

Preface Or Postscript To The German Edition Of The 'Summers'.

23 Rough Notes (provisional)



A RECENT ANTI-APARTHEID DEMO IN LONDON. THE SNARLING FILTH IN THE CENTER OF THE PHOTO HAS JUST KNOCKED OUT HIS INSPECTOR (ARROWED RIGHT). FOR ONCE THE LONG ARM OF THE LAW WAS DOING A GREAT JOB.

PREFACE OR POSTSCRIPT TO THE GERMAN EDITION OF THE "SUMMERS".

ROUGH NOTES. (provisional)

1

Over the last six years, from '79 and "The Winter Of Discontent" onwards, the UK has in many different ways been one of the few countries in a situation of intense but often elusive, hide and seek ferment. Now you see it, now you don't. If not pre-revolutionary in any immediate sense, it is beyond doubt extremely explosive. In saying this, nobody should underestimate the difficulties and problems ahead and which as yet, more or less, are of an unknown substance. In a way, the UK has been insulated from the defeats and setbacks for the revolutionary process in Western Europe, particularly in Italy, Spain, Portugal and France. This is both welcome and unwelcome. The UK has its own marked peculiarities and surreal contradictions which make it something of a freak. Neither typically continental European or American, the clash between the "special relationship" vis-a-vis the USA and a projected West European super-State has tended to sharpen ancient, half buried, contradictions. The explosions in its inner cities inescapably bring to mind the riots in US cities in the late 60's. Yet apart from the protestant and catholic ghettos in N. Ireland which are dissimilar to those in America, there are no such things as ghettos in the UK. Although firmly inserted in the EEC, the UK does not possess in general with its archaic class structure, a modern day European character. Despite the recuperative formation of unions and "workers" parties which exist elsewhere in the world, the UK is encased within an antiquated husk which is almost pre-industrial in its patrician caste quality and the amazing rigidities of its class composition.

2

There are many similarities between the '81 riots and those of late '85. The racial mix: Afro-caribbean, white and asian youth united together on the streets, is the same, with Afro-caribbean youth as before, the main protagonists. Where Afro-caribbean youth don't reside, the riots tend to be less furious in character. The riots have exploded in some of the same areas: Handsworth (Sept '85) Southall, Brixton and Toxteth (Oct '85). All the big riots have been triggered by an incident caused by heavy policing which finally lights the fuse. Again an enjoyable potlach of laughter, fire raising and looting ensues and the same intense desire for life is expressed with a spontaneous generosity everywhere. Again, as before, it's not just down to unemployment because nearly 50% of those who've joined in the recent riots were employed in recognised jobs and not like the rest, scrounging in the black economy. Essentially as before too, they're proletarian uprisings.

3

There are now however some real differences. The renewed bout of rioting is much more violent and destructive, reflecting a far more desperate situation than in '81. Though more furious, they are of a shorter duration. Literally everything that can be torched is torched. It's not just consumer outlets. Getting down to an open attack on religion, a church was burnt down in Handsworth. There's also been a few deaths and those who openly defend the status quo have been savagely dealt with. A copper separated from the rest of the filth and a freelance reporter stupidly photographing a jewellers shop being looted, were offed. Two asian brothers, (one a sub-post master) - who incidentally lived in a reasonably well off house outside Handsworth - foolishly tried to defend a sub-post office. Overcome with smoke, they died in the heat of the flames. But much more to the point, ordinary people with no stake in the shit heap have, in some instances (especially Brixton) been attacked. Insurgents rightly searching individuals for I.D. (to see if they're press, T.V. or plain clothes cops) sometimes turned to indiscriminate mugging. Also one or two senior citizens have been stoned when cussing the fact that their flats had been inevitably torched because they were next to a burning store. (In one instance though

an old man was bricked cos' he was complaining about his gaff about to go as it was situated above a burning squat.) In Brixton, two well off women were raped after a provocation from their Hooray Henry boyfriends directed against rioters because they'd interfered with their load of high class, polished tin: a car. Obviously the media, trying to ferment an even more oppressive law 'n' order backlash than present, had a field day on these incidents. However before coming out with an understandable, quick fire, condemnation of attacking old people and rape, just remember the general situation. London, unlike the northern or midland cities, has since '81 become incomparably more gentrified than ever before and the poor are being forced into a corner as the rich young (and not so young) things move in and send property prices crazy. Moreover, as the proletariat has become more au fait with chic, a greater levelling in terms of fashion has meant that it is becoming difficult visually to tell the difference between the rich young things and those who are more thoroughly alienated and estranged from themselves than previously. Behind the style levelling though there's a major counter-tendency: the chasm of the social apartheid is getting wider and wider. In the riots there's been a direct response to gentrification with physical attacks on owner occupied housing and building contractors mobile offices were burnt out in Handsworth. Also, though precise details are lacking, building workers (and/or contractors) refused to work on council funded cosmetics on some Handsworth housing some days after the riot. Invariably this type of work means prettier exteriors but smaller living spaces and perhaps they sensed the rioters were aggro about this. However there are nuances to this too. Bearing in mind that a number of young rioters tend to work in a scrounge capacity on the buildings, it is somewhat pleasantly ironical to think they spend the days grafting on the buildings, only to burn them down at night.

4

Although frequently in the same areas the riots have moved out onto a new terrain. The Frontline has taken wing. No longer is it so much the streets on which there stands the late 19th century buildings which clever urban development has handed over to the well off since '81 (or knocked down and rebuilt in semi-respectable complexes) but the huge working class housing estates, which are the centers of insurgency. There are distinctions within this. The riots are taking place not in monolithic point blocks but in crumbling low rise, deck access estates where architects and town planners, along with other official pressure groups, attempted in a superficial way, to create the intimate atmosphere of the pre second world war slum minus the slum conditions. Riots have hit the big estates between Brixton station and Stockwell tube, the horrendous Peckham estate (which even seasoned hards found too heavy) and Broadwater Farm in Tottenham, North London. Complimenting this and highlighting the surreal character of revolt in the UK. riots have also erupted (with so far little inbetween) in ultra posh, very conservative, country towns like Harrogate, Welshpool and Bournemouth where there are no asians or Afro-caribbean to speak of but where a rigid, class bound, social apartheid gives the impression of existing in its unadulterated "Upstairs/Downstairs" T.V. format. In fact generally in these renewed riots, there are more whites involved than in '81.

5

The only serious racism too - and that has unfortunately increased alarmingly since '81 - is attacks on asians by white racists. It's largely been confined to East London but there's also been ugly incidents in the north. Recently there was a rampage by white racists shouting "Zeig Heil" in the high density asian area of Larkholme, Keighley, W.Yorks on October 20th '85. Also, very occasionally asians were sadly attacked in the mining areas of W.Yorkshire even during the ferment of the miners' strike. These attacks, may it be said, were not carried out by miners who gratefully received the generous donations magnanimously given them by the local asian



HARROGATE. W. YORKS. In the early hours of Oct 13th '85 youths ran crazy in the town center smashing shops, looting and fighting the police. A month beforehand a threatened punch-up between pupils from 3 rival comprehensive schools had been narrowly averted by the police. As a copper said at the time "There has been trouble before but never anything planned on a scale like this". Whether the same people were involved in the two incidents or not, competitive inter-class rivalry in the UK continually fluctuates and rarely stays the same for long. The Spa town of Harrogate was largely the creation of 19th century industrialists. Here miles from the manufacturing districts of W. Yorks they could flaunt their wealth without fear of reprisal. The town possessed a service proletariat and not an industrial one and the servants quarters of Bilton and Starbeck concealed in dips on the fringes of the town were hidden from the gaze of the well-to-do. The personalized "Upstairs/Downstairs" nature of class relations in Harrogate have changed more in favour of impersonal hotels, plush conference centers and there has been a striking increase in the number of restaurants. Yet the town center still exudes an air of immense prosperity and privilege.

community. Moreover asians in the north have generally and for sometime, looked to the miners as the group of workers who could stem the reaction taking place throughout the whole gamut of social life. In a sense attacks on asians remind one of the anti-semitic outrages of a few decades ago. There's the same complications: a very different, inward looking culture, seemingly (but only seemingly) immune from modern day erosion of old time values, a proprietorial orientation among a small number and a concern with education which both black and white find somewhat unsympathetic. Just like the jews before them, all of this conveniently neglects that 80% of asians are proletarians and that individually, some asians are beginning to develop an amazingly acute revolutionary awareness that leaves most others standing. Indeed, one badly needs a revolutionary analysis, from the inside, of all the complications and drifts within the asian community. Aswell as being totally fascinating in itself, it could do its small bit in helping to clear up some of the misunderstandings and prejudices which abound. In particular, the media tries to play on an anti-asian undercurrent. However, in general since '81, the media has gone even more crazed in its utter lies, especially in trying to ferment racial divide and rule in the UK. No wonder that what was begun in '81 with direct attacks on the media - followed up throughout the miners' strike and since - has got heavier and heavier and heavier against the laughing hyenas, running dog jackals, AIDS infested alligators and athritic werewolves of press, radio and T.V.

John Dillinger's WHITE HOT CLUB

Rioters drive out Pete



PETE: "We are obvious targets."

★ BIZARRE pop star Pete Burns last night vowed to leave his Liverpool home after he and his wife Lynne were pelted and attacked by rioters in Toxteth.

Still shaken, Pete told me: "It was dreadful—we were in a taxi coming home when we were surrounded by a mob. They were trying to roll the car over, and screaming all sorts of obscenities," said Pete, whose group Dead Or Alive are racing up the charts with My Heart Goes Bang.

"Lynne was crying and the taxi driver was nearly hysterical—rioters were on the roof and banging on the windows. Eventually the police got through the

EXCLUSIVE

crowd to us, and the taxi was able to move on but we were chased and stoned."

Pete and Lynne live in Toxteth along with fellow pop stars Echo and the Bunnymen.

"We simply cannot carry on living there—with so much poverty in Liverpool we are obvious targets," he added.

● King Kurt pop singer Gary Thomas—known as Smeggy—was left homeless when his Brixton home was burned to the ground by rioters at the weekend.

DEAD AND ALIVE were to come out of this situation more dead than alive. The even more famous "Echo and the Bunnymen" live in Toxteth. But street cred' is becoming suspect. The term always has implied getting, pulling oneself up out of the shit into something even worse by the boot and root straps. A situation of permanent riot in the inner cities would not only serve to drive out the rich things but would also help to reduce the property values the latter have forced up by their unwelcome drift back into the cities after the detour of suburban/country living. To hope for such things is realistic and possibly more so than an immediate overlap with the unfortunately as yet more bureaucratized forms of the employed workers' struggle.

6

The recent riots have occurred amidst a total vacuum in pop culture: a vacuum paralleling in a strange way, the social apartheid - getting wider and wider too. "Ghost Towns" by "The Specials", which accompanied the riots of '81 was the last radically recuperative record. After that, even the ability of music (punk and reggae) to tease with the suggested destruction of the old world, disappeared. Apart from the occasional, almost street level, scratch turnabout, music entered into a crisis far worse than that of the early 70's. A semblance of content gave way to technical audio-visual display, marketing and style. By degrees the class system was thrown into the music biz as the lads and lasses from downstairs were excluded in favour of the bland, middle class rich kids who'd always had it easy in any case. (Their only real claim to misery - and pop is full of it - is that rich kids on the lam are anomic not alienated.) Punk/Reggae and to some, although much lesser degree, the life styles which went with them, were the last youth rebellions in the UK to fatally express themselves in terms of culture. There'll be no others and when, as is happening, the working class kids (working class used here in terms of social place and not vis-a-vis work/non-work/refusal of work) are jacking in buying records, a dangerous gap is opening up for the organizers of our misery because pop culture in a nation-State like the UK is a far more effective tranquillizer than religion. It was the sigh of oppressed creativity in an everyday life denied on all levels. In reducing the effectiveness of culture's recuperative role, the ruling class is now stupidly destroying one of its most potent forms of self-defence. Culture is at a dead end everywhere. Repeats followed by even more pathetically insipid repeats. For example, the spray can and paint wall decorations promoted by the creep McLaren (now a millionaire) are a pitiable, pastiche import, of the outlaw subway expressions of the New York graffiti bombers. (.....At least before they were rapidly taken over by the Mad Ave art scene...) Particularly since '81, music has become for many to starkly appreciate, a blatant, high rolling money market, without mood, eros or emotion. But just as football riots, through incalculable knock on effects, are moving into other big time leisure industries, (boxing, rugby league, motor racing - the Brands Hatch clash- even darts) so the same process is bound sooner or later, to end up with the diasaffected musical spectators which will make the pop concert riots of the early 70's child's play in comparison. As for those musicians who get praised from the left wing groups and fellow travellers in the music press - individuals like Paul Weller, Billy Bragg and groups like "the Redskins" and "The Communards" - they're devoid of all the guts feel of what, never to be repeated, good rock and soul was. The insipid Paul Weller is academic soul for insipid academic Trotskyists. To boot, all of them, ("The Redskins" more critically), sickly end up supporting the Labour Party again. And at least something of the old, baneful sisyphus-like myth begins again but thankfully getting weaker and weaker.

7

Significantly at the beginning of '85 some striking miners wrote to the NME just after Weller's "Style Council" LP, "Our Favourite Shop" had been released. The letters criticized Weller for his surrogate radicalism, which brought him quodos and status out of miners' misery. Again the workers had hit the nail on the head in their critique of culture and the left were shown up in all their philistinism. Because of the intense capitalization of culture in the UK, it is hardly surprizing that workers here are more acutely aware of its role than rebellious workers elsewhere. To take one example. Though a minority of Spanish workers are more advanced than workers in the UK in totally refusing to have anything to do with parties and unions, they're not so advanced in other respects. We asked some Spanish workers' collectives to clarify a few points about dis 'n' dat. One was culture. Some members of the OEPB (Organizacion Estibadores Portuarios de Barcelona) replied but it was all at cross purposes and misunderstandings arose. Culture for them was largely bringing the proletariat upto an adequate standard of literacy and not as a mass consumer drug.

8

The left has shown something of a change in its attitudes to the riots from four years ago. On the one hand, the issue politics oriented, "sensitized" city bosses (e.g. London's Ken Livingstone/ Sheffield's David Blunkett) and their lefty flunkies - often having comfortable jobs/incomes on the frontiers of the "new" capitalism - have clearly revealed themselves to be what one knew them to be in the first place: retainers in new garb of capital and the State. They've either maintained a judicious silence on the recent riots or have openly condemned them. With one or two exceptions, all have implicitly fallen in line behind the leader of the Labour Party, Neil Kinnock. (It goes without saying that any future Labour Government will be even more dire than Wilson's or Gallagher's.) On the other hand, the Trotskyist left - those Trotskyists outside the Labour Party - and the various Marxist Leninist parties have praised the recent riots. Reading between the lines however, their flattering words are as slippery as eels. In the small print, the rioters are condescendingly put down, either in favour of the revolutionary party, or in not going to the factories where the real power lies. They say this without acknowledging that the fossilized structures of trades' unionism must also be destroyed by the factory and office workers themselves, in the process of finding authentic self-organization. Then there's another put down: failure of theoretical consciousness, as if fighting the cops and destroying commodities wasn't theory-in-action itself. Similarly, with a few exceptions, the Anarchists haven't fared any better and some Anarcho-syndicalists went so far as to disparagingly compare the late '85 riots unfavourably with the miners' strike. These organizations! These terms! Left/Right/Social Democratic/Trotskyist/Marxist/Leninist/Anarchist are now totally inadequate both theoretically and practically to deal with just what is different in the historically unprecedented situation which is now developing in the UK. All without exception have an ideology to realize and one can learn more casually hanging around in a vibrant street/moorland industrial town or going on a pub crawl rapping with punters here, there and everywhere than in a revamped stew inherited from the old workers' movement.

9

One of the ways the far left has responded to the riots is to call them an "old" English response or, the softer left, more benignly relating them to, "a long and distinguished history of urban and rural riot" (Stuart Hall, "New Socialist", Nov '85). However there are essential differences between riots of the far past and contemporary events. The rural riots of the 18th century, among all the uproar, still fixed a "just" price for over inflated foodstuffs - the "just" moneys in the end handed over to the merchant or trader under attack. This pattern broadly remained even for the incendiary "Captain Swing" riots of 1830 and the revolt against over-expensive toll gates in South Wales by the colourful "Daughters of Rebecca" a few years later. The only exception to this general rule were the guerrilla actions of the Luddites. The intense city riots of the same long period, particularly in London, though having a social character, also had a racial disposition whereby Irish, Jews, Spaniards and Scots were often burnt out. None of these characteristics are present today. The riots represent in the best possible way, insurgent racial unity and economically there is no attempt at an auto-reduction which always recognises the mediation of monetary exchange. The riots are not tools of collective bargaining but an end game whereby in the heart of wealth and the seeming avarice of a destructive loot-in, the abolition of money is concretely posited.

Pit strike backlash blamed for flare-up

FROM "FOOTBALL'S" MASS PICKETS TO FOOTBALL FREEDOM FIGHTING?

Football's accumulated profits are not being threatened by players' putting in for Himalayan pay rises and record transfer fees but by the side winder missiles lobbed from the terraces. For example the profits of Manchester United LTD'S are down from £2 million in '83 to a mere quarter of a million today. It is football hooliganism that is responsible for this falling rate of profit and there is evidence aplenty to suggest that the schizoid, psycho praxis of much football hooliganism is becoming less so as it merges with more tangible class expressions like inner city riots and strikes. But these things are rarely just one way and dialectical hairpins, like the soccer rowdiness of the striking miners, are everywhere. Since the end of the strike it would seem miners have taken to football hooliganism as they once took to the picket lines. And the "famous" Featherstone Rovers rugby league - the majority of them miners - were banned from Blackpool's posh hotels in Oct '85 after a night of vandalism.

8 police hurt in riot at Cup-tie

EIGHT policemen were in hospital last night after a riot broke out at an FA cup tie.

Trouble started 20 minutes after the start of the match at Frickley, near Pontefract, Yorkshire.

Forty supporters of home side, Frickley Athletic, invaded a stand reserved for the visitors - Midlands club Halesowen.

The disturbances went on after the game, as police, trying to restore order, were constantly stoned.

"Eight police officers were confronted by a group of about 50 men in the ground and bombarded by bricks and stones.

"One officer was knocked to the ground by a missile.

"After the match about 300 youths congregated in Westfield Lane, South Elmsall and began stoning police vehicles."

Police in riot gear arrested two men.

West Yorkshire police added later: "Eight police officers were injured and needed hospital treatment. Several were detained."

The match ended in a 1-1 draw.

Asked if the violence against the police appeared to be a back-lash from the NUM dispute, a spokesman said: "It's too early to say."

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THE MIRROR, Friday, October 11, 1985

Night the yobs ran wild

NO DRINKING, segregated fans, TV monitors, a heavy police presence—Leicester carried out the official guidelines almost to the letter.

Yet after the football club's Milk Cup clash with Derby County, petrol bombs were thrown, cars overturned, shops looted and police injured in the worst

by FRANK PALMER

soccer violence since Brussels.

Why? Yobs, say police chiefs. Just yobs spilling for trouble.

Inside the ground no public bars were open. With trains timed to arrive at 6.35 and return at 10.05, "there was no time to drink

before or after the game," a senior officer said.

"A TV camera picked up the first sign of trouble. About fifty youths 'who hadn't even been to the match' were seen gathering on a nearby recreation ground."

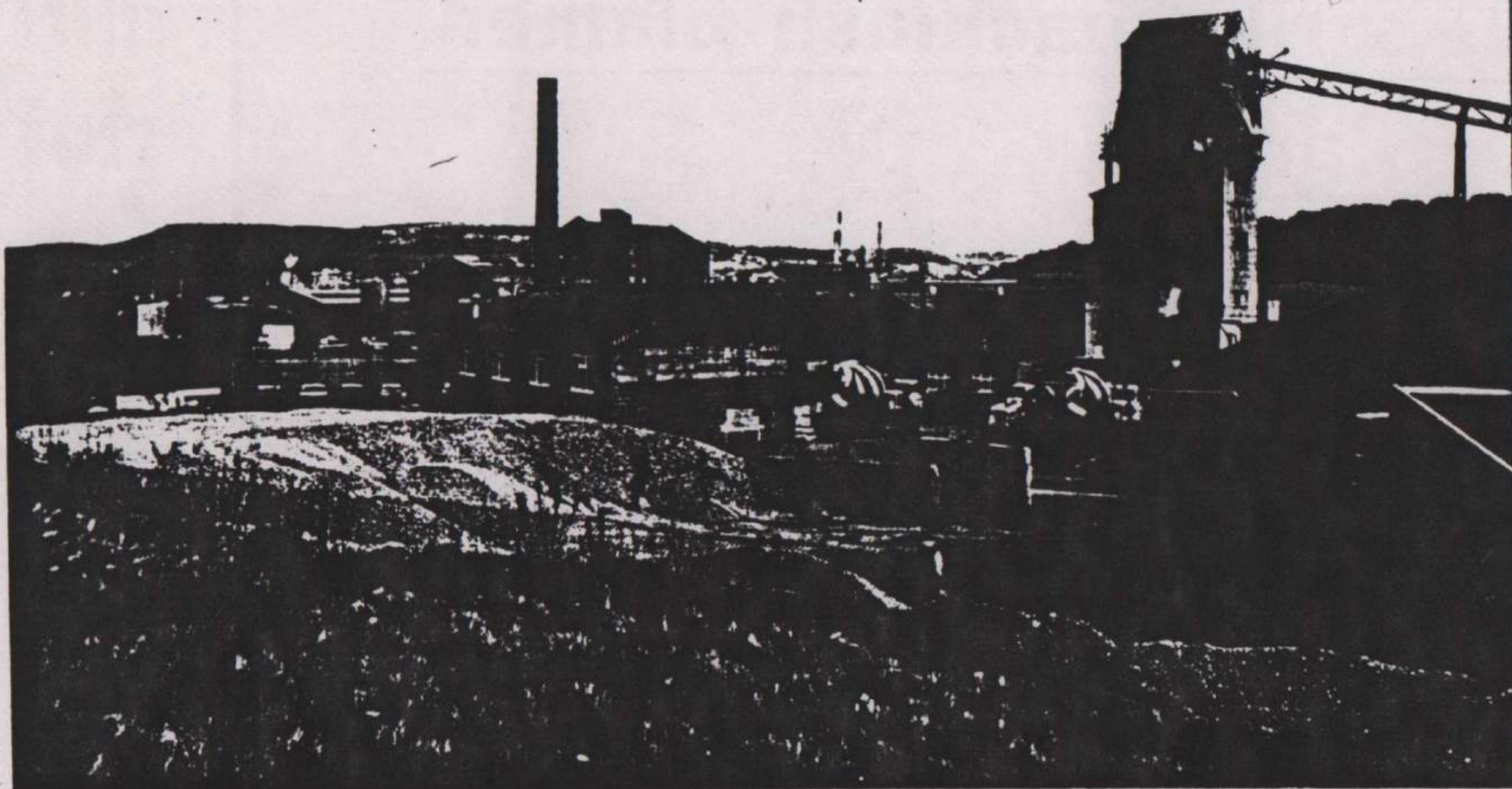
As the fans streamed out after the 1-1 draw under

police escort, the waiting youths hurled missiles.

The battle was on—and quickly spread to a "cosmopolitan" estate in the city's Highfields district.

Deputy Chief Constable Brian Pollard said: "The trouble was caused by strangers to the estate."

"This was just another method for them to attack the police."



HUDDERSFIELD. W.YORKS. Photo of the Red Doles (sic) Industrial Estate about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the city center. Fartown which erupted in '81 and the Sheepridge estate (Oct '85) are close by. A few miles beyond the ICI chemical works in the background lies one of the most rebellious areas of the West Yorks coalfield (Fitzwilliam, Hemsworth, Frickley, Featherstone etc.) Viewing the area with growing alarm the Tories went to the paranoid lengths of posting sharp shooters on the Polytechnic roof during a visit to the city in March '85 by the then Home Secretary, Leon Brittan. He had after all become identified in the public's mind with the brutal policing tactics employed during the miners' strike.

10

Avoided by the left there are also some very real questions which can now be raised on the basis of the gap between rioters, more or less, outside production and the employed proletariat. In rightly proclaiming the sovereign power of workers' councils, one comes across difficulties particularly in considering the councils in a too rigid way where revocable delegates and direct democracy are the be all and end all of everything. Put as dryly as this, the councils then have a tendency to become like a judicial regulation which neglects the movement "of spontaneous necessities in a sphere of passionate action" (Pannekoek's "Workers' Councils") where even in the past, in some moments of rebellion "actions did not comply with the decisions". (Ibid) This is even more to the point in modern ultra consumer conditions, especially among the reserve army of the revolution, existing more than ever before, in a trajectory of automation/semi-automation pointing clearly to the end of the world of work. Therefore contemporary rioters don't relate just like that to the workers' council concept. Although the rioters complain about given conditions essentially these riots express no demands. Those that are placed there come from substitutionist bodies among leftists or Black Liberation groups which aren't themselves at the eye of the rioting storm. In a sense too, the highest achievement of democracy (outlined in insurrectionary workers' councils) don't correspond to the actual situation of the rioting center. The riot itself becomes a kind of assembly of insurgent egalitarianism disposing of fire freely. Although there have been (and will be again) many riots connected with industrial struggles, the rioting hasn't

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**Gangs petrol-bomb
police at Sheepridge**

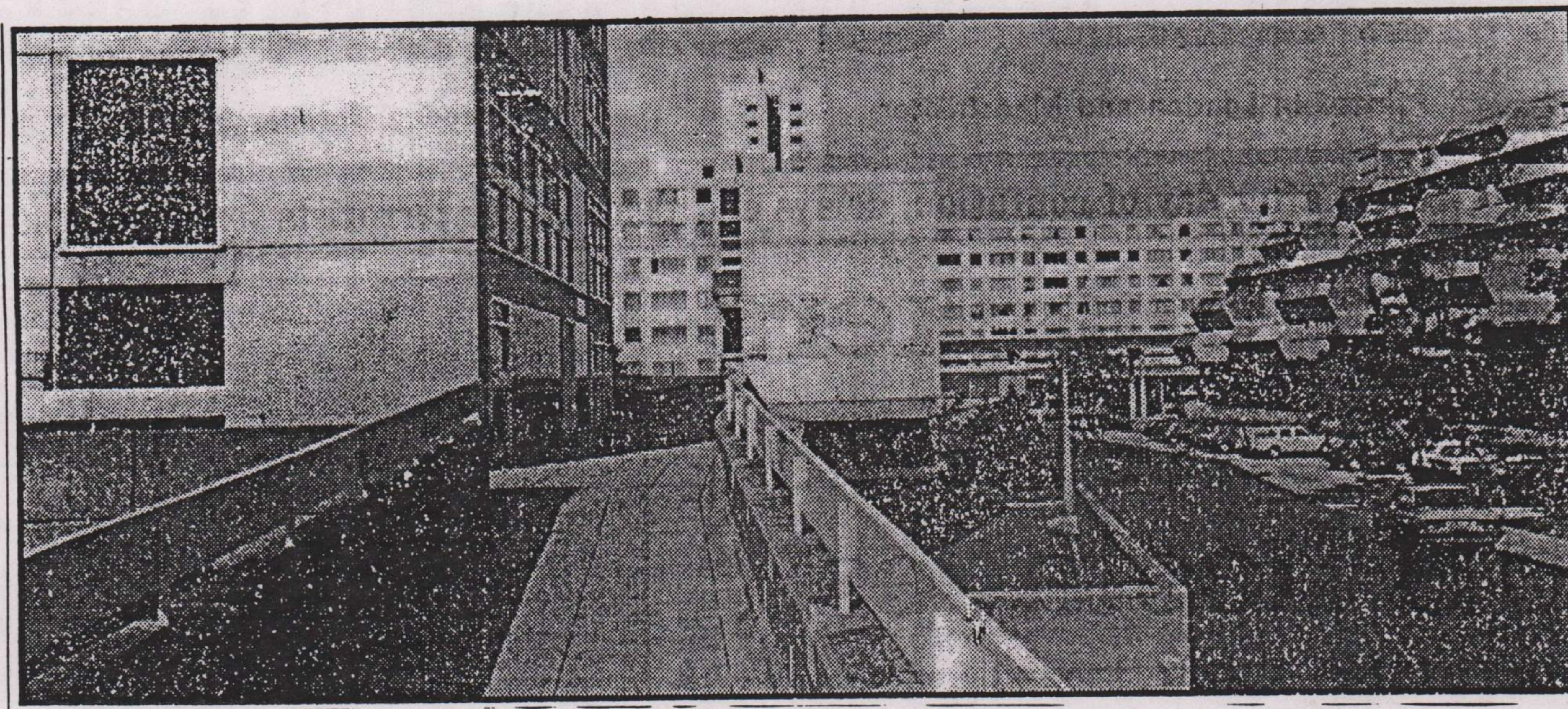
been the center of occasion which in the last instance, has been the workers' council itself. In the contemporary urban riots in the UK what's the point of delegating a petrol bomb, or a spontaneous destruction when the material basis for these events lies outside the work-a-day world? Presumably at some point there will be mass city wide assemblies but how and on what basis could these riots choose to elect a delegate? Put specifically vis-a-vis the UK, just how do the youths of Toxteth and Liverpool council employees make a unitary common cause? Not susceptible to magic formulae or wooden theoretical elaboration, the real and unique problems can only be solved through many disparate elements engaging in struggle over a lengthy period. A final word of caution. Raising these questions doesn't mean toleration for any social democratic or trade unionist recuperation of assemblies or party oriented hi-jackings of direct democracy or simply any cavalier attitudes towards the power of the councils.

11

Everything that moves now in the UK is incriminated or in danger of becoming so. Law 'n' order for the Tories has in some ways become the new Falklands factor which for them hopefully will keep their government in power for quite a few more years yet. A concerted attempt aimed at the subconscious psyche is frenetically being staged by the State (assisted in the form of subliminal suggestion by the media) effectively lumping together rape, wildcat striking, soccer hooliganism, mugging, beating up senior citizens, child molesting and rioting. The State is hoping to make them all indistinguishable from each other. The punishing frenzy of sections of the judiciary is now reaching apocalyptic proportions. The jails were filled to overflowing many moons ago yet no cabinet recommendations, or whatever, can apparently stop this seemingly self-fulfilling trajectory. The anti-heroin drive is interpreted by these whig and truncheon vampires as an excuse to jail even those who take aggressive direct action (individually or collectively) against dealers. And it's the unfortunate user - the victim - who are given draconian prison sentences more than the elusive pushers who nearly always make their getaway. For many at the bottom of the shit heap, it's becoming obvious that the State is encouraging the use of hard drugs. Furthermore, unlike the '81 riots, the Police Federation and Police Chiefs are actually implying that the riots have been caused by dealers themselves. Keeping what is meant by "dealers" unspecified like this comes in handy. This, more or less implies, the big H is looking for likely markets when its well known that the blacks in the UK refuse to push heroin. For all its mystifications, Rastafarianism (and ganja's Special Branch) has made certain of that.

12

In the increasingly barbaric and brutal situation which is the UK today, the patrician British State, rearing itself up into its quintessential, old style essence before it is vanquished for ever, is treating its own proletariat as its last colony and final territorial imperialism. Its Imperial contradictions are finally coming home to roost and not only with its own ex-colonial subjects, residing now on its own doorstep. Every proletarian, no matter what colour, though within differing degrees, is treated as an underdeveloped childish subject. Although much is made of the new policing techniques resembling the French CRS riot squad, they really come from the long experience of Empire days. The recent public order structure is an update from the old para-military techniques (in particular Hong Kong and more recently, N.Ireland) which was used against subdued nations before most indigenous bourgeoisies threw off the colonial yoke. The other side of this para-military coin which was first employed calculatedly and brutally against the miners in '84/'85, is community policing, which in itself, is largely inherited from the old style pacification techniques of the British Colonial Office more than say,, the American variant. American pacification techniques revolve around uprooting whole communities to CIA dominated safe areas rather than the Brits' technique of instigating and manipulating community projects on their own home base.



Broadwater Farm. Tottenham, N. London.

13

In parenthesis here, developments too in capitalist accumulation have something at least of a surrogate Empire feel to them. Although the UK's indigenous industrial and manufacturing base has been savaged by recent Toryism, none the less its expansion in overseas markets has been quite remarkable and for the time being anyway - considering the increasing autonomy multi-nationals enjoy - some of the profits are repatriated to the home base. Alongside this, the City of London is slowly becoming the major financial capital of the world which in itself, is an extra dimension to the UK's amazingly diverse contradictions. Perhaps putting it as follows. A very rebellious and polarized hinterland between rich and poor, (not least on the City's doorstep) deeply embedded in an antediluvian social structure where myth, pagantry and ideology are very powerful forces, surrounds the rapidly modernizing "off-shore island" (-the City of London) where the world's money markets (particularly because of the Euro-dollar) could become mightier than they were in the heyday of the British Empire.

14

Although the police have become immeasurably more para-military than in '81 and are now ready to use heavier responses (C.S. gas, water cannon and pump action guns), the rioters, using more cunning, have innovated in response to these heavier times. Police are lured into ambushes by many varied ploys. The rioters go for more hit and run tactics and less static phalanx fighting. There's more burning cars both creating a better atmosphere as well as disorientating the police. Best of all though, the rioters are using the modern counter-revolution in urbanism, particularly the deck access flats, to their own advantage. These deteriorating 5 or 6 storey concrete and brick buildings with their pre-fabricated cladding falling off - ready for use as powerful ammunition - are in many ways, more formidable and impregnable as a weapon than ever the medieval fortresses were for the belligerent armies of growing City States. Inevitably too, the tooling up of the London Met (which almost inevitably too means innocent people get shot) has jumped miles since '81. It's encountered now a real response from the streets. Top pig Newman, the technocrats copper, has tried to impose N.Ireland on London. Initially using armed police units on particular IRA safe houses in N.London's, Kilburn - which has a large Irish population - the technique has probably drifted down to deal with wild London lads looking for a good time and with no politics (least of all IRA nationalist, though many come from Irish backgrounds.) Finally these terrorist counter-insurgency techniques have been deployed against the blacks but because of police racism, in a more trigger happy way. No longer swamp operations but selected targets by armed police has lit up the stores. Hardly surprising then, in the renewed riots (particularly Tottenham, Oct 6th/7th '85) guns have very occasionally been used by the insurgents. Where this spiral will lead is still too early to say but London is not Belfast or Capetown and it is very difficult to get a simple but very real divide and rule going in London like in N.Ireland and South Africa. It could be that police viciously fucking around with guns might as well be playing with themselves for what good it can do them in the long term. However guns have gone off in the insurgents' spontaneous rage and fury but they're unlikely to be a prelude to an armed party political gangsterism (a la Jamaica in the late 70's) or the State created terrorism of the Red Brigades which so disoriented and capsized the revolutionary process in Italy in the same period. One must also remember that it was the deliberate policy of the British State, threatened by its own proletariat in "The Great Unrest" (1909-14) and the Easter Rebellion in Dublin in 1916, which finally outlawed the holding of guns (apart from licensed hunting guns.) This law, through one thing or another and not least, gun and air rifle trade in sports shop consumerism, is now in ruins. For the future though but in a relevant manner and not as rhetorical slogan, one has to think again about what armed aspects may be necessary in a distantly approaching pre-revolutionary situation in the UK. It is a complex dialectical problem and not given to easy answers. In this respect, we don't want the present American experience: a working class armed the better to shoot each other.



FITZWILLIAM. W. YORKS. On the night of 9th July '84 there occurred one of the best and most exciting incidents in the miners' strike when miners and town youth fought running battles with the riot police around the Kinsley Drift Mine. Concrete slabs were thrown onto the main Leeds/London line, the police station in Hemsworth was attacked and NCB trucks and property trashed and set on fire. "Outsiders" - mainly skinheads mucked in and were later condemned by the NUM. However the photo above catches something of this brilliant mix. Painted on the roof of the boarded up cinema are the words "FITZY BOYS -WE HATE MODS BY ME" while below on a bridge crossing the Leeds/Doncaster 3 rivers railway line is a grafitti commemorating two miners killed during the strike. A really accurate account of what happened in Fitzzy that night has yet to appear. Fitzzy miners and skins how about it? Don't just leave us with a rotten old journalistic record.

A short postscript is also sadly a post mortem. After the incident the NCB threatened to close the pit in retaliation. True to their word they have done just that. For the time being at any rate vengeance is theirs.

15

Undoubtedly though the recent savage rioting has demoralized the police more than ever the miners' strike did. Despite all their new riot gear, the police were shit scared of fighting in the inner cities. It's almost as if ordinary coppers were opportunistically using the spontaneous riots as an occasion to protest against their superiors and Chief Constables. In the heat of the night, many of them, in a kind of desultory way, chose to semi withdraw and hold the line somewhat distant from the action. In Peckham this was literally miles. It's almost as if these tactics were a mute, low profile protest at the ever increasing productivity demanded of them by a society which is now escaping law enforcement control. The coppers are under intense strain (as their various Police Federation mags graphically tell us) and none of us must underestimate this when fighting them. And in a situation of permanent riot everywhere without a center and fixed, hierarchized leaders, even the anti-terrorist para-military bodies like the D.11 blue beret police squad, SAS, the SBS etc - though never to be taken lightly - might be of no avail. Out there, in the streets, in the nitty gritty, the coppers in some kind of dumb fuck way, probably sense something of this too.

16

And even though the police won at Tottenham, it was a pyrrhic victory. The rioters when exhausted were able to melt away into their flats and apartments on their own terrain. Contrast this to Orgreave, (outside Sheffield) in the summer of '84 where the miners' mass picket placed more or less out in the open, on rural ground, was brushed aside by mounted police and snatch squads. It was truly a police victory which need not have happened if the miners had prepared their ground well in advance by approaching workers/employees in all the factories/offices etc around Orgreave, using the mass strike weapon (i.e. a social weapon) as a major means of combat. Railway workers next to the Tinsley Park steel works could have been rounded up, so could local sewage workers and the electricity sub-station staff. And then there was the workers of Woodhouse Mill/Waring Gillow Carpets etc as well as the people living in Sheffield HANDSWORTH - Ged it! All of them could have been contacted/leafletted/had a bevy with days before hand. Even the new, aggressive, Hong Kong style policing probably couldn't have coped with this. Two entirely different situations, Orgreave and Tottenham, need two entirely different approaches and one has to say, the Tottenham insurgents were more on the ball than Orgreave's T.V. battle spectacular.

17

At the same time although the police felt arrogantly confident after the miners' defeat, many times throughout the great strike they were at their wits end (e.g. Maltby, Hemsworth, Fitzwilliam, Shirebrook, Gascoigne Wood etc.) The thin blue line only just held. There was serious talk indeed among the top echelons of the boorjuice during '84 about what would happen if the policing failed. Some top brass foolishly let it out that the part time Territorial Army, particularly in some of the northern regions, could prove to be unreliable and mutinous in dealing with striking miners. What then? Use a small, professional army (in comparison to other West European countries) largely tied up in West Germany and Ulster, which in the latter case couldn't be moved, without the possible risk of civil war in the province? Coupism, off and on, over the last 12 years has in the UK become fashionable and quite a few sensationalized, trashy novels, have been published with an army coup in England's green and pleasant land, as part of the plot. But could coupism work in reality? Take a look at N.Ireland again. Through a combination of political and technical factors, the army couldn't defeat the protestant Ulster Workers' strike in May '74. Although this is not the place to go into the complexities of Ulster, suffice to say here that because of capital's higher technical composition, the army was ill equipped to take over the running of much basic industry, particularly the power stations. However since '74, it must be remembered that the army chiefs have struck back. One or two have actually crawled out of the Somme trenches and surveyed the modern world. Special army detachments have been trained in how to run modern power stations and how to handle

containers in the event of a lengthy dock strike. All these military choices are fraught with risk. On top of this there's an extra complication. When under pressure, all the perverted and distorted expressions of class contained in the repressive State apparatus in the UK, instead of coming together against the common enemy, tend to sheer, collide and shatter against each other.....Although what's been put down above is necessarily sketchy, it does pinpoint some of the questions which need to be considered more carefully when assessing the different forces at play, (an inseparable dialectic of para-military and social forces) in the UK's disintegrating social fabric.

18

The great regret! If only the renewed city and town riots had taken place during the miners' strike. What bliss! One knew it at the time. In hope and desperation many individuals attempted to detonate street riots but such tactics are a militant substitution for the real thing which has its own pattern and logic when, in these streets, social networks, inseparable from everyday life, are chronically violated. 99 times out of 100, detonating tactics don't work (one of the exceptions to this were the activities of the Minus group in Hong Kong in the 70's.) Instead when riots do happen, it's best just to jump in along with everybody else and enjoy yourself. Of course extra ingredients are needed but surely this will come more from within a given situation than from some direct action, ideological framework pirouetted in sideways? The emancipation of the rioters will be the violent play of the rioters themselves and not through an ersatz, avant garde detonator with fixed anarchist formulae to realize.

19

"I stumbled then I saw".(from Bill Shakes' "King Lear") It seems to be true, although truly difficult to know for certain, that the miners more than any other sector of the employed working class have enthusiastically greeted the renewed inner city rioting. Some have even visited the scenes of devastation but because of distances involved, after the events. In fact on a more general level, the miners retrospectively understood the great significance of the '81 riots (and the heavy shit going down in N.Ireland) through their own titanic struggle and not least because they met head on some of the horrors of inner city policing. Some miners in their moments of great defeat, with all the misery this entails in psychological/personal relationship terms, are now making searching, as yet tenuous links, out over. Although the strike was a defeat, it was so in the sense of Karl Liebknecht's remark, the day before his assassination, that "some defeats are really victories, while some victories are more shameful than any defeat". Why? Because now the miners are questioning things like never before and again, moving out over away from the enclosed, trade within itself separation which was, in some ways, strengthened by their victories in '72 and '74. The trouble generally with the recent miners' strike was despite the many excellent and beautiful initiatives (and starting off as a wildcat) ,like hit squads, sabotage, women's self activity and other forms of direct action, the strike never broke free at its heart, from militant trades unionism and a residual faith in leaders. However - and it's a good sign - no strike has been made official in the many wildcats that have taken place since March '85.

20

After the miners' strike, a small minority of miners have hesitatingly begun to question the basis of trades' unionism itself and to correspondingly hate the Labour Party and the leftists. This is a far more important step than the creation of the Nottinghamshire based UDM (Union of Democratic Miners) which is the convenient right wing scapegoat for the NUM. In a small way the influence of the Spanish dockers' Co-ordinadora has had some effect on this process. (The pamphlet "International Dockers Struggles In The Eighties", BM Blob, had some distribution in the north and the South Yorkshire coalfield.) The majority of Spanish dockers over the last 10 years have formed a revolutionary co-ordination which is consciously outside socialist/ communist party trade unionism and revived anarcho-syndicalism. Towards the end of the miners' strike, after some miners visited the OEPB in Barcelona (the hub of clarity in

BATLEY NEWS

Est. 1879

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Price 17p

Days numbered for Wilton gangland

THE WILTON ESTATE, BATLEY. However the place and the name are of little consequence. It could apply to literally 1,000's of other estates throughout Britain. In contrast to the riots of '81, council estates have increasingly become the center of the rioting storm. Inevitably they have clashed head on with Tenants Associations which function rather like trade unions, channeling discontent and institutionalizing the tenant/landlord relationship - in this case the local State. A standard response to vandalism and crime (sometimes directed against the tenants) is to call for a greater police presence on the estate. The old and feeble, single parent families, cannot meet force with equal force and tend to automatically look to the police for help. Their justifiable and understandable grievances and fears have a nasty habit of turning into a reactive law 'n' order tirade. As a consequence resentment intensifies and spurs on the bad side of gangland activity. For the future this gordian knot must be untied one way or another.

Angry Wilton tenants were told to "stand up and be counted" at a public meeting called to discuss the problems on their estate.

Over 60 residents crowded into St. John's Social Club, Carlinghow, on Tuesday night to tell their stories of harassment and vandalism, but police chiefs told them:

By Jennifer Bradley

"Stand up and be counted together. Give us the evidence we need and we will prosecute the wrongdoers."

For two and a half hours the platform party of councillors, housing officials, police and representatives of schools listened to tenants vent their feelings on the conditions in which they have to live.

Petrol bombs, exploding gas bottles, threats to old people and smashed windows were just a few of the things they claim are inflicted on them by the gangs of youths and children that roam the estate at night.

One woman spoke of being held captive in a phone box by four youths and another man told how his car had acid poured over it after he had reported children to the police.

Community Constable

Steve Walker was doing an excellent job, he said, but he did not have the manpower to police the area all the time.

He warned residents about the dangers of vigilante groups and said they risked prosecution themselves if things went wrong.

The condition of the estate in general also came under fire.

Tenants asked why houses were left empty for up to three years at a time only to have their windows and doors smashed, and why the general environment could not be improved.

Coun. John Jenkins said the best way to solve these grievances would be to form a tenants' association.

"In this way you would have a representative on the local housing consultative committee and have the chance to put your problems to those in a position to do something about them," he explained.

The headmaster at Carlinghow J and I School, Mr. Stuart Birkett, told the residents he did his best to instill respect for their surroundings into his pupils.

the International dockers' organization) some Spanish dockers proposed through assembly meetings that all ships to the UK be blacked and not just those connected with the coal trade. Remember that all the differences between various trades is the fetishized basis of trade union separations. The Co-ordinadora have attempted to supersede such barren limitations. However, this splendid initiative which could have had such an exemplary effect on the pivotal form of the miners' struggle, came too late. A rank 'n' file miners paper has now appeared in the South Yorkshire coalfield which is beginning to seriously consider the libertarian form of organization through which the Spanish dockers conduct their activities. But because it is a rank 'n' file paper which in itself implies pressuring a union hierarchy, the outcome so far has been a confusion - which has played with autonomy whilst not leaving trades' unionism behind in the mists of history. Consequently the rank 'n' file miner has proposed, "instant recall of all officials" which is a garbled step back from "instant recall of all delegates". Delegates yes. Officials NO! Abolition of ALL officialdom. However, in the renewed rank 'n' file groups which are beginning to appear everywhere again, tensions within them are more marked than ever before. They've been reborn with all the baneful marks of their eclipse in '74 when the unions were able to pull their teeth as the TUC along with the Labour government, ensconced themselves in the State apparatus for the following five years, until their defeat at the hands of striking workers. What followed was Thatcher's iron rule. Rank 'n' file organizations were eclipsed precisely because they never broke free from trades unionism wanting, among other things, democratization of the union along with all the miserable shibboleth about nationalization under workers' control. (C/f the revived paper of the rank 'n' file in the construction industry - "Building Worker".) It means sweet fuck all. Hopefully the tensions in renewed rank 'n' filism will spill over and split towards the formation of new inter-trade autonomous link-ups, of joint assemblies between the employed, scroungers and non-workers, of autonomous shop stewards having broken free from unionist manipulation. It's going to be one helluva struggle to get this process really moving and living. And before great speculations like these one SIMPLE STEP must first of all be made: workers must stop handing over their weekly subs to the union bureaucracies which use them for their own ends. They must take over themselves the "check-off" system whereby management deducts union dues and use the money for their own necessities. One radical pit/hospital (or????) doing this and the effect could be like Smirnoff.

21

Since the miners' defeat, there's been a lull in strikes everywhere. The most successful was that by Tyneside shipyard workers who, not given the blessing (sic) of union officialdom, won their strike demands completely by themselves. There was also something of an organizational drift in this strike and breakaways from the official union structure were seriously considered. What this may have been never saw the light of day. Interestingly, the most ferment among the employed workers is taking place among those sectors who daily have to deal with the subjects of inner city revolt: the teachers, social security staff (DHSS), unemployment benefit staff (UBO's), ambulancemen, firemen and council maintenance staff. In a complex and often contradictory way these sectors are responding to the riots. For example teachers are striking because they are under attack by a Tory government which considers them too left wing but whose counter-insurgency role, more importantly is being constantly subverted by school kids who riot and burn down schools. Also as a rider to this domino effect, one mustn't forget the growing wave of strikes engulfing the Irish Republic. Indeed a radical evaluation of all the strikes and unknown anti-religious/anti-nationalist subversion in Ireland (north and south) is desperately needed because apart from one or two tiny exceptions, every text (leftist or otherwise) on the Irish proletariat is total bullshit.

22

Liverpool. A Merseyside uprising is forever on the cards. But what has demoralized the Liverpool proletariat more than anything else, is all the competing, leftist political gangsterism attempting to takeover the local State bureaucracy in terms of



A hopeful but inspiring grafitti on a wall in Newcastle Upon Tyne. Wallsend is one of the main shipbuilding centers in the UK. In Sept '85 a strike broke out there which spread to other yards belonging to the Swan Hunter group on the Tyne. It lasted for some two months and though pickets were mounted daily these were scarcely needed to prevent scabbing. It began initially as an occupation of the main yards above which there hung a banner saying "Under Workers' Control". The strike remained unofficial throughout its duration when after 7 weeks management unexpectedly capitulated to meet the main demands in full. These included an end to on ship rest breaks and an assurance there would be no return to the bad old days of the right of foremen to hire and fire. The victory was all the more remarkable considering the degree of demoralization that existed amongst the working class especially of Durham and Northumberland after the defeat of the miners. There was even talk of setting up a breakaway union. Put like this the central question of what is wrong with trade unions as organs of emancipation is never properly posed but there was was enough self activity and initiative to throw a scare into the Confed of British Shipbuilders.

their own particular flavour of the month. Union/Municipal power bloc against another Union/Municipal power bloc. It's a specific Mersey mix of American Tammany Hall clientalism and Russian style, Bolshevik apparatchnik favouratism but which can't quite make it on either counts because of sheer down home, two fingers up, workers' pressure. The trouble is, Liverpool workers haven't with sufficient clarity broken free from all those cliques claiming to represent them. A corporatism between council employees and City Hall itself is the death knell for clear sighted direct action. Militant, the entrust Trotskyist group inside the Labour Party - and which more or less runs Merseyside - should be treated by the proletariat for what it is: the guv', the man, the big chief. Only then is it possible for a clear sighted strike wave to rip through the city making possible link ups with Kirkby or Toxteth. Nonetheless Liverpool still defies all expectations and any kind of predictions are useless but some Rubicon will be crossed sooner or later.

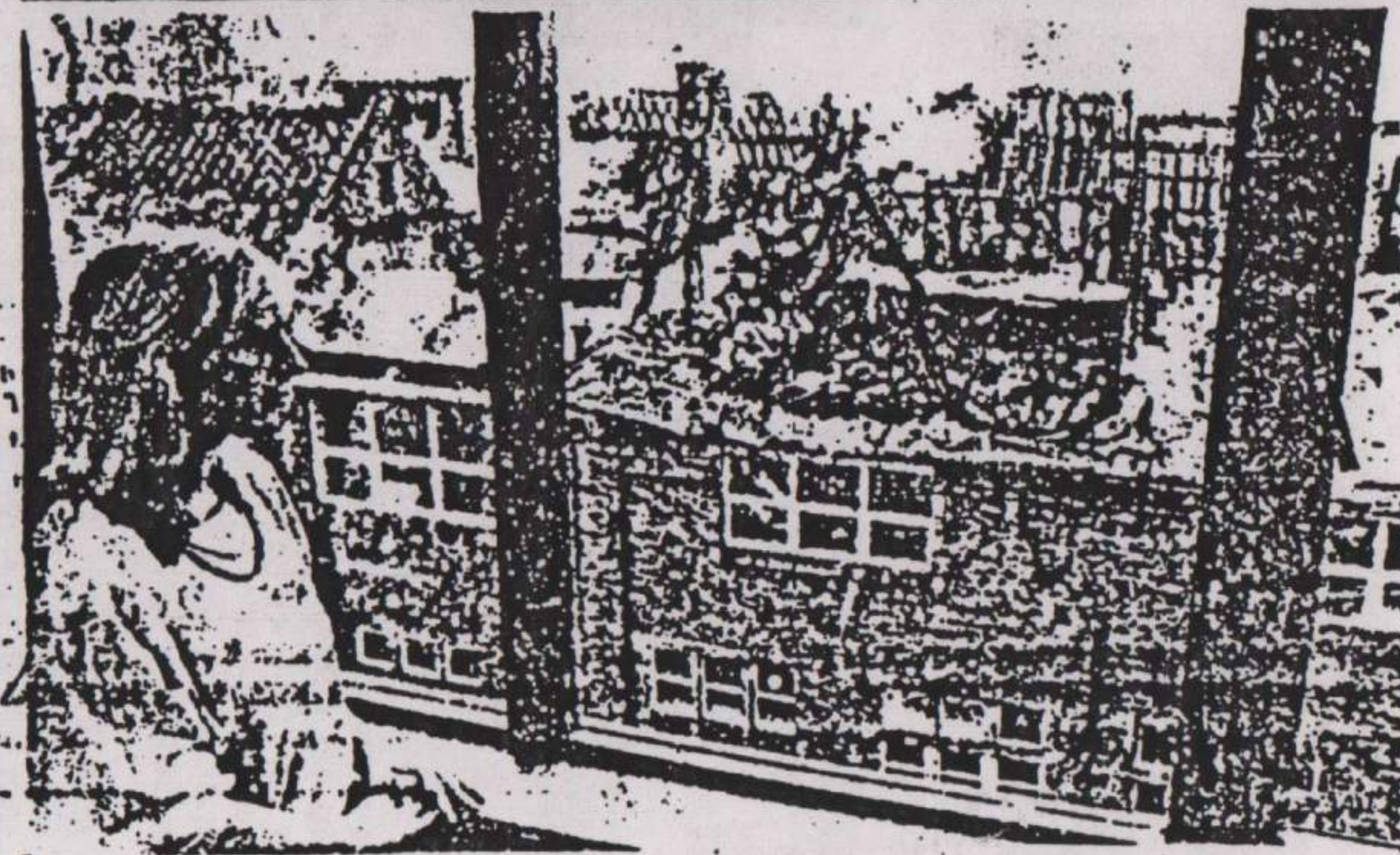
With all its breakthroughs/hesitations/relapses, the UK is entering a period of great commotion with no easy ride over the rapids. The atmosphere - out there - is extremely tense. In daily life there's an allover, sharpening aggro and individuals are snapping with each other everywhere. A sharpened atmosphere explodes hidden aggressions on many levels. At the same time - and like most elsewhere - the simple pleasures which once constituted immediate life, have now been colonized by a bourgeoisie which since '68 has toyed with and slept on, every facet of life which belonged to the total revolution. Breakdown/schizophrenia/madness seem also to be on the loose everywhere. However there's nothing new in this, merely its greater generality which indicates often, a more generalized psychosis. What was once a unity becomes disunity as the restless search for a way out intensifies and solidarity is not the solidarity of a labourist sentimentalism which more than ever is in crisis. In their "narcissism of small differences" (Freud), the gurus are falling out with themselves and each other everywhere, as the pub brawl enters all the various hierarchies.

Meanwhile those at the heart of all this shit - and the only ones able to change it - respond in differing ways. Some of the proletariat are moving towards violent action on many simultaneous fronts; others are unsure, full of hesitations moving this way and that, whilst many become more and more withdrawn, solipsist and suicidal. Some because of economic poverty cannot consume, some refuse to consume, while some cannot break from a survival sickness, junkie fixated consumerism which is driving them towards a black despair. Beyond these nuances, the basic separation has still to be superseded. The gap between the employed and the unemployed blows like a suspension bridge in a force 10 gale. Easier to overcome in the friendlier and warmer north, more complex and differentiated in the paranoid atmosphere of London, the search for subversive unity is difficult. Finally however, apart from a series of ad hoc measures which keep falling down, the State doesn't even have a semi coherent strategy to deal with what's around the corner, let alone knowing how to prevent a link-up with the employed which will oneday be made.

Obviously much has been left out in these notes. Things like positive discrimination and the emerging Afro-caribbean middle class. The many wildcat strikes against racism among manual and white collar workers and the increasing involvement of women in rioting. For the moment leave it here....

BM.BLOB,
LONDON WCIN 3XX
DECEMBER '85.

Grim picture of desolation



DEWSBURY: THE ART COLLEGE. to a significantly greater degree than other places, West Yorkshire is currently going up in smoke. Sat'day night in Bradford is known as "Burns Night" to the local Fire Brigade - a pun on the yearly haggis and whisky celebration of Scotland's national poet Robbie Burns. In the event Bradford's fire raisers prove more elusive than the spirits in Tam 'O' Shanter. Sure, much is down to "Jewish lightning" (i.e. collecting fire insurance before the Fire Brigade even arrives) but there's a fair proportion that is not. A branch of Carrefour's supermarket (the French retail multinational) was burnt down for the second time in 11 months in Castleford in the heart of the mining region. Similarly Dewsbury's Art College "inexplicably" went up in smoke shortly after the completion of a £5 extension. All that the local Manager and the Principal stand to collect out of this is their pension!

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HEMSWORTH & SOUTH ELMSALL EXPRESS

Police probe second fire at school

POLICE are investigating a second fire at a South Elmsall school, which gutted one classroom and extensively damaged two others.

Firemen, some wearing breathing apparatus, fought for more than 20 minutes to get the blaze at Broad Lane Middle School in Westfield Lane under control.

The blaze which started on Wednesday at 7.30pm was the second at the school within days.

The previous week, an intruder broke into the classrooms and on leaving set fire to the sports store room, destroying equipment and causing more than £2,000 in damage.

Acting headmaster, Mr J. Pearson, said he felt it was too much of a coincidence for it to be anything other than arson. "We are grateful to the fire service who came very promptly once the alarm was raised. Painters had been decorating and there were a lot of flammable materials.

"It could have been a lot worse. The whole school could have gone up. One of the classrooms was gutted and two others badly damaged.

POLICE have appealed to the people of Kinsley and Fitzwilliam for calm following Monday night's disturbances.

At a press conference in Pontefract on Tuesday morning, Assistant Chief Constable of West Yorkshire, Mr John Domaille, said: "I appeal to everyone in the area to be calm and rational and encourage each other to be calm and try to cool this situation."

He said the area would be

policed as normally as possible, using local officers but added the warning: "The police are aware of the current sensitivity in mining communities and are being as tolerant as possible in the circumstances.

Nevertheless, we have our normal duties to perform at all times and the Chief Constable of West

Plea for calm

Yorkshire is not prepared to accept disturbances of this nature which cause worry to the entire community.

Mr Domaille said of the incidents: "We are not talking about a riot but about serious public disorder. Roughly a hundred men were involved, some of them very young, but the number was fluid, groups came and

went throughout the time. At no point were there more police than men. Not all the eight arrested were miners."

He went on: "I want it to be known that I have not said that it's down to the miners. But let's be right, it's a mining community and the strike has been going on a very long time.

"It's probably a build-up of all sorts of incidents, it's really down to the total situation. My great plea is that everyone takes a responsible attitude and tries to cool the situation."

Mr Domaille said the police were well aware of the fact that some criminal elements seek to make use of the miners' dispute as an excuse to cover their own activities and said it was a possibility he intended to pursue in this case.

RIOT BRINGS PIT WARNING

A REPETITION of the violence at Kinsley Drift Mine when over £100,000 damage was caused, could lead to the closure of the colliery.

Riot police were called in and fought a "pitched battle" with a rampaging mob of around 100 in the pit yard.

Colliery officials had to barricade themselves into offices for two hours

Night of violence after mob attack

Young Stewart Ga
watching the races 1
last week.