up venues in a historic part of town. The police and city council conspired to direct traffic away from them, and many were ruined.

BF: *Were there any protests during the Olympics?*

Nora: There was no protesting or boycotting - the police stopped it all, using anti-terrorism laws. The city returned to normal after the Olympics, but they beefed up police security, with lots of roadblocks. People in Atlanta think this is normal, they are used to it. The police are very brutal. In 1995 they killed Brother Jerry Jackson, shot him dead in cold blood. The officer who did that hasn't even been prosecuted or brought to trial.

In August 1996, Sister Olabumi Chavious was brutalised by police after someone jumped into her taxi. The police officer involved slammed her face into the pavement and refused to call a doctor despite the pleas of witnesses.

Police harassment is constant. There is little done to counter it, old organisations like the NAACP have a lot of meetings, banquets and so on, but they don't DO anything. The situation for poor people is one of high rents, high gas and electric, high reconnection fees if you're cut off.

BF: *What sort of opposition is there to this?*

Nora: There's very little, none really. The middle class are very afraid of the poor working class, and the poor are caught up in materialism. Many can't read, do math, and are so called third generation welfare. No one on the campuses is working with the poor, the only community oriented organisations are very middle class.

In many places the police run the communities. One particular squad, the "Red Dogs" run the drugs industry. The projects are very bad, in one a baby choked on a cockroach and died. the ghettos are starved of resources, and this is in a black run city. At my school there was no heating, and I ended up going to a white high school. The Atlanta education system is one of the worst in America.

BF: *What about police involvement in the drugs trade?*

Nora: They are famous for it, especially the Red Dogs who break into peoples' homes. There are some projects where it has now been proved that the government brought crack into them, because certainly no one there could afford it.

Most police are black, the whites tend to live in the suburbs. The biggest problem is the lack of education, the leftist organisations are afraid of the black working class themselves.

BF: *What about the Nation of Islam and their drug programmes?*

Nora: The NOI is very strong in Atlanta, and Farrakhan is a demigod to them, though they don't do anything political here. The Million Man March was well organised by the NOI but nothing came from it. Their next plan is the Million Woman March, out of Philly.

The Communist Youth Brigade are active on campuses but won't touch the black working class. The NOI fill the vacuum that ought to be filled by leftist organisations with things like the breakfast programmes and drugs work. With the NOI, this tends to be individuals who do this work, and the Nation rallies round, though some Ministers have been expelled where they did a lot of work with the working class. It is a good escapist organisation for people without self-discipline.

BF: *Is there a way out of it?*

Nora: It needs education, the kids feel there's something wrong but don't know what. There are various organisations

which do literacy programmes but they don't address where people are coming from. A lot of the kids don't feel they can do anything for themselves, and there are a lot of measures against them, like curfews.

@nacho quiz

questions:

1. Which linguistic scientist wrote that "a visiting Martian scientist would surely conclude that aside from their mutually unintelligible vocabularies, Earthlings speak a common language?"

2. The same scientist has only one entry in "Bartlett's Familiar Quotations", and rather a strange one at that. What is it?

3. What was the longest strike in Australian history?

4. What connects it to Professor Fred Hollows, Australian eye-scientist, rabble rouser, former Communist and general controversial figure, who, in his last interview before he died in 1992, said that he was now more in agreement with anarcho-syndicalism than anything else?

answers page 31

scotland yardies

ON 10th JULY 1997 a Jamaican national, Eaton Green, lost his battle to avoid deportation to Jamaica. Green's counsel, in seeking to resist a deportation order, had argued that Green, a police informer serving six years for armed robbery, had been told by a Metropolitan Police intelligence officer that he would be "protected".

The High Court judge, Mr Justice Jarrett, ruled that the Home Office was not bound by any such undertaking. Eaton Green's original trial, for a robbery in Nottingham, attracted a flurry of media attention because of the revelation that he had carried out the robbery and dealt crack and run a South London protection racket, while operating as an informer, and further, that Green's handlers (in particular PC Steve Barker) had full knowledge of his activities and attempted to protect him from arrest and prosecution by Nottingham police. The line adopted by the media in relation to this, and subsequent revelations about "Yardie" informers, was that good "street cops" under pressure, under resourced and unsupported, had bent rules to try to effectively tackle a "Yardie" crime wave. The main proponent of this line is a *Guardian* journalist, Nick Davies. "How the Yardies Duped the Yard" was the headline of an article he wrote on 3/2/97.

Whether Davies believes what he writes is open to question. The articles themselves read like a damage limitation exercise drafted by Scotland Yard's press office. Their central proposition, though, does not stand up to examination. They do not fit with the facts.

In his 3rd February article, Davies opens with "Ten years ago, Scotland Yard realised that organised criminals from Ja-

maica - the Yardies - were moving into London. By 1987 they were pumping crack cocaine into black housing estates and establishing their control with terrifying violence. The response from police was chaotic and pathetic. A 1993 official report warned that "unless there is a consistent, aggressive and long term strategy", drug related crime would soar." In fact, Scotland yard's "Yardie" strategy stems from a meeting in 1989 between UK police officers and Robert Stutman, then head of the New York office of the Drug Enforcement Administration, in which he warned that most crack dealing in the US was controlled by two ethnic groups - Dominicans and Jamaicans - and that these gangs were determined to engineer a "crack explosion" in the UK. Up until 1989, Yard policy had been in the hands of Roy Ramm, who stated soon after his appointment in 1987 "I'm absolutely convinced that there is no such thing as a black mafia or black Godfather operating in this country".

In 1988 armed police raided the New Four Aces club in Dalston to target suspected Yardie gang dealing in cocaine. The raid netted £6,000 worth of cocaine - not a significant quantity given that a kilo of coke carries a street value of about £160,000. Further Metropolitan Police figures for 1989 show 58 grams of crack being seized in the whole year, compared to 331 kilos of heroin, 424 kilos of cocaine and 50,000 kilos of cannabis. In consequence of this, for all the apocalyptic proclamations of the likes of Stutman, police units like Operation Lucy were in fact wound down. The journalist Jim Davison, a former *Sunday Times* writer, and like Nick Davies, a proponent of the "Yardie" myth, reports a discussion with Roy Ramm at the time as follows: "It is a loose association of violent

criminals bent on making profits from drugs and then spending them as quickly as possible", he (Ramm) said. Unlike the Mafia or the Colombian cartels, the gangs opted for a "little and often" method of importation rather than large scale smuggling operations. "The end result of this is, as Davies reports, a Yardie Squad set up and killed off within six months in 1990, and the establishment of Operation Dalehouse in 1991, to target what the Squad Commander DS John Jones (who I'm sure would throw his hands in the air in Hendon-shaded outrage if numbered as a racist) called "a fairly wide-based criminal fraternity of black British people." So successful were they that this squad also wound up in November 1992. Davies throws up a smoke screen around the reality of Operation Dalehouse. He writes that it "made 274 arrests often for attacks on black victims. John Jones feared that part of the problem was that black victims of crime attracted less press attention, and therefore tempted the policy makers at Scotland Yard to ignore them. And all the time that the generals at Scotland Yard were ordering their foot soldiers to retreat, there were more Yardies flowing into London. "In truth operation Dalehouse did make 274 arrests, but of these only 25 were charged with serious criminal offences, and the *Sunday Times* journalist Davison concedes the squad met with a "lack of co-operation from the local community."

The end result was that by 1993, according to Davies, his heroes were reduced to "a hard core of half a dozen detectives and immigration officers who were still trying to tackle the Yardies. They had no office and no facilities and were reduced to using the bar of a small pub in Southwark where.. they swapped intelligence and tried

to cobble together a strategy.... officers had been forced to spend their won money to fund operations." It's here that Davies' argument begins to fall apart. Soon after pleading poverty on the anti-Yardie squad's behalf, he reveals that the Drug Related Violence Intelligence Unit (which Davies snidely notes was so named to avoid triggering complaints of racism) ran an informer code-named Andrew Gold who was able to live a life of indulgence, driving around in a Golf GTI, eating expensive meals, drinking fine wines, playing golf, making endless transatlantic phone calls and sleeping in a luxury furnished flat with a view of the Thames - all supplied at the British taxpayers expense." Not bad for an outfit that Davies had earlier told us was reduced to running its operations from a pub back room at its own expense.

Davies provides details of 3 Yardies informers run by one SO11 linked DRVIU. Andrew Gold, we are told, produced a report on the Yardies in London which contained no useable new intelligence, at a cost of more than \$45,000, before returning to Jamaica in January 1994.

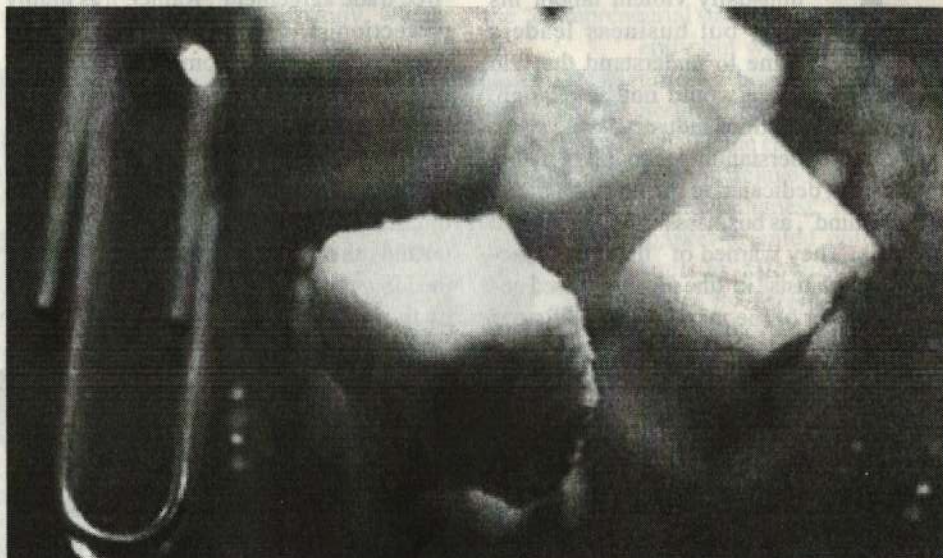
Eaton Green carried out armed robberies and ran protection rackets under the protection of the unit. The DRVIU cannot deny that they protected Green. Cecil Thomas and Rohan Thomas came into the UK on March 28th 1993 on false passports, to work with Green. An immigration officer who worked with the DRVIU, Brian Fotheringham, secured residence rights for Green after he married a British national whose child he claimed he'd fathered, even though the child's date of birth made clear that the women in question had been pregnant for four months before she met Green. At Green's robbery trial, DRVIU officers made illegal approaches to both the Crown Prosecution Service and the trial judge to try to protect Green. From May 1994, Fotheringham and PC Steve Barker ran another informer, Delroy Denton, who had agreed to work for the SO11-linked team following his arrest after a raid on the Atlantic pub in Brixton. Immigration's initial assessment of Denton was as a "dangerous Jamaican criminal, given 16 years in Jamaica for firearms/aggravated burglary offences." Following the intervention of Fotheringham and Barker, Denton was back on the streets. On 19th December 1994, Denton raped a 15 year old school-girl. On 1st February 1995 the CPS dropped a rape charge against him on the grounds of insufficient evidence. Fotheringham and Barker continued to run

Denton, who by this stage had acquired a reputation as a psychotic, who Davies concedes fantasised about "how he would like to tell a man and a woman that he was going to kill them, then order them to stay and have sex, and then when the man was too scared to perform, he would rape the woman himself before he blew out both their brains". In April 1995, Denton entered a flat in Brixton and raped and stabbed to death a 24 year old mother of 2, Marcia Lawes. Denton was charged with murder on 29th June 1995. On 29th October 1995 the CPS again dropped the charge because of "insufficient evidence".

The Number Five Area Major Investigation Pool detectives investigating Denton contacted Fotheringham and advised him of the informers' status as an illegal immigrant. Fotheringham refused to act. Barker, with full knowledge of senior SO11 officers, continued to meet Denton. In July

have spoken to that unless there is a consistent, aggressive and long term strategy to deal with Jamaican criminals in London, there will be ever and sharply increasing incidents of murder, violence, drug related crime and crack availability." Davies would have it that "the policy makers at Scotland Yard then sidelined a substantial number of Clark's 35 recommendations", and things then began to go wrong.

But Eaton Green was arrested on July 8th 1993, only 2 days after Clark signed his report and BEFORE the DRVIU was officially established. Both Eaton Green and Andrew Gold (with his \$45,000 budget) were being run by Scotland Yard officers before Clark delivered his report. Green and Gold were only able to remain in the UK due to the manoeuvres of immigration officers like Brian Fotheringham. If Scotland Yard policy indeed led to the "almost complete breakdown of the Met-



1996, following further AMIP work, Denton was jailed for life. Nick Davies argues that the DRVIU was starved of "power and leadership" and in consequence, front-line officers, with falling morale, committed errors in the field. "In the background, Scotland Yard's policy makers blocked a series of anti-Yardie initiatives which had been proposed by front-line officers." This is bullshit.

Whatever Davies and the media management teams at Scotland Yard are trying to conceal, the chronology of their cover story makes no sense. The DRVIU was, we are told, set up following recommendations from Detective Chief Superintendent (now deputy Assistant Commissioner) Ray Clark. Clark made 35 recommendations and delivered a report which concluded "It has been made abundantly clear by all I

ropolitan Police strategic response (to Yardie crime) and of the formal intelligence gathering and development structure" and if the anti-Yardie squad was really reduced to a Southwark frinking club how and why were the resources to run Gold and Green obtained? If Barker and Fotheringham had already overseen Eaton Green's crime spree of their own initiative, and with a PR disaster and the souring of relations between the Yard and Nottingham CID the chief results, why accept Clark's report at all?

Whatever the reason, we can be sure it wasn't to stay a Yardie controlled crack epidemic. Any balanced examination of the drug scene in the UK would suggest that Ramm's "little and often" assessment of Yardie drug dealing activity remains correct.

continued page 26

democracy in a neoliberal order:

doctrines\$ & reality

part 2

by Noam Chomsky

In the first part of Noam Chomsky's article *Doctrines and Reality* he looked at the effects of neo-liberal economics on countries where it had been applied in the developing world, particularly South America. In this second part he looks at how the strong economies of Britain, the USA and Japan have steadfastly refused to implement the doctrines they preach

THE UNITED STATES has an unusually violent labour history, but business leaders came to understand that violence would not be enough. The Public Relations industry is one product of this understanding. From its origins, it has been dedicated to the "control of the public mind", as business leaders described the task. They warned of "the hazard facing industrialists" in "the newly realised political power of the masses", and the need to wage and win "the everlasting battle for the minds of men" and to "indoctrinate citizens with the capitalist story" until "they are able to play back the story with remarkable fidelity". Huge resources have been devoted to enlisting schools, universities, media, the entertainment industry, advertising and every other imaginable means in the cause of protecting the minority of the opulent from the plague of democracy, one of the central themes of modern history.

Let us return to the prevailing doctrine that "America's victory in the Cold War" was a victory for democracy and the free market. With regard to democracy, the doctrine is partially true, though we have to understand what is meant by 'democracy': top-down control to protect the minority of the opulent, secured by violence or other means. What about the free market? Here too, we find that doctrine is far removed from reality.

I referred earlier to NAFTA (1), an agreement which, it is hoped, will protect investors from the danger of a democracy opening' in Mexico. NAFTA also tells us something about the economic principles

that have emerged victorious. It is not a 'free trade agreement'. Rather, it is highly protectionist, designed to impede East Asian and European competitors. What is more, half of the US 'exports' to Mexico never enter the Mexican market. They are transferred from one branch of a US firm to another, crossing the border to make use of cheaper labour and avoid environmental and other regulations, then returning to the US as 'imports', but always controlled by the highly visible hand of central management. About half of US 'trade' world wide consists of transactions within centrally-controlled institutions that are totalitarian in internal structure and are largely free from public influence. Much the same is true of Japan and other industrial powers. Some international economists have described the world system as one of 'corporate mercantilism', remote from the ideal of free trade.

Even the basic structures of the economy radically violates neoliberal principles. The standard work on business history is Alfred Chandler's book 'The Visible Hand'. Its main theme is that "modern business enterprise took the place of market mechanisms in co-ordinating the activities of the economy and allocating its resources", handling the bulk of transactions internally, another large departure from market principles. There are many others. Consider, for example, the fate of Adam Smith's principle that free movement of people is an essential component of free trade - across borders for example.

The theory of free markets comes in two varieties. The first is the official doctrine. The second is what we might call 'really

existing free market doctrine': Market discipline is good for you, but not for me. The official doctrine is imposed on the defenceless, but it is 'really existing doctrine' that has been adopted by the powerful since the days when Britain emerged as Europe's most advanced fiscal-military and developmental state, with radical increases in taxation and efficient public administration as the state became "the largest single actor in the economy" and its global expansion (John Brewer), establishing a model that has been followed to the present.

The historical record offers many instructive lessons. In the 18th century, the differences between First and Third World were far less sharp than they are today. Two obvious questions rise:

- 1) Which countries developed, and which not?
- 2) Can we identify some operative factors?

The answer to the first question is clear. Outside of Western Europe, two regions developed: the US and Japan - that is the two regions that escaped European colonisation. Japan's colonies are another case; though a brutal colonial power, Japan did not rob its colonies but developed them, at about the same rate as Japan itself.

What about Eastern Europe? In the 15th century, Europe began to divide, the West developing and the East becoming its service area, the original Third World. The divisions deepened into early in this century, when Russia extricated itself from the system. Despite Stalin's awesome atrocities and the huge destruction of the wars, the Soviet system did undergo significant industrialisation. It is the 'Second World', not

part of the Third World - or was, until 1989. We know from the internal record that into the 1960s, Western planners feared that Russia's economic growth would inspire 'radical nationalism' elsewhere and that others too might be stricken by the disease that infected Russia in 1917, when it became unwilling "to complement the industrial economies of the West", as a prestigious study group described the problem of communism in 1955. The Western invasion of 1918 was therefore a defensive action to protect "the welfare of the world capitalist system" threatened by social changes within the service area. And so it is described in respected scholarship.

The basic logic of the cold war falls within the general framework of North-South conflict. It resembles the case of Grenada or Guatemala, though the scale was so different that the conflict took on a life of its own. It is not surprising that with the victory of the more powerful antagonist, traditional patterns are being restored in Eastern Europe. It should also come as no surprise that the Pentagon budget remains at Cold War levels and is now increasing, while Washington's international policies have barely changed, apart from rhetoric.

Let's turn to the second question: How did Europe and those who escaped its control succeed in developing? Part of the answer seems clear: By radically violating free market doctrines. That conclusion

holds from England to the East Asian growth area today, surely including the United States, the leader in protectionism from its origins.

Standard economic history recognises that state intervention has played a central role in economic growth. But its impact is much underestimated because of a narrow focus on protectionism. To mention one obvious omission, the industrial revolution relied on cheap cotton, mainly from the US. It was not kept cheap and available by market forces: rather, by violent elimination of the indigenous population and slavery. There were of course other cotton producers. Prominent among them was India. Its resources flowed to England while its own advanced textile industry was destroyed by British protectionism and force. Another case is Egypt, which began indus-

trial development at the same time as the United States, but was blocked by British force, on the quite explicit grounds that Britain would not tolerate independent development in that region. New England, in contrast, was able to follow the path of the mother country, barring cheaper British textiles by very high tariffs as Britain had done. Without such measures, half of the emerging textile industry of New England would have been destroyed, economic historians estimate, with large-scale effects on industrial growth generally.

A contemporary analogue is the energy on which industrial economies rely. The 'golden age' of post war development relied on cheap and abundant oil, kept that way largely by force. So matters continue. A large part of the Pentagon budget is devoted to keeping Middle East oil prices within a range that the US and its energy companies consider appropriate. I know of only one serious technical study, which



concludes that Pentagon expenditures amount to a subsidy of 30% of the market price of oil, demonstrating that "the current view that fossil fuels are inexpensive is a complete fiction". Estimates of alleged efficiencies of trade and conclusions about economic health and growth, are of limited validity if we ignore these and numerous other hidden costs.

A group of prominent Japanese economists recently published a multi-volume review of Japan's programs of economic development since World War 2. They point out that Japan rejected the neoliberal doctrines of their US advisers, choosing instead a form of industrial policy that assigned a predominant role to the state. Market mechanisms were gradually introduced by the state bureaucracy and industrial-financial conglomerates as prospects

for commercial success increased. The rejection of orthodox economic precepts was a condition for the Japanese miracle, the economists conclude. The success is impressive. With virtually no resource base, Japan became the world's biggest manufacturing economy by the 1990s and he world's leading source of foreign investment, also accounting for half the world's net savings and financing US deficits.

Turning to Japan's former colonies, the major study of the US aid mission in Taiwan found that US advisers and Chinese planners disregarded the principles of "Anglo-American economies" and developed a "state-centered strategy", relying on "the active participation of the government in the economic activities of the island through deliberate plans and its supervision of their execution". Meanwhile US officials were "advertising Taiwan as a private enterprise success story". In South Korea the "entrepreneurial state" functions differ-

ently but with no less of a guiding hand. Right now South Korea's entry into the OECD, the rich man's club, is being delayed because of its unwillingness "to rely on market-oriented policies", such as allowing "takeovers by foreign companies" and free movement of capital, much like its Japanese mentor, which did not permit capital export until 1972, when its economy was well established.

In the current issue of the *World Bank Research Observer* the chairman of

Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors draws "lessons from the East Asian Miracle", among them that "government took major responsibility for the promotion of economic growth" abandoning the "religion" that markets know best and intervening to enhance technology transfer, relative equality, education and health along with industrial planning and co-ordination. The 1996 UN Human Development Report stresses the "vital importance" of government policies in "spreading skills and meeting basic social needs" as a "springboard for sustained economic growth". Neoliberal doctrines, whatever one thinks of them, undermine education and health, increase inequality and reduce labour's share in income; that much is not in doubt. Accordingly, they undermine just those factors that underlie sustained economic

growth, as is generally agreed.

The comparison of East Asia and Latin America is striking. Latin America has the world's worst record for inequality, East Asia the best. The same holds for education, health and social welfare generally. Imports to Latin America are heavily skewed towards consumption for the rich; in East Asia, towards productive investment. Capital flight from Latin America approached the scale of the crushing debt; in East Asia it is tightly controlled. In Latin America "wealthy people do not pay taxes" and are generally exempt from social obligations, Brazilian economist Bresser Pereira points out: its problem, he continues, is not "populism" but "subjection of the state to the rich". East Asia differs sharply.

Latin America economies are also more open to foreign investment. Since the 1950s, foreign multinationals have "controlled far larger shares of industrial production" in Latin America than in the East Asian success stories (UNCTAD). Even the World Bank concedes that the foreign investment and privatisation it hails "has tended to substitute for other capital flows" in Latin America, transferring control and sending profits abroad, unlike East Asia. The Bank also recognises that prices in Japan, Korea and Taiwan deviated more from market prices than those of India, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela and other alleged interventionists (1976-85), while the most interventionist and price-distorting government of all, China, is the Bank's favourite and fastest growing borrower. And as Atilio Boron has pointed out, the Bank's official studies on the lessons of Chile carefully avoid the fact that nationalised copper firms account for half of Chile's export revenues, to mention only one of many examples.

It seems that openness to the international economy has carried a significant cost for Latin America, along with its failure to control capital and the rich, not just labour and the poor. Of course, sectors of the population benefit, as in the traditional colonial system. The fact that they are as dedicated to the doctrines of the 'religion' as foreign investors is not very surprising.

Britain did finally turn to liberal internationalism - in 1846 after 150 years of protectionism, violence and state power had placed it far ahead of any competitor. But the turn to the market had significant reservations. 40% of British textiles continued to go to colonised India and much the same was true of British exports generally. British Steel was kept from US mar-

kets by very high tariffs that enabled the United States to develop its own steel industry. But India and other colonies were still available and remained so when British Steel was priced out of international markets. India is an instructive case; it produced as much iron as all of Europe in the late 18th century and British engineers were studying more advanced Indian steel manufacturing techniques in 1820 to try to close 'the technological gap'. Bombay was producing locomotives at competitive levels when the railway boom began. But 'really existing free market doctrine' destroyed these sectors of Indian industry just as it had destroyed the textile industry and others. The US and Japan, in contrast, could adopt Britain's model of market interference.

When Japanese competition proved to be too much to handle, England simply called off the game: the empire was effectively closed to Japanese exports, part of the background to WW2. Indian manufac-

**profit is to be
privatised, but costs
and risks are
socialised**

turers asked for protection at the same time, but against England not Japan. No such luck, under really existing free market doctrine.

A century after England turned to a form of liberal internationalism, the US followed the same course. After 150 years of protectionism and violence, the US had become by far the richest and most powerful country in the world. Like England before it, the US came to perceive the merits of a 'level playing field' on which it could expect to crush any competitor. But like England, with crucial reservations.

One was that Washington used its power to bar independent development elsewhere, as England had done. In Latin America, Egypt, South Asia and elsewhere development was to be 'complementary' not 'competitive'. There was also large-scale interference with trade. For example, Marshall Plan aid was tied to purchase of US agricultural products, part of the reason why US share in world trade in grains increased from less than 10% before the war to more than half by 1950, while Argentina's exports fell by similar propor-

tions. US 'food for peace' aid was also used both to subsidise US agribusiness and shipping and to undercut foreign producers. The virtual destruction of Columbia's wheat growing by such means is one of the factors in the growth of the drug industry, which has been further accelerated throughout the Andean region by the neoliberal policies of the past few years. A few months ago, Washington barred exports of tomatoes from Mexico in violation of NAFTA and World Trade Organisation rules, at a cost to Mexican producers of close to \$1 billion annually. The official reason is that prices were "artificially suppressed by Mexican competition" and Mexican tomatoes were preferred by US consumers. In other words, free market principles were working, but with the wrong outcome. Like democracy, markets are evaluated by outcome, not process. These are only scattered samples.

The most important departures from official doctrine lie elsewhere. One fundamental component of free trade theory is that public subsidies are not allowed. But after WW2, US business leaders expected that the economy would collapse without massive state intervention that they had learned to love during WW2. They also insisted that advanced industry "cannot satisfactorily exist in a pure competitive, unsubsidised, 'free enterprise' economy" and that "the government is their only possible saviour". I am quoting the major business press, which also recognised that the Pentagon system would be the best way to transfer costs to the public. They understood that social spending could play the same stimulative role, but it has defects: it is not a direct subsidy to the corporate sector, it has democratising effects and it is redistributive. Military spending has none of these unwelcome effects. It is also easy to sell, by deceit. President Truman's Air Force Secretary put the matter simply: we should not use the word 'subsidy', he said; the word we should use is 'security'. He made sure the military budget would "meet the requirements of the aircraft industry", as he put it. One consequence is that civilian aircraft is now the country's leading export and the huge travel and tourism industry, aircraft based, is the source of major profits. The same pattern prevails in computers, electronics generally, metallurgy, biotechnology, telecommunications, in fact just about every dynamic sector of the economy, all heavily dependent on public subsidy.

There was no need to explain this cen-

tral feature of 'really existing free market capitalism' to the Reagan administration. They were masters at the art, extolling the glories of the market to the poor at home and the service areas abroad while boasting proudly to the business world that Reagan had "granted more import relief to US industry than any of his predecessors in more than half a century" - which is far

ciaries to enable them to dominate commercial markets.

All understand very well that free enterprise means that the public pays the costs and bears the risks if things go wrong; for example bank and corporate bailouts that have cost the public hundreds of billions of dollars in recent years, as in South America. Profit is to be privatised, but costs

and risks are socialised.

Of course, the United States is not alone in its conceptions of 'free trade' even if its ideologues lead the cynical chorus. The gap between rich and poor countries from 1960 is substantially

attributable to protectionist measures of the rich, the UN Development Report concluded in 1992. The 1994 report concluded that "the industrial countries, by violating the principles of free trade, are costing the developing countries an estimated \$50 billion a year - nearly equal to the total flow of foreign assistance" - much of it publicly subsidised export promotion.

To illustrate "really existing free market theory" with a different measure, the most extensive study of the top 100 Transnational corporations found that at least 20 "would not have survived at all as independent companies, if they had not been saved by their respective governments", by socialising losses or direct state takeover when they were in trouble. One is the leading employer in Gingrich's deeply conservative district, Lockheed, saved from collapse by \$2 billion government loan guarantees. The same study points out that "There has never been a 'level playing field' in international competition and it is doubtful whether there ever will be one." Government intervention, which has "been the rule rather than the exception over the past two centuries,... has played a key role in the development and diffusion of many product and process innovations - particularly in aerospace, electronics, modern agriculture, materials technologies, energy and transportation technology" as well as telecommunications and information tech-

nologies generally and in earlier days, textiles and steel. Quite generally "government policies, in particular defence programmes, have been an overwhelming force in shaping the strategies and competitiveness of the world's largest firms." Other technical studies confirm these conclusions.

If we take the trouble to distinguish doctrine from reality, we find that the political and economic principles that have prevailed are remote from those that are proclaimed. One may also be sceptical about the happy prediction that they are "the wave of the future" bringing about an "end of history" in a kind of utopia of masters. The same "end of history" has confidently been proclaimed many times in the past, always wrongly. And with all the sordid continuities, an optimistic soul can discern slow progress, realistically I think. In the advanced industrial countries, and often elsewhere, popular struggles today can start from a higher plane and with greater expectations than those of the past. And international solidarity can take new and more constructive forms as the great majority of people of the world come to understand that their interests are pretty much the same and can be advanced by working together. There is no more reason now than there has ever been to believe that we are constrained by mysterious and unknown social laws, not simply decisions made within institutions that are subject to human will - human institutions, which have to face the test of legitimacy and if they do not meet it can be replaced by others that are more free and more just, as often in the past.



Noam Chomsky



too modest; they surpassed all predecessors combined, as they "presided over the greatest swing toward protectionism since the 1930s", the journal of the Council on Foreign Relations commented in a review of the decade. Without these and other extreme measures of market interference, it is doubtful that the steel, automotive, machine tool or semiconductor industries would have survived Japanese competition, or been able to forge ahead in emerging technologies, with widely proliferating effects through the economy. That experience illustrates once again that "the conventional wisdom" is "full of holes" another review of the Reagan record points out, in the same journal. But the conventional wisdom retains its virtues as an ideological weapon to discipline the defenseless.

There is also no need to explain the doctrines to the leader of today's 'conservative revolution' Newt Gingrich, who sternly lectures 7 year old children on the evils of welfare dependency while winning the national prize for bringing government subsidies to his rich constituents. Or to the Heritage Foundation, which crafts the budget proposals for the congressional 'conservatives' and therefore called for (and obtained) an increase in Pentagon spending beyond Clinton's increase to ensure that the "defense industrial base" remains solid, protected by state power and offering dual-use technology to its benefi-

Race Class & Organisation

the view from the Workers Solidarity Federation (South Africa)

We recently observed a very fruitful discussion on race and class on the Internet, particularly around “black” anarchism, special oppressions and the desirability of separate organisation.

One of the best and most comprehensive posts came from a member of the Workers Solidarity Federation of South Africa, an anarchist/syndicalist group with a majority African component, in personal capacity, reflect their politics and positions on these matters.

Interest in anarchism is growing throughout the world. There are active groups in most parts of the world, with the exception of the Indian subcontinent, Antarctica and as far as we know the Chinese dictatorship. This process will no doubt accelerate and there is a challenge for us to make our ideas accessible. But as our South African comrades point out below, “it was the ability of anarchism to provide alternatives and to pay special attention to the specific needs of these different sections of the working class in order to unite the whole class that made the success (of the Cuban anarchists and IWW) possible,” not “a revision of anarchism to accommodate nationalism”.

it is falsely claimed by some that Anarchism as currently constituted is unable to attract Black people, and other specially oppressed groups. It is therefore argued that we should thus endorse separate Black-only anarchist/ community organisations that may in some (vague and unspecified) cases associate with “white” groups - “white” groups should “work among” “their own” people etc. It is also asserted from this view point that Anarchism is ‘Eurocentric’ and lacking an analysis of racism and imperialism.

in defence of classical anarchism

These arguments are wrong or lacking in clarity. They reflect a distortion of anarchist history and a misunderstanding of anarchist strategy.

Firstly, class struggle anarchism has historically proved quite capable of attracting massive numbers of people of colour. In fact, one could claim that historically most anarchist movements have been based in Third World countries. For example, anarchism dominated the revolutionary movement in China in the 1910s and early 1920s. In the First World, Anarchist movements historically attracted specially oppressed national minorities, for example, the syndicalist IWW attracted thousands of Black workers in the USA Deep South and other movements attracted Jews in Eastern Europe and the East End of London. Even today, groups such as the WSF (SA) and the Awareness League of Nigeria have almost entirely Black memberships.

The key to this success was a consistent class struggle programme that combated all manifestations of oppression. For

example, the Cuban Anarchists mobilised both Afro-Cubans, Creoles and Spaniards in massive integrated anarcho-syndicalist unions because they opposed racist practices like apprenticeship laws, because they supported the anti-colonial struggle against Spain and because they provided a class struggle answer to the questions facing all sections of the working class. It was not a “revision” of anarchism to accommodate nationalist paradigms that made the breakthrough- it was the ability of anarchism to provide alternatives and to pay special attention to the specific needs of these different sections of the working class in order to unite the whole class that made the success possible. Anarchists did not capitulate to nationalist ideas- they combated them- they did not organise separately, they organised as Anarchists on a class struggle basis.

Even today, the Anarchist groups emerging in Third World countries like Nigeria and South Africa base themselves on a class programme- we have seen the end results of nationalism and we oppose it (although obviously we defend peoples right to choose to believe in it, and even if we recognise grassroots nationalists as progressive fighters against racism etc.). This does not mean that we downplay imperialism or racism- on the contrary we pay specific attention to these key questions, but we subject them to class analysis and advocate class struggle strategies against them.

This clearly shows that the claim that Anarchism is 'white' or 'Eurocentric' is fundamentally wrong, as Anarchism - in terms of its analysis, history and composition- has in all respects been a truly global movement against oppression in all guises. All modern Anarchists need to live up to this legacy.

Black nationalism and/or separatism is not the only thing that can fight racism or attract Black people and workers to organisations. Even in South Africa, the Communist Party was the main mass organisation throughout the 1930s and 1940s and dwarfed the nationalist groups like the ANC; in the 1920s the main mass organisation (aside from the Communist Party) was the quasi-syndicalist Industrial and Commercial Workers Union. In Harlem in the USA in the 1930s, the CPUSA was able to win Black workers away from Garveyism on the basis of a consistent defence of the unity of White and Black workers.

against separate organisation

As anarchists we call for separate organisations in one sense; we call on the working and poor people to organise separately from their class enemy, the bosses and rulers. What then of non-class based forms of separate organisation such as women only organisation (as advocated by radical feminists) or Black-only organisation (as advocated by Black Nationalists)?

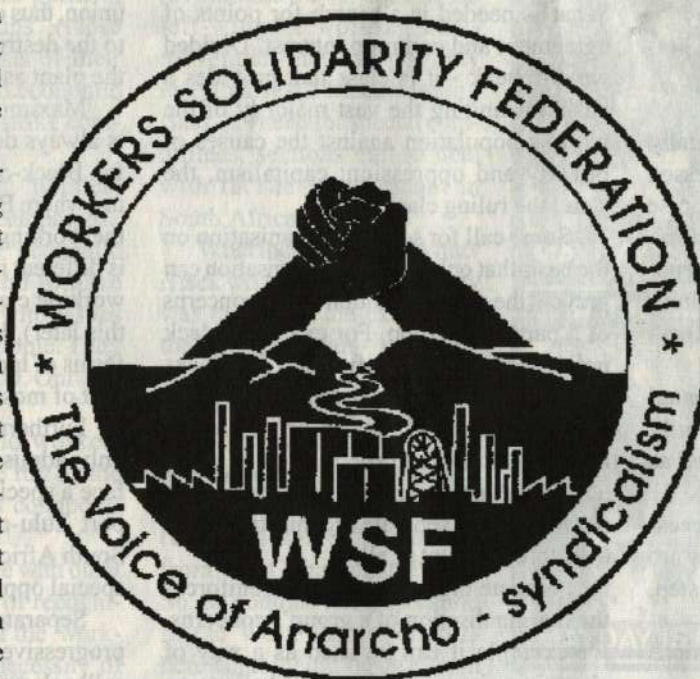
Before dealing with this issue, we need to understand the links between racism, class and class struggle.

state, capitalism and racism: one enemy one fight

We would argue that racism is the product of capitalism and the State, created to justify slavery, colonialism and the super-exploitation of Black workers. Capitalism and the State are inherently racist: they always generate new forms of racism (e.g. against immigrants). The social inequalities created by racism can only be dealt with by the removal of capitalism and the State to allow for projects of redress, reconstruction etc.

Therefore the fight against racism is a fight against capitalism and the State

class struggle, class power



Only the working class, poor and peasants can make the anti-state, anti-capitalist revolution because only these classes are productive (and can therefore create a non-exploitative society), and have no vested interest in the current system. In addition. As the vast majority of the world's population they have the numbers to win, as well as the necessary social power (by virtue of their role in the workplace as producers of wealth they can hit the bosses where it hurts - in the pocket) and organisational ability (their concentration in factories etc., facilitates mass action).

The Black middle class, capitalists etc. will defend capitalism and the State against the workers despite the fact that this means they are defending the system that creates racism. It is in their class interest to do so. In any case, they are shielded from the

worst effects of racism by their nice houses, good schools, etc.

Therefore the fight against racism requires a class struggle and a workers revolution.

The struggle against capitalism can only succeed if it is anti-racist. We can only mobilise the whole working class if we fight on all fronts, against all oppressions that affect us. We can only unite the working and poor people for a revolutionary victory through a consistent opposition to the divisions within the working class and poor, e.g. race, nation, etc.

Insofar as workers can only be mobilised and united on the basis of programmes that opposes all oppression, insofar as working class Blacks are the main victims of racism, and insofar as the majority of people affected by racism are working class, it follows that anti-racism etc. are class issues. Therefore the fight against capitalism and the state requires a fight against racism.

Given that the working class is multinational and multiracial, it follows that its struggle must be fought on internationalist, united, integrated lines. As argued above, this unity is only possible on a basis of principled opposition to all oppression.

are white workers a labour aristocracy

No sections of the working class gain in real terms from the special oppression of Blacks, colonial people etc. In the First World, White workers may have slightly less unemployment etc., but they are still the majority of the workers and the poor, i.e. of the classes victimised by capitalism and the State. Racism worsens conditions for all workers because it divides workers struggles and resistance and ability to destroy the system. That is why the ruling class promotes it. Therefore it is in these workers direct interest to fight racism and unite with black workers. Even if these workers accept racism, they are still not its primary cause: racist - capitalism is. Nor are they its beneficiaries.

At the same time, the doubly oppressed groups like Blacks etc. require allies amongst the White working class. Without them, they lack the numbers, strategic position, or strength to defeat the racist system and its causes once and for all. Unity is also in their interests.

Similarly, the argument that the Western working class benefits materially from imperialism, is false. There is not a shred of proof, nor a sustainable economic theory, nor any correlation between the level of imperialist activity and the living standards of First World workers to back up this claim. On the contrary, imperialism is against the interests of these workers, because it strengthens the power of their own states (e.g. colonial armies are used against workers "at home" - remember Spain 1936?), wastes resources and lives that could be spent on people on the military, promotes reactionary ideas like racism and imperialist patriotism that divide workers and strengthen the ruling class, and allows multinational companies to cut jobs and wages by shifting to repressive Third World colonial and semi-colonial regimes.

searate organisation?

As Anarchists should unconditionally defend the rights of specially oppressed sections of the working class to organise separately because we defend the principle of free association, but we should separate the question of the right to organise separately from the issues of the usefulness of this mode of organisation.

We simply cannot take it for granted that separate organisations are necessarily progressive or travelling the same road as we are.

Separate organisations are not necessarily progressive - in some cases they are clearly reactionary and a backward step, in others they are poor strategy.

Non-class based separate organisations typically fail to correctly identify the source of special oppression faced by the group in question. For example, separatist black nationalism calls for people of Africa descent to organise separately on the basis that all whites are the source of black oppression, therefore they are the enemy. What such an approach fails to recognise is the primary role of capitalism and the state in causing black oppression, and the common interests of both working class men and women fighting sexism on a class struggle basis. Or it may be argued that capitalism is a form of racism - this again fails to recognise the common interest of both working class whites and blacks in fighting capitalism.

Separate organisation that is not on a class struggle basis almost always lays the basis for cross-class alliances as is based on non-class identities and supposed com-

mon interests between all who share that identity. As we argue below, only class struggle can end special oppressions such as racism and sexism.

They thus became hitched to the class projects of capitalists, bosses and power-hungry would-be rulers. A case in point is the Nation of Islam in the US.

Separate organisations can divide the working class into competing and fragmented sections. Why stop at separate organisation for women, blacks, etc.? The whole notion of separate organisation lays the basis for a continual fragmentation of identities and issues: gay versus black versus women versus lesbians versus bisexuals versus gay blacks versus white blacks etc.

Instead of an emphasis on difference. What is needed is a search for points of agreement and common interest. Divided we are weak - it is class that provides a basis for uniting the vast majority of the world's population against the causes of poverty and oppression; capitalism, the state/ the ruling class.

Some call for separate organisation on the basis that only separate organisation can prevent the marginalisation of the concerns of a particular group. For example, black nationalists in the US often call for blacks to organise separately, so that they are not, for example, marginalised or ignored in mainly white organisations.

While this is an important issue, it does not follow that separate organisation is the best solution. Not at all!

Separate organisation often reinforces the marginalisation of a group's concerns, for example it can be used as a way of ghettoising issues. Rather than challenging racism, such organisations allow racism to be ignored by others. White workers can ignore the issue "leave it to the blacks, it's their concern, not ours". But should, say, illegal immigrants have to fight against racist immigration laws on their own, or should they have allies from other sections of the working class? "Self-determining isolation can readily lay the basis for weak struggles that are easily defeated by the ruling class (see above). Finally, the claim that Blacks can never function in integrated organisations expresses a disturbing lack of confidence in Black people's abilities.

Instead, we should win *all sections* of the working class over to a *programme of opposing, not ignoring* all oppression. This is a more effective way of winning demands. Even if some do not have direct experience of a given oppression, it does

not follow that they are unable to be won to a position of opposing it. As argued earlier, *no* workers really benefit from special oppressions like racism. It is in their *interest* to be anti-racist.

Separate organisation is not even progressive in some cases.

Separate organisation in the workplace is not acceptable in any case where industrial unions of all workers exist. The logic of trade union organisation is to unify different categories of workers, who can only find strength in their unity. To set up a separate black trade in a situation where blacks are in a minority not only weakens the existing unions, but puts the black workers themselves in a weak and unsustainable position due to their limited numbers, as well as in direct conflict with the existing union, thus creating a dynamic that can lead to the destruction of union organisation in the plant as a whole.

Maximum unity on a principled basis is always desirable, supported and fought for. Black-only unions are a recipe for failure where Black people form a minority in the working class (obviously the situation is different in South Africa where the Black working class is the majority- but more on this later). How can one even launch mild forms of industrial action without the support of most workers?

Furthermore, separate organisation is only admissible in cases where workers face a special oppression. We do not support Zulu-only unions like UWUSA (in South Africa) because Zulus do not face a special oppression as Zulus.

Separate organisation is not innately progressive. It can be used as a tactic to rollback worker struggles and undermine the left. For example, the nationalist-minded liberal middle-class Black leaders of the mass Industrial and Commercial Workers Union in SA in the 1920s used arguments that the Communist Party was a "White" institution to expel socialists from their ranks and had the union over to (White!!) liberals like Ballinger who opposed anything other than simple bread and butter, non-political orthodox trade unionism, as opposed to the ICU's previously semi-syndicalist positions.

special organising committees

Having said this, it is clear that Anarchist political organisations should be integrated. Having said this, we do recognise that it may be necessary to set up commissions/ taskgroups within these organisa-

tions to focus on specific issues e.g. groups to work on immigrant support. These are not separate

organisations, but working groups integrated into the overall organisation, and to which any member may belong.

relations with existing separate groups

People respond to capitalism and the State in a variety of ways, and through a variety of ideologies. How should we relate to these groups?

In general, the WSF apply the following "rule of thumb". A basic distinction can be drawn between "political groups" (those which unite people on the basis of accepting a certain ideology- such as political parties), and "economic groups" (those which unite people on the basis of their common, immediate social and economic interests- such as unions, rent-strike committees).

We would work *alongside* in "political groups", for example, around campaigns.

And we would work *within* "economic groups". Economic groups tend to have working class base and deal with issues relevant to working and poor people. They therefore have a *class dimension*. Our aim here would be to promote:

- 1) class consciousness and workers power: these groups should be run by the working class and reject class collaboration.
- 2) work in principled alliance with other working class formations out of recognition of the common interests of the working and poor people and the necessity of class struggle.
- 3) do not undermine the unions, but on the contrary work with them, defend them and promote them
- 4) take up arguments about the need for anti-racism etc. with other sections of the working class.
- 5) win them to a revolutionary Anarchist programme.

Our aim here would be to unite and merge these "economic organisations": those in the workplace should be united into "One Big (Trade) union"; those in (working class) residential areas into "One Big (Community) Union". They would have a common struggle: against capitalism, the State and all oppression. In this way, they could provide the nucleus for the self-governing worker and community councils of the Anarchist future. Thus, we call for this unity to(1) unite the working and poor

masses around their common interests and needs(2) provide a united basis for self-management after the revolution

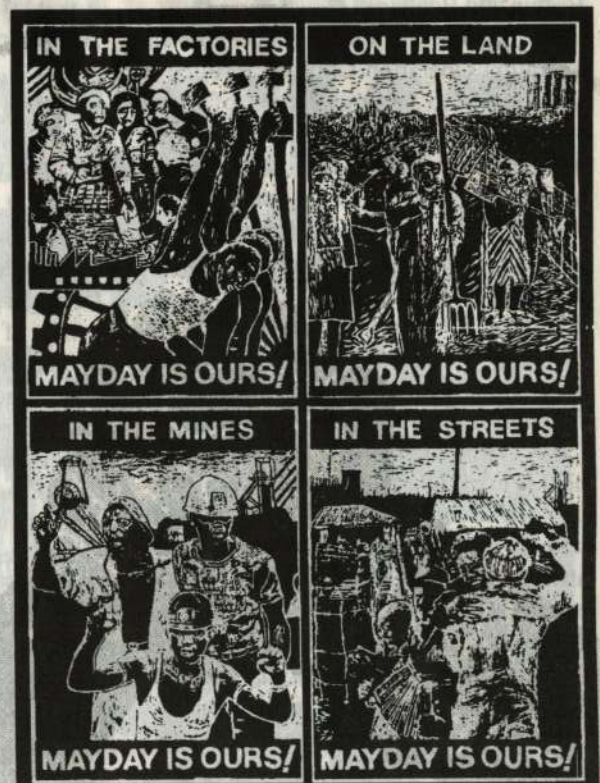
south africa - a special case

In South Africa, this situation is somewhat different. Clearly, the defeat of racism in South Africa does also require a class struggle and a workers revolution (as elsewhere). But here the Black working class is the majority of the population, the most radical, combative and organised force in society. Thus the question of Black workers presents itself in a different fashion here as it is obvious that the Black working class will be the force that makes the SA revolution. Since there is no left-wing or working class movement that can possibly marginalise the Black working class, the need for special committees, sections etc. to deal with racism is redundant in South Africa.

What then of then of White/Black worker unity? This unity was remote in the extreme in the apartheid years- it was extremely unusual for White workers to join the struggle of the Black working class under apartheid, precisely because of their extreme level of privilege (although some did, mainly from the Communist Party). So, in contrast to the situation in the West, White workers here actually did benefit from racism. Nonetheless, interracial workers unity (on an anti-racist platform) would have been advantageous even under apartheid because it would have weakened the armed power of the State (most Whites were at some or other point soldiers and were and are workers). With the demise of formal apartheid and the move to a formally non-racial bourgeois parliament, the prospects for such unity are far better. The economic crisis, the removal of job reservation and other legal privileges, the breakdown of the alliance between Whites of different classes that underpinned the racist regime all make a workers alliance and unity more feasible.

Thus we have a situation where literally tens of thousands of White workers and historically White unions have actually joined the non-racial integrated COSATU unions; the main historically white union

federation, FEDSAL, has also begun co-operating with COSATU in negotiations and even demos (although White worker attendance is quite poor). We should support this unity, so long as it is on an anti-racist basis, and so long as the general layers of activists remain broadly representative of the mainly Black unions. In other words, workers unity is good, if only in terms of our proletarian internationalism and non-racism, but the basis of that unity must still be the struggle against racism as well as capitalism. In any case, it is clear that the Black working class will still



be the battering ram that destroys the system (the possible participation of White workers as reliable allies notwithstanding).

Therefore, class unity on a principled anti-racist basis (with the provisions for special organisations outlined above) is the key to freedom.

This is why we say
 "Black Liberation Through Class War"
 "State, Capitalism, Racism: One enemy, one fight"

A comrade from the Workers Solidarity Federation (South Africa)

Contact: PO Box 1717, Rosettenville,
 Johannesburg 2130

<http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/7017>

wsf_sa@geocities.com

scotland yardies

Jamalca Perera, from the Centre for Research on Drugs and Health, noted in a recent report on dealers in Kings Cross that all the dealers revealed their original supplies of crack came from white criminal families in Bermondsey. In 1988, Eddie Richardson was gaoled for the importation of 2 tonnes of cannabis and 153.8 kilos of cocaine - to a street value of £43 million, linked to the Cali cartel. The operation involved connections and communications, bank accounts and front operations between Britain and Bangkok.

More recently a joint police/ customs operation Operation Crayfish resulted in the conviction for importation of Curtis Warren, a mixed race Liverpoolian, "The Mr Big's Mr Big" as the Observer described him, who made the Sunday Times list of Britain's 500 richest citizens, and has alleged links with the Cali cartel. (There are many aspects of the surveillance operation which led to Warren's arrest and conviction, not least the procuring of drug buys by undercover cops, which give cause for concern, and an appeal is pending).

Vincent Ruggiero, a reader in criminology at Middlesex University, in his survey "Brixton, London: A Drug Culture without a Drug Economy" noted the clear absence in areas of south London targeted by the DRVIU - Brixton, Clapham, Peckham - of the money laundering and investment in legal business that illustrate a sophisticated, expanding drug economy. Quoted in *The Guardian* on 15/7/96, Ruggiero observed "The profits of the drug economy are nowhere to be seen in inner-city London areas." The major suppliers did not generally live in these heavily policed areas but in "respectable, affluent, white, areas."

The DRVIU seems, from all the reports of its activities to date, to do nothing but run informers. It is fair to say that street crime of the kind the DRVIU allege is committed by the Yardie gangs usually is contained by more obvious police methods - surveillance, stop and search, interviewing of witnesses, etc. In his book "Gangsta", John Davison details the operational methods of Operation Dalehouse; "a combination of intense surveillance and computer analysis.. large numbers of "spins", both looking for guns and to accumulate intelligence from interviewing suspects and analysing sheaves of their documents. Names and numbers in address books were par-

ticularly fruitful, as were numbers on itemised mobile phone bills, fed into a computer and cross checked with all dedicated Yardie databases in the Met, a detailed pattern of connections were built up, aliases and street names were unscrambled and addresses targeted." All standard operational routines. The protracted use of informers, however, suggests not the monitoring and containment of crime, but its procurement. Research carried out by Colin Dunningham of Durham University and Clive Norris of Hull University notes that "the most effective informers are actively involved in crime themselves and one consequence is that their handlers frequently turn a blind eye to offences committed by their informers, leaving numerous detectable crimes unsolved." (*The Role of the Informer in the Criminal Justice System*, 1996).

The Guardian's regular crime correspondent, Duncan Campbell, has written "many defendants, particularly in drug cases, claim that the main player in trafficking operations is often acting at the behest of his handler and that the crimes would not have taken place without their encouragement. A number have claimed that the police handlers encourage much larger deals than would have taken place or of Class A rather than a Class B drug, with cannabis smugglers being urged to move to ecstasy." (30/4/96) The particular history of the Yardie gangs may well make them especially susceptible to procurement by the state. Gangs linked to the right wing Jamaican Labour Party were covertly armed in the 1970s as a means of destabilising the social democratic Peoples National party government of Michael Manley.

CIA involvement in the arming of the JLP-linked gangs was revealed by the former agent Philip Agee. By the end of the 70s, JLP and PNP politicians bought gunmen as a means of sustaining political influence and handing out jobs and favours. After the 1980 election in Jamaica which brought the CIA stooge Edward Seaga to office, Jamaica became a sweatshop for American manufacturers, with Nike paying 20 cents an hour to handpicked cheap labour. Seaga turned the police and army onto the gun gangs whose expansion he'd overseen. By the mid 80s, the Americas Watch human rights monitoring group estimated that one third of the island's homicides were committed by the police. The gangs moved to New York and Miami, and many of them became street soldiers for the Cali cartel.

Given the posses origins, their attitude to the state was necessarily more ambiguous than was the case with other criminal gangs, and informers and supergrasses have a long history within the posses.

Eaton Green was recruited in 1991 following his arrest by Steve Barker for a minor traffic offence. During his time with SO11 he provided 168 intelligence reports on Yardie-related activity (at £1000 a time). On the back of this, Barker went from being a bent Brixton cop to a big fish at the Yard. John Davison and Nick Davies would argue that "in order to combat the bad men the police need bad men on their side - and in some respects the badder the better."

But according to the Clark report, the new unit was established to combat "sharply increased incidents of murder, violence, drug-related crime and crack availability." The reality is that the unit clearly and deliberately managed such incidents. Again, if the anti-Yardie work of Scotland Yard had been stepped down to almost nothing prior to Clark's report, why were Barker and his associates spending thousands on informers and why did Barker go to Jamaica in the summer of 1993, at a time when, according to Davies, "officers had been forced to spend their own money to fund operations"? Why was the unit set up despite the Eaton Green fiasco? Any answers to these questions are necessarily speculative, but it's clearly the case that the answers Nick Davies and Scotland Yard would like us to swallow won't do. What if money was channelled covertly to officers like Barker while the official monitoring of Yardie gangs was stepped down? What if this was done because publicly accountable expenditure was not justifiable on the basis of the evidence of the real extent of the Yardie gangs' involvement in crack dealing, but that infiltrators of the Yardie gang served some other purpose? What if, when the shot hot the fan the best form of defence was seen by the Yard as attack - to blame a combination of politicians over-sensitivity to complaints of "racism" and inept "policy-makers" for the mess, and propose as a solution the formalisation of the covert activities which had led to the mess in the first place? Even if any of the above speculation makes sense, the question remaining to be answered is why? In an article in *The Guardian* of 15/7/96, Mark Olden interviews a Ladbroke Grove crack dealer named Eric. In answer to the question "What about the police?", Eric replies "when we were out on the streets, we paid. When we were visited, we

paid. Some of the gear I've had taken off me, I can't swear to it, but I'm sure it's back out there within weeks." Media hype over crack epidemics in the US resulted in a "War on Drugs" which allowed parts of urban America to be under permanent police siege while drug rehabilitation projects were closed due to cutbacks. Under the guise of anti-gang activity, the LAPD has compiled a "gangbangers" register which lists more suspects than there are black and latino youth in LA! The LAPD carry out semi-permanent community occupations, "narcotic enforcement zones", which serve a dual purpose of whipping up middle class fears of crime, which serve as a useful justification for directing more resources towards policing, while justifying the virtual lockdown of working class communities. Equally, the containment of drugs and drug related crime within working class areas effectively serves to divide and to pacify working class communities. The US anti-drugs activist, Clarence Lusane, in his book "Pipe Dream Blues" asserts: "In numerous black communities, police departments have launched what are essentially full scale military assaults. With the logistics of the kind usually reserved for invasions of other nations, police raid black neighbourhoods weekly... The proliferation of hard drug use in these communities plays the dual role of social control and economic delusion. A drugged out community, pacified, subdued, and bent on self-destruction, is not going to rise up against the white corporate power structure. The youth of these communities, who are most likely to rebel, are at the centre of the drug epidemic and the government sponsored drug war." If police strategy is in reality about the confinement of crime within working class areas; if, whether for political purpose of private gain, some police are actively involved in the drug trade in inner cities, then, far from being an embarrassment, the Eaton Greens of this world are doing exactly what they're paid to do, and the only embarrassment comes from the public

disclosure of such activities. It couldn't happen here? Maybe not; but consider, finally, the following two points: 1. According to HM Customs & Excise 89% of all drugs aimed at the UK market get past them and the police. If the police and customs aren't involved in the drug trade the figure is meaningless, just a guess from the number of port/street seizures per annum. So, either police/customs expenditure is based on nonsensical guesswork, or, to state that 89% get past them, the Customs & Excise must have knowledge of, and control of, drug traffic in the UK. 2. Steve

Barker is still operationally active with the SO11-linked unit. He likes to brag that he's been nicknamed John Wayne. It's fair to say that someone who's overseen an armed robber, a rapist and a murderer and a \$45,000 con-artist as informants wouldn't normally have been sitting pretty at the Yard. There can only be one reason why "John Wayne" is still running his show. There are more Eaton Greens and Delroy Dentons out there, and Barker is still needed to handle them.

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR



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POSTER BY CLIFFORD HARPER

the rape of socialism

by Donovan Pedelty

Prometheus Press, Tir Celyn, Aberedw, Builth Wells, Powys, LD2 3SQ
£27.50 hbk, £13.50 pbk

SUBTITLED "How Labour Lost the Millennium" this book is an analysis of the transformation of the Conservative Party into a party based on the ideology of *laissez faire* free enterprise capitalism and of Labour from a party with nominal socialist objectives into one concerned solely with the achievement of political office to carry out the efficient management of the capitalist economy. I am not sure it was a good idea to have both analyses in one book; they are related but putting them together makes the book both too long and too short. It is too long for all its material and conclusions to be properly balanced in a reader's mind, and too short to deal fully with both subjects.

But the main thing it lacks is what it maybe needs most, a consideration of why these developments occurred. There is some reference to the inclination of leading Labour politicians, having achieved the pinnacle of prominence under the status quo, to conclude quite understandably that the status quo has much to recommend it. But such psychological insights fall short of the analysis of socio-economic factors that area t play on the movement and which result in the acceptance of so little when so much could be sought.

Similarly the abandonment of paternalism by the Tory Party and its adoption of virulent free market policies did not come about by accident. My feeling has long been that the crude Marxist view that it was a response by the politicians of the ruling class to a particularly severe and

enduring crisis in the stability of the system is probably broadly accurate but too simplistic to offer a full understanding. This book deals with the hijacking of the Tory party as narrative, not as analysis. The questions which such an analysis could address are whether the capitalist system in the 1970s had come to the end of the post war boom, and that there was no more productive slack to be taken up. This coincided with an increasingly assertive and successfully combative working class gaining significant wage claims. The employing class had to deal with this and adopted free market monetarism as the theoretical garb in which to conceal a concerted attack on trade unions as organisations and working class industrial militancy as a response.

As a way of explaining the world economy and understanding how it worked monetarism was self evidently twaddle. It never had analytical intellectual coherence. Its prescriptions never corresponded to reality. But this was not its purpose. It was simply the cloak which covered the anti-working class strategy which sought successfully to tip the balance back towards the employing class - as if it had ever really tilted the other way! The anti trade union legislation was the centrepiece of the Thatcher years. It had the further impact of gong into the public consciousness. The notion that the 1970s was a time of endless abuse of power by trade unions is very widely held, and very importantly by people who have no personal memory of the era. But it has little relation to the reality



of what happened. Like so many folk myths its purpose is top reassure rather than inform. This was brought home to me on election night when I was chatting to a young man who admitted that he had just voted conservative. People ready to admit this were rare enough birds after Tory victories; he is probably unique in the present political climate. He justified this most eccentric action because of the trade union excesses which occurred under the last Labour government. As he is now 33 years old he can have no adult recollection of the last Labour administration and he is not sufficiently interested in politics to have looked into the period independently.

A further matter to consider is the extent to which this process of instilling ideas into the collective consciousness has influenced the policy and purpose of the Labour Party, now in government. Their acceptance of the iniquitous practice of privatising public utilities, the gifting of monopoly businesses to the private sector to provide considerable and assured profits to private shareholders rather than contribute them to government revenues, is particularly galling.

One doubts that the Blair government will use its enormous House of Commons majority, which surely must ensure them a minimum of a two term tenure of office, to assert a distinctively radical or even egalitarian programme. Nobody who has been even fleetingly awake in the post 1960s years can expect anything remotely socialist. This book confirms this melancholy view but does little to deepen the reader's understanding of why this is the position we are in.

Our secular correspondent

A Ladder for Mr Oscar Wilde by Geoff Sayers

(ISBN 1 901677001) £1.80 from Two Rivers Press, 35-9 London St Reading RG1 4PS profits to Reading ABC

A SHORT, well produced pamphlet that is a really nice read. I leafed through it in that dead time before going to work, and it makes good use of comparisons of crime and punishment in Reading between the 1890s and the 1990s. Worth buying for the explanation of its title alone.

Where There's Brass There's Muck - Ecology and Anarchism by the ACF

£1.80 from ACE, 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX

60 PAGES which seem to have originated from *Organise*, the ACF paper on "green" issues and the anarchist approach to them. Because it started as articles, there are places where things veer off a bit, but in others it makes it a lot more readable than the average anarcho-text on green issues.

The content is generally good, though in some areas it is a little superficial, such as in its approach to Darwinism. I found it a little odd that there was a lot of space dedicated to Earth First!, both here and in the US, but doesn't mention *Green Anarchist*, whose views, particularly around population, technology and primitivism, are clearly within the scope of this pamphlet.

That said, there's little most of our readers would disagree with here, and it's hard to work out whether this pamphlet is aimed at the already-green, the already anarchist, or the general reader.

Between The Riots - The Best of the Class War Supporters Bulletin £1.50 blank cheques/POs to Ipswich CW, PO Box 87 Ipswich IP4 4JQ

THIRTY SIX pages of material collected from the time Ipswich CW did the supporters bulletin. Most of you should be familiar with what's on offer here, cuttings from the press on people standing up to the police, articles (mainly humorous) and loads of anti-royal stuff. Not going to change the world, but good for a laugh.

reclaiming theatre

a review of the play *The Haymarket Incident*
staged at Bradford University May 5th 1997

I'M THE WRONG person to review this play. I'm biased. I was staying for the weekend-in Bradford for the 1 in 12 Club's May day festival. It was the first time I'd seen the 1 in 12 in action, and possibly the best event they've ever put on. And I hadn't been back up north for a while.

The play tells the story behind May Day. Set in Chicago, 1886 it centres around the activities (and eventual framing and murder) of four anarchist trade union militants, August Spies, Adolph Fischer, George Engel and Albert Parsons. Put on by the 1 in 12's theatre group most of whose members had no previous acting experience or drama school education, it tells the story in a down to earth and human way, with humour, politics, romance. And it's bloody good.

The play starts as soon as you walk into the Theatre. In almost complete darkness, with no seats, and a barely visible stage, you are herded in by 19th Century American cops with truncheons who bark at you aggressively to move to the front and to keep moving. And then you as the audience are dragged into the action, becoming caught up in the events that unfold: A man (August Spies) dodges like a scared rabbit through the crowd and hides behind us against the wall. A cop pushes through, pulls him out, humiliates him and beats him up. This sets the context and tone of the play. Bits of action pop up in every dark corner of the theatre, and the audience (or crowd) moves over to see the action and occasionally gets involved, cheering speeches, backing off as a gun is fired, or just being an audience. And it keeps you enthralled. It's audience participation at it's best. You don't feel daft when you cheer a speech or join in a song because you feel part of the story.

The early part of the story centres around Parsons, an ordinary bloke. The play takes us through his home life, his relationships and eventually his involvement in a strike by workers at the McCormack Machine Company and the agitation for an eight hour day. During an attack on a striker's rally outside McCormack's by armed police, at which August Spies was a

speaker, one worker is killed and several wounded. Spies immediately circulates a flyer for a mass rally against police violence and calling for "Workingmen to arm themselves and appear in force". In response, the police attempt to stop the rally and a bomb is thrown, killing at least one policeman, paving the way for a massive state crack down on trade unionists in Chicago, including the hanging of four known activists - The Haymarket Martyrs. The second half of the play centres round the trial and execution. The trial (at which Spies turns up halfway through, stating he is prepared to face death along with his other comrades) is played out using much of the original recorded words. And as well as being intensely moving it's also funny, which brought you back down to earth. There's the two cockney likely lads who are called as witnesses for the prosecution who have obviously been paid to say that Parsons and Spies had made bombs and make a complete hash of their court appearance. And there's the judge who, every time the lights come on to start a new scene, is caught snogging a "floozy" who sits almost on his knee throughout the trial wearing little else but a few feathers.

There is a disturbing and violent scene where the Four stand with their heads covered ready to be hung, and make impassioned political speeches seconds before they die.

It's the best play I've seen for a long time. But if you want to see it yourself you'll have to do a bit of work. The Cast are mostly unemployed, ordinary young people. They haven't got any funding but would love to do a tour. They need groups to sponsor them. If you're interested you can contact the group directly through the 1 in 12 club (01274 734160) .. The Director and Producer and (it seems) the main enthusiast is Noel Batstone, a 1 in 12 member. I suppose it's just nice to see a real play with real people who haven't been to college telling a political story that inspires you. It'd be great if anarchists could give these people a hand to put the play on elsewhere.

Go on, give 'em a ring!

John M

Dear Black Flag,

The "Albanian Revolution" article of issue 211 was of great interest to me, as I spent a couple of months there last year. The nature of the people-incredibly friendly, generous, full of spirit and spunk(!) despite incredible poverty and dictatorship-impressed me. But I think the article, with all its polemical romanticism of a "proletarian peasant revolution" needs to be questioned. Its hardly romantic for those involved-for them its survival and revenge for massive betrayal.

The state was slowly withering away, as far as I could tell, before the Pyramid collapse. Bureaucracy and policing, in all but the major cities, was more or less non-existent. The people were set up on a massive scale. People who have lived their whole lives as part of an extreme brainwashing Stalinist dictatorship have a certain ingrained mentality that cannot be unlearned quickly. Television plays a role here, and their "glorious" visions of the West come from Italian, American and Greek satellite t. v. People would say to me "The West is the best" and were dumbfounded to hear me disagree. When the Stalinist regime collapsed in 1991 they turned unquestioningly to the only other

system they had been informed existed. Presented as "normality" or even "democracy", we know it as capitalism. It promised freedom and wealth, but when I was there, people were starting to discover that things were not quite as they seemed. A rich community/social life and seemingly never ending political discussions in bars and cafes has survived the t. v age-word spreads quickly. When the Pyramid schemes collapsed and revealed themselves to be a great lie, Albanians across the country revolted with all their hearts.

The elections have just passed and the Socialist Fatos Nano has claimed victory over Sali Berisha, promising "something new" - but we all know what that means.

Sadly, senseless violence is rife, and mafia control of many border regions does not present such a rosy picture. The country has never been developed - rugged mountains covering 2/3 of the country, few roads and little infrastructure means that there is more opportunity for spontaneous community and co-operative self sufficient living in the anarchist style, and less opportunity for state thuggery. Though we all know thuggery of the state has many powerful supporters. I watch with interest. (pew!!-rock and roll!!!)

Matt M (Edinburgh)

Dear Black Flag,

In regards to the statement that the "newly formed Anarchist Communist Federation" supported the CNT-Unificado/CNT Renovado which later changed its name to the CGT, in the last issue of *Black Flag*, may I point out the following facts: The ACF has never supported the CNT-Renovado/CNT-Unificado /CGT in any of its publications. The ACFs critiques of anarcho-syndicalism/revolutionary syndicalism that have been developed over the last 10 years would exclude any support for the Renovados/CGT. No motion of support has ever been put forward, let alone passed, for any conference or delegate meeting of the ACF.

The ACF was founded in March 1986. In February and May 1985, a member of the Anarcho-Communist Discussion Group, one of the elements that assisted in the foundation of the ACF, wrote 2 articles of information in *Freedom* about the repression and torture carried out by the Spanish state against members of the CNT-Euzkadi (Basque section of the CNT

Unificado) who had played an active role in the Michelin workers strike in Vitoria. This was an act of simple solidarity and did not imply uncritical support for the CNT-U. This was followed in October 1985 by another article in *Freedom* "A Reply to the CNT-AIT" by the same writer, replying to a report by the Press Secretary of the CNT-AIT discussing the expulsions of various groups from the CNT, including the magazine collective Askatasuna who the Press Secretary wrongly called Platformist (they were not Platformist but were expelled because they advocated a libertarian Euzkadi-Basque country) the Movimiento Comunista Libertaria (influenced by Platformism, but using the Platform as a point of reference and not as the Gospel) the Anarcho-Syndicalist Affinity Groups around Sebastian Puigcerver, a former member of the CNT national committee, and the magazine collective around *Bicicleta*, an independent anarchist magazine based in Catalonia. The writer went on to describe the physical attacks on mem-

bers of the CNT-Unificado, with one militant nearly losing an eye, and another receiving a fractured skull. The aim of the article was not to discuss the rights and wrongs of the splits in the Spanish CNT, but to point to the authoritarian character of the expulsions, and the barbarous behaviour of some in the CNT-AIT, including members of the Federacion Anarquista Iberica. The writer finished by saying "There are probably many workers in the CNT-AIT thoroughly sick of the violence and sectarianism employed against workers in the CNT-U, libertarians themselves, just as there are many workers who have left the CNT, and are disgusted at these antics. The sooner these destructive squabbles are settled, the better for the libertarian workers movement in Spain. "Hardly an all out endorsement of the CNT-U. The writer of these articles is still a member of the ACF, but like everyone else in the ACF, would not support any syndicalist faction. To conclude otherwise, as your writer does, is a little specious.

Finally, (hooray) on the charge of Platformism against the ACF. The ACF does not regard itself as Platformist, but sees the Platform as an interesting point of reference. (Some ACF members are more enthusiastic about the Platform than others.) The same could be said for the Union des Travailleurs Communistes Libertaires of France -UTCL (renamed several years ago as Alternative Libertaire-AL). They did enthusiastically support the CNT-U/CGT and still do, as did the Swiss Organisation Socialiste Libertaire and various libertarian communist groups in Italy with similar politics to the UTCL-AL. These groups have a conception of work within the reformist unions in their specific countries which in most cases includes taking official positions in the union structures. The ACF has nothing in common with these tactics, so you can hardly talk about a united bloc of groups erroneously labelled as "Platformist", especially if you also include the French Organisation Communiste Libertaire, who the writer in *Black Flag* would probably also describe as "Platformist" but who, as far as I am aware, never took sides on the CNT split. As regards the Workers Solidarity Movement, who are keener on the Platform than others, I'm sure they can defend themselves.

Yours for libertarian communism
Ron Allen

Dear Black Flag,

To my mind, the ill-informed sectarian bollocks about the Anarchist Communist Federation in the last issue of *Black Flag* ruined an otherwise fascinating article on sectarian bollocks in the IWA.

I can't see how such snide shit stirring about other anarchists is going to help *Black Flag* become a forum for debate, ideas and action amongst class struggle anarchists.

Yes, anarcho-syndicalists are going to disagree with the ACF's position on the unions (otherwise they wouldn't be anarcho-syndicalists) but simply giving anything you disagree with a slagging isn't going to get anyone anywhere.

Yours against sectarianism and for a united revolutionary anarchist movement,

Freddy Cheeseworth

(Road manager for John Shuttleworth?-eds)

lancaster anarchist group

A new anarchist group has been set up in Lancaster. If you want to get in touch their address is Lancaster Anarchist group, c/o The Bookcellar, 9 Meeting House Lane, Lancaster LA1 1TJ

libertarian labour review

LLR the US anarcho-syndicalist publication have a new web site at:
<http://flag.blackened.net/llr/>

CNT web site

The spanish CNT have updated their web site at:
<http://www.cnt.es>

anarcho-syndicalism 101

Texts on anarcho-syndicalism from authors such as Rocker, Chomsky, Maximoff and many others have been published on the web at:
<http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/5851/index.html>

@narcho quiz

answers

1. Noam Chomsky
2. Despite being in the top ten most referenced writers in the humanities (and the only one alive) his one "familiar quote" is "colourless green ideas sleep furiously", a sentence he contrived to show that a sentence could be grammatical but make no sense, and that impossible word orders could also be grammatical. For example, colourless can't be followed by green, ideas don't sleep.
3. In 1966, the Gurrindgi Stockmen of Wave Hill station, in the Northern Ter-

ritory, went on strike against being paid only in rations, and for control of their land, leased at the time to Lord Vestey, British meat baron, owner of Dewhursts and tax-dodger extraordinaire. Eight years later, Aussie PM Gough Whitlam gave Vincent Lingari a piece of paper recognising the Gurrundgi people's right to the land. The strike as significant as well for boosting the land rights movement, still fighting in Australia to do this day.

4. When Vincent Lingari came to Sydney to publicise and call for solidarity. During his visit he met Fred Hollows who noticed he had an easily curable eye disease that causes blindness. Hollows set up a "barefoot" clinic in the outback, and made the operations himself, while gathering a team together and training aboriginal ophthalmologists to follow in his footsteps. The project has since spread from Australia to Nepal and Eritrea.

obituary

Fiddler (Gerald Farthing)

Died on 24th July of an asthma attack. He was only 32. Fiddler was one of the active squat crew in Brixton through much of the '80s and a stalwart of All-London-Squatters. He was a cheerful, ingenious Geordie whose style was to get on with useful things without a lot of fuss. For all the blethering of politicians, it's people like Fiddler who build a squatting movement. His name came from his knack with amenities in squats which didn't work. After Fiddler had fiddled with them....they usually did. He fiddled with other things too. After a raid on a pirate radio station which had been particularly annoying to the authorities, Fiddler couldn't be found. He was, it turned out, locked on the roof of a tower block. He contrived to escape un-nicked after a long, boring night, but any chance of a name change had evaporated with the morning mist.

He got qualifications in plumbing and became a registered gas fitter, working for various co-ops and shortlife housing groups around London, where he was much respected, not least for activities beyond the call of duty, from feeding cats to seeing off Poll Tax snoopers. His skills kept hundreds of people in squats and co-ops in winter warmth and hot baths, without the deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning you keep hearing about when private landlords and councils are involved. The sad irony is that it was Fiddler who died in his own front room, but safe gas appliances on the housing margins - so that others don't - are one of his memorials.

There were many facets to Fiddler's life. Apart from squatter and plumber, he was a drummer - with a new band recently formed - keen Brockwell Park cricketer, footballer and Sunderland fan. The very opposite of a "lifestyle anarchist" poser, Fiddler's life showed how anarchy really works. He dented the chaos of capitalism by being collaborative, cheeky, too, the inspiration to be constructive, and a lot of warmth and fun with it!

Jim Paton

De Rich Getting Rich

Rich wants a profit
Sue wants a kidney
Tony wants a job
Errol wants freedom
Tom wants clean air
Rich wants a rocket
Jenny and Paul want a zebra-crossing
Ms. Campbell de teacher wants recognition
Larry wants a pension
Sgt. Mollins wants a conviction
Rich wants old champagne
Dis child needs fresh water
Danny needs a pair of shoes
Mom needs fifty pence for de meter
And this guy said if him don't get some kinda
Voice in parliament him will blow de place
Up, and watch it fall down.

Rich wants a war.
Him sey him want to protect Tom, Larry, Jenny, Sue, Errol, Sgt.
Mollins, Mom, Tony, Paul, Danny, dis child, and Ms. Campbell
and many other guys including you and me.
Big Boy Rich says he never got where he
Is today by sitting pon him backside
Complaining about the state of de world.