

WARNING!  
THIS ARTICLE  
CONTAINS MATERIAL  
HIGHLY OFFENSIVE TO  
BRITISH ANARCHISTS.  
PARENTAL GUIDANCE REQUIRED.

# BOMBER HARRIS JOINS ANTI-FASCIST ACTION

THE ONLY  
GOOD  
FASCIST



A typical anti-fascist poster

The basic proletarian position on fascism and anti-fascism can be stated simply. Fascist and Nazi governments are anti-working class, and have murdered millions of working class people in the interests of capitalist accumulation. When not in government, fascists have often played an important role for the state in spreading racism, dividing and weakening the proletariat. Judged by these criteria, all other capitalist political tendencies are no different. Democratic governments have killed just as many people as fascist ones, and through nationalism, reinforce racist divisions. The left have used anti-fascism to persuade people to support democratic parties. During the Second World War, this was useful to the Allies. The main purpose of anti-fascism was to justify the war, and crush the working class. This was the central aim of the war effort, as shown by Britain's attitude towards resistance to Hitler inside Germany: the Foreign Office argued "the Gestapo and the SS have done us an appreciable service in removing a selection of those who would undoubtedly have posed as 'good' Germans after the defeat of a Nazi Germany" (*Guardian*, 23 July 92). When Milan's workers rose against the fascist government in 1943, Britain and the US bombed them.

In Britain today, anti-fascist fronts divert those who wish to fight racism towards the almost irrelevant tactic of chasing small groups of skinheads. There is no evidence that racist attacks on black people are primarily carried out by Nazis: ordinary British patriotism is the problem. Anti-fascists do not challenge patriotism, in fact they support it. They demonstrate every year against fascists marching with the other capitalist parties, who fully supported the World Wars, to remember the dead. They object to fascists tainting the patriotic ceremony with their nasty foreign ideas. On Remembrance Sunday 1991, a speaker from Anti-Fascist Action argued against burning the Union Jack, and instead set fire to an imperial German flag.

In Labour-controlled Camden, when the council started deporting Irish and Bangladeshi workers, the left pleaded with them to stop doing it, because it

"played into the hands of the Nazis". It never occurred to them that the Labour Party were doing what the fascist groups could only dream about. In another London borough, Tower Hamlets, Labour and Liberal councils ran a *de facto* apartheid policy, putting Indian and Bangladeshi families in separate estates from whites. Targetting fascists is a deliberate strategy by icepick-heads to shield Labour politicians in local government, though the anarchists involved in anti-fascism lack the analytical ability to see that they are being used for this purpose.

The anti-fascist movement's analysis of the fascist resurgence in Germany today is basically that Germans have an inbuilt urge to wear jackboots and march around doing Nazi salutes. There are even anti-fascists in Germany who have internalized the democratic/Zionist guilt trip so completely that they defend the bombing of Dresden by the Allies! The following article hopefully goes some way towards explaining the problem of neo-Nazism from a more internationalist perspective.

So much for the situation in Britain. Beyond the white cliffs of Dover, things are a bit more complicated. Fascists supported by Germany have democratically taken power in Croatia and started a civil war. Fascist parties have gained 15% and more of the vote in Germany, France and Italy. Though these parties have little chance of winning power - their role is to help the state divide white workers from immigrants to keep wages down, rather than prevent immigration altogether - they are obviously more important than their counterparts in Britain or the USA. Here we publish an account of an anti-fascist demo in Germany by the German communist group *Wildcat*. We don't completely agree with it. For example, we don't like the conclusion that people join anti-fascist groups because communists have nothing better to suggest. We always have something better to suggest: as *Wildcat* know better than anyone, there is always some sort of class struggle going on. The relative downturn at present is no excuse for supporting the left.

# A TOUGH STATE AND SOFT HEADS



The demo in Hoyerswerda

The following does not claim to be a comprehensive critique of the demonstration in Hoyerswerda. A vehement discussion is currently taking place in Berlin on this. The demo was successful on a number of scores: there was a lot of spraying and sticking-up posters (for a few days Hoyerswerda must have been the most colourful town in the Federal Republic). On the day a lot of things were discussed in general and this probably had consequences which went beyond the day of the demo. Instead we want to draw attention to a few weak points in autonomous anti-fascism and pose a few questions which are, unfortunately, not being raised by anyone at all. The following is, therefore, a mere start and not an analysis of the overall situation; just a few ideas on how our struggle against racist tendencies and our intervention in the class struggles of '91/92 might look.

Until the 1960's Hoyerswerda was a small village in Saxony. Then a "workers' town" with 60,000 inhabitants was built overnight, with almost everyone there working in the brown coal mines. From the early 1980's on, the G.D.R. imported tens of thousands of cheap labourers from Mozambique and Vietnam to work in the Cottbuss brown coal mines. They were crammed into hostels, with frequently 4.5 men to a room. With the end of the G.D.R. and the projected closure of the gigantic open-pit, brown coal mines they were gradually sent back to their home countries. About 200 were still there when a group of fascists drove Vietnamese traders from the weekly market in the middle of September. The latter retreated into the hostel. That night stones were thrown at the hostel... For some time the management of the brown coal mines had been making life difficult for the foreign workers. For example, they had raised the bonus for German workers by more than DM 800, whilst raising it by

about DM 200 for the foreigners and simultaneously making an "offer" to these workers to terminate their contracts prematurely. Instead of accepting this they went on strike for the same bonuses, and the management responded by forbidding them entry to the company premises. Subsequently, negotiations followed in the hostel without producing any results - three hours later the attacks on the hostel started. In order to get rid of the foreign workers, the enterprise would have had to give them severance pay. (There is also a rumour that the owners paid or incited the fascists; some people claim to have seen them talking.) The following night the fascists returned, and this time there were two dozen of them. The workers finally lost their tempers and hit back with a counter attack. Afterwards the attacks shifted to the hostel for refugees applying for political asylum and intensified each night. Fascists came from the whole surrounding area, and gradually about 300 people gathered around the scene, clapping every time mollied hit their targets. The crowd also included a number of youths who wanted to have a go at the police and who couldn't care less about the fascists and the foreigners. For days on end the state played little games with its ostensible helplessness before suddenly arranging for most of the workers and all the refugees to be transported away on 29th September: through rows of applauding residents from the neighbourhood.

"Hoyerswerda" was the most concentrated mobilisation of the state to take place so far. At the same time it revealed the most concentrated agreement between the left and the state: from pamphlets to the taz (left/alternative newspaper) to Springer's Morgenpost agreement prevailed: the Osis (East Germans) had to be taught democracy. The taz even went so far as to demand BGS (Federal Border Police), barbed wire and stricter laws for the Osis.

On 9th September a convoy of some 1,000 people set off from Berlin for an "anti-racist demo" in Hoyerswerda. After gathering on a car park outside the town, the demo proceeded towards the new town: an incredible mixture of 60's style rabbit-hutches - one slab of concrete after another, visibly beginning to disintegrate - built for the working class in the period of real socialism. There were the standard slogans "Nazis out, foreigners in" (not being able to think of anything better we decided to stay quiet), there were those who, with foaming mouths, planted themselves in front of the blocks of flats, pointing up at the people on the balconies shouting "You should be ashamed!", "Anyone who remains silent agrees!", "Nazis out!". Such clear expressions of one's political standpoint were followed by deeds: cars were attacked and stones thrown at private dwellings.

Then the cops formed a thin line in front of the (deserted) refugee hostel and wouldn't let us go any further. Demonstrators began, as a result, to break up concrete slabs and to prepare to charge through the police line - only to be immediately surrounded by others wanting to stop them. The masked demonstrators retorted with "autonomous reformists!", punches and hitting people on the head with batons. Finally, the demo leaders decided to turn back. We could no longer stand it in the demo with the moralistic, anti-fascist slogans, its inner confusion and the aggression directed at each and everyone there, and five of us set off for "enemy territory". During our walk through the new town we ran into people who were, almost without exception, horrified about the attacks on foreigners - but who did not see any way of intervening personally or of at least standing up and stating quite clearly that they thought that what was happening was shit. One young woman said: all the older people think like my mother, that what the fascists did was good. In the future it will be embarrassing if someone asks you where you come from. When we returned to the demo it had been standing in front of a second police cordon of the BGS. Negotiations were conducted for about two hours. This time outside pressure had once again ignited bloody disputes within the demo. In the meanwhile its character had also begun to change: an increasing number of young people from Hoyerswerda began to join the demonstration, making announcements over the loudspeaker. An old man standing on a balcony waved his red flag and lowered drinks, others distributed sandwiches among the demonstrators ... As it was already beginning to get dark, we were finally given permission - with vicars leading the way - to start demonstrating. When we set off there were about a thousand of us and probably about a thousand came out and joined in; by the end of the demo there were about three thousand of us - i.e. several hundred people from Hoyerswerda had joined in (in front of the demo, behind the demo, most of them alongside it, but quiet a few of the courageous

people joined in). The demo came to an end at the workers' hostel, where 21 people from Mozambique were still staying. They were in the two top floors (probably the 11th and 12th) and hung white sheets out of the windows. Now the emotional climax was reached: "We've got a song for you." And then it was played through the loudspeakers at full power: "Deutschland verreck! (Go to hell Germany)". This is when most of the demonstrators with black masks discovered the child inside each of them, their knees went weak and they began to dance and shout for joy. International solidarity had been re-established, the demo was a complete success - at least for all those who thought that they would be running into 60,000 fascists and now saw that this was not the case! For everyone else a number of questions remain open:

1) **With the new Law on Foreigners**, with the fascist groups bawling their heads off at the Polish border, with the systematic attacks on hostels for foreigners, and not least with African workers and asylum applicants being driven out of Hoyerswerda together with the gestures by politicians and the Police operations, the Federal German state is preparing a new sector of the labour market: the (illegal) exploitation of several million new immigrants- "Hoyerswerda" was the provisional climax of a state campaign against the immigrants coming here and the foreigners who live here.

This constellation is remarkably similar to that of 1986: industrialists in the Federal Republic are faced with the problem that immigration is now declining substantially (in the building industry, catering and agriculture there are bitter complaints about a "shortage of labour") following the 1.1 million coming across from the East in 1988 and 1989. In analysis and strategy papers prepared for their own use, industrialists and their consultants assume that the Federal Republic will require several million new immigrants in the 90's. For some months now politicians have been stirring up the "refugee question" (although people applying for refugee status only constitute a minute proportion of immigrants). The FRG needs more immigrant workers who should not, however, come here feeling self-confident but intimidated and as "tolerated" workers. The state is experimenting: huge waves of immigration have, to be sure, always led to explosions within the class, but have usually and rapidly also brought fresh wind into the class struggles ("Italian strikes" in the sixties, "Turkish strikes" at the beginning of the seventies, etc.) Whereas earlier state measures aimed at "integrating guest workers", they are now directed towards "making immigration precarious": work permits for persons applying for refugee status, eroding the laws on political asylum, the new Law on Foreigners, the toleration of fascist groups, the media campaign over the "issue of political asylum" (racist conditioning of the indigenous working class), the sudden outcry in

the media over attacks on "foreigners" (with the desired imitations). These are all aspects of a state strategy which is intended to prepare the ground for the immigrants arriving in the next few years.

**2) This campaign is also directed against the entire working class and, in particular, against the threat of struggles in the former GDR.**

The many attacks on hostels for foreigners over the past few years were generally published as short reports on the "colour page" of the newspapers. In the week in which the press suddenly took a fancy to publishing these attacks on the first page of the paper, a few thousand workers at the Tridelta-Werke (an electronics company) occupied the Hermsdorfer motorway intersection a few miles away, shutting it down for the entire Friday afternoon. They had discovered that Tridelta was to be shut down. This kind of struggle was unprecedented in the history of the Federal Republic (at best there had been the one-minute motorway occupation under the strictest control of the unions following prior consultation with the police) and it was not to be allowed to spread under any circumstances. For in the coming months, hundreds of thousands of dismissals are impending in the south of the GDR. And in the Hoyerswerda area two events are taking place almost simultaneously, as in the rest of the former GDR: two days after the demo took place the rents were increased five and even six-fold. A one-room flat in one of the glorious housing blocks now costs DM 250 (= £87 per month). Secondly, at the end of the year the short-time working regulation will cease to apply: almost all the 60,000 workers in Hoyerswerda work in the open-pit brown coal mines and in coal processing, which are to be reduced in size at the end of this year. Unemployment will be sent soaring. What will happen if the workers revolt? What will happen if they discover their power in the conglomeration of Hoyerswerda? The working class in the former GDR has not ceased struggling and putting up resistance since the GDR was driven to collapse. By stirring up "hatred of foreigners" two things have been achieved: the people have been given a scapegoat - within reach - for their own impoverished situation, and at the same time all Ossis have been branded potential racists in order to intimidate them and to keep a lid on the impending class struggles.

**3) Hatred of foreigners grows from below.** There are countless isolated reactions (in the family, in the "German" housing estate, groups of different nationalities in the factories, during leisure time, etc.) to the uncertainty and, in some cases, aggravation of material conditions by the 1.1 million "immigrants from the east", to the stagnation in class struggles in the old Federal German state, to the widespread social rejection and mobilisation experienced through "re-unification", to the traumatic events taking place at the level of "foreign

policy" (the Gulf War, the civil war in Yugoslavia ...). There is widespread fear of the future (ecological, with the war, with mass unemployment or for whatever reason). There is growing aggression and an increasing tendency to make "too many foreigners" responsible for one's own problems and even more so for fears projected into the future. People are becoming more aggressive. And, in general, the situation is reminiscent of the sixties and the defamation of the "Itacker" (a pejorative term for Italians): as being lazy, depressing wages, chasing the German women etc ... Two things are different: today there are far more movements, but there is far less of the spirit of upheaval and revolt than in the sixties. This has made it very easy for the state so far to exploit these tendencies in the class for its own use.

**4) There is no left in the world which cares so little about the "proletarian world" yet is so ready to put the blame on "racism, fascism, sexism, Teutomania" etc. etc. when problems arise.** These slogans have one prime goal: to keep the social reality at bay and to confront them on a moral level only.

The mobilisation which followed Hoyerswerda took place under the banner of moral outrage: "You make us sick and now we're gonna show you!" Some anti-fascists saw it as a "punitive expedition" and let themselves go accordingly. They still maintain after the event that "90 or 99%" of the inhabitants of Hoyerswerda are fascists.

Nobody took the trouble to see whether there were real problems between the "foreigners" and the "Hoyerswerda locals" (all of whom are "newcomers"), or how people have dealt with the situation up to now. These are problems which exist in any (alternative/leftist) scene pub and in every squat in which German comrades and foreigner workers try to live together. For example, there have also been fights with Africans in Kreuzberg scene pubs because they tried to get off with the women; there were also fights at the demo between "Germans" and "foreigners" - Is it an accident when it happens "in our circles"? Racism when it takes place among workers?? Something that has to be kept hushed up when it happens among refugees???

**5) "Hoyerswerda" was and is being used by the political class (from the [neo-fascist] Republicans to the Greens) for their own use.** The state created a *fait accompli* when it deliberately rushed the "endangered foreigners" away in buses: an invitation to Nazis and their drunken mates to continue. It succeeded far better as a state spectacle directed against new immigrants than the brutal expulsion of Albanian refugees from Italy - in that case the state was visible, in Germany the "mood of the people" is presented as something which the state can hide behind or oppose.

The campaign is better prepared and with more advance planning than the "Flutkampagne" - denouncing the flood of refugees, especially via East Berlin - of 1986 (at the time the state campaign tended to produce solidarity). That also led to a considerable dissolution of solidarity among institutional groups and the liberal left. Today almost everyone, from left to right, from green to brown, church to "pro asyl", Turk to Ossi agrees on two points: first we haven't got anything against foreigners. Secondly, the boat is full. The only ones who aren't in this front are the industrialists. The *Wirtschaftswoche* (c.f. the *Economist*) carried the headline "There is still room in the boat", adding quite bluntly that the whole dispute was mere "electioneering". The CDU was trying to gain votes with the "asylum question". Lafontaine, who for years has counted among the most savage demagogues opposing applicants for asylum and immigrants from the east, made an effective media pose standing on the market square at Hoyerswerda. The "taz" demanded border police and barbed wire against the "Ossis", who weren't yet ripe for democracy. The German left more or less "nationalised" itself (from the green to the autonomous social workers). At best they envisage "politics from below" as street work. Their practice confirms the fascist view of the world: oppose the left and their state ...

6) **The West German state uses the fascists.** The German state cannot cover the "new Federal Länder" as extensively as it would like to, and in a manner to which we Wessis are accustomed. There is little police presence, social workers are scarce, etc.. But this state is in the process of coming out of its position of weakness. Southern Italy is an example of the way in which weak state presence need not mean anarchy at all: there the mafia has assumed the functions of the state. Hoyerswerda demonstrates that this state can use a dozen fascists in order to show all foreigners - with the help of the media (including the "left") that this time the wind of change is blowing: that is why those who fled from Hoyerswerda will continue to be given bad treatment in an exemplary fashion (through being torn apart, not legalised, etc). Yet the power of the state really is too weak in the area which was formerly the GDR, and not only against the hooligans. It hasn't had any means so far of proceeding, for example, against motorway occupations, strikes, etc.. A few fascists are certainly not enough to make up for this. on the other hand, an excuse was needed: one cannot openly send in troops trained in putting down civil disobedience just one year after re-unification. The excuse for moving in the border police is now there (the taz has grounds to celebrate!).

Triggered off by the politicians and the media, there were systematic attacks on hostels for foreigners throughout Germany. For the first time the fascists had a broad public impact. Hundreds of right-wing

drinking pals finally felt called upon to act.

Nor can the observation of a LKA (state criminal investigation department) cop be dismissed out of hand, i.e. that some of the attacks were "in their precision, untypical of the far right scene", and untypical was also the fact that there were not any letters claiming to have been responsible ... What was the story behind "Gladio"? (see *Wildcat* 53 p16, c.f. also the use of fascists by the state in other NATO countries, e.g. Italy.)

7) **The West German state uses the anti-fascists.** Political fascism as a revolutionary strategy is finished. It is no longer able to do anything which cannot be functionalised by either the state or the Nazi squads. It has no political substance: when organised anti-fascists announce that the situation now is the same as in 1933 they only make fools of themselves. They have no moral substance: the hardest fights and the largest number of casualties came about as a result of demonstrators attacking one another at Hoyerswerda. The functionalisation of young kids who see to it that the heat really gets turned on at demos is now rebounding. Political anti-fascism is now only a recruiting ground for hierarchically structured, political organisations - and, of course, continues to be a field of activity for militant big shots. However, this should by no means distort our view of the many new people who are simply sick of the way in which foreigners are being treated here, and who want to do something about it. As long as we have nothing better to suggest and to practice, they will first politicise themselves through the anti-fascist groups ...

8) **Let's turn "Hoyerswerda" on its head.** The demonstration in Hoyerswerda was a concentrated experience which could happen anywhere in this society: decisive action can rapidly become a crystallisation point, since the atmosphere has

**Anti Nazi League** Tel: 071 924 0333

● **STOP  
HOLOCAUST DENIAL**  
● **DON'T BUY THE  
SUNDAY TIMES**

**Six million dead - NEVER AGAIN!**

The ANL grossly underestimate the number of people killed in the Nazi death camps. Six million is the figure normally given for Jews: it does not include Poles, Russians, lazy workers etc.

become highly politicised everywhere.

\* In a Berlin factory, with an almost exclusively Turkish workforce, the mass employment of Vietnamese, and then of immigrants from the east, and finally of Ossis, completely undermined the combativeness of the collectivity. Following the Gulf War huge splits appeared among the workforce: playing cards, eating, talking with one another in the breaks - all these things were done almost exclusively according to nationality. The press reports about Hoyerswerda did a lot to break this down and set things in motion: the Turks first started to discuss it a lot among themselves, asking how they could deal with the situation (it is important to know that they started to conquer the surrounding area this summer together with their families: you can now buy döner kebabs at all weekly markets within a radius of 50 km, as well as Turkish clothes etc.). Then there was a lot of aggression directed primarily against Ossis with short hair: "Hey, are you also a fascist?" and so on. Over the next few days this behaviour was greatly stepped up by the Turkish and Vietnamese workers and directed against all German supervisors. After a while they no longer dared go near the assembly lines because they were greeted everywhere with cries of "Heil Hitler!" and so on. The day the state expelled the foreigners from Hoyerswerda the supervisors felt compelled to issue a formal declaration that they were not Nazis, had nothing against foreigners and that they regretted the incident. In this heated and highly politicised situation the Ossi's and the Turks did at least start to talk to one another. Yet a week later the discussion subsided: the debate in the Bundestag on the current situation and the newspaper reports were generally understood as an all-clear signal, the German state would protect people because it still wants to have foreigners working here.

\* People in Berlin occupied a house in Königs Wusterhausen, the stronghold of the regional fascist scene. When they moved in they first had to paint over the Nazi slogans inside the house. They are trying out a mixture of living, making music, doing cultural projects, creating a meeting place for youths and space for everyone. They have had trouble with the Nazis and things have been demolished, mollies thrown, cars wrecked in front of the house, etc.. At the annual "beach party", which has been violently disrupted by Nazis for the past three years, it comes to the (prepared) show-down: 40 fascists with baseball bats are driven off by 20 people. One fascist is left lying on the ground with a cracked skull. The next evening a group of people are shot at from a big BMW passing by, someone is hit in the upper arm. But these are acts of desperation by the fascists. Anti-fascist activities follow, scaring the young Nazis to such an extent that they leave their outfits at home and stop running around in Königs Wusterhausen and call a "peace conference". But, above all, the people in the squat have succeeded in rapidly establishing

good contact with their neighbours and they write: "The Ossis are provincial somehow, you notice that because they are so damned human. Thank God we are immune to that because we walk around in a suit of armour full of prejudices which we would call racism elsewhere." The (autonomous) left, with its (superficial) morality distorts analysis of any social reality. The real phenomenon, i.e. that the class is directing its hatred against itself in some cases, is only dealt with as fear (mixed up with the fear of their own decline). Shouting their own fears into the society: "Foreigners, don't go to the DDR!", "Girls, don't go on the streets!", "Tomorrow it will be your turn!!" are no substitute for revolutionary politics.

Instead of withdrawing and isolating ourselves in line with the general trend we must intervene!

Not as a punitive expedition of people with a superior morality, but in confronting the situation day by day. That presumes that we learn to distinguish between real problems and fascist slogans. And that we have some idea of the way to overcome these problems.

We need access to the entire class situation if we want to intervene in a revolutionary sense.

**DON'T STAND AND WATCH!! DON'T STAND BACK!! DON'T BE SCARED!! GO AMONG THE PEOPLE!! TALK WITH THEM!! ASK IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!! GO INTO THE HOSTELS FOR FOREIGNERS!!**

## THE ARMALITE AND THE ROSARY BEAD

Ever wondered what Sinn Fein's position is on abortion?

In a rare moment of candour they explained it to the *Guardian Women's Page* just before the general election in the UK.

### Sinn Fein

**W**E BELIEVE in full equality for women and our policies reflect that. Women's lives are profoundly influenced by partition, which has created two reactionary and fundamentalist states, one Catholic and the other Protestant. The effects of this on the women in the 26 counties has been documented but less attention has been paid to the conservative fundamental Protestantism of the Six Counties. Here women's groups have had continually to fight to have progressive legislation — dealing with such things as sex discrimination, rape and domestic violence — extended to cover the Six Counties.

We are against the law on abortion in Northern Ireland being brought into line with the law in Britain. We accept the need for abortion only where a woman's life is at risk.

# A PROLE'S GUIDE TO THE RECESSION

## Economics with the truth

Bored rigid by talk of exchange rates, interest rates and PSBR's? So you should be! The capitalists are always moaning about their figures not adding up but, unfortunately, their system isn't about to become mathematically impossible. Behind this dialogue of figures, though, is a real discussion within the ruling class about our struggles and how to defeat them. The following glossary will hopefully prove useful in deciphering the bullshit spouted by politicians and economists.

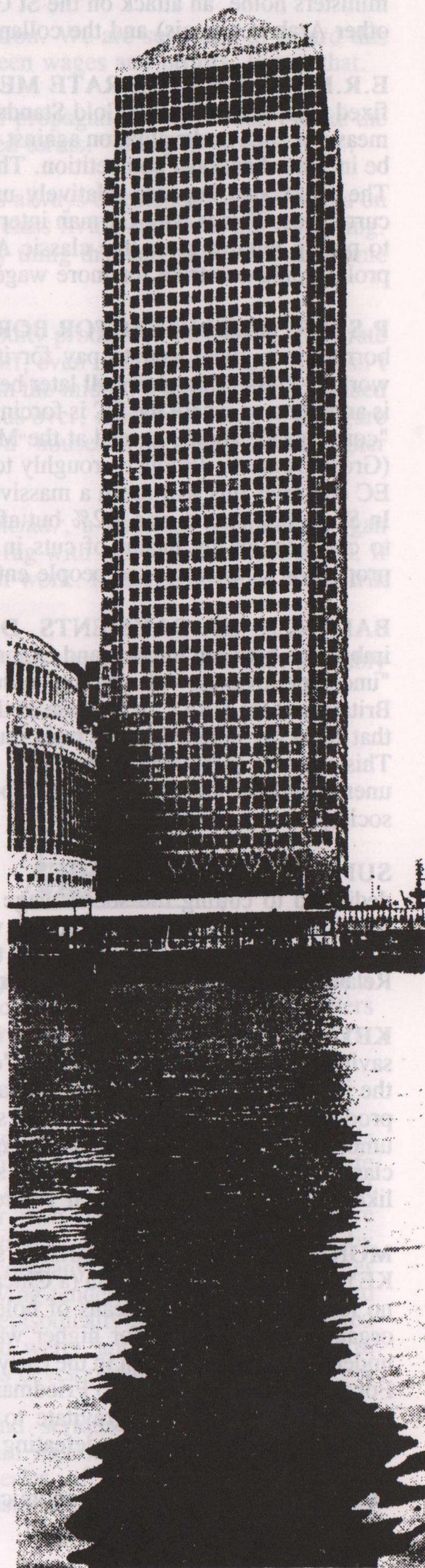
**INFLATION** - A means of attacking real wages (as stated by J. M. Keynes in his "General Theory..."). A common means of making the working class pay for wars, for example. It can also be a concession to the working class since it tends to keep inefficient businesses functioning - every wage slave with a grain of class consciousness knows that these are the best ones to work for! Inflation tends to undermine debts (by reducing the value of repayments) and so favours industry relative to finance capital, creating more employment so as to maintain social peace. This was why the post-war boom (a sort of productivity deal on the level of society) needed a few percent inflation per year. High inflation, then, is generally a sign that the bourgeoisie is weak since it has to buy social peace. This is why the Thatchers of this world are always going on about fighting inflation. At the G7 conference in July when they were talking about restructuring the CIS (even more!) John Major described hyperinflation as the "seedcorn for revolution".

**ANTI-INFLATION POLICIES** - Another means of attacking wages, this time by means of mass unemployment. This can be a risky business though. In Germany in 1930 a political commission, the Braun Committee, proposed to combat the depression by means of expanding credit (a classic inflationary measure). Hayek (the guru of anti-inflation measures, much praised by Thatcher) sent an article to his friend Professor Röpke, who was on the committee, attacking such measures. However, he enclosed a covering letter saying:

"...But if the political situation is so serious that continuing unemployment would lead to a political revolution, please do not publish my article..."

The article was not published!

**DEVALUATION** - An important strategy in countries where most wage goods are imported (Britain being the prime example). By reducing the value of the currency the real value of the wage is reduced. It is a means of carrying out a **short term** attack on wages. The disadvantage is that although it filches money from workers pockets it doesn't actually attack them directly through restructuring in the way that the 1981 recession did. Just taking money from us proles without restructuring society can sometimes be a positively bad idea - as the example of the poll tax clearly showed! Nowhere is the class nature of devaluation better understood than in the Lebanon. In



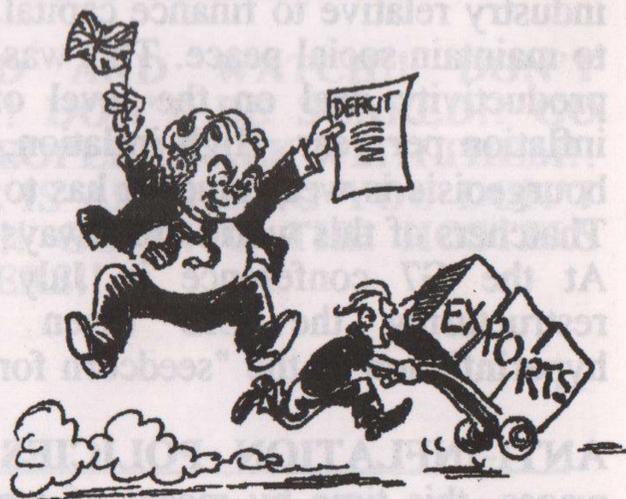
early May 1992 the Central Bank announced it would no longer support the currency (the lira). As soon as it fell to 2000 per dollar there were widespread strikes and riotous demos resulting in the burning of the finance ministers home, an attack on the St George's Yacht Club in Beirut (where ministers were swanking it up with other Arab bourgeois) and the collapse of the Syrian-backed government.

**E.R.M. (EXCHANGE RATE MECHANISM)** - Exchange rates between EC states are now more or less fixed (rather like the old Gold Standard). The individual governments of the EC can no longer use short term measures such as devaluation against us so bosses are obliged to restructure. The mechanism for doing this will be increased national competition. Thus single European money needs petty nationalisms to function properly. The ERM also imposes relatively uniform interest rates since interest rates affect the relative strengths of currencies. This is why German interest rates have suddenly become such a big issue. The German bosses had to put up interest rates (the classic Anti-Inflation Policy) in order to counter-attack against all those stropy proles going on strike for more wages.

**P.S.B.R. (PUBLIC SECTOR BORROWING REQUIREMENT)** - The amount a government will have to borrow in a given year to pay for its expenditure. It is a means of putting off an immediate attack on the working class. Though it will later be used as a justification for such an attack ("we must pay our debts"). This is another area where the EC is forcing the bosses to adopt a Europe-wide strategy of restructuring. It's planned "convergence zone", agreed at the Maastricht summit, requires national debt to be no more than 3% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product - roughly total commodity production within a state's borders per year). For poorer EC countries this will mean a massive acceleration in austerity measures. Italy's debt to GDP ratio is 10.5%. In Spain last year it was 4.2% but after the summit in April the government recently announced its intention to cut it to 1% by means of cuts in health care, public sector bale-outs and unemployment provision. The proportion of unemployed people entitled to dole is to drop from 50% to 25%.

**BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT** - A measure of the imbalance between imports and exports. It's a way of talking about the "uncompetitiveness" of a nations industry (much used by the rulers of Britain and the USA). In the case of the EC, fixed exchange rates mean that for a big deficit interest rates must go up to protect the currency. This means inefficient businesses are chopped leading to more unemployment and, the bosses hope, restructuring of industry and society.

**SUPPLY SIDE ECONOMICS** - A whole school of economics dedicated to cutting the social wage - this is the part of our income which we receive without having to work for it (welfare, health care, subsidised housing etc.). They refer to the social wage as "rigidities". Related terms: "dependency", "dependency culture", "flexible working".



**KEYNESIANISM** - Originally the ideas of Keynes, formulated in the 1920's, were presented as a way of saving capital from communism (or "chaos" as it was sometimes described). After 1945 Keynesianism became the ideology of overall political management of the economy (e.g. "fine tuning"). What it actually was was a productivity deal on the level of the society based on the welfare state and full employment. It needed strong unions to police productivity and wage agreements. It also needed the Cold War to depoliticise the working class - revolution being presented as something foreign, paid by Moscow etc.. Keynesianism is not something likely to be revived in the near future.

**MONETARISM** - A monetarist is someone who wants to restrain the money supply. It was a reaction to KEYNESIANISM. Friedman (a Chicago economist who advised the Chilean junta) frankly stated that inflation no longer worked as a means of holding down wages. On the contrary, it had acted as a political focus for organising the struggle for higher wages. In the British context, think of the battles over "Incomes Policy" under Heath's government in the early '70's or the "Social Contract" under the last (ever?) Labour government. For this reason, according to Friedman, there was no point in the government trying to restrain unemployment. It should be allowed to gravitate to its "natural" level and then be reduced by means of SUPPLY SIDE measures. For monetarists, defeating INFLATION is the central obsession.

**MINFORD** - Professor of Economics at Liverpool University. Had a lot of influence on Thatcher. Has been

known to visit pubs in Liverpool and try to convince proles of the virtues of the free market, cutting welfare etc.. Has also been known to preach on the streets in the East End of London. A nutter.

**RECESSION** - A slow down in the growth of total commodity production. We are supposed to regard this as a disaster. A formulation which completely ignores the relation between wages and profits. Funny that.

**DEPRESSION** - Like a recession but worse. Mostly used on the level of propaganda - "if we don't make the painful changes now, the recession could turn into a depression". Related terms: "slump", "double blip".

**ECONOMIC COLLAPSE** - This is something that never happens but is always threatened - e.g. "Bosnia on the verge of economic collapse". What is usually meant is that working class living standards are collapsing. As long as capitalist social relations exist so will the economy - the only thing that can cause real economic collapse is the dictatorship of the proletariat.

**RECOVERY** - This is what we're all supposed to be praying for, commodity production increasing at the rate it used to. This doesn't necessarily mean that us proles will be any better off, even in capitalist terms. It doesn't even have to mean a reduction in unemployment. During the "recovery" in the mid-80's in Britain it continued to rise. What it definitely would mean is more traffic on the roads to run us over, more new roads to disfigure the landscape, more yuppie wine bars to get thrown out of, more "toytown" houses to get depressed in, higher housing costs... They can keep it!

A excellent critique of recovery can be found in the 2nd issue of *Armchair*, a fraternal communist organ produced in Reading. It is a humorous, cheaply produced, anarcho-type rag with lots of good illustrations. It shamelessly calls for the dictatorship of the proletariat for the abolition of work. It can be obtained from Erik the Vandal at ARMCHAIR, BM MAKHNO, LONDON WC1N 3XX.

It should be clear from the above that if an economist says something you don't understand what they probably mean is "Work harder for less!".

# LETTERS



## DIALOGUE ON DRUGS AND DEMOCRACY

One result of our policy of "continuous improvement" in our organ's size and quality has been a corresponding upward direction in the coherence of our correspondence. We no longer get idiotic letters from anarchists in Manchester. Here we publish at length some of our recent discussions with our readers, on some of our favourite topics: drugs, democracy and the poll tax.

### LETTER FROM A COMRADE WHO WORKS IN THE HEALTH SERVICE IN LONDON

Dear Comrades,

When reading your article on drugs and moral panics in W15 I couldn't help thinking about the similarity between the crack scare and the earlier panic over heroin, typified by the DHSS anti-heroin campaign started in 1985. This was the one with the laughable "Heroin Screws You Up" posters. This slogan was not an accurate description of reality.

For a start they made no mention of the fact that most of the severe problems associated with heroin are a result of it being taken by injection rather than

from the effects of the drug itself. In fact they made no attempt to differentiate between relatively safe and unsafe use at all. This was not the result of ignorance. Their own reports on the matter were cynical in the extreme. A preliminary study done by the advertising company Andrew Irving Associates identified a growing tendency for heroin to be used "irregularly and episodically" by people who smoked or snorted it and were "apparently able to control their habit". This development -

"creates new and serious problems for for any attempt to contain misuse because it provides non-users with a series of arguments that undercut established resistances: heroin is not instantly addictive, not dangerous, a good "buzz",

controllable."

Their Research Summary Report stresses the same theme -

"Those exposed to positive word of mouth about heroin and the example of "successful" users remain a difficult audience to reach because they could correctly argue that most of the negative consequences of heroin misuse were not inevitable."

In other words: it's difficult to tell lies to people who know the truth!

So the authors recommend an approach "showing the beginnings of a downhill slide. In this context it would be possible to allude to the more serious physical effects without being too specific"

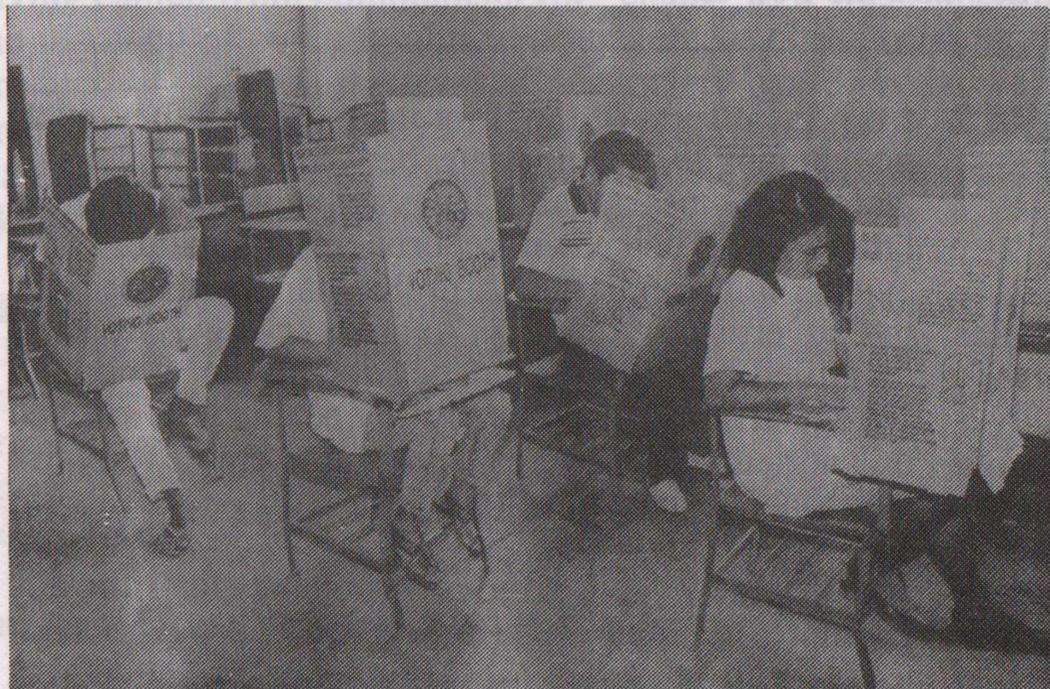
This reluctance to go into specifics is to allow those less knowledgeable about heroin "to project their own genuinely believed misconceptions". What can you say? It has to be said that the campaign didn't actually use **blatant lies**. Indeed its "power" came from taking out of proportion and context and investing with symbolic resonance a genuine phenomenon: opiate addiction (yes, it does happen!). But, as the initiators of the campaign freely admitted (to themselves, anyway), the aim of the campaign was not to "educate" young people liable to actually take heroin but to encourage the ignorant prejudices of those who know nothing about it. This was blatant law 'n' order propaganda thinly disguised as health education.

Yours in Solidarity, George

## 2. LETTER FROM COLLIDE-0-SCOPE

Dear Comrades,

I'm writing in response to your latest issue (15) with



Democratic Austerity - voters in the Phillipines

the long and important discussion of the Russian Counter Revolution. It is remarkable that after so much time and analysis we are still trying to understand what happened in Russia in 1917. Your articles "The Hunt for Red October" and "Remember Kronstadt" for the most part advance the attempt at clarification and are well worth reading. I would like to argue, however, that in one central respect your analysis is still confused and this in an area of specific interest to you, the question of "democracy" in the revolutionary movement. That the question has particular importance for you is clear from the statement you make on p 9: "One of our long-term aims is an international journal of anti-democratic communism".

Part of the confusion evident in your articles stems from your failure to define what you mean by "democracy". From the contexts in which you use the word it seems to mean a formalized process of decision-making based on voting according to rules to which all adhere. But this conception of democracy looks only at forms, not at content. True democracy, democracy of content, needn't be institutionalized in formal voting bodies to exist. In a revolutionary situation especially rules are broken and new rules are made to be broken anew. True, the Bolsheviks seized the state without waiting for a vote. But they would not have been able to seize the state without a majority of the working class behind them in the critical locations - garrisons, naval vessels, streets, factories, railroad stations, communication centers, etc. The Bolsheviks acted when they did because they believed that the majority support was there, that is, the people had "voted", although informally.

If majority backing had been lacking, the insurrection would have failed. That the Bolsheviks themselves were "undemocratic" is true (how you can call such a critique "the most dangerous of all errors made by non-Leninist tendencies" [p 17] is a mystery to me). Nevertheless they knew that their pursuit of power relied on the support of a majority of the working class. As you show, they held their hand until they were confident they could control this support for their own purposes. They struck when the moment was ripe; had they waited, they feared, the fickle masses might have switched allegiance to other parties. The point is that despite their undemocratic mentality, the Bolsheviks depended on the will of the majority for their power. Democracy is the expression of this will, whether in votes or in revolutionary action. Revolution is the most forceful and direct form of democracy.

The Bolshevik Counter Revolution began when they preserved elements of the pre-existing state apparatus and added to them

the Soviet components they controlled. Was this activity undemocratic? No, it was democratic. In the areas under Bolshevik/working class control all but a very few, the anarchists, were convinced that a state was necessary. (As they had pointed out for years, all states are counter-revolutionary.) But the Marxist parties and the workers they influenced and drew their power from still were controlled by the fetish of the state. In a formal sense the state the Bolsheviks constructed was undemocratic, in that decisions were made by the Central Committee of the party or the Polit Bureau or by Lenin alone. But in a more profound sense the early Soviet State was democratic, in that the vast majority of the working class believed they needed to have a state that placed their interests first. They believed the Bolshevik state to fit the bill. Of course, when the Bolsheviks tried to impose their machine over the vast stretches of rural Russia and the surrounding areas, the great bulk of the population the peasants, were not interested. As the Makhnovists in Ukraine and the Greens in Tambov and Siberia showed they didn't want any state controlling their lives.

Clearly you recognize the counter-revolutionary nature of the state, as you call for "anti-state communism" on p 22. The creation of stateless communism cannot be the action of a minority any more than the seizure and destruction of the pre-existing state can. All of these acts require the will and action of the majority. As long as the fetish of the state persists as the dominant social ideology (shared by the bourgeoisie, the Marxist "revolutionaries", and the mass of the working class), revolutionary activity will be channelled into counter revolution.

Your critique of the Bolsheviks as counter-revolutionaries who established a new capitalist state and dictatorially controlled the working class once in power shows clearly that you would not consider yourselves Leninists. but your call for "anti- democratic communism" can only serve to confuse the people you reach with your ideas, since you confuse formal democracy with democratic content. Formal democracy (a.k.a. "bourgeois democracy") is a cover for state-imposed political oppression of the working class by the capitalist class, even when it is copied by workers in their own organizations. This is your point, as best I can make it out. But democracy as the expression of the will of the majority (the working class in most countries, perhaps all, as the peasantry is really integrated into global capital just about everywhere today) is the only potentially revolutionary force that exists. To be "anti-democratic" with

respect to formal democracy is correct, but to be anti-democratic in the sense that you assert the right and intention to impose your minority will on the majority is counter-revolutionary. That is exactly what the Bolsheviks, other Leninists and indeed all capitalist classes have done.

But I don't believe you can mean to assert this intention, hence my conclusion that you are confused. Your evaluation of the Kronstadt soviet is revealing in this respect, I would like to think. On p. 24 you say "The debates at Kronstadt were real debates, in which the deputies, even to some extent the Bolshevik ones, decided the issues on their merits, rather than on the basis of the party line." Exactly; this is democracy of content. There is no substitute for making the case for communism on its merits. Perhaps that is not very glamorous or hopeful work at times, but that's the task. I'm afraid your call for "anti-democratic communism" sounds like a call for "undemocratic communism", the Leninist variety, which you know is just another name for capitalism. If you don't mean to give this impression, you've got to make "the case" more clearly.

### 3. REPLY TO COLLIDE-O-SCOPE

"The great issues of the day are not decided by fine speeches and majority verdicts, but by iron and blood." Bismarck.

Dear comrades,

This is a reply to your letter of 19 November. You are right to say we didn't explain what we mean by democracy. Since *Wildcat* 11, we have not really tackled the issue head-on. We welcome this opportunity to do so.



Worker's Democracy - painting ballot boxes for a living

We didn't intend to give the impression that we regard democracy as a formalized decision-making process. We are against the **content** of democracy rather than majority voting. Democracy means more than this. It means the dictatorship of individual citizens over the class struggle activists, who are **always** a minority. Workers' democracy means taking orders from that section of the citizenry who happen to be sociologically working class, rather than from those who actually defend proletarian interests. There is no middle way. Either you are a democrat, in which case you respect the views of the majority, even if you know they are dangerously wrong, or you are for the class struggle, regardless of how many people support it.

You say that the Bolshevik counter revolution in Russia was democratic, yet don't see this as a condemnation of democracy. You try to have it both ways when you say that the Bolshevik Party had "a majority of the working class behind them in the critical locations - garrisons, naval vessels, streets, factories, railroad stations, communication centres, etc.". Well, which is it? The majority of the working class, or the parts of it that occupied the critical locations? It was when the Party was able to mobilize supporters in the key **strategic** points that it took power. It did not have a majority of the workers in Russia, who remained passive throughout, nor did it need one. Using the term "majority" to describe its supporters is meaningless.

Some have rejected our arguments on the grounds that we are being "elitist". If you think that advocating clear minority leadership by example is dangerous, we can only say that relying on majority votes to make decisions at any stage in the revolutionary process is guaranteed to lead to disaster, because the dominant ideas are the ideas of the ruling class. Since we know that revolution is possible, and that it cannot be democratic, we can only conclude that it will be undemocratic, and no number of dire warnings about the dangers of dictatorship will change our minds. You say there is no substitute for making the case for communism on its merits, in other words trying to win the battle of ideas. Fortunately, there is - action. You say that revolution is the most forceful and direct form of democracy. We agree it takes a lot of people to make a revolution, but why a majority? A majority of what?

We are against any state, not for the moralistic reasons put forward by anarchists, but because it cannot be used for our purposes. We are however for taking dictatorial measures. When insurgents in Iraq recently stormed a prison in which Baathist pigs were being held by the Kurdish nationalists and killed them, they did not take a vote on it in the workers councils first. After all, people might vote the wrong way. We are not going to kid people that we are

democratic when we support defying the majority whenever necessary.

We hope you will discuss this issue with other comrades in the Bay Area, and let us know when our views are supported by the majority.

#### 4. LETTER TO SUSSEX POLL TAX RESISTERS

To : Sussex Poll Tax Resisters, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY.

Dear comrades,

We were concerned to hear about a member of the Resisters becoming a member of the Militant Tendency.

This does not mean that we think prisoners' support groups or local anti-poll tax union - the Resisters being a bit of both - can be as pure as driven snow. For example, we would not argue that such a group should exclude someone for being in the Labour Party, though we hate the latter as much as the Conservative Party or the fascists. The fact is, that members of the Labour Party have done useful work against the poll tax.

As long as they are kept carefully under the control of class-struggle militants, they should be grudgingly tolerated. But you have to draw the line somewhere. This cannot be based on some ad-hoc empirical case-by-case criterion, because who you allow to be involved sends a signal to the anti-poll tax movement in general.

Conversely, the expulsion of a Millie would tell them that certain things cannot be tolerated. It would also prevent *Militant* from having a spy in the group. It's not enough to say that you give the "donkey work" to your token Millie, as you have done. This is an argument about principles, not just immediate issues. But even on an immediate practical level, if we went to a Resisters meeting, we would feel inhibited about what we said, knowing that it would get back to the police informers who run *Militant*. This is a serious issue.

Finally, we don't think such an expulsion should be carried out by open discussion and democratic debate. It should be a manoeuvre by the more radical elements. They should be prepared to make it clear that they will not take part in organizations which tolerate such blatantly anti-working class elements. Those of you who supported the *Keep Off The Grass* leaflet about the TSDC surely must disagree with putting up with people who are a bit confused on the police question.

## 5. REPLY FROM SUSSEX POLL TAX RESISTERS

Dear Comrades,

Our initial reaction to your letter regarding the "Millie" in the Resist Group was twofold: firstly we were perhaps a little affronted that you should doubt either our political acumen or, even worse, our political integrity; secondly, bearing in mind the individual in question, we were not a little bemused that you should take this issue so seriously. However, on further reflection we feel that the position that you adopt in your letter is symptomatic of a certain rigidity in your thought and analysis which all too easily reduces matters of principle into little more than dogmatic posturing, unrelated to the world that we have to change. Unfortunately we have been too busy in the last few months to formulate our reply any earlier; we apologise for the delay.

As you know, most of us have been actively involved in the anti-poll tax movement for more than four years, both at a local and at a national level. In Brighton, perhaps in stark contrast to London, Militant have been the dominant force in the local anti-poll tax movement from its very inception. Whether we like it or not, here in Brighton, it was Militant, more than

any other of the Labour and left groups, that did the hard slog of door to door canvassing and organising that built the basis for the Brighton anti-poll tax movement. As a consequence, it was never enough for us to merely dismiss Militant as a lefty group trying to hi-jack the movement; rather we were obliged from the very start to establish a minimum practical relation with them in the local anti-poll tax groups in order to carry out such basic campaigning work as canvassing that would have been ludicrous to carry out in isolation from them.

Of course this is not to say that such a working relationship was not problematic and that we did not make important political and tactical mistakes with it. Nor is it to say that Militant did not seek to manipulate the movement in order to re-integrate it into the dead end of Labourism and Social

Democracy. Indeed, they used every trick in the book to maintain their stranglehold on the local anti-poll tax movement and at the level of the Sussex Federation we found ourselves in constant struggle with the local leadership of Militant. But it is through this practical and concrete experience of dealing with, and confronting Militant that we have developed our understanding of them as a political force.

As you know, the Sussex Poll Tax Resisters Support Fund was established in the aftermath of the Poll Tax Riots of March 1990 at the zenith of the anti-poll tax movement. The SPTRSF was established for two closely related reasons: firstly it was obvious that the all important defence of those being victimised after the events of the 30th of March could not be left up to the Militant and the leadership of the "official" anti-poll tax movement

who, at the time, were threatening to grass people up to the police; secondly, the poll tax riots had both shattered and discredited Militant's attempts to dominate the anti-poll tax movement, both at a national and at a local level, and it was hoped that Resist, along with similar groups up and down the country that were organising around the defence of poll tax prisoners, would provide an alternative organisational focus to that of the Militant dominated ABAPTF.



Tommy "Shop 'Em" Sheridan celebrates with some of his moronic supporters after a career-boosting spell in prison

It was for these very same reasons that we both aligned the SPTRSF to the TSDC and subsequently supported the criticisms of the TSDC in the infamous Keep off the Grass leaflet.

At the time of *Keep off the Grass* we still believed that there was a distinct possibility of the Government responding to the anti-poll tax movement by an openly repressive policy of mass jailings and the aggressive and widespread use of bailiffs that may then have led to a further escalation of the anti-poll tax movement. Such a prospect meant that we faced a two-fold imperative: firstly it was important that we did not allow Militant to regain its credibility amongst the more radical sections of the movement through its accommodation by the more liberal elements within the TSDC; secondly, it was important to challenge the very dominance of these

liberal elements that was allowing the TSDC to drift towards a soft-cop policing role and becoming an advice agency for the state.

In such circumstances, as we saw it, it was vital for us to press home the fact that only a few months before, leading figures in the Militant tendency and the ABAPTF had gone on television announcing that they would "name names" and fully co-operate with the police in bringing "rioters to justice": that in short, the Militant were grasses whose position was directly opposed to the basic position of the TSDC of unconditional defence of all poll tax prisoners. Further, we believed that it was vitally important to give voice to a class perspective within the TSDC which saw the poll tax riots as a positive expression of class violence; in counter-distinction to the all too prevalent liberal whining about police brutality.

It was on these grounds, and in such circumstances that we supported *Keep off the Grass*. This does not mean to say that we simplistically conclude that because leaders of Militant acted in particular circumstances as grasses that they are nothing other than police grasses, at all times and in all circumstances: that because they act in the interest of the state they are nothing more than a branch of the state. It does not take much subtlety of dialectical thought to see such conclusions which reduce everything to simple identities as being crass nonsense that explain nothing; and little better than the paranoid conspiracy theories that can only see wars in terms of the evil designs of the international protocols of "capital" hidden somewhere in the recesses of the CIA and the KGB (the latter of which has now, no doubt, faked its own disintegration after inspiring the break up of the USSR!).

On the contrary, we do not simply identify Militant with the state and dismiss them as nothing more than police informers - nor do we simply identify rank and file members of Militant with its leadership. For us Militant will act as grasses in particular concrete circumstances due to their political position and perspective. Because they seek to represent the working class as it is, or more precisely what they see the working class as being - respectable "law abiding" working class families - through the remnants of the traditional Labour Movement, they had little option in the aftermath of the poll tax riots but to present themselves as reputable upholders of law and order and the "peaceful and democratic traditions" of the Labour Movement. Even if it meant that they had to set up a witch-hunt on the same lines as Kinnock uses against them, it was necessary for them, in the face of a hostile media, to present both themselves and the ABAPTF as a respectable and democratic working class movement. It was for these reasons, and in such circumstances, that Militant came to threaten to "name names".

Furthermore, we must remember that in the face of the overwhelming outrage at the behaviour of Steve Nally and Co., not only from the rest of the anti-poll tax movement but also from Militant's own rank and file (some of whom had been involved in the fighting at Trafalgar Square), the leadership of Militant were forced into an embarrassing climb down in which they pleaded that they had been "quoted out of context"! The proposed "internal inquiry" never happened and the ABAPTF never came to publish any names of supposed trouble makers or "agents provocateurs".

Whether we like or not, many working class people are members of Militant because they see it as a well organised and effective organisation. While we may deplore their slavish support for the Party line we cannot totally dismiss them, and some are far more committed to the ideas of the party than others. The individual Millie member of Resist is to say the least a little politically naive. He joined Militant not so much because he accepted the ideas but because for him they were the political group that seemed to be doing the most. At the same time, through his practical involvement in the Resist group he has demonstrated an unswerving commitment to the unconditional defence of all poll tax prisoners. Of course there is a latent contradiction between his involvement in Resist and his membership of Militant but it is a contradiction that, in present circumstances, is not realised and has no practical consequences. If it was to become realised then "our Millie" would have to make his choice to resolve or we would have to make it for him; but this is not the case.

As we see it, the Government's tactical retreat over the issue of the poll tax has meant that the anti-poll tax movement has gone into decline. This is clearly the case in Brighton, where once there were more than a dozen local anti-poll tax unions now there are none that are active. The SPTRSF now no longer seeks to be the alternative focus of the Brighton anti-poll tax movement but is solely conceded with the important, but low level tasks of providing practical and moral aid to the remaining poll tax prisoners. In such circumstances our relation to the Sussex Federation can only be one of mutual indifference. As a consequence, there now seems little point in making grand gestures to the rest of the anti-poll tax movement by expelling Millies and breaking off relations with the official anti-poll tax movement; such actions belong in the past.

Furthermore, the idea that we have a spy in our midst is simply ludicrous since there is nothing to spy on. Even if we were doing anything of interest to the police such matters as these would have never been conducted in the semi-open meetings in the pub!

One final point concerns your dogmatic insistence on using anti-democratic methods even in the completely inappropriate context of the Resist group. An insistence that amounts almost to the point where we are expected to launch an anti-democratic coup against ourselves! We are well aware of the realities of democratic ideology, indeed the democratic manipulations of *Militant* within the Sussex Federation were a practical example of its power. However, unless we are to condemn ourselves forever to a principled isolation we have to work with others of differing views and politics, as you concede when you acknowledge our need to work with members of the Labour Party. But for this we have to grasp the kernel of truth of democracy; namely necessity for a minimum level of trust and openness between groups of divergent interests and perspectives. Without

this, political co-operation becomes impossible. The simplistic idea that we should use anti-democratic methods almost on principle, regardless of their implications or context seems to us as little more than ridiculous. Indeed it reveals that your position on democracy and anti-democracy has not really been worked out; it is another example of adopting the easy way of dogmatism.



Gratuitous riot picture

## 6. REPLY TO SUSSEX POLL TAX RESISTERS

Dear comrades,

Once again, it was only to be expected that a single issue campaign limiting itself to nothing more than destroying the prison system, based on a broad alliance of different classes, should fail to understand the role of the left as a fully integrated arm of international capital, thus leading the proletariat off its own autonomous terrain and into the arms of the police.

On the other hand, we have to accept much of what you say in your letter. We did take a dogmatic stance. Involvement in the class struggle inevitably involves working alongside members of reactionary organisations. The question is how and to what extent. You go a long way in your letter towards answering this question, using the example of your

own experiences ducking and diving the manoeuvres of the Millies. The question is one of tactics, and you rightly point out that even *Militant* is not simply a branch of the state, neither are its members police. Most of them would fail the IQ test.

We would like to correct one factual point. The Resisters group did not support the *Keep off the Grass* leaflet. True, the most radical elements in the Resisters helped write it, distribute it, and defend its illiberal approach to supporting class war prisoners in our many friendly discussions with the comrades of the Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign. But because you could not be sure of the support of some of the Resisters, *Class War* supporters and the like, you wouldn't even let us use the Resisters address on the leaflet. (*Keep off the Grass* is available from our

address). You have had to make a lot of concessions in order to keep the Resisters group going. The practical consequences included producing newsletters in which a class viewpoint was smothered by being surrounded by liberal rubbish. It is not dogmatic principles, but practical experience, which leads us to advocate that the more revolutionary bods should be prepared to undemocratically

outmanoeuvre the less. We can't see why the need for trust and openness between divergent groups is "the kernel of truth of democracy". Democracy is opposed to trust and openness - it provides a framework for groups to lie to and conspire against each other while presenting a public front of unity.

But having said all this, we reiterate that we accept the gist of your reply. There is a lot to be learned about tactics in the class struggle from your analysis of what we did in the anti-poll tax campaign.

Just one more thing. We defend our *penchant* for conspiracy theories. We are not sure about the KGB in Russia, but we know that the Securitate in Romania faked its own disintegration. It is not enough to simply describe our position as "paranoid". We hope to hear from you soon.



## JUST WHAT THE NEW WORLD ORDERED

As we go to press, the situation in Yugoslavia is suddenly making headlines, though nothing much has changed in the last year. It appears that the world ruling class are preparing for war, but in spite of the media barrage of manufactured atrocity stories directed against Serbia, calls for full-scale military intervention are being frustrated by disagreements among the more powerful capitalist gangs. In spite of the historic importance of Britain's recognition of Croatia, which was the first time German interests have dictated British foreign policy, the EC is still a long way from a unified 4th Reich. Differences among its members are at least as important as differences between them and the US. So the Balkan war has not turned into a struggle between the US and the EC. The New World Order is holding, in fact the Yugoslav crisis is part of it. Whatever their differences, all the capitalist factions involved have an interest in the war: the millions of refugees are useful to capitalism, because they can be used to keep wages down. War keeps the working class desperate, divided and easily exploited, both in the immediate war zone and in neighboring countries. This must be the starting point of a communist intervention against any new UN crusade. We are unable to be more specific at the present time.

## WORLDWIDE INTIFADA

We welcome the publication of the first issue of *Worldwide Intifada*. We have no fundamental political differences with its publishers, so apart from ruthlessly editing their copy, we will let them speak for themselves:

"The youths who riot in Gaza are no more footsoldiers of the PLO and its nationalist struggle that the LA rioters are in favour of more black policemen. The struggle is not between Arabs and Jews, it is between two classes with conflicting interests; the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In our bulletin, we look at how the intifada has undermined not only the military strength of the Israeli state, but the entire forces of the regional bourgeoisie. We discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the movement to assess its potential for developing autonomous action against all factions of the bourgeoisie in the region and the rest of the world.

*Worldwide Intifada* is obtainable price £0.50 by writing as follows: Box 1, 22 High Street, LEAMINGTON, WARWICKSHIRE, UK. The bulletin is in English, and we can reply to correspondence in Arabic."

## FIVE GO JOB-HUNTING



Kincora Boys' Home in N. Ireland - run as a brothel by MI5 for rich bastards and politicians

In recent months, there has been a well-publicized tiff within the British law enforcement community. The buggers of MI5 (part of the military) are short of work following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and are trying to muscle in on police work such as chasing the IRA. MI5 justify their increased involvement in Irish affairs by the fact that the Special Branch (part of the police) are obviously too

stupid to beat the IRA. This in turn means that the Branch have to justify their employment by finding other supposed threats to chase. We recently discovered definite evidence of interference with our mail. We suggest that correspondents try to use false names and addresses, and use box numbers or apartment blocks which receive their mail in a common collection box.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS AND PAMPHLETS

Subscriptions are £5 or \$10 for 4 issues. Please send cash/postal orders/money orders to the London address, as we don't have a bank account. The pamphlet *Open Letter to Comrade Lenin* is £3 or \$5, or £20 or \$30 for 10.

We will shortly be publishing two new pamphlets. One is on the history of class struggle in Korea, and the other is an attack on trade unionism in Britain. Either of the pamphlets are £1 or \$2. Deduct 33% for orders of 10 or more.

The Internationalist Communist Group's new English mag. is now available. Lavishly illustrated with Bolshevik woodcuts of the 1920's, it contains eye-witness accounts of the insurrection in Iraq. It is available from: BP 54, Brussels 31, 1060 Brussels, Belgium.

## NEW TECHNOLOGY

We have acquired a scanner, a device which enables us to read printed text into a computer, then convert it to ASCII characters. We can then use desktop publishing software to reformat it, correct mistakes, and publish it. We already have Barrot's *Fascism /Anti-Fascism* on floppy disk (PC format, in ASCII and WordPerfect 5.1 files). It is available from us for £1/\$2, on 1.4M 3.5" disc unless otherwise specified. There are numerous out-of-print documents we would like to see republished, for example translations of texts of the Communist Left of the 1920's, and Italian Autonomists of the 1970's. We have the technology, but not the time. If other comrades are interested in doing most of the work involved in producing these documents or others, we would like to hear from them.

We have achieved a steady *rapprochement* with the comrades in the Bay Area. The editorial in this issue was written jointly. The next issue of *Wildcat* is intended to be the result of further homogenization.

Our addresses are as follows:

BM CAT, LONDON WC1N 3XX, UK.

PO BOX 3305, OAKLAND CA 94609, USA.

## WHAT HAVE WE LOST?

Magnificent shopping malls engulfed by open fields.

Parking lots sacrificed to wildlife habitat.

Progress and Technology butchered on the altar of nature and wilderness.

Skyscrapers razed to build communal lodges.

Mighty dams subdued and tamed by free-flowing rivers.

Mass production and assembly lines subsumed by skilled crafting.

Supermarkets and chemical agriculture devastated by abundant food, free and shared by all.

Organized violence of global warfare overpowered by ritualized conflict games.

Computer information networks subverted by campfire storytelling.

Stock Exchanges and profit undermined by gift-giving.

Forests encroaching on the deserts.

Religion devoured by spontaneous festivals and living myth.

Docile and obedient wage-laborers left to follow their own desires.

The city lights are dark, the stars blaze.

The clocks have all been smashed.

There is dancing in the land.

Music in the air.

The dreamers are awake.

There will be no going back....

## Hands Off Columbus!

The events commemorating the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America have led to a predictable outcry from numerous leftist and Indian pressure groups, who point to the disappropriation suffered by their ancestors. It has become fashionable to decry Columbus and the other European adventurers. Horrific though some of the conquistadors' activities may seem, as Marxists we have to look at historical events objectively, not merely in terms of their immediate effects.

Whereas anarchists only see events through the distorting lens of eternal moral principles, Marxists defend a scientific materialist view of history. Though racial holocausts may be a symptom that capitalism is no longer progressive, in its infancy they were signs of robust health. Judged by this historical method, Columbus and his successors "played a most revolutionary part" (Marx) in liberating the productive forces of an entire continent from the archaic relations of hunting and gathering societies. Against the bleeding-heart moralists of his day, Engels summarized the Marxist view on these tribes of backward savages in the following passage from *The Origins* - "People were therefore almost completely dominated by nature as an external, alien, hostile and incomprehensible power, as is reflected in their childlike religious conceptions".

The European explorers freed the Native Americans from this domination, and more importantly, enabled the development of America's immense reserve of natural wealth. Though this process was achieved at great cost in human lives, this was the inevitable price that had to be paid. The development of America, and the vital boost it gave to man's mastery of nature, laid the material foundations for communism. Without this capitalist revolution, mankind would still be in the thrall of nature.



Indians having their hands chopped off for failing to meet the gold dust quota



### MAX ANGER'S SONG

Come hither, comrades, with your six-packs of ale,  
To sneer at our rulers and see how they fail;  
On the lives of the rich pile a mountain of grief,  
For its cuttin' `em  
and guttin' `em  
that bring us relief!  
So fill up a glass, for their ways shall soon pass;  
When they're dead we'll remember their stink and their gas!

John Kennedy's brains were red, so they say;  
But what's their spilt blood when we're happy and gay?  
I'd rather help slaughter the rich while I'm here,  
Than be passive, hard-working - **and dead half a year!**  
So comrades, let's kiss,  
On their graves we shall piss;  
In hell there's no bosses or time-clock like this!

In nights filled with riot and burning and shooting,  
This city's been conquered by arson and looting!  
Social unrest is sweeping the nation,  
There's a pig-roast down at the old police station  
So let's give a hand to a mutinous band,  
'Cause I'm merry while I tarry  
On top of The Man!