

# BLACK FLAG

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Organ of the Anarchist Black Cross

## POLAND; SNATCHING DEFEAT FROM THE JAWSOF VICTORY

THE POLISH WORKING CLASS HAS PROVIDED THE WORLD WITH A REMARKABLE EXAMPLE OF HOW TO SNATCH DEFEAT FROM THE JAWS OF VICTORY. THE EVENTS IN POLAND CAN THEREFORE ONLY INSTRUCT WORKING PEOPLE IN THE FATAL CONSEQUENCES OF IGNORING THEIR OWN STRENGTHS, COMPROMISING WITH THEIR ENEMIES AND FAILING TO CONCEIVE OF A TRULY DIFFERENT WORLD WITHOUT MASTERS.

THE MAGNITUDE OF THIS COLLECTIVE FAILURE IS ALL THE GREATER BECAUSE OF THE POLES' ACCOMPLISHMENTS. WITHOUT TRADE UNIONS, WITHOUT A "VANGUARD PARTY", WITHOUT ACCESS TO STATE-OWNED RADIO, TELEVISION, OR NEWSPAPERS, THE POLISH WORKERS WERE ABLE TO INITIATE A GENERAL STRIKE. THIS STRIKE SPREAD THROUGH THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF THE NATION, PARALYSED FOREIGN COMMERCE AND EFFECTIVELY BROUGHT THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF POLAND TO A STANDSTILL. THESE FEATS WERE ATTAINED NOTWITHSTANDING THE TOTAL DOMINATION OF POLAND BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE RUSSIAN ARMY SINCE THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

### HYPOCRISY

THE POLISH WORKERS COMPELLED NEGOTIATIONS AND APPARENT CONCESSIONS FROM THEIR RULERS CAUSED THE PREMATURE RETIREMENT OF A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE ENTRENCHED LEADERSHIP (INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER GIEREK) AND OBTAINED, AT LEAST ON PAPER, RIGHTS WHICH ARE UNPRECEDENTED IN THE EASTERN BLOC. YET FOR ALL THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS (AND THE STORY IS CERTAINLY NOT COMPLETE IN THAT RESPECT) WE SHOULD NOT FAIL TO OBSERVE HOW AND WHY THEY HAVE FALLEN SO SHORT OF THE MARK OF THEIR OWN FREEDOM. IN MAKING AN ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION IN POLAND IT IS IMPORTANT TO TRY AND AVOID THE TRAP OF SEEING ONLY WHAT FITS NEATLY WITH A PRE-EXISTING VIEWPOINT. WE HAVE NO USE FOR THE SELF-SERVING HYPOCRISY OF MAINSTREAM POLITICIANS

LIKE CARTER AND THATCHER WHO PRAISE THE "HEROIC POLISH WORKERS" FOR ACTS WHICH WOULD BRING SWIFT AND VIOLENT DENUNCIATION IF UNDERTAKEN BY AMERICAN OR BRITISH WORKERS. NOR DO WE HAVE ANY USE FOR THE POLITICIANS OF THE LEFT SUCH AS THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHO SEE ONLY THE WORK OF "ANTI-SOCIALIST ELEMENTS" IN POLAND. NEITHER SHOULD ANARCHISTS TRY TO EXPLAIN AWAY SUCH DISCONCERTING PHENOMENA AS CATHOLIC MASSES IN THE GDANSK SHIPYARDS OR CHOOSE TO DISMISS THE ENTIRE EVENT AS INSIGNIFICANT BECAUSE OF THE WORKERS' REFORMIST DEMANDS. THE WHOLE PICTURE MUST BE SEEN, WARTS AND ALL; WE SHOULD NOT BE BLIND TO EITHER ITS WEAKNESSES OR STRENGTHS BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT IN ACCORD WITH OUR OWN THEORIES.



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WALESA; NOMINAL LEADER OF THE POLISH WORKERS BUT HOW REVOLUTIONARY?

What is remarkable about the last three months in Poland is that certain sections of the working class - primarily the transportation workers, dockers, shipyard workers, workers in heavy industry and mining - spontaneously occupied their places of work, halted production, threw out management and proceeded to establish democratically-organized workers' councils to co-ordinate this self-activity throughout the country. Delegates were sent to Gdansk from various striking factories. Frequently they were rotated to permit new people to participate in the deliberations and negotiations and to avoid, or at least to limit, the growth of a new representative bureaucracy. The actual negot-

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# BLACK FLAG



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The "new and staggering" deficit will, we hope, come down a bit when we get some cash in for the previous issue, but, despite some good support, we are still going to be heavily in the red. A regular supporter writes to ask us why the Black Cross doesn't do anything to help German prisoners. The answer is simple - we are restricted by our lack of funds, and the first to go is always somewhere where a local organization exists. The Black Cross has only one source of income; we are entirely dependent on Black Flag. May we repeat our appeal that those receiving the Flag who don't want to receive it should write to us. Those who were subscribers and have changed their address (and wonder why they don't get it) we cannot reach; but if you know anyone pass the message on. That's on the negative side; on the positive side, thanks for those who are helping us to spread the message.

PRISONERS RESISTANCE FUND :  
In hand: £122.07  
Received: £18.97 SS (Guam)  
£4 SB (Cosham)  
£22.97  
New total £145.04  
Sent £100 for distribution to  
Spanish prisoners.  
Balance £45.04

Thanks to our two regulars who send cash faithfully. Thanks too to those who have sent off aid to the addresses supplied, particularly to who ever it was on holiday in Greece who gave £50 direct to an anarchist prisoner's family, saying it was from the Black Cross.

## Mufti Poster

The poster which was printed as a centre spread in the last issue of "The Irish Prisoner" is now available in a larger version printed on good quality white paper. Under the slogan "Inside and Outside, Support Prisoners' Resistance", the poster's photo-montage depicts a mufti-squad officer during the attack on prisoners in Wormwood Scrubs in August 1979. Smaller pictures show Irish POWs on the roof of the Scrubs in 1975, Hull prisoners on the roof in 1976 and a joint Prisoners Aid Committee/PROP picket of the Scrubs in 1979. The text describes the attack by Mufti squad forces on unarmed prisoners, using quotes from prisoners and their relatives.

THE POSTER, 16½" x 27", IS AVAILABLE IN ORDERS OF NOT MORE THAN TEN COPIES FROM:  
PAC BOX 9, 2a ST. PAULS ROAD,  
LONDON N1. PRICE £1 EACH,  
INCLUDING POST AND PACKING;  
£3 FOR 5 COPIES; £5 FOR 10 COPIES

## ITALY

The 30th of June saw the release of Salvo Marletta, Alfredo Bonanno and Jean Weir after 100 days of detention, leaving one of the original 19 anarchist comrades arrested in the "blitz" operation carried out by various sectors of the Italian police in Sicily and North Italy at the end of March, still in prison. They were the first comrades to be arrested and it was around the accusations of armed robberies against them that the police constructed a big frame-up designed to draw members of the anarchist movement into the fire of the State's anti-terrorism apparatus. From the start the three comrades recognised the frame-up for what it was and refused to undergo any interrogations and only agreed to an identity-parade when the others were released and the frame-up was obviously crumbling. The comrade who is still in prison is Massimo Gaspari, sentenced to four years and ten months after 50 sticks of gelignite were found in his home, he is in the special prison of Fossombrone.

# anarcho quiz

Answers on  
Page 11

1. The Afghan tribes - "bandits" when they opposed British imperialism and "freedom fighters" now they oppose Russian - once included a nation, the Vizeerees, who deserved the name freedom fighters (until finally wiped out by 'independent' Afghanistan). What distinguished them from other tribes?
2. What revolutionary action is commemorated next year - which ought to be celebrated at London's Blackheath?
3. What had the Bheels of India in common with the MacGregors of Scotland?
4. What political philosophy inspired most of the scientists who worked on the atom bomb?
5. Which lawyer from Manningtree (Essex) made a brilliant prosecuting career, still admired by the Bar, which was built not on the conventional method of inventing the evidence to prove the crime, but inventing the crime to fit the evidence?
6. During the Depression it impossible for people living in some of the worst slums of East London to get jobs, because once they gave their home address they were turned away by employers. What typical liberal reform is said to have been carried out (some say by Bethnal Green, others by Stepney, council) to amend this state of affairs?

I CAN'T BEAR IT WITHOUT  
BLACK FLAG...



# ANARCHIST CENTRE

# JOIN!

Thanks to Crass, Poison Girls and a number of other bands, as well as the many people who've responded to our requests for money the Anarchist Centre now has in its coffers about £4,500, easily making us the wealthiest anarchist group in the country.

Be this as it may the biggest hurdle has still to be overcome - the finding of suitable premises. In the last few weeks we have looked at several likely places and have put in tenders for two of them. We cannot even guess as to how successful our tenders will be, but we should hear back from the agents soon.

The cost of obtaining such a place (not to mention its upkeep once we get it) is extremely high and we will need your support if we are to open and stay open.

In order to do a proper cost evaluation it is essential for us to know how many people are likely to use the Centre, so we would welcome not only membership fees now, but also letters from people interested in the project who would be prepared to use it, help run it, or have some skill which might be useful. We

also welcome any suggestions about what use the Centre can be put, any information about possible sites, or how we can reach more people with news of the idea.

For those of you who are members or are on the mailing list, the October newsletter has been printed and is on its way. There was no September issue.

In the near future we intend to hold a meeting open to members and all those interested in the Anarchist Centre to discuss ways in which we can speed things up. News of this

meeting will be carried in Freedom and those on the mailing list will be notified.

For those of you who haven't already taken out membership but intend to eventually, please do it now. The more members we get the sooner we can open.

Membership: £15 for those in London, £10 for those outside.

Cheques payable to:  
"William Godwin Memorial Society" c/o Freedom Press,  
Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel  
High Street, London E1.



On 30th August about 1,500 people attended a "Beyond the Fragments" conference. The conference was held at Leeds University and was organized for those sympathetic to the ideas expressed in the book by Lynn Segal, Sheila Rowbotham, and Hilary Wainwright, "Beyond the Fragments". The book examines the possibilities for the "fragments" of the "libertarian" left to unite outside the major left groups, the Labour Party, the SWP, the Communist Party and so on, but extra-parliamentary rather than anti-parliamentary and complimentary to rather than the left groups rather than in any real opposition.

Also present were approximately twenty people involved in the London Autonomist milieu who attended for a number of reasons: firstly to observe this latest attempt to bring together the individuals and groupings which work primarily on local or single issue campaigns; to attempt to meet and talk with people with views similar to our own, and to present an active opposition to the leftist package deals presented for consumption: to intervene and disrupt this.

A group of us who travelled by coach arrived late and so apart from a quick look at the gathering most of us did not feel like attending any of what was left of the morning workshops and went to a cafe instead.

We had previously decided to attend any workshops as a group to prevent any intimidation and to avoid being isolated voices which are generally ignored or quickly overwhelmed. As all the afternoon workshops were on organization we decided to attend the one chaired by someone who describes himself as an anarchist and had previously described us as fascists in the letters page of Freedom. We spoke as individuals, and therefore expressed our own views, but a common theme agreed by all of us was the need to oppose the Labour Party and the Unions as Capitalist institutions necessary for the management of the working class, the need for direct and unequivocal opposition to all the leftist parties, groups and sects because of their reformism.

The workshop debate was tedious and structured as to remain that way. We were presented with a duplicated sheet of paper with points to be discussed. The paper began: "How can we as socialists...", which implied the minimal agreement that we were all basically socialists with perhaps a few disagreements which were keeping us "fragmented". Various people argued that clearly there was no agreement and the basis for discussion was not to assume that there was. Attempts were made to confront people with the contradiction of "socialists" working within capitalist institutions but all efforts in this direction failed to elicit

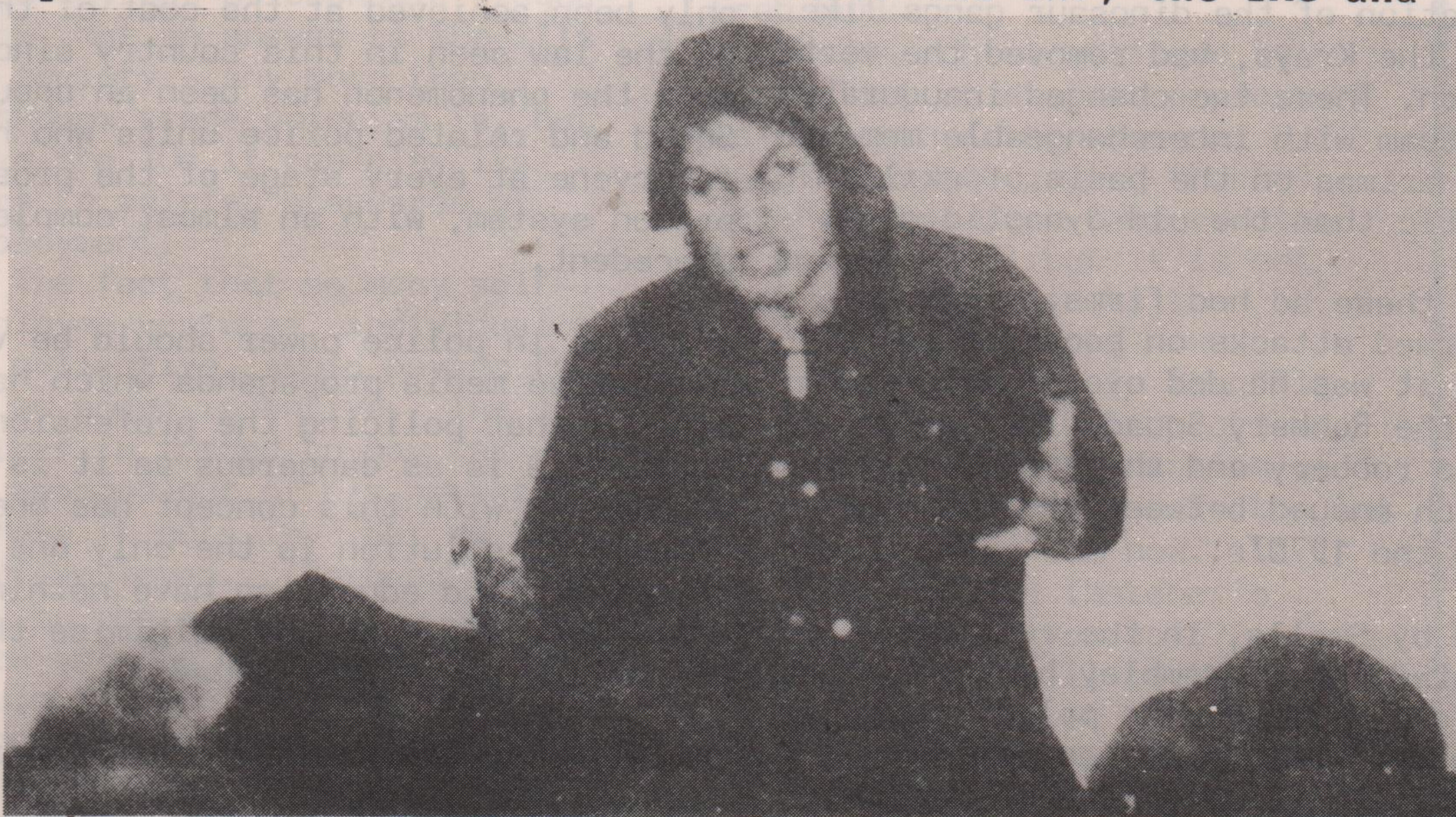
# BEYOND THE FRAGMENTS OR BEYOND THE LEFT ; AN AUTONOMIST VIEW

THE LONDON "AUTONOMISTS" ATTENDED THE RECENT "BEYOND THE FRAGMENTS" CONFERENCE HELD IN LEEDS. HERE ONE OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED GIVES HIS REASONS FOR GOING AND HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE, THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS CONDUCTED, AND ITS RESULTS.



THE CONFERENCE WAS HELD AT LEEDS UNIVERSITY. AN ESTIMATED 1,500 PEOPLE ATTENDED

any response at all. Others suggested that it was time to confront the state on selected terrain and to be prepared to meet (and to use) violence, but this was deemed to be outside the scope of the conference and anyway, "What do we mean by 'violence'?"



AFTER BEING DENIED ACCESS TO THE MICROPHONE, ONE AUTONOMIST HAD TO SHOUT IN ORDER TO VOICE HIS CRITICISMS OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS POLITICS WHICH WERE DELIBERATELY IGNORED BY THE ORGANIZERS.

At the final plenary speeches were made by various functionaries with the obligatory applause from the passive audience. Hilary Wainwright said that the stewards had slips of paper to be filled out and handed in by those who wished to speak. One of our group did so and we agreed that he would speak

on our opposition to the Labour Party, the Unions, and the leftist sects because, as far as we could tell, the issue had not been raised at all. In fact the summary of the reports back from the workshops spoke in terms of working with them. We waited while the SWP, the IMG and

the Right To Work people and others spoke, and as time was getting on, one of us went over to the platform to see when he was going to be permitted to speak. One of the organizers claimed that he hadn't handed in the necessary piece of paper. We found the steward to whom we had given the paper but met with

the reply that the organizers must have lost it and anyway it was too late to speak as they were finishing. At this point some of the leftists gathered round our spokesperson and attempted to look threatening by weight of numbers, so some of us strolled over to even up the numbers. While we were trying to impress on these people that one of us wished to speak, Hilary Wainwright was using the microphone to explain to the meeting that there was no more time and that the persons causing the disturbance were attempting to jump the queue of people also not able to speak. Sections of the crowd shouted: "Let him speak". Then one of the women who had spoken earlier grabbed the microphone and cried: "Must we put up with this male violence?" which was applauded by a number of the spectators. The "autonomist" who had been prevented from speaking took possession of the microphone without permission from the chair and once again tried to speak. This time they switched it off. It was obvious that he was deliberately kept from speaking, unlike the SWP, the IMG and the Right to Work people (so much for criticisms of left parties) so he was forced to stand on the table and shout to be heard, which was, of course, largely ineffective.

The meeting broke up and people drifted away. We spent the remainder of the evening talking to individuals, one of whom told us that a week prior to the conference one of the organizers had contacted the Leeds Anarchist and Solidarity groups and expressed concern at the possibility of an intervention from the London Autonomists and asked them to help steward the autonomists should it occur.

My own feelings on this conference are that any attempt to continue this form of compromise must be interrupted and that insofar as the organizers clearly see some kind of new organization forming around "Beyond the Fragments" it must be resisted. I was sickened by the liberalism prevalent at the conference and the manipulative way that all real criticisms were silenced or ignored.

*"The present conference has been called in the face of the critical state of decomposition that the left has reached. Its purpose is to lash together some series of compromises so that we may witness the pitiful spectacle of the left limping harmoniously along for a few more years... 'Beyond the Fragments' goes no further than to attempt to reform reformism. It attempts*

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



# THE SUPERGRASS STRATEGY

IN 17TH AND 18TH CENTURY LONDON, BEFORE THE ORGANIZATION OF A CENTRALIZED POLICE FORCE, SHADY CHARACTERS EXISTED WHO MEDIATED IN CRIMINAL MATTERS BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND THE COURTS; THEY WERE THE THIEF TAKERS. THIEF TAKERS AND RECEIVERS, SUCH AS JONATHAN WILD, WERE THE MOST SCURRILOUS INDIVIDUALS, RESTORING STOLEN PROPERTY TO THE ORIGINAL OWNERS FOR LARGE SUMS WHICH WERE THEN SHARED WITH THE THIEVES. THEY CONTROLLED THIEVES UNDER THREAT OF INFORMING ON THEM AND SOUGHT FAVOUR WITH THE JUDICIARY TO ORGANIZE WHO WENT IN AND WHO STAYED OUT OF PRISON. OFTEN THESE THIEF TAKERS HAD A NOMINAL POSITION WITHIN THE POLICING ADMINISTRATION. IN 1692 THE HIGHWAYMAN ACT ALLOWED FOR A REWARD OF 40 POUNDS (WORTH ABOUT £1,000 NOWADAYS) TO BE GIVEN TO ANYONE WHO CAUGHT A THIEF AND PROVIDED EVIDENCE WHICH LED TO A CONVICTION. THE ACT ALSO ALLOWED FOR ANYONE WHO INFORMED ON AT LEAST TWO OTHER THIEVES AND GAINED THEIR CONVICTION TO BE GIVEN A ROYAL PARDON.

THIS PERIOD OF POLICING WAS ONE ALMOST ABSENT OF ORDER, IN WHICH THE THIEF TAKER CUM THIEF AND RECEIVER MEDIATED BETWEEN THE CRIMINAL AND GOVERNING CLASSES. ANY INVESTIGATION INTO THE RECENT PHENOMENON OF THE "SUPERGRASS" IN LONDON INVITES COMPARISON BETWEEN THOSE DAYS AND OUR OWN.

UNTIL 1973 THE 'grass', 'nark', or 'snout', the police informer or police spy was an insignificant creature. All policing and all law, necessitates mediation between the law enforcers and the law breakers. Divided into two relatively cohesive and secretive camps, in order to work effectively, they both need to infiltrate. Until 1973 the police informer was a figure on the fringe, a pathetic, morally ambivalent character who gained small financial rewards or small immunities in exchange for scraps of information gained by way of tittle-tattle, by pokey enquiries among friends or those who were unable to keep their secrets to themselves. Nevertheless the role was an important one; like crime, detection necessitates information. The work which the police did on Derek Creighton Smalls, known as Bertie, in 1973, radically cahnged the nature of the police informer.

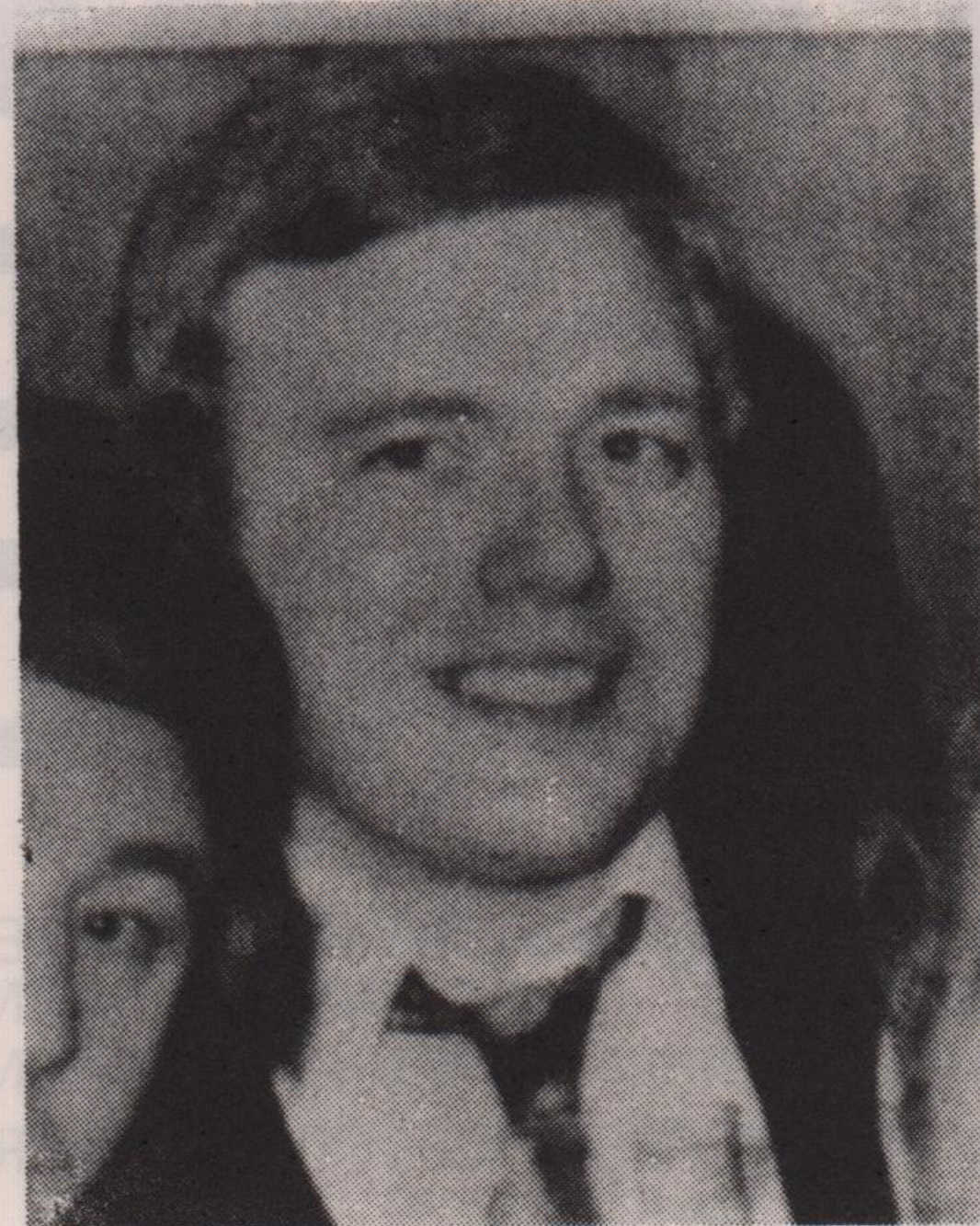
NO-ONE COULD HAVE FORESEEN IN 1973, WHEN SMALLS, DEFECTED FROM THE milieu which he had a hand in shaping for ten years, that he represented the first member of what had become a modern criminal institution. Though the history of the supergrass is seen as beginning with Smalls, to see him as an initiator would be to credit him with a grasp of the future and the consequences of his own actions, which he does not deserve. When Smalls decided to make statements in January 1973, he was able to give the names and involvements of 27 other men who had participated in crimes of which he had often been the instigator. Rather than being an initiator, Smalls was the product of his times. He was, as most criminals are, reactive, and his form of reaction took place in relation to a series of changes which had occurred in the nature of crime during the late 1960's.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES IN THE FIELD OF MONEY SECURITY AND TRANSFER HAD displaced the old craftsman villain who either worked on his own or with a small group of confederates. Changes in the criminal milieu itself, with the decline and disintegration of the dinosaur gangs like those run by Jack Spot, Billy Hill and the Krays, had removed the vertical hierachy from criminal organization. These two changes inaugurated the era of the 'ad hoc' firm, a small team with interchangeable members, which came together for specific crimes on the basis of skills and which was essentially more democratic than the old dynastic gang.

IN ORDER TO PURSUE ONE OF THE FIRST OF THESE AD HOC FIRMS, WHO HAD successfully carried out a series of armed attacks on banks, taking money at the last point of transit as it was handed over to the bank staff, the Metropolitan Police set up the Robbery Squad. The growth and consolidation of this type of armed robbery and the consolidation of the Robbery Squad, the struggle which ensued between the two, describes a new type of urban policing in the 1970's.

DESPITE THEIR IMMEDIATE VICTORY, AIDED BY SMALLS, IN THE RESOLUTION of a series of robberies which culminated in the Wembley bank job, the concept of a robbery squad was essentially flawed. The policing of the professional criminal in an advanced urban metropolis has come to entail the same lack of higher professional skills which the policing of civil disorder demands from a riot squad. Throughout the 1970's detective work gave way quickly to mass sweeps and evidential sleights of hand, in which the end inevitably justifies the means.

WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT THAT SMALLS HAD INFORMATION TO RECOUNT ON A large scale, there was much toing and froing between the police and the Director of Public Prosecutions. A strategy of exception had to be conjured up and it was found in a gentleman's agreement between Smalls, his solicitor and the DPP; it was an agreement negotiated around a table by various representatives and given to Smalls' solicitor in the form of a typed contract. Essentially it gave Smalls complete immunity from prosecution for any crime he admitted to with the reservation that the DPP could not sanction murder.



"The Supergrass Strategy" is the first in a two part review of the way in which police informers and "grasses" have been used in recent years. The review comes from The Criminal Research and Action Group (CRAG). Crag is now mainly involved in investigating alleged verbal confessions ("verbals"). The group was formerly called Justice Against Identification Laws and was prominent in the Campaign to clear George Davis.

Charlie Lowe: In the same mould as Smalls. After being freed early from his five year sentence in return for grassing, Lowe was subsequently convicted in a drugs trial and returned to prison.

IN 1975 THE APPEAL COURT recognised this contract for the unhealthy bargain that it was: "We hope", said Lord Justice Lawton, "that we will not see the undignified sight of the DPP making agreements with professional criminals again". As time went by the Smalls Agreement was to become as frequent as the claims that the Robbery Squad had "verballed" suspects, gained convictions on spuriously marked bank notes, rigged identification parades, done deals over bail and planted evidence. Of all the techniques used by a squad whose capacity for detection deteriorated by the day, the employment of the supergrass was to become the most effective.

THE TRANSITION FROM THE IDIOSYNCRATIC BEHAVIOUR OF SMALLS TO THE institutionalisation of the many who have followed him has presented, and continues to present, a far ranging series of moral, political, and legal problems to the police, the judiciary and the criminal fraternity. Who, for instance, was to police and provide protection for the supergrasses, and what form should that protection take? Could they all be given complete immunity from prosecution, and how long would that immunity last? When they had defected, and while they were under police supervision, how would they be treated? Were they to be given all the rewards due to some-one who had embraced a new philosophy and repented, or were they to be seen just as criminals and pawns in a law and order game? Within the criminal community individuals had to decide if their values dictated that they would take retribution against informers.

ON THE WHOLE, SINCE 1973, THE MEDIA AS THE principle narrator of the war against crime has contented itself with frequent listings of new supergrasses, drawing attention beyond that only to such insubstantial stories as those about underworld contracts. In reality, the supergrass phenomenon is not simply another aspect of criminal activity but something precipitated by an onslaught from the police upon the criminal community. the phenomenon can only be seen clearly in the context of a state in crisis. This bid for order has also necessitated an onslaught upon the criminal law. The success, from the police point of view, of supergrasses as a tactical weapon has only been achieved at the cost of the most massive disorganization of the law seen in this country since the 18th century. Consequent upon the phenomenon has been an upsurge in the power of the Robbery Squad and related police units who have shown themselves able to intervene at every stage of the prosecution process and in the prison system, with an almost complete disregard for existing legal precedent.

THE LEAP IN POLICE POWER SHOULD BE VIEWED AGAINST A BACKCLOTH OF supportive media propaganda which has consistently driven home the message that policing the professional criminal community of the metropolis is as dangerous as it is in certain large American cities. Married in with this concept has been the interpretation that a "military" solution is the only one possible and that political structures and education have nothing to do with crime - a line of propaganda employed to legitimise the continuing militarization of the anti-crime police squads.

DETECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT ROBINSON FROM THE City Road police station was in the forefront of formulating police policy on supergrasses. In 1977, after studying the supergrasses who had appeared since Smalls, he recommended a three point plan for prising the uncommitted out of their milieu; a reward in the form of special remission, police help in a new life and identity, and a special secure wing in prison for their protection when sentenced. By 1979 all of these ideas, together with many refinements, had become accepted police and judicial policy; maximum sentences for supergrasses were fixed at five years, while gharges which could not plausibly be covered by such sentences were dropped altogether in consultation with the Director of Public Prosecutions. Reading prison which is mainly a 'Rule 43' prison, containing people permanently seperated from other inmates for their own protection, was adopted to house the growing army of criminal informers.





# Black Flag's Court Circular



In determining this policy, the police, the judiciary and the Home Office have worked closely with the press. While Gilbert Kelland's statement appeared in one part of the centre spread of the Daily Mail in July 79, the rest of the page carried a picture of David Smith a contemporary supergrass, and a reported a £30,000 contract on his life. Before giving evidence Smith apparently spent some time in hospital, on a female ward, being treated for hepatitis and a slipped disc, he was, the newspaper said, protected by armed police who warded off the long queues of underworld hit-men waiting to pick up the mythical £30,000. Despite all this security a Daily Mail photographer was allowed to attend his bedside for a quick picture with the hero. When Smith had been sentenced to five years in February 1979, Detective Inspector Tony Lundy, apparently acting as his impressario as well as investigating his statements, verified a story which gained the front page of the SUN (February 27th 1979). Not only was Smith in danger of his life but he had been "hurriedly moved from Finchley police station a few months ago when police heard that an armed gang were planning to attack the station and silence him".

At the height of the intrigues involving Charlie Lowe, in 1976, the Daily Express claimed that there was a £40,000 contract out on him, the Sun put the imaginary sum at £20,000 and £10,000, while the Guardian and the Telegraph shunned the dramatic populism and only offered £8,000.

In July 1978, the Daily Express ran a front page supergrass story on Eddie Martin, "Squaler hides for his life". "There is a huge contract on his head" said an anonymous detective, "if he went home he would be dead within a day".

The concerted campaign run by the police and the tabloid press in the form of "life in danger" stories, has boosted the potency of supergrass evidence and made it less likely that anyone would investigate the numerous short cuts being taken to rush evidence through the courts. The unhegemonic structure of London's professional criminals, their tendency towards ad hoc organization, their lack of centralized coordination and their separation from political organizations all militate against corporate action being taken by them against the super-grasses.

## RUC KILLERS- judicial wrist slapping

An example of what happens when the law deals with its minions was given when five members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary stood before the Northern Ireland Lord Chief Justice, Lord Lowry, to be sentenced for a series of terrorist offences.

Three of them were accused of an attack on a bar in Keady, Co. Armagh, on June 5, 1978. One customer was shot twice in the stomach during this assault. The gunman, Constable William McCaughy, made the ludicrous claim that he'd fired at his victim's legs. This, coupled with the fact that the bomb he planted failed to explode enabled the lukewarm prosecutor to withdraw charges on what was obviously a primo facie case of attempted murder.

Apparently Lord Lowry took their ineptitude into consideration when sentencing the accused. Constable McCaughy received a seven year sentence, but as it's to run concurrently with a life term he's already serving for a sectarian murder, this constitutes little more than a judicial slap on the wrist. Two of his accomplices on that occasion were also treated very leniently.

Constable Ian Mitchell and Reserve Constable Laurence McClure were each given two year suspended sentences.

A fourth accused, Constable David Wilson, was given a one-year suspended sentence for "withholding information" about the attack. A number of civilian motorists who've had their cars hijacked and were threatened, on pain of death, not to inform the police, have received custodial sentences of up to 18 months for a 'crime of omission' in no way different from that of Constable Wilson's.

A fifth policeman, Sergeant Gary Armstrong, also appeared in the dock with McCaughy. Both were charged with the kidnapping of an Ahoghill, Co. Antrim, priest, Father Murphy, on June 18 1978. Apparently their plan was to hold him hostage for the release of a policeman supposedly held prisoner by the I.R.A. In fact, Father Murphy was released soon after a televised appeal by the Rev. Ian Paisley. A man with no small influence amongst Loyal-paramilitaries.

McCaughy received another concurrent sentence, this time three years for the kidnapping. Needless to say Sergeant Armstrong wasn't going to be

treated any differently from his fellow accused by the beneficent Lord Lowry. He too felt the full weight of judicial displeasure - he got a two year suspended sentence.

Constable McCaughy's father, Alexander, who had a conviction, and the inevitable suspended sentence, for complicity in the sectarian murder which earned his son a life sentence, also faced charges related to the kidnapping. In fact, the priest was held in his farmhouse for twelve hours. He pleaded guilty and received yet another one-year suspended sentence.

Aware of the leniency of the sentences he'd handed down, Lord Lowry commented that anyone who thought he looked lightly on offences committed by members of the R.U.C. would be making a gross mistake.

Their sentences, particularly in the kidnapping case, are especially galling to those who know that Republican Martin Meehan has been on hunger strike since May 19th as a protest against the twelve years he and

two other men received when "fitted up" on a similar charge. The only prosecution evidence adduced in their case was the unsupported word of a known informer.

The convictions of these serving policemen also throws an oblique light on an aspect of Ulster violence which has been studiously avoided by the national press. It was well known, but little reported, that almost an entire unit of the Portsdown U.D.R. was responsible for the "Maimi Showband Massacre." The notorious "Shankill Butchers" gang also numbered members of the security forces in their ranks. Generally speaking, however, a member of the R.U.C. or U.D.R. is invited to resign if he's about to be charged with an offence which might compromise the organisation he serves in. This stratagem, and the compliance of the press, effectively protects the reputation of the "Ulsterised" security forces which are actually riddled with sectarian bigots, torturers and murderers.

Announcing  
The Christie File



The Christie File: Enemy of the State, 384pp, photographs, 210 x 132mm, 0 904564 37 1, £6.00

The literature of anarchism contains a number of fine autobiographical works. Emma Goldman's *Living My Life*, Alexander Berkman's *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*, Kropotkin's *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, Albert Meltzer's *The Anarchists in London* are all good examples of a genre in which publicly notorious and vilified anarchists have been able to explain and defend their actions and beliefs, while at the same time dismantling the mystique surrounding their private and personal lives, a mystique created artificially by a rabid state apparatus with the connivance of a 'bought' press.

For libertarians and the general public alike, this personalisation of almost mythical figures from history is of singular importance. For those of us who carry on the struggle for a lifestyle and a society based on a co-operative ethic and personal freedom, we can recognise the continuity between these 'legendary' figures and ourselves in the anecdotes of arguments in political meetings, nagging financial worries, good meals enjoyed with friends and comrades, fear and paranoia, and the ups and downs of such stories of what anarchism could be *in practice*, in terms of personal and individual quality of life, are probably at least as valuable and persuasive as tales of suffering and heroism, or the justifiable denunciations of social injustice.

It is a sad commentary on the state of things in the world that despite the fact that anarchy and anarchists are blamed for everything from the Iranian Islamic 'revolution' to crime in the streets, in our era there have been few, if any, anarchists outside of Spain with the personal notoriety, involvement, and commitment to write a compelling personal history of modern anarchism.

For those unaware of Stuart Christie's involvement with the modern anarchist movement - in spite of it having been trumpeted regularly in the international press for over seventeen years - a few bare facts will suffice to establish the subjects, times, and places. The Glasgow anarchist first became a subject of controversy in 1964 when, at age 18, he was arrested in Spain in possession of explosives which were used to attempt to terminate the life of Franco. After three years in Spanish prisons, he was released and returned to Britain. The object of continuing investigation, harassment, and arrest during the height of political upheaval in the late sixties, he was framed and imprisoned in 1971 for alleged involvement in the massive 'Angry Brigade' conspiracy trial, Britain's first libertarian urban guerrilla organisation. After a year and a half in prison he left the trial a free man, exonerated on all charges. Continuing his political activities he was soon forced to leave London, in response to thinly veiled police threats against his life and freedom. Moving first to Yorkshire, then, narrowly missing involvement in the infamous 'Persons Unknown' case, he moved to Orkney where he lives to this day. Since 1972 he has been excluded from entering virtually every country in the 'Free' world. As this book goes to press he is once again under investigation by the Special Branch, the British Legal Establishment, and the 'law and order' lobby in Parliament for the publication of *Towards a Citizens' Militia: Anarchist Alternatives to NATO and the Warsaw Pact*.

Stuart's side of the controversial events which have surrounded him and the movement with which he is so closely involved has been a long time coming, and we suspect there may be another volume to be written before he cashes in his chips, but in the meantime we're glad to be able to present *The Christie File*. We think you'll agree it was worth the wait.

The Editors, Partisan Press

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# HORST MAHLER FROM URBAN GUERRILLA TO STOIC

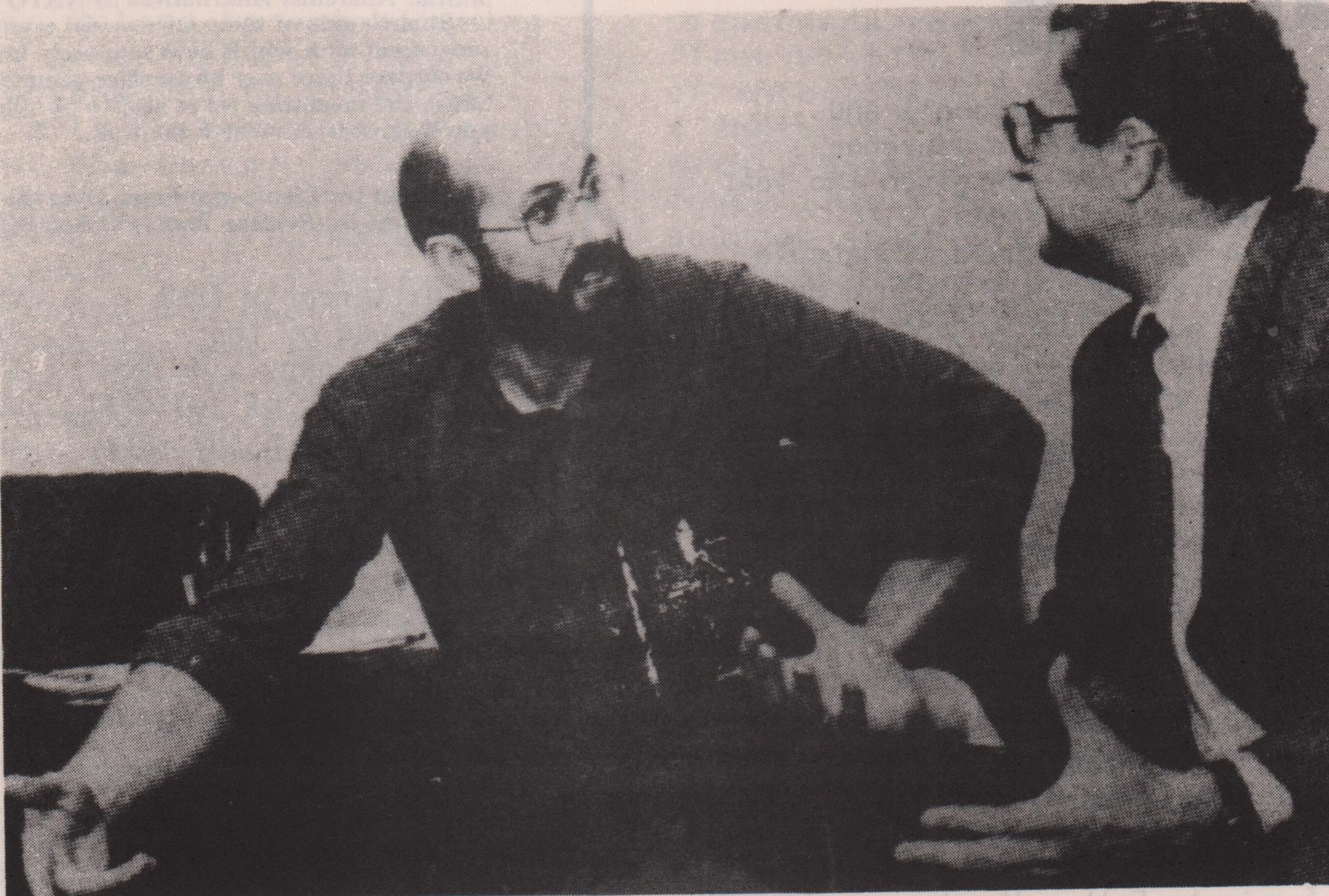
*This interview appeared in the French Left-wing Newspaper, "Liberation" in August.*

*Mahler leaving prison in Berlin last August.*

Condemned to 14 years in prison, since last autumn he had been allowed out on work parole. During the day he worked in an architect's office. In the evening he returned punctually to the prison. "It wasn't surrounded by walls just a wire fence. And the rooms were not really cells." Mahler was benefiting from a rule for well-behaved prisoners. It had not been granted before to a political prisoner. However Mahler was a rather special prisoner. In February 1975, when he had been in prison for 5 years the '2nd of June Movement' had kidnapped the Christian Democrat deputy Peter Lorenz, in exchange for 12 political prisoners. Mahler was high on the list. He refused to go. Clearly and publicly. So he stayed in prison. At that time he became a member of a Marxist-Leninist group called the KPD. That did not last. He searched as he has always searched. Unlike many of his comrades of the "guerilla" he went back a long way. He had been a member of the SPD\* since 1956, when he was 20, before he became a lawyer. During all the years of the Berlin students revolt, he was the SPD lawyer. The many trials which rained down on the militants of the new left made him a famous lawyer. He was to be seen in the courts in some of the famous trials, those of Fritz Tenfel and Beate Klarsfeld, who had publicly slapped the face of ex-nazi chancellor Kissienger. He was also to be seen in the streets, megaphone in hand, in confrontations with the police. He was a "red" lawyer who denounced the Springer press and against whom there were constant attempts to stop him practising. With the beginning of the 70s came the ebb of the German new left movement but for one part of it, the underground movement, it was the debut. Horst Mahler, an established lawyer and figurehead of the movement was one of them. He disappeared. And

when in May 1970, an armed commando freed Andreas Baader, he was hunted along with Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin.

Against all appearances -he was well established, married and a father - this social democrat student turned socialist lawyer had become one of the propagators of the "guerilla" in Germany in the 1970s. He spent 10 years in prison of which 3½ were in solitary isolation. His treasured possessions were the complete editions of Marx and the works of Hegel.



In 1975 Horst Mahler, already a stoic and still a Marxist-Leninist, exhorted the political prisoners to give up a hunger strike: "For a revolutionary" he explained "gains nothing in appealing to 'bourgeois pity'".

In an open letter to another detainee, Mahler went further: "When children hurt themselves and cry, wise parents say to them 'Indians don't cry'. If the left want to help RAF political prisoners, it must say to them: 'a revolutionary does not cry when the state treats them harshly.'"

After 10 years of imprisonment one of the founders of the RAF has been freed from prison. Those 10 years much changed him.

In 10 years the man who said to his judges: "you don't talk with capitalist agents, you strike them down", has much changed. His public dialogue with the German federal minister of the Interior last January has caused a commotion. Treated as a traitor by his old friends; Mahler was a model prisoner, but always refused to collaborate with the judiciary.

Mahler did not stop there, he denounced the propaganda made by the RAF around the conditions of detention of the political detainees. "What may or may not be destroyed in you by the conditions of detention, depends not on them but on yourself." - he said this in a statement which immediately earned him a shower of abuse from his old comrades and also from all of the extreme left.

He was treated as an agent of "Counterinsurgency", and another detainee, the poet Peter-Paul Zahl, in whose opinion he had hoped

*Mahler, pictured here with the West German minister for the Interior, Gerhard Baum. The meeting caused a new scandal.*

to find an echo, responded by calling him "a ventriloquist" in the service of the "Masters of the West".

But Mahler persisted - "this constant pushing of more young people into the guerilla must stop." His objective has not changed. He refused to collaborate with the judiciary but denounced

the vicious circle of an armed struggle which had no more objective than to liberate its own members; "a guerilla to liberate guerillas" as he had one day ironically called Peter-Paul Zahl.

These are questions on which Mahler has had time to reflect: "It is an old debate" he said, "when I was arrested, it was possible, in a very indirect way to communicate with Baader and Ensslin, who were still free." They proposed that he do a pamphlet on detention conditions. In vain. They reproached Mahler for not taking account of the difficulties the group was in: for Baader: "you can only elicit the solidarity of the legal left by capitalising on the prisoners situation."

The discussion became more war-like when two years later, Baader and Ensslin, in their turn were arrested. For the RAF their arrests were a mortal blow. "Without their energy, their decisiveness and their imaginative genius, no one could imagine that the rest of the RAF could continue to fight."

For the RAF "liberate Andreas and Gudrun" became the principle objective and Gudrun" became one of their principle objectives. Mahler: "I well remember Gudrun saying 'now we are inside, we have only our bodies to create conditions of solidarity favourable to the RAF.' It was questionable - the motivations for recruiting and giving moral justifications for liberations which could only end in bloodshed.

Thus was decided the campaign against torture. "Without reason the judiciary took a hard line on this campaign by imprisoning Ulrike Meinhof and Astrid Proll in isolated cells in the silent wing of the Cologne Ossendorf prison. It was essential to get them out of it. But even in the the RAF itself there was a reluctance to use the word 'torture' to describe the conditions of detention."

About his statement that the situation of a prisoner depended firstly on himself: "It can be seen as the projection of a personal asceticism. In my cell I had read all that revolutionaries of the past had written of their different prison experiences, and I had found confirmation of my ideas. However terrible the conditions of detention may be the most important thing is how you comport yourself.

It is true that the conditions of detention were illegal and inhuman; communication with others is part of being human. And that is why they must be changed. But it is also important that one must speak precisely without creating myths."

This revolutionary without revolution has become a liberal stoic; some months ago he created a new scandal by participating, for the big weekly magazine 'Der Spiegel', in a discussion on terrorism with the Minister of the Interior, Gerhard Baum, a member of the liberal party.

"For some time I have felt that certain better governments were trying to create conditions of openness, for those who are 'knocking' at the doors of this closed society without a chance of ever being let in."

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