Burn Babylon, burn!

On the Friday the Brixton riots began, the police were preparing to announce the success of their so-called 'Swamp 88' exercise to stamp out street crime in Brixton. Three days later, 200 of the bastards had been injured. In those three days the militaristic attempts of the cops to hammer their law and order on the area had received the response it deserved.

The people of Brixton had had enough of being pushed and played around with. And not just in the streets. The police presence was a continual attack on everyday life. Whatever you do in Brixton, you are always aware of a cop in the corner of your eye, or of a vanload of them cruising up and down the street. When the rioting started, the bubble burst and the carnival began.

The plainclothes cops in their casual disco gear (men at C&A) were forced behind riot shields with their uniformed colleagues. There they armed themselves with offensive weapons. If they had known what was going to happen they would undoubtedly have had a larger armory: CS gas, water canons, rubber bullets etc. The people of Brixton used what weapons they could find: bricks, stones and molotovs. If the events had been planned, as the press suggests, the police would not have been injured. They would have been dead.

In Rayton Road and for a bit in Coldharbour Lane, the people and police were in direct confrontation. There was a feeling of excitement on both sides. The people happy to damage any policeman or police vehicle in stone-throwing distance. The cops happy and scared at the same time – this was different from their usual routine and it allowed them to get carried away with their own violence without fear of reprisal.

They used their usual cop theories – everyone’s potentially guilty, so let’s nick everyone. They might resist arrest, so thump them first.

Elsewhere in Brixton things were different. The police didn’t know where to look, or where to go. Everyone in Brixton was on the streets enjoying the atmosphere, relieved and excited that things had eventually reached a head. The cops would charge a group of people who were just hanging around (an offense in police eyes) whilst they were doing that, other people were smashing the shops and taking whatever they wanted – goods they had seen in adverts, but hadn’t a hope of affording.

Most people were jubilantly predicting that they would get the police station next. But when we got there the place was surrounded by police: on foot, on horses and in coaches. Ironically, behind them was a large sign announcing that there was a ‘let’s fight crime’ exhibition inside.

The police station remained unchallenged, but the coaches were smashed and their tyres punctured. More police turned up to protect the station and to stop people taking the wonders from Currys, Burtons and other shops. But they were kept at bay with stones and people anyway kept on splitting into the Brixton sidelines. In the towncentre, on Saturday night, the police could only huddle together in small groups, or hide in the coaches whilst people wandered around looking at them as if they were piles of shit.

By midnight the police had swamped the area with reinforcements. They were there to regain ‘police rule’ of the Brixton streets. But by that time most people were satisfied to let them have it. They wanted to go home to count what they’d got, help those who’d been arrested, or simply to go to bed.

The people of Brixton. The people had shown what they thought of the ‘police rule’ they are still trying to maintain. The people who live in Brixton feel disgust. Either people control

Continued on page eleven.

Xiral’s Simon Read, dubbed by the press as the ‘anarchist mole’, was given a six months suspended sentence in April for his part in a plot to raid the MI5’s ex-headquarters in Hackney. His brother David was found not guilty of trying to drug security guard Derrick Day.

Simon was arrested in June 1979 and charged with intent to cause criminal damage. David was arrested some five months later and was subsequently ‘identified’ as by Derrick Day as being the man known to him as Ellis, who had attempted to drug his coffee on the night of the incident.

The jury accepted David’s defence that Day had cheated in picking him out, because he was not Ellis. However they rejected Simon’s defence that he had acted with lawful excuse in trying to prevent crimes of violence.

Simon’s own story is printed on page eleven.
Dear Aunt Y,

Aunt Y’s fan mail!

We’d just like to let you lot out there know that Xtral is not a group or tendency in the anarchist movement. Those of you looking for consistency, or a ‘line’, are gonna be disappointed — cos there isn’t one.

The collective is a group of people aiming to produce the best, most readable anarchist paper.

We’re all involved in different things unconnected different things unconnected with the paper and everything printed has its critics inside as well as outside the producing group.

Dear Aunt Y,

Just a few notes on your squ Attitude (Xtral):

1. No evictions are ‘illegal’ without a statement sworn by the PIO — protected intending occupier. But the ‘intend- ing owners’ section of the Criminal Trespass Law (Section 7) is sometimes used totally illegally in Court.

2. Once you’re in, it is very important to keep at least 5 or 6 intelligent people who won’t open the door under any amount of threatening. This is for both physical and mental state of mind.

3. Never open the door/window/anything eternally by police.

4. Stealing electricity is one of the standards against.

Also, take a note of the meter readings before you switch on the lights. Leave this note on top, or near the meter (if you’re lucky enough to get electricity when you arrive).

5. If you break a window on...

After the success of last year’s anarchist conference in Oxford, the Oxford comrades have decided on a re-run in mid-June this year. Please send suggestions on format, content and facilities to 145 Welton St, Oxford, or phone Oxford 54388. (Ask for Mike or Jamie)

Dear Aunt, sorry, Aunt Autonomy,

I am a middle-class escapist, and I’ve still got long hair and say ‘man’ every third word. Please accept this fiver for a £2 issue subscription to Xtral as from and including No 8, so that I can make sure I don’t forget that there are still things going on in the city and that I would be out there if I wasn’t so comfy in my cozy little commune.

Love, Sam, for Lifespan.

Like the poster on the back page? We are running a lot off separately to Xtral. If you’d like copies, write to Xtral, BCM IT, London WC1 3XX, enclosing 30p for the poster (20p per copy for orders over 10).

Yours insincerely,
P. Dismal.

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We are your dissidents!

All power corrupts. All submission to authority humilates!

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For twelve issues, a subscription to Xtral costs: Individual: £4.50 Institutions: £6.50 Overseas: £7.50 Pro rate and back issues: 30p per copy plus 5p post and packing.

Please send your money to: Xtral, BCM IT, London WC1 3XX.

Your name: Address: 

Donations will be gratefully received!
There's nothing more odious than the political commentator who, actually having been indicted correctly for a change, glibly says, 'I told you so'. Nevertheless, I must just say...

Well, I did tell you so, didn't I? About a year ago, I wrote an article in support of the Labour Party: knowing how long it takes Xtra! to come out, he probably won't have seen me officially by the time you read this. And Woy's lovely Centre Prize is now a reality. And his 'great working of British politics' seems a distinct possibility.

The consensus among most 'Left radicals' (as opposed to 'Centrist radicals' like Goody Two-Shoes, Shirt & co.) is that these recent developments, whilst good in the sense of purifying the Labour Party ('will shot of those reactionary clones - guzzlers'), are a Bad Thing as far as 'The Progressive Cause' is concerned: they think that this new party will, by attracting support from disaffected voters of both left and right, make some considerable electoral headway - possibly causing a stalemate after the next election, and thus preventing the possibility of a 'Really Socialist Labour Government' from achieving office.

Well, they're correct in most of this analysis. I'd be extremely surprised if any party has a majority in Parliament after the next election.

Stalemate

But it would be very surprising if the Labour Party, widely accepted as moving further and further left (more about that later) didn't win an election outright. So a stalemate seems virtually inevitable. And it looks as though the Liberals and these Centrists will be causing this stalemate.

Nowhere is the point where the trends 'Left radicals' draw false conclusions from a correct analysis of the situation. Disraili though the prospect of being governed by the likes of Shirt, Rodgers, Or Death and Woy undoubtedly is, it is an utter illusion to suppose that the alternative could be a 'Really Socialist Labour Government'. The only people who cling to this theory of Labour's future are those whose vested interest is the collapse of the Party (from the Communist Party leftwards).

As explained before in this column, the Labour Party has been bifurcating to 'the left' ever since its inception - if the media of the moment was to be believed. At present however, the Labour Party is moving - not to the left!, but towards more and more illiberality.

Carve Up

Who, for example, is to choose the Labour Leader in future? Not ordinary members of the Party, that's for certain: no, the whole operation will be carried out by a handful of union barons, Labour MPs and 'constituency party delegates'(the fab Four of this world).

And about all this high-sounding rhetoric about 'new radical policies'? Take my word for it, it's the same old mixture as before: half-baked state interference, which will benefit nobody except the new breed of middle-class public sector bureaucrat (if you don't know what forcing them to pay for expensive and inferior English goods instead of cheaper and better foreign ones).

And, as in 'Animal Farm', everything will be in the name of 'progress'.

Of course, the Centrists are a pretty dismal proposition too. Their policies amount to nothing more than the diet we've become accustomed to over the past couple of decades: unquestioning membership of the good 'ol EEC (you know, the one that makes food too expensive to buy, then dumps it) and nice 'ol NATO (the one that claims to want to prevent war and then does all it can to bring about it); a 'mixed economy' (that's industry run by the bosses for the bosses - owned privately unless it can make a profit, in which case it's nationalised and the consumer gets screwed every time the Government needs some spare cash); incomes policy (the difference being that whereas normally a government spends its first two years telling us it 'wouldn't work' and its last two in telling us 'there's no alternative', the Centrists would probably in practice do the exact opposite in other ways around) and 'radical pragmatism' (which covers all eventualities).

Turnabout

Which leaves us with the Tories. As you are doubtless aware, they seem to have joined in the general plunge for Centre (I've been stuck - my lot's got more moderate policies than yours nana so there!).

Why this dramatic turnabout? Well, it seems finally to have sunk into the Cabinet that monetarism might be a good way of stopping inflation, but if the price is virtually no industry left in Britain, then maybe it's not such a good wheeze after all. And the leeches in society upon whom the Tories depend for electoral and financial support - accountants, bankers, stockbrokers and the like - need something to leech on to (industry, in the main) if they are to survive. So the anguished cries from industry over the last year are at last being heeded.

The centrist argue that proportionate representation and so on would help us emulate the 'success' of West Germany. They've chosen a country which was virtually reconstituted economically after the war. My guess is that Britain with electoral reform would be more likely to emulate a west European country which, like us, has a shaky economy and all that: Italy, in other words, lots of changes of government, upheaval, terrorism, chaos, loss of authority and...

Hang on, isn't that what you lot out there want OK, then, anarchists for Owen! Syndicalists for Shirt!! Wreckers for Woy! Revolutionaries for Rodgers! Sense and Centrisim!

Too Late

But the Tories may find that their new-found pragmatism is come too late. My guess is that a lot of the aid which used to flow from business into Tory party coffers will in future be going to the new centre party. Why? Because contrary to establishment thinking, businessmen are not dogmatic Tory supporters. They like what's best for business: the present political set-up - all those damn elections leading to different governments changing policies - is highly damaging to business confidence. The Labour Party always seems (though it rarely is in practice) a threat to private enterprise; equally, ideological Tonyism which holds that the incompetent should go to the wall (and by that yardstick most of British industry should have been allowed to go bust yonks ago) is also feared. What then, could be more agreeable than a nice, consistent centre party which would prevent these violent swings of the political pendulum from occurring? No wonder so much money is being donated by industrialists to the Campaign for Electoral Reform.

The Social Democrats seek a man or woman of high administrative skills to act as full-time Chief Executive to the new political party they will launch on 26 March. Salary around £20,000 a year.

Please write fully and in confidence to: The Trustees, Council for Social Democracy, PO Box 736, London SW1H 9BJ.

Not content with predicting the start of the new centre party, our erstwhile political commentator (ha ha) decided that since he obviously knew more about them than anyone else, he'd be an ideal candidate for a job with them which was advertised in The Guardian in March....
BARMY!

This leaflet was distributed by Aberdeen Solidarity at the Gordon Highlanders’ Open Day last year....

Gordon Highlanders’ Application Form

1. Name:..........................................................................................................................
2. Address ..........................................................................................................................
3. Age .................................................................................................................................
4. Occupation ...................................................................................................................
5. Do you have an active or questioning mind? .................................................................
6. Are you capable of doing a wide variety of jobs, from clearing rubbish to washing windows? ...........................................................
7. Do you have any grudges or resentments towards others that could aid you in your career as a soldier?...................................................
8. Would you be prepared to shoot at anyone we tell you to?...........................................

Have you got what it takes to be a Gordon? Read on and find out!

If you can’t remember your name, don’t worry. We give everyone their own number. And anyway most recruits have forgotten their names after the six weeks basic training.

We must have your address so our policemen know where to find you if you run away.

Many of the young people who join us are bored and see no purpose to life. We will give you a sense of purpose, but it may cost you your life.

Military funerals are stirring occasions and your family and friends will feel very proud.

We are looking for people who will do exactly what our officers tell them — immediately and without question. In the army, life is simple: officers make decisions and give the orders, other ranks do the dirty work. If you don’t like thinking for yourself, then you’re the kind of person we are looking for.

It’s very important that you have the ability to do a wide variety of jobs — one of the army’s main tasks is breaking strikes for better pay and conditions. We went into action against the fire-fighters and the Glasgow dustcart drivers, and early in 1979 we were in training for a sewage workers strike. The government gave us a big pay rise recently to keep us loyal — they rely on us to keep people working in their place. Strike-breaking isn’t easy — it could mean acting against your family, friends and former workmates, maybe using violence against them. You’ll have to be a real professional.

We don’t expect you to fight other working class people just for the sake of it. Our soldiers are carefully trained to hate those who threaten the security of NATO, an exclusive club through which the various western ruling classes unite to further their interests.

We could order you into action against anyone the government considers its enemy. In Northern Ireland we have our peace-keeping operation. Your duties there could include intimidating families on house to house searches, torturing people in detention camps, and shooting unarmed civilians.

Increasingly we’re using the techniques we’ve learnt in N Ireland in mainland Britain. The potential enemy here is the 85% of the population who have to work for a living, or who are unemployed. With the economic crisis and the government trying to cut working class wages, we’re worried that strikes or other struggles could develop much further. The danger is that the vast majority of people could make a revolution, overthrowing the authority of employers and the government. People themselves would then run the workplaces and the entire society for human need not profit. Obviously we couldn’t stand for this — the army’s whole purpose is to defend Britain’s rulers. So to improve our efficiency in acting against civilians we’re developing close links with the police. We’ve had joint army-police operations and exercises at Southampton, Hull and Heathrow — who knows, you may soon see us in action in Aberdeen.

Aberdeen Solidarity

HUNGER STRIKE

The four week long hunger strike by 300 prisoners in West Germany is over, but 12 members of the RAF have continued their action. Their main demands are for political status and improved conditions. At the time of writing, the whole prison is near to death, and their condition is made worse by their daily fight against the prison doctors who want to feed them intravenously and who keep taking samples.

Outside the prisons the German government is using censorship to prevent newspapers from commenting on the hunger strike. The strikers’ lawyers are thoroughly searched after visits and their offices are searched for literature relating to the strike.

A recent law judgement in the courts, convicting supporters of last year’s hunger strike of inciting others by prosey to commit a terrorist offence, now makes it a criminal act to support the hunger strikers. Two people have been jailed for distributing leaflets and at the same time there is a campaign in all the big magazines like Der Spiegel and Der Stern against terrorism. This aims to tell the new uprising movements against nuclear power, militarism, imperialism (El Salvador, Turkey) not to go on to the final offensive.

But many people have taken part in actions of support throughout Germany. These include the throwing of petrol bombs into the Arteken, because many doctors condone the medical and mental treatment of the RAF prisoners. Journalists have been attacked. The offices of Der Spiegel and the SPD (social democratic party) have been occupied. Slogans were painted on the buses in Heidelberg, on the US consulates in Dusseldorf and fire-bombs were thrown in Frankfurt.

The German government is acting in direct response to the demands of Ronald Reagan, that governments of individual countries should step up their efforts to ‘Destroy the menace of the international terrorist’.

TORENS

May 9th to 17th has been chosen as a period of action against the Torens Nuclear Power Station in East Lothian. Groups are encouraged to plan actions for that time, in direct action against their own part of the country.

So far, people involved have been workers in particular, Edinburgh and East Lothian, representing a wide cross-section of views. Actions envisaged include a rally and a concert in Edinburgh and an attempted occupation of the site.

People wanting to be involved are welcome to contact SCRAM at 2a Ainslie Place, Edinburgh beforehand with details of their plan of action.

GOON SQUAD

You ever hear the one about the DHSS doing the nasty scorcherers for fraud?

Well this one is slightly different. It seems that because there are so many of us on the dole, and, as you know, so little money to spend on employment, that the local dole offices get totally fucked up with all those meaningless bits of paper and the whole thing grinds to a halt. This gave rise to a roving band of DHSS officers who come in and clear the system. Now the local offices really are going to grind to a halt. It seems that this roving band have been doing a nice little number called fiddling the expenses (not so unusual you might think) however, when it turns out to be the tune of £10 a week for the last few years, even the DHSS got upset and sacked them.

On a similar subject, the dole fraud squad was recently at work in Essex. They stay in each area for about a couple of months. A nasty gang these, who visit anyone who has been on the dole for a year or two, to make sure they haven’t been ripping them off. Quite an interesting time they have sparring on you. They find out what your place is like, how you eat, how you dress and other such stuff. They decide whether you take drugs, or deal, or are on the game, or anything else they can think up. Also if your place is too neat and clean, they will probably decide you have a job on the side. After that they go away and write up a report on you, mentioning your fraudulent/ illegal activities and if they are still interested in you, you get your place watched and frequent visitors get followed around for a few days. After that, who knows? Jacksonwack wobble.

Short Odds

In a recent industrial Tribunal case, Cables the leisure world group was found to have acted reasonably in sacking two employees for theft, because they weren’t sure which of them was guilty. A similar case has decreed that even if one of them can later prove their innocence, because they weren’t sure which of them was guilty.
After Marx... April

After Marx, April! was given a full page plug in 'Time Out' - so I went along feeling rather sceptical, but decided to pay my £1.50 and see what happened.

Turning up late on Saturday afternoon to get educated about the Black Power movement and the Restructure of Capital, I was surprised to find that the session hadn't yet started, but an incredible argument went on about the length of speeches had as far as I was concerned there was no point in paying money to hear something I'd had something important to say, then let them say it; everybody was in the same situation as regards time.

At this point, the self-appointed 'autonomy' people attempted to make 'rules' like 'We'll limit the speeches to five minutes at 5.30,' followed by shouts from the floor 'no, no, not five minutes, 45 seconds, ha, ha, I think we should elect a different moderator.'

F**k me, I thought, 'autonomists' and 'anarchists' were meant to be the least part of people who'd ever worked out people who'd surpassed all this meaningfulness. Anyway there was no point in contributing to this debate - I was in for a bad time because I've been like admitting that these actually was a problem. The student union was pretty hopeless as well. The first woman took five minutes to say precisely nothing; Blije from Radio Alte in Bologna was okay in parts and John Mennington from Midlands Poly was actually quite good. The others I've forgotten about.

I was glad to get away at 6.30 and nip down to the fish and chip shop; then I thought about being autonomous by going to a party - at least there I could talk to people directly and eat, drink and take drugs in vast quantities - all of which were distinctly lacking in consciousness-raising.

But then again, perhaps suffering is an integral part of consciousness-raising? I came back for more punishment on Sunday for the session entitled 'Post-political politics - needs, desires, feminism and sexuality'.

This session was conducted mainly in French, Italian, French and another language called 'Dialektik materialismus'. But only the first two were translatable. Even then most of the students there were about 15 years old - harking back to the situationists. I fell asleep. All I knew past this session was that I needed a place, desired a joint, wasn't a feminist and didn't feel particularly sexual towards anybody in the room.

Finally the evening film about events in Bologna in 1977: not very well constructed and they cooked the sound up.

Enough said.

I had this distinct feeling that 'autonomy' was about to become the new trendy leftist scene, for all those bourgeois radicals who couldn't 'relate to workers like the SRA'. But after this farce, it's 50

More amusing is the fact that the few self-styled 'proletarian autonomists' were probably more alienated and less interested in autonomy than anybody. And not surprisingly their calls for a strategy based on class violence was met with cries from the back 'but we'd get arrested!' I think with 'autonomy' when we've already got 'anarchy' going for us? It seems to me that the basis of the theory and practice of the autonomists is just a recent replacement of the best of the theory and practice of anarchism.

Autonomy is the open, leftist recuperation of anarchism was. 'Autonomy' doesn't necessarily exclude 'nationalist', racist or sexist ideas within autonomous movements. Anarchy must try and come in the UK just doesn't sound right.

And Now A Word From One Of Our Sponsors

On an almost weekly basis, autonomous youth have clashed with the riot-police in Zurich. These disturbances have spread beyond the city, to West Berlin, squatter and house sit groups, with their supporters numbering thousands. In London alone, the Basque armed forces and the students have fought running battles with the forces of 'order'.

What is this about? Does this excellent news serve you here in passive Britain? It could be argued that young people have taken to the streets in Amsterdam, Berlin, Zurich, despite the fact that England (except in Bristol) there's been fuck all. Instead of mass participation, we get6 shitflying waves and 'New Wave' bands, mods and New Romantics, a start of a heroin epidemic.

The working class reaction to the crisis has been body and cowardly. 100,000 people marched through Liverpool recently; not one arrest, not one window broken, not even any heckling against the Labour Party.

There are as yet no signs of an autonomous movement. There are plenty of pseudo-'autonomous' groups though: 'Gay Sweatshops', Anti-sex. 'Supermarket Strip', 'Beyond the Fragments', in fact an endless list. None of these groups seem to understand our situation. They don't do the street fighting, footsoldiers, fight the pigs, blow up the bombs, occupy cars and set them on fire, or stage spectacular actions associated with our European comrades. These pseudo-groups are all full of fascist, liberal rabble, as reflected in their politics. Most of these are pressure groups in the process of becoming interest groups.

Violent confrontation is the only yardstick by which a revolutionary consciousness will be measured. While Europe erupted in 1968 all we had in England was talk from 'Marxists'. For twelve long years we have had to endure this monstrous sifting. Let's push aside this death weight, kick it out of the way, get rid of every other facet of this society.

We hear of police repression in Italy, which has experienced dramatic convulsions of mass heroin addiction from the weak-kneed, dittoe 'comrades' - but fuck me! are we not getting that over here, without the upheavals?

When it comes, as it surely will, a violent confrontation by politicised youth will be extremely violent. The left will not have the effect of a safety valve - it has no following in this country, except among the effete middle-classes. Autonomy is its first real expression, will be violent, or it will be nothing.

Sore Throat from Hackney. Written before Brixton, but this is still only a beginning.

Rising Free - till now the home of the most exciting paper in the world (and Xtra! too) has closed shop up at 982 Upper St (so if you'd vaguely intended to come in do have a look at a few books - tough shift).

We'd hoped to be able to move to a new premises, but have decisively cocked that up. We're still on the lookout for new digs in Hackney & if all goes well, hope to open in about six weeks.

Our plans for the new shop include (comfortable) chairs, tea/coffee, lay-out and duplicating facilities - and we'd like to have a library.

We'd really appreciate offers of help in moving/dcorating etc. We also urgently need people to join the collective and work in the shop. All labour (apart from the free tea or even expenses) however we can offer all the pleasure of getting around one of the few profit, non-aligned revolutionary bookshops. Well, that and free tea or even expenses if you're interested or want to have a look. We're having a neat Evie on 395 2783 (or 313 750) or Fabian on 515 899.

Dave for the Rising Free Collective.

MEANWHILE in Zurich

Statement put out by the Zurich rioters at Christmas.......

The authorities in Zurich did not react to the ultimatum given by the Zurich youth that the Autonomous Youth Centre should be re-opened by the 24th December 1980. As promised, Christmas was done away with and another festival was provided.

Young people met on the streets and decided to hold a sports meeting. In Bahnhof Street Zurich's Police Chief had the bad luck of meeting the contestants face to face. His reaction was to give a fine display of his 100 metres sprinting ability. As the sports contestants arrived at the Youth Centre where the Police were in occupation, they numbered around 8000 and were eager to compete in such competitions as the removal of barbed wire, stone putting, long distance bottle-throwing, hurling, breaking down gates, sprinting and so on.

Suddenly a police gymnastic team, comprising several hundred members, arrived prepared for water sports. They enthusiastically pro- ceeded to break all the rules in good spiritis and with warm limbs we spread our activities to various well-loved sporting areas (the shopping and banking areas) of the City.

In the evening the contest was furthered by competitors who, with Olympic Flames in their hands, spread the happy message: 'For jeden der pent, es gilt doch noch vieles das bremlet!' (For every person that sleeps, there will be more that will burn). The victory celebrations were a superb example of the new generation.
WHY CHARLES FORTE
IS A TARGET FOR ATTACK

Just off Park Lane, where the prostitutes are as numerous as the Rolls-Royces, there's this THF hotel I used to work in. It's a nightmare place, where, for example, the assistant managers walk into your personal rooms while you're working, ostensibly to check for cleanliness, but more to look out for petting.

The work is part of the same nightmare: drudgery, badly paid drudgery, and split shifts, weekend working and more or less compulsory overtime. And this is one of THF's showplaces.

The workers are marshalled, controlled like fodder, and our weekly working hours are even greater than the cost of a room for the night. At all times we have to stay out of sight from the management and even the news with the specially trained glassy grin ('that certain smile').

This is all rather too much, and I'm not sure, after all, if it's a question of expectations. For a Filipino woman due to be deported out of the country due to some trumped-up technicality, what's the alternative? You were needed when no-one else would work as a chambermaid - now they're just disregarding you. If you're recruited from areas of high unemployment and London is alien to you, you're not going to throw up a job when your accommodation goes with it in the same night. Oh I know that's not legal, but hotel security runs its own rules.

Control can be subtle, not just through badly-paid, monotonous over-labouring, as security is trying to estab-

lish status and authority. Control can be through evenly fostered discrimination and segregation with higher groups (there's always a higher group somehow) making sure to preserve their own paltry privileges.

There's the institutionalised status where the management turns a blind eye to petty petting (traditionally recognised as a fringe benefit) until there's talk of a union or fightback, when, all of a sudden, the suspected offenders are 'dis-

covered' taking home some fruit or a piece of chicken and out they go ('regrettably, but rules are rules').

I heard once such a porter who

worked in some nationalised industry bar room restaurant. The directors would come in, fill up their personal flasks with the drink provided and tip out the cigarette leaves into their bin before - a common practice amongst directors. The porter was clearing up after one of these meetings and found a handful of cigarettes on the floor, which he put in his pocket. Seen by the super-

visor, who was promptly told 'you have to stamp out this sort of thing'.

Situations like this are legion, but in some ways the straightforward intimidation you get in a lot of estab-

lished firms is more intense and more to be preferred than THF tactics. Here you have the Big Lie exemplified: 'we are generous to them and recognise them as people.' (Charles Forte)

Charles Forte can say this while at the same time he runs the company some he's some feudal baron. As the biggest company in the largest industry in this country, he makes sure that wages stay at poverty-

level. He exploits the low expecta-

tions of women and the immigrant community, while at the same time keeping any attempt at combi-

nation. Forte's places dish out the extremes of extreme convenience food, usually in his motorway cafes (and never think that those exorbitant prices protect you pay the staff as well as offering the limits in conspicuous consumption. The latter can be filled in by Iceland's, Iceland's.

A highly-trained Chef will spend about a week working in a fridge to create a masterpiece (soaring eagles are common) out of an ice-block. This is presented before high-paying, highly-bored customers, so that they can nibble on canapes and watch the thing you've guessed it melt. At the time of writing, I don't know whether Forte will be able to take over the Savoy Group, probably not. One thing's for sure, THF will continue to expand, and with all those extra profits created by the Royal Wedding, Forte or his spawned porters will guaranteed a percentage.

Of course he'll use the recession to boost his profits even more. The queue outside Forte's chain of imitation cafes (cas-

u- ual porters waiting for jobs) will grow even longer, as they huddle in their cardboard boxes, trying not to think of Forte stuffing his face at the Cafe Royal. The catering industry is the bottom of the heap and even though profits will not decrease, wages will. Already the employers are fighting hard for 'flexibility' - porters working as chambermaids during their 'slack' periods etc.

The union response to the problems of the catering industry has always been minimal. The industry (small workplaces, illegal practices, divided workplaces) has always been difficult for traditional unions and their prejudices hinder development in non-industrial, women and immigrant-dominated service industries. The International Workers Branch of the TGWU was a novel attempt to fight employers in the industry, as it was based in the immigrant communities themselves and it was a lively democratic branch. However it founded on defeats (particularly Garners), and unsympathetic bureau-

crats who eventually limited its actions.

These days the unions are corrupt and moribund. There's a 'spheres of influence agreement' which divides the industry into two invidious areas - one is TGWU dominated and the other dominated by the GMWU. There was some degree of rational thought behind this, as when the T&D tried to unionise some workplaces, it found the managers recognising the GMWU, making all their assistant managers shop stewards.

Lately though, under new full-time officers, the International Workers Branch has become more active again, fighting for the Filipino workers threatened with deportation and launching a 'Stiff Forte Campa-

ign'. The latter was an emotional response by workers in the THF television campaign. It's involved flyposting THF hotels and distributing leaflets. We still need more people for this and if you're interested the campaign can be contacted through Xtra.
Why the hate campaign against Maggie? Oh, I hate Maggie too. What a patronising shite. Vile dresses, vile voice, vile hair, full of hate and home stuffing. It's a baked, half-digested ideology. I wouldn't give a damn if someone knocked her off. I cheered when I heard about that bastard Reagan getting it too.

But hang on. What makes her different from all the rest? What has she done that's so new? Maggie has always been cosy and her position of power has always been realistic and constant. Why haven't we seen before? From where I'm sitting, it looks to me like it's just been given a concentrated dose of more of the same. What did we expect? The system's just the same. The rules haven't altered much. Every government just takes over where the last one left off. What choice does it have? To survive it works with what exists - the bosses, the multinational's, the army, the police force, the civil service, state education, you name it. Whatever the claims of governing parties (and especially creeps like Tony Benn) they're all conservatives - preserving not destroying, altering the dot in the most conscious way.

So why is there a hate campaign against Maggie? The chant of £60 is Maggie Out. The leftists rev against each other for the best insults. The Labour Party personified her as the mad axwomewman. In fact there's been more personal attacks on Maggie than opposition to what she does.

I don't just say this because of the disgraceful way they are done by mistake. They want us to focus our hatred on Maggie so we don't think about that's really going on.

Left out

Take the Labour Party. A left-wing revival? Don't make me laugh. Eighty people they get out of office they work on the left-wing opposition angle. This time it just won't work when you must fight the hysterics who've grown fat on the Party's blood over the years. When what's left of this crew get back into office, we know what to expect. They won't reverse anything much. They'll keep on cutting services, they'll keep on adding to the defence budget, they'll keep on telling us what fucking great socialists they are. And the people who believe them when they make Maggie his as a maniac, as an 'irresponsible' leader, will vote them back in.

Because as long as people believe that things are getting worse because the leadership's all wrong, they'll turn to other leaders to make it all right again.

Target practice

So it's pretty damn convenient for Labour that Maggie's such an obvious target. Look folks, a fanatic, a stupid voiced fanatic, a woman.

And haven't they got mileage out of that one! The sexist crap that's been thrown at her makes me laugh. The vomit. But you won't get them admitting that's part of the hate trip. Oh God no. They're into 'equality', 'women as good as men'. Too right they are. But that approach they're no skin different to men when they're in power. They're still leaders. Just not as harsh to you and me. There you come to the hierarchy if you're a woman doesn't make any difference. I hate leaders, not just male leaders. Any make do who make it to the top of the shit heap. All leaders.

The leftists have played the same hate campaign, but more so. They make Maggie responsible for the system itself - get rid of Maggie and you get rid of capitalism. With one proviso - you put their party into power instead. This might involve a revolution too comedies, so be ready for it when we give the word.

The truth is that the leftists in this country are bankrupt. No ideas, no energy and no leaders. They're quite real. Their Che Guevara, their Marx, their Lenin? At least they're not stupid enough to think by using Paul Foot or Tarik Ali to 'inspire the masses!' But they have to fill the vacuum and that's where Maggie comes in. What they've developed is an anti-hero. An anti-leader. A cult against one person. Hang on you can't have that, hate Maggie today and we'll find you someone to idolise tomorrow.

It's easy when you think that bloody bloody. Red. Sad. Reducing to a devil, because they can't come up with a God. And they have to do this because the one thing they can't admit is that any leader is a shit - not just because of what power does to people, but because leaders administer the system.

Doing a job...

If you don't want to attend school, why not leave? Because I would get in a lot of trouble, it's against the law!" might be your answer. What I really don't want - by leaving school you do no harm to anyone whatsoever. The local education authority would try and cajole you into going back to school and if you still refused would threaten your parents with court action. This would no doubt cause your parents great anxiety, the LEA will blame you on, hoping to make you feel guilty. But your act of leaving would have caused no harm.

Compulsory school attendance is controlled by the fundamental notion of freedom. Once you recognize that government has no right to pass laws compelling you to go, you will no longer be intimidated by the representatives of authority. You will be able to speak to them on an equal level, recognising them for the shits they really are.

But what would happen if we all those illegally leaving were to join together, telling authority to 'get knotted'? In fact, giving authority a solid and accurate gob in the eye! If there was a sufficient number and enough determination and fortitude, our unofficial departure could succeed And I'm sure that others outside school would help you anyway they could.

We are well aware of the fact that a substantial number of people are quite content to stay at school and there's nothing wrong with that. It's your children's education at stake, but for those don't, especially those with no hope of getting any qualifications, surely leaving is better than being punished about in lessons or being fed off with lessons on 'money management' to keep them occupied. A pass in money management is worth fuck all.

What about me then? Am I just an unrealistic tosh who wants to see his fantasies become reality? Maybe, but still..."IT'S WORTH A TRY!!
One of the best ways of establishing one's credibility among radicals is to be in the 'middle-class'. And it appears, being middle-class oneself is no barrier to hating 'them'. I was going to say 'look at X for instance'; but as I want to be as 'pale as possible' I'd better say 'look at the New Statesman or Socialist Worker'.

On the other hand, if one assents to a whining deficiency of the privileged, 'Fraid so, chaps, I can't help it. I'm not actually defending anything I'm just making a point: I'm getting a little weary of the fashionable middle-class position of regarding the working-class as something which should be hailed as the saviour of the masses. It's rather like being an industry in its own right. For me at any rate, the revelation that Joe Strummer esq. is an ex-public schoolboy has finally sunk any remaining credibility that the Clash had of being a street band. Roll on London Calling at Earl's Court, complete with lasers! At least Led Zepp are honest and aren't being the idle rich.

Not to say there isn't anything particularly virtuous in being middle-class. Having gone to a private school myself, I can confirm that a lot of them are absolutely lads and ladies and rottenly trendy (if you pardon the strong language). On the other hand I can't help having been born into a family who are basically a people to condemn for that is about as reasonable as condemning the horse for being born black (or for that matter, esq., I know someone who lives in one. But even we fucked-up members of the school it was common for younger boys to have their heads flushed in lavatories, or to be put inside a big speaker cabinet blasting out Deep Purple for hours on end - almost as bad as the Reading Festival) and where the next move is to spend taking it out on the younger kids. And where you don't see your parents for weeks on end; where you're constantly being watched and frightened, with no one you dare talk to. And all those hideous afternoon games when some brutal batchelor tries to occupy your mind by being a 'real man' - ie by encouraging your primitive base and savage instincts which are laughably termed

FAKING IT.

But most private schools aren't half so nice. Can you honestly say, hand on heart, that you'd actually like to go to a place where you never meet a member of the opposite sex, where the first three years are mainly occupied attempting to escape your tormentors (even in my school it was common for younger boys to have their heads flushed in lavatories, or to be put inside a big speaker cabinet blasting out Deep Purple for hours on end - almost as bad as the as 'team spirit'. And where you're constantly tired because some of the 20-odd members of your dormitory not merely are able to manage on 4 hours sleep per night, but are determined that you should do likewise.

So it's hardly surprising that so many young bourgeois emerge from these horror-bins as social, emotional and sexual cripples. (Well-equipped for life I think they call it.) And if you think life's wonderful

from them on, you're kidding yourself. For a start, even if you escape with a relatively open mind and vaguely humane opinions (and remember, 90% of ex-public schoolboys aren't either become hard-nosed businessmen, leaders of the Socialist Worker Party, housewives) you will be plagued by middle-class guilt feelings and self-doubts as you proceed to Yadonize yourself with a house, marital partner and all the other tediously worldly objects in which you object so strongly in principle ("I'm glad to see you're becoming bit more realistic, son." And all those much-vaunted benefits of working in an office really so wonderful when (as any genuine middle-class soul-searcher is bound to do) you reflect that the main purpose of your stagnant routine is to line still more the pockets of your more ruthless contemporaries?

HIT OUT.

No, it's definitely not all roses. I have no doubt that about 70% of the pop-pigs are happy to agree that any faults that a worker or a poor fellow possessing are due to 'social conditions'; so maybe next time you possess the urge to kick in the teeth of someone on the ground that he's an pig-headed, arrogant, igno- rant, unhealthily snobbish, and predicatably tedious, why not pause and reflect that these qualities may have something to do with this person's unpleasantly affluent background. And then kick their teeth in.

BACKLASH - A CONTINUING SAGA.

Are most anarchists 'facile revolutionaries... hypocrites... nestard collectivists...'? Two opposed responses to the article 'Backlash' in the last issue of Xtra!-----------

1. Whoever wrote that article 'Backlash' was spot on, the only article I've ever read in a national anarchist paper that I've ever agreed with wholeheartedly.

If I may just make a few observations of my own; a lot of so-called anarchists describe, as I assume all other anarchists would, anarchy to mean freedom.

But having said that they go on about Worker's Councils, communal ownership etc, equal distribution of wealth and the destruction of 'capitalism'. I don't know about you, but in my eyes, anyone who promotes anything that involves the expense of another is anything but an anarchist and in this case it would be arrogant of me to call them socialists.

Tories say that capitalism is freedom and anarchists say that socialism is freedom and communists say that communism is freedom. But the skins say that Nazism is a 'fucking great lard mate'!

Another apparent contradiction is the sympathy some 'anarchists' express with such total scumbags as the SWP.

The SWP are just as bad as the NF, Neither believe that people should be able to vote for who they want to, or should I say who they don't want to govern them. Both would have to oppress the very same people, for both the ideas of the extreme left and the extreme right are rejected with equal contempt and derision by Joe Public.

In a democracy you do have a certain degree of free speech and expression, and in a dictatorship you have none. And dictatorship is what the NF and SWP both stand for and it doesn't matter if your views are ideologically close to the other side, it's all right to the individual to decide how he or she wants to live, and neither you nor I have the right to tell him or her. If you think you have that right, then you're not an anarchist. Well now, I'm glad I've got that off my chest.

An anarchist from inside view.

2. 'The act of rebellion is nothing, cute little words, all nice and neat. Bristol wasn't revolution, it was nothing, just a shitty little rebellion. Shoplifting, taking things without paying more money to the filthy rich is just a way for us to get our kicks. Nothing to do with taking what's ours back, because we can't afford to pay for it.

How the fuck are we expected to get to revolution? Sit reading the Sun one minute and find ourselves revolting (or is it revolting)?

The next? Rebellion is a spontaneous explosion which can lead to revolution. Lootin, vandalising (shitty words), destroying property, not only in a useful ways of gaining confidance and experience. Any one involved in this (or act of rebellion) will never for- get it, or its lessons.

What about class struggle? It still exists, workers are still treated like shit. But for God's sake if I can (alas pheme too) don't make a great big song and dance about it. Some of us are working, involved with your actual working class Sun readers.

so what? Anyone who fights the system is okay by me, whether that person is middle /upper class makes no differ- ence. What counts is that that person is working for the destruction of systems that exploit people. Most anarchists would vote Labour would they? Not that I've ever met, but maybe that doesn't count. People taking responsibility for their actions. That's happen- ing now, all the things you call 'nothing' are part and parcel of it.

I don't know any anarchists who've followed the SWP's rotten line. Of course anarchists are against the fucking Nazis same as we're against the fucking Reds. I've never heard any anarchists calling for the suppression by the state of anyone. If you mean suppression in the sense of us trying to get them then with our own means, well what's wrong with that? We'd do the same to all political parties with power as their aim. What else is there? The final solution can be defeated by...being ignored.

Sure, close your eyes all the pigs might go away. But if they drop out and live in a commu- nite in the Welsh hills, that's really radical, the state would surely collapse. The rest of us can face reality and get on with our petty acts of vandalism and little rebellions. And anarchist isn't a trade mark to be classified as by an exclusive group who agree with you. Anyone who takes the nails is taking a step, the pigs are sure to be inter- ested in any type of anarch- ists.

Finally, I don't claim to speak on behalf of any true anarchists, I'm speaking about my reactions to the Tory-anarchist who wrote 'Backlash'.

A Lambeth dissident.
GOD
and the revolution

There's this woman at work who's been 'saved'. She wears a 'Jesus Loves Me' badge and spends all day reading psalms. But it's her expression that's the real giveaway. That vacant look in her eyes and that perpetual sick smile. She tells me proudly that she used to have a drugs problem, but now her life's got 'purpose'.

At school we were subjected to endless videotapes relating the experiences of converted outcasts. Drug addicts, alcoholics, people with psychiatric problems, all living 'naturally' through religion. Even at the age of twelve I didn't need telling these people were no more 'whole' than they'd been before. They'd simply exchanged one emotional prop for another.

We all know people like this, whether they're into straight religion or the newer, revamped varieties, exiles, the pseudo-scientists. And as the economic situation gets worse there will be even more of them. Why? Because they quite simply all offer an alternative to the forcible poverty. An alternative that doesn't involve self-blame and feelings of guilt.

The premise of humility involved in most religions is actually not far from that of direct, active, internalized violence. The idea is we're all equal-ly inadequate. And for some people this shared inadequacy is a basis for security - especially as it avoids conflict with a rotten system. It's very easy to attack the newly-converted. They are the ones whose beliefs are most obviously distorted. Their organization is the most visibly corrupt. But we tend to forget they represent only the tip of the iceberg of the whole institution of religion. Most people act as if zealots are different to those whose beliefs are more 'rational'. In its attempt to mainline religion, liberal thought has always stressed tolerance. Thus it has always been the Church and not religion itself which has come under attack. That's still true today. Think of the two most recent blasphemy controversies - the Gay News report on the Life of Brian. The poem did nothing to challenge religion. It challenged the Church's attitude to sexuality. As for the Life of Brian, it was the idioacy of dogma (in religion or politics) not 'genuine' tolerance which was attacked. The idea of God has been challenged in the past - but only intellectually. Even this hardly exists today. Those of us who don't believe in God see the arguments as self-evident. Those who do tend to see themselves as somehow different from other believers. It might even be 'unusual' to be an 'anarchist Christian', but it's not un-acceptable.

In the future it must be unacceptable. If you accept that the Church can open the door to ideas of leadership and hierarchy 'I'm an anarchist Christian' must do accept this, then in what sense do they see themselves as anarchists? Because they can apparently achieve their ends? It does. But it does so totally independ-ently of a God, the Church and the state. Its approach is humanist not religious. 'Militant' has seen as something which humanists decide on individually and together. And the whole business is a demand for a fixed and static thing. In no sense is it related to any-thing outside human society. We may feel some sympathy for the beliefs of 'anarchist christians', but we cannot accept that this can be anarchism. Our tolerance can be misplaced.

The fact is that the majority of British people still con-sider themselves as christians and wouldn't be interested in the subtle differences offered by 'anarchist christians'. Even today, religion has to be one of our major targets. Especially in this country where alliance with the C of E is often as much an expression of spurious patriotism as it is anything else.

Intelectual challenge isn't enough. It isn't enough again-ist the bosses, the unions and the left. It isn't enough either against the Church and religion. We have to confront them. We can start by leafleting, picketing services. But when the revolu-tion starts, we won't just be burning banks and the houses of parliament, we will be destroying churches too.

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Work in prison is dreadful, idiot work, about as much good to the brain as jumping off a cliff. It is boring, monotonous, absolutely never-ending work.

Worse, it was only part of the psycho-logical punishment, which was systema-tically administered from the moment we went in until the moment I came out. Every second of every second of every day was accounted for, and I knew it. The minute I took my clothes off, I knew that for the next however many years or months, it was going to be like this - no freedom. No freedom of speech, no freedom to be clean, no freedom of body, no freedom to shit.

One of the first things to happen to a man as he enters prison is the taking away of his clothes and subsequent issue of a prison uniform. This uniform is the first step in an attempt to break down your spirit. Firstly it is blue and is it a coincidence prison staff also wear blue uniforms? Much more likely the colour similarity was chosen deliberately, to condone the wards' authority, by simple unconscious sympathy.

Secondly, it is a demonstration of pure power on the part of the prison depart-ment. Can you think of any people other than prisoners who have to wear a suit of clothes of anothers choosing, for per-

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In the extra-judicial system, slop out...porridge...work...dinner...exercise...work...tea...slop out...
SPECIAL OFFER to LOYAL READERS...

worried about those TV detector vans? Frightened by the prospect of that £200 fine for not possessing a TV licence? Well the solution is simple: Buy XTRAL'S SPECIAL SAVING STAMPS - Pay Your Fine in Easy Installments - And Save £100!

Let's face it. Britain has the lowest fines-for-not possessing a TV licence in the world. Think of it. £200. That's less than 60p a day - hardly enough for a Big Mac. Or more than a copy of Now!
The French fine is £300. The Swiss part with £500 every time the detector-chap interrupts 'Cross Alps'. And as for the Japanese, how they coughed up seven billion yen smackeroos when the authorities discover they haven't got a licence while they're secretly watching all those movies! Poor old Japanese, tee-hee, have to contend with detector vans which can discover unlicensed sets at 2,000 miles' distance (makes our 200 yards seem pretty modest, eh?) and which automatically deduct 5,000 green 'uns from their local number plate bank account in Switzerland!

And pity the Dutch - they pay a hefty 65,000 guilder (that's 650,000 dollars) for evading the licence even if they don't have a TV!

Their neighbours, the down-trodden Belgians pay through the nose (£2,50G) whether they have a licence or not! And in Fascist Spain everyone has to pay for a licence and a fine (£80 & £800 respec-tively - 'Special Discount Licence' n' Fine rate of £1000) - and the poor adds don't even have a TV service to begin with!!!

And the licenceless Lithuanian is liable to get lashed around the lugholes and locked up for a long-hair interlude - or (if lucky) at the very least loses a lot of lovely firewood and has to catch on to any illicit list-ening in the lavatory.

So consider how lucky you are. For this modest little fine you are helping to finance 1 Overpaid pancakes like Parkinson, 1 Overpaid hangers-on and bureau-crats with their expense accounts and lavish pensions 2 Horses and hordes of detector-vans, detector people, licence collectors and, oh course, lots and lots of lovely administration and bureaucratic! 3 And last, but not least, smug, complacent yet ever-so-slightly menacing and intimidating adverts like this.

So hurry, hurry and start collecting XTRAL Licence Fine Stamps. Buy as many as you like, as often as you like.

You can give them in don-ations of £1, £5, £10, £50, £100 - or you can even send us £200. Rest assured we'll take good care of your money....
Confessions Of An Urban Guerrilla

Sitting in the dock at the Old Bailey is about as interest-
ing an experience as you could get in a year's worth of Cross-roads.
You have to sit there trying not to look bored, knowing all the time that it's really your next few years they're care-
ful what you do or say.
This sense of unreality is not helped if you've been charged under the false witness law, or if one of your widars is reading a horror comic called 'Elephant' while he is sitting in the cell section standing against the door
leaflet death by the same door.
The warper opened the door and motioned me inside. I was arraigned, had my name recorded for manslaughter, when he angrily pushed me outside and grabbed the real defend-
ent.

The whole proceedings are every inch a game than you realise. All the lies are believed aut-
omatic-ly and no one really makes the truth. In the harsh light of the court, witnesses just fig-
ure they might as well be consistent. The truth is forgotten. Oddly enough, the prosecuti-
ons suffered more from this than ours did.

The case against my brother hinged on identification ev-
dence from Derrick Day, who, before he had any trust in, at least all the police and the prosecu-
tion. In the end, and the judge acquitted him. That led to another hearing.

The recent disturbances in Brixton have raised several imp-
portant questions about spontaneity and control of the...

Brixton continued from page one

The police, or we are living in a police state.

In Brixton there is no question of the police controlling the crime, or of them getting any information from them. The...
LIFE IS SO SUPER!

DUPER

STUFF IT!

THE WHOLE THING MAKES ME WANNA VOMIT!