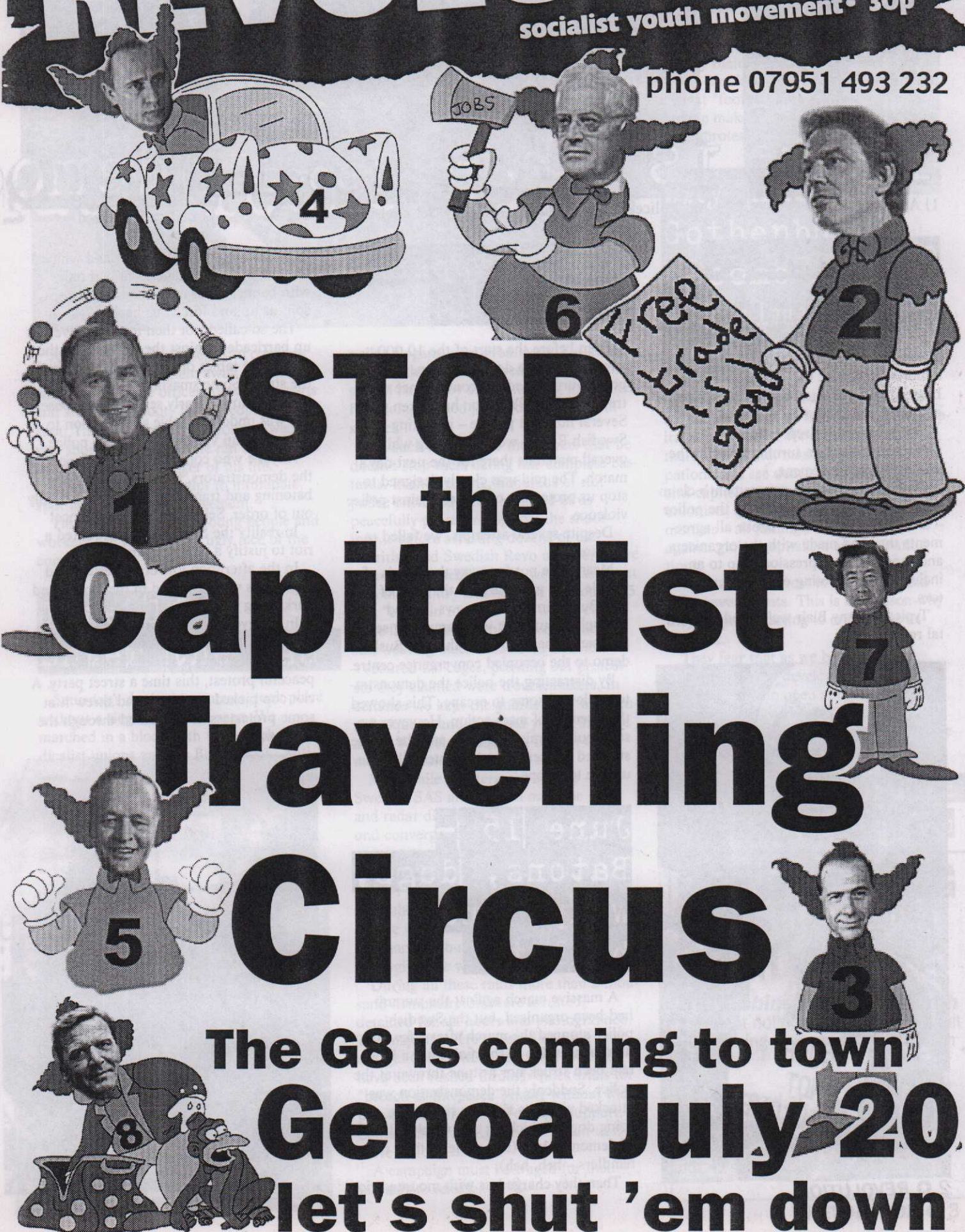


REVOLUTION

socialist youth movement • 30p

phone 07951 493 232



STOP the Capitalist Travelling Circus

The G8 is coming to town
Genoa July 20
let's shut 'em down

Gothenburg,



This

1) Approach Police



is what

2) Police take aim - run!



(social) democ

3) Get shot in the back



4) Critically injured

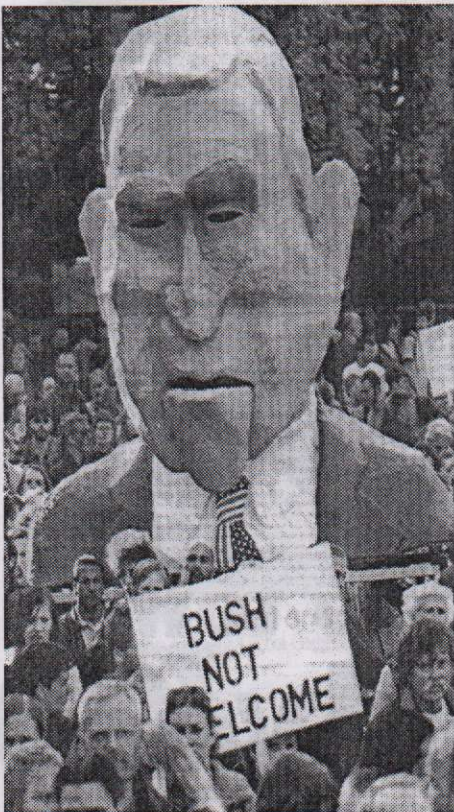
Gothenburg.

Thousands of us went to Gothenburg to take part in mass peaceful protests against third world debt, the destruction of the environment, human rights abuses and for a more democratic EU. Instead we were beaten, whipped, attacked by dogs, arrested, jailed and shot at by the cops.

The brutal police repression in Gothenburg marks a turning point in the anti-capitalist movement.

Despite the Swedish government's claim that it would negotiate with us, the police - and SAS-style troops - broke all agreements they had made with the organisers, and used violent repression - up to an including the shooting of three demonstrators.

Typically, Tony Blair welcomed this brutal repression.



What happened - June 14

Even before the start of the 10,000 strong anti-Bush demonstration, riot police surrounded the convergence centre... before ANY action had taken place. Several hundred people - including Swedish Revo - were preparing white overall materials there for the next day's march. The raid was clearly designed to stop us protecting ourselves against police violence.

Despite several attempts, we failed to breakout.

Meanwhile not far away thousands of people were gathering for the start of the anti-Bush demo. When news filtered through about what was happening several thousands marched from the anti-Bush demo to the occupied convergence centre.

By distracting the police the demonstrators allowed some to escape. This showed the strength of mass action. However we still couldn't raise the siege and the police stormed the centre and arrested all those unable to escape.

June 15 - Batons, dogs, whips and bullets

A massive march against the summit had been organised, but the Swedish police stopped the march after a few hundred metres. Up to this point not a blow had been struck nor a stone thrown at the police. Suddenly the demonstration was attacked along its sides by riot police using dogs - which bit and mauled dozens of demonstrators (and some of their own handlers - heh, heh).

Then they charged us with mounted riot

cops, lashing out with batons and whips. Despite brave resistance - armed only with banner poles and stones - the cops split us up and forced us back.

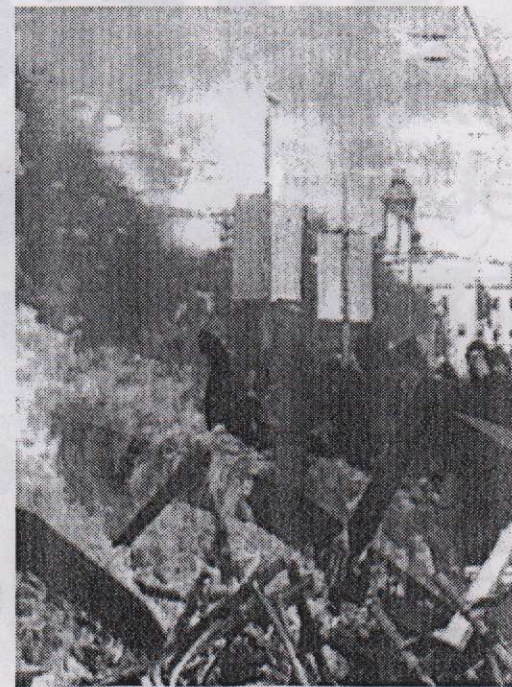
The so-called riot then followed. We put up barricades against the police from the chairs and tables of the cafés which lined the street. Some smashing of shop and bank windows clearly served no purpose but was understandable as a reaction to the tooled-up violence of the riot police.

Anyone who condemns the "violence" of the demonstrators, faced with dog bites, batoning and trampling by horses is totally out of order. Self-defence is no offence!

In reality the Swedish police wanted a riot to justify a violent clamp down.

In the afternoon lots of protesters and organisers were arrested in the streets and parks long after the fighting was over.

In the evening the cops - and some fascist thugs who mysteriously slipped in and out of police lines - attacked another peaceful protest, this time a street party. A riot cop picked up a rock and threw it at some protesters as he walked through the street party.



Sweden

What are they
frightened
of?

The scale of repression in Gothenburg represents an organised violation of our rights.

Tony Blair and the new Home Secretary David Blunkett want to extend their bans against "football hooligans" to "political trouble makers" and ban travel to international protests.

racy looks like

Why has
Gothenburg
become such
a culminating
point?

The main reason is clear. For years we see the growth of an international anti-capitalist movement. We see mass protests in the Third World, mass strikes, land occupations. We see demonstrations of young anti-capitalists, immigrants, militant trade unionists, anarchists, socialists and communists – all joining in mass protests against global capitalism and its institutions.

This is a real threat to the bosses and their governments. This is the reason why they are now starting to criminalise its activists.

They fear that as we become better organised, as we develop links with the working class an open anti-capitalism will emerge in the workers' movement.

This is a declaration of war on our movement – and we must organise NOW to repel this attack.

Rodney from

Swedish Revolution

GOTHENBURG PRISONER SOLIDARITY

Paul Robinson - charged with
• violent rioting • attempted assault
He is facing 4 years, and is a Unison member

Write to Paul at:
Göteborg Remand Centre (Häklet)
Göteborg Polis Headquarters (Polis Huset)
Box 49 40126 Göteborg Sweden

At that point people began to confront the cops and chase them away. This was when some police officers drew their guns and started to shoot. Three people were shot. The most serious – a young Swede – was shot in the back as he ran away and is still in hospital in danger of his life.

Again this is an attempt to intimidate, split and weaken our movement.

This attempt will fail. Young people and workers can now see the ugly face of the corporate state, unmasked.

June 16 -
Enter the SAS

Saturday's demo, by contrast, took place without a single cop to be seen. We marched in a block with the anarcho-sindicalist unions and the Black Block. Anti-

police slogans were prominent. But at the front of the march a Swedish Left MP disgraced herself by congratulating the police for "doing a good job in difficult circumstances".

But stop toadying to the powers that be doesn't stop them acting like complete bastards. In the evening, hundreds of riot police encircled a few hundred of us peacefully protesting against the shootings... before arresting dozens of us.

British and Swedish Revo members were among those arrested. We were bussed out into the country and held for six hours, 25 to a "cell" (in reality a cage with a concrete floor). Police undercover agents – still wearing black balaclavas and hoodies – scoured the cages, pointing out protesters they claimed were troublemakers. In defiance we kept the guards busy with stupid requests and sang and yelped into the night. We were released at four in the morning, cold, hungry and angry.

Meanwhile anti-terrorist squads – the Swedish SAS armed with machine guns and radar directed pistols – raided a second convergence centre where 200 or so people were sleeping. They made them lie face down, spread-eagled on the rain soaked ground, outside the centre, before a number of arrests were made. The excuse was that they were looking for German bomb-making terrorists! Not surprisingly none were actually found.

During all these raids more than a thousand demonstrators were arrested, detained for six hours and photographed. The majority were released without charge. Others were deported. Dozens have been rushed through quick trials for "breach of the peace", many without the presence of any lawyer or legal support. Some – like Paul Robinson – await trial on more serious charges.

A campaign must be waged for their immediate release.



the lessons of Gothenbourg



political lessons

We have to prevent the media, the bosses' parties and the official labour leaders from isolating and effectively outlawing our movement. We have to launch a massive campaign to defend the right to assemble and demonstrate, the freedom to travel from one country to another.

But the key way to avoid isolation is to turn to the rank and file of the workers movement, to involve them in our actions, to win them to militant tactics. The capitalists want to isolate us. But we shall not fall into their trap.

Gothenburg was a turning point for the anti-capitalist movement because it showed the need for a political step forward. The reformist leaders showed their true face by denouncing the arrested protesters, not the cops. They have to be challenged, thrown

out of the movement and replaced by democratically accountable fighters.

As we have seen in Quebec and Seattle, our protests are most successful when anti-capitalists and unionised workers unite in action. We need greater numbers and these can only come from mobilising the unions – from below – as well as radicalised young people.

strategy & tactics – Where Now?

But even numbers alone will not be enough. We need organised numbers clear about our aims. We need a democratically recognised leadership of the actions including all the political, social, trade union, environmentalist, anti-fascist, anti-racist organisations, parties, and groups supporting the action.

Above all we need to organise defence of our demonstrations against police

attack, defence capable of helping the mass forces to break through police lines and guard against police agents provocateurs. But this means challenging not only the reformists, but also the many of the anarchists.

The tactics of non violent direct action (NVDA), those advocated by Ya Basta!, and also of those of the Black Block all have the disadvantage of restricting themselves to one tactic.

Both NVDA as well as the trashing of the Black Block are an ineffective way to actually stop any determined repression. NVDA is useless faced with state or fascist violence which, as in Gothenburg, has decided to smash us up regardless of how that looks on TV. The Black Block's smashing up of city centres alienates local workers from our movement (some local workers spat at us the next day) making it easier for the cops to bash us. It is also easy for the cops to infiltrate the Black Block and start riots when we don't want them.

What about Ya Basta! and the White Overalls? While their disciplined defence of demos is great they also have shortcomings. Their public preparations open them up to a pre-emptive strike like the convergence centre being shut down. Their renouncing of even defensive violence means they cannot strike back and break police morale. Their visibility and relative immobility means they cannot change tactics halfway through a battle.

Ya Basta claim to be at the service of the demo. But once they have assumed leadership there is no Plan B to fall back on – like the Zapatistas, they are effectively an elite fighting force who report back to an unarmed mass every now and then but in practice are unaccountable.

So what's our answer? Each demo poses different problems and opportunities. There are no standard answers that the cops will find impossible to combat. But as a principle we should favour mass meetings to thrash out the political priority for the demo or action. Then a subgroup of known and trusted activists representing all the groups should meet in secret to hammer out a practical plan of action. Lines of communication should be clear – from front line to stewards to the body of the protesters so that changes of plan can be implemented and breakthroughs quickly followed up.



Jez in

Camberwell

GENOA - Closedown

the G8's Capitalist Travelling Circus IN JULY

The new right-wing Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has threatened to ban the Genoa protests. He has said that the city will be sealed off for four days. The German, Austrian and French borders be closed. The G8 leaders will be accommodated in battle-ships moored in the harbour!

We need to press on with our plans for a huge mobilisation to go to Italy for the G8 summit. We should try in every way possible to evade the blockade.

The maximum number must try to get through but in any case **WHEREVER WE ARE STOPPED IS GENOA.** And there we must demonstrate, try to break through, discuss amongst ourselves and agitate amongst local workers and youth.

Those of us who cannot take the time or do not have the money, needed for international travel can **TURN OUR OWN CITIES AND TOWNS INTO GENOA.**

If they violate our rights in one place by sheer force of police numbers and weaponry we will spring up with renewed forces in a dozen, a hundred places. Nor will this be an empty gesture or "protest politics". It will strengthen the movements of the working class, the oppressed and exploited worldwide for the struggle against global capitalism, against the layoffs and privatisations of the multinational corporations and their obedient states.

ONWARDS TO GENOA!



Bush, USA: Mr. Armageddon

Blair, UK: No.1 Privatiser

Berlusconi, Italy: Mussolini Fanclub

Putin, Russia: Butcher of Grozny

Chretien, Canada: Always Gets His Man

Jospin, France: Renegade Trot

Koizumi, Japan: The Pacific Connection
Schröder, Germany: Wannabe Blair

Violence Versus Pacifism Can The Revolution Be Non-violent?

Is violent revolution a necessity? The simple answer is no because the truth is that any movement whose aim is to hurt people is not for people but against them. However a ghandiesque revolution would prove difficult if not impossible. For example, in Tiananmen when the general population had risen up against the state and created the threat of a left-wing take-over of power, the state-socialist government supposedly for the people sent in tanks to crush the uprising. It will never happen in the west I hear you say? Think again. In 1970 the National Guard descended on an anti-war protest in Kent State University in Ohio firing live ammunition into the crowd killing and wounding students. So can a pacifist socialist movement possibly gain power? The answer again is no because no matter what government you live under, if the security of the wealthy or the powerful is ever challenged you will soon find that democracy will quickly turn to a dictatorship.

The reason for this is that although we are all taught that in a democracy it is an elected government, big corporations have a huge effect on countries and the amount of money a large company has is often larger than that of a third world country. It is impossible for any elected government to pass any laws against the big multinationals because any attempt to do so will result in the multinationals moving abroad. In this way the corporations can push for deregulation meaning laws that "are obstacles to the freedom to trade" are removed. This usually means labour rights and environmental protection laws. So who elected them to rule over us?

The corporations represent an authority that will do anything it can to safeguard its position meaning that it will do anything it possibly can to influence and steer a government against any movement that gains enough power to threaten it. The revolu-



tionaries will not be terrorists, they will not bomb the rich or kill the landowners but when the tanks roll out then neither will they remain pacifist. Democracy is the rule of the people and under a democracy there is no need for violence but the unelected corporations have just as much power as any elected government. That is not democracy. As socialists we have to try our best to be non-violent but any movement that refuses to use violence outright will fail because even though you may be polite and willing to talk, when you're threatening their position, I doubt they'll be.

**Xiaozhou in
Orpington**

ideas to use against global capitalism

4

In the last issue of REVOLUTION we looked at class, the main division in the world today, and why it's important in the struggle for liberation.

This month we examine the state, its role and what it means for future revolutionary situations.

Copies of Part 1 - Origins of capitalism and Part 2 - Exploitation, Part 3 - Class; are available - just ring 020 7793 1468.

The

Whenever we challenge the multimillionaire corporations that rule the world, we find an organised opposition lying in wait for us.

Against every march, however peaceful - every protest, however well-intentioned - every picket, boycott, strike and action... there is an organised force trained, prepared and waiting to block us, smother us and stop us.

We saw this force on Mayday in London, at the great anti-capitalist demonstrations in Seattle, Prague and Gothenburg. We will see it in action next month in Genoa, defending the leaders of global capitalism from the protests against the G8 summit.

What is this force? Revolutionaries call it the State.

Who is in the State?

It's the police that threaten us, move us on, caution us, batter us, arrest us and imprison us.

The judges who try us and condemn us, even though they know nothing about how we live and never will.

The faceless civil servants, bureaucrats and lawyers, who pore over documents and draft complicated laws to isolate, stifle and stamp on any resistance to the power of big money.

And there's the last deadly line of defence for the system, the Army - a killing machine waiting to spring unthinkingly into action when their paymasters' dirty work needs to be done.

So how did the state come into being? What makes it tick, and can it be abolished?

If we want to be free and to break the power

Against every march, however peaceful - every protest, however well-intentioned - every picket, boycott, strike and action... there is an organised force trained, prepared and waiting to block us, smother us and stop us.

of the corporations and the billionaires, we need to try and answer these questions.

Let's start with the origins of the state. The earliest human societies did not have and *could not have had* a state. This was because their society was not divided into different classes. In the first tribes of hunter-gatherers, human beings did not yet possess sufficient skill, knowledge and technology (tools) to produce a surplus. After a day's work, every individual had only produced roughly what it took to keep them alive. There was next to nothing left over. In this situation, there is no point in forcing another human being to work for you - there could be no benefit from it.

It was only when societies had advanced far enough for each person to be able to produce a little bit extra that a surplus arose - and it is at this stage that a part of society struggles to control that surplus. Suddenly it is worthwhile forcing other people to work for you. It is possible to get rich - but only by oppressing others. At this stage, a *class* seizes control. It makes the surplus of the group its own private property. And it can only do this by holding the rest of the people down - by using force. In other words, by establishing a state - kings to rule, priests to lie to the people about the king being holier than everyone

else, soldiers to take action if the people saw through the lies and demanded a fairer share.

Liberals believe that the state is a neutral force that exists to ensure fair play between different interest groups in society. To them, the state *mediates* between the classes. The ecologist and anti-globalisation journalist George Monbiot is an example of this way of thinking. He says that the way to control global capitalism is to strengthen the powers of the state. The state will then be able to take steps to limit the abuses of the big corporations, cutting them down to size and restricting the extent of their control of the world's resources.

It sounds nice - but it completely misunderstands what the state is and what it exists to do.

As we have seen, the State comes into being when society is divided into classes with different relationships to the wealth that its members have produced. It is not some wonderful power that descends on society from above to keep the warring people apart and impose a sense of fair play. It is, in the words of one of the first revolutionary communists, Frederick Engels, the product of the division of society into "irreconcilable" classes, groups of people whose interests directly clash and collide.



State

In short, the state is not a referee in a football match who blows the whistle when either team commits a foul. It is a weapon that fights for one class against another.

This means that there is no point imagining that the state that exists today will help the people do away with capitalism. It exists to defend the property of the capitalist minority from the working class majority.

But it also means it is ridiculous to imagine that the state must always be with us – that we must always have a special armed force ready to be used against the people.

We have not always had a state, and we will not always have one. Once we get rid of the division of society into classes and all human beings have a common set of interests, the whole need for the state will pass away.

As Engels explained:

"The state ... has not always existed from all eternity. There have been societies that did without it, that had no idea of the state and state power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the split of society into classes, the state became a necessity owing to this split. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes not only will have ceased to be a necessity, but will become a positive hindrance to production. They will fall as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage. Along with them the state will inevitably fall. Society, which will reorganise production on the basis of a free and equal association of producers, will put the whole machinery of the state where it will then belong: into a museum of antiquities, by the side of the spinning wheel and the bronze axe."

Today we have reached this stage. The division of society into a tiny capitalist class and a huge

majority of working class people is an obstacle to progress. At every step the capitalists increase the threat of global warming, destroy public services in favour of private corporations, tighten the hold of the banks on third world countries through debt and build up ever bigger nuclear arsenals. Production has reached the stage where we can feed, clothe and house the whole population of the world a hundred times over – but still millions starve in shanty towns.

To overthrow the rule of the capitalist minority, we will first have to overcome their resistance, which means we have to overcome their state power.

Reformists and liberals believe that this can be done peacefully through parliamentary and constitutional action. All history proves otherwise.

In Chile in 1973, the working class won a parliamentary majority for the socialist party and tried to take steps against the capitalists, in order to redistribute wealth and power in favour of the poor. But real power does not rest in parliament – it rests in the hands of the unelected state – the army and police. It was these forces – working hand in hand with the CIA – that moved violently against the government and overthrew it. General Pinochet came to power, torturing and executing thousands of socialists. And this is just one example.

That is why the most determined part of the working class, throughout the history of modern capitalism, has always argued that the state cannot be reformed; it has to be forcibly overthrown. While such an overthrow will require the support of the majority of the working class, it will also have to break up the forces of the state, using ruthless methods to overcome their resistance.

The only way this can be done is by forming mass councils of delegates from the working population as alternative centres of power, and by organising a popular militia from among the armed people to take action against the capitalists, their allies and protectors.

In short, it will take a revolution to smash the capitalist state.

But does this mean we can move overnight to a stateless society?

The capitalists will use every means at their disposal to get their property and their power back. Until such time as a planned socialist economy can redistribute

wealth and do away with class division altogether, the old ruling class will continue the fight. While classes exist, there will be a need for a state.

But after a socialist revolution, a completely different type of state will be needed – a working class state.

The capitalist state exists to defend the power and property of a tiny minority. A working class state would exist to do the opposite – defend the property of the overwhelming majority of the world's population from a tiny former elite.

Instead of a standing army and police force, the people itself could be organised democratically to defend our communities. Instead of a parliament elected every five years stuffed full of careerists who can break their promises and get away with it, we could be governed by delegates elected from mass popular councils of working class people. They would be subject to instant recall if they broke their promises and would be paid the same as the people they represented. Bureaucratic positions could be rotated so no-one could concentrate too much power in their hands.

As classes disappeared there would be less and less need for even this special state machine. The functions of the working class state could be more and more taken over by society as a whole. The state would wither away as government and authority, even of the most democratic sort, could ever more be replaced by the simple administration of society by the people. As Engels put it, "the government of persons would be replaced by the administration of things".

The future lies in a society without classes and states – a society based on real freedom, fairness and fulfilment. But there is only one road to freedom: the revolutionary break-up of the capitalist state, and the establishment of a democratic working class state.



RACISM: ALIVE AND

Refugees are welcome here!

"A refugee or asylum seeker, is a person who flees from their home country for a well founded fear of persecution on account of their race, religion, nationality, or membership of a particular social group or political opinion"

However the increase in numbers of refugees seeking refuge in Western countries is not only related to political oppression and war, but also to the growing inequality between the poorer countries and the richer ones.

The WTO, IMF and World bank have established an economic order which allows multinational corporations more and more freedom to produce, invest and trade across borders while at the same time the freedom of movement of people across borders is subject to even tighter controls and restrictions. Examples of this can be seen at the US-Mexico border and at the Eastern Frontiers of the EU (Fortress Europe), where there have been military clamp-downs on illegal migration. Why is the restriction of movement of people so beneficial to the affluent US and Europe? The answer is that it creates a pool of cheap labour that can be used by multinationals to achieve greater profits.

The result of such forced globalisation on poorer regions is destabilisation and conflict and often leads to forced migration from these regions to wealthier ones in the West in search of a better life, and a what a welcome they get when they finally reach there! With the governments and the media in the West playing on fears of huge numbers of people arriving on "their" shores to take away "their" housing and use up "their" resources for health and education using language such as "flood" or "tide" of "fraudulent" or "bogus" asylum claims, its hardly surprising that asylum seekers are welcomed not into a safe and positive environment but into an overwhelmingly negative and hostile one. The backlash from globalisation is creating xenophobia thus linking the refugee struggle with the anti-racist and anti-capitalist one.

In Britain, we saw how in the months leading up to the election, the government and the media created an atmosphere of racism and xenophobia

Open the borders!

towards refugees. Refugees were being made into scapegoats for everything from the lack of housing and healthcare to increases in crime and robberies.

The governments no-choice dispersal system "dumped" refugees in the worst rundown areas of the country that already had under-resourced, under funded health and social services without offering these areas any extra support. These dispersal's exposed the poverty and infrastructural



decay in many of the poorer parts of the country but it was refugees who were being blamed for all these problems. This scapegoating created a backlash from the local residents not against the government but against the refugees. In many areas campaigns of racism and violence were used to try and drive refugees away.

Every other day, we saw politicians and tabloids attack asylum seekers, from Heseltine's comments on the BBC's "The World this weekend" on which he stated, "Bogus asylum seekers are cheating British people out of access to housing and health services" and leaflets printed by a Tory party supporter in Dagenham claiming "Labour is now importing foreign nurses with HIV" to David Blunkett's pledge to Sun readers that should he be appointed home secretary underneath New Labour he would "blitz society of asylum cheats."

What we also saw in the build up to the elections was a rise in racist tension and racist attacks towards refugees (but also spilling over to the whole black community) every-time such anti-refugee comments were made. Yet they refused to make the connection and the Sun's response was - "how can we be racist when most asylum seekers are white?"

The Government's Immigration and Asylum bill bars Asylum seekers from working for at least the first six months (though the economy needs more workers) - tabloid columnists

claims that they lazy! and no-one bats an eyelid!! The anti asylum seekers message has been repeated so many times that its now accepted as a perfectly natural view to have.

So what is life like for refugees in Britain today? Well if we believed the papers we would think they all live in lovely council houses with easy access to health care and education for their kids and use benefits to support their wealthy lifestyles. In reality, life for refugees in Britain is a miserable cocktail of detention centres, forced dispersal's and degrading voucher schemes and at every step there is big money to be made out of their misery. The government has been very keen to involve the private sector in housing refugees. The result is that private landlords buy up slums that are unfit for use by council tenants sometimes infested with rats and fleas and place refugees in them and make a nice profit.

Refugees are not allowed to receive mainstream benefits, instead they are given vouchers worth £36.54 per adult only of which £10 is exchangeable for cash - this is only 70% of regular income support thus forcing them to live 30% below the poverty line. These vouchers can only be used in certain shops, mainly large supermarkets, and no change is given. Instead it's the retailer that pockets the change thus making a profit out of the degrading voucher system.

The Immigration and Asylum bill also allows for refugees to be detained en masse for as long as the home office wants - yet these holding places don't get referred to as detention centres but as hotels (the home offices description of Oakington detention centre is a hotel!), even though detainees are not allowed to leave! When they are allowed to leave, they are dispersed into areas with no refugee communities, with little or no access to legal advice or interpreters and no support. This is the harsh reality of a refugee's life in Britain.

On the 29th June, the government is opening a new extension to the detention centre at Harmondsworth in West London, which will make it the biggest detention yet. It plans to house 550 asylum seekers including families with children and even disabled men and women. The detention centre has been contracted to be run by Sodexo (who also run the voucher scheme) and has been given an exemption from the minimum wage so inmates will be made to work at cooking, cleaning and decorating for a disgusting £12 a week! We need to close down such centres and give refugees back their freedom and the chance to build the life they come in search of.

by Rekha in Streatham

KICKING IN BRITAIN

Self-Defense is No Offense!

In Oldham in May, the BNP launched a race war against the local Asian community - and the police helped. As part of their election strategy - the BNP were standing 3 candidates in the general election in the area - they marched by the Asian area of Godwick, attacking Asian shops and households, throwing bricks through windows and hurling abuse at people, and chasing Asian children. Ahmed, a local eyewitness, reports what the reporters didn't:

"The most important point is that a group of twelve racists had broken into the house shouting racist abuse and smashing things up. But what angered us most was that the police didn't come for 20-30 minutes when normally they're always cruising by, and this time they were nowhere to be seen. Then when they came they arrested two Asians rather than the racist thugs. That's when it all kicked off."

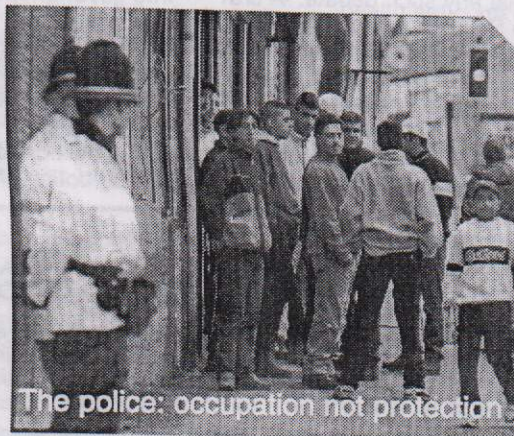
When the police failed to show up the Asian youth courageously took on the racists themselves - then the police arrived and arrested 2 Asian youth and none of the racists! The community exploded. The youth attacked a pub the fascists had gone into and the local racist tabloid. They drove the police out and set up burning barricades using beds, cars and dustbins to prevent riot vans storming in and attacking them.

The no-go areas were a myth, made up by the local tabloid and picked up by the national press to cast the Asian youth who defended their areas as racist. A senior policeman showed where the racism really lies. He was approached by journalists and told that Asians denied the idea that there were no-go areas. His reply: "You must have spoken to the only 12 people in the area that can read and write." They don't even hide their contempt for Asian people!

The police are no good for defending black and Asian communities from the fascists - they are racist through and through

themselves. In Leeds Bangladeshi youth, along with black and white youth, attacked the police after an argument over a "produce" (Asian youth report being stopped and told to "produce" car documents at the police station as often as 4 times a week) resulted in the police using CS gas and handcuffs to restrain the driver. That explosion over racist police harassment and assault was branded as "macho" youths "out to cause trouble" by the local police, with the media, as usual taking up their side of the story. It's not just here, in the US the police regularly shoot black youth in the back, as in Cincinnati this year, sparking riots that drove police out of the neighborhoods.

"The police were calling us Paki and black motherfuckers! We won't put up with that shit!" - Faruq



The police: occupation not protection

The police aren't on our side. This May in Streatham, South London, a black couple were seriously injured on 20 May when they were stabbed by two white racists who forced them out of their car. The man was hospitalised, only to be arrested when released from his hospital bed and find that he might be facing charges, while the attackers were released without charge! 34 year old Shibli Rahman was stabbed by a gang of white men in London's East End - the police turned up in force at his funeral, as if the mourners presented a threat to their own area! And of course the police have let the National Front march 3 times in Bermondsey - while denying anti-racists the same right.

We need to organise self-defense against the fascists and race attacks, you can't rely on the police - they are racist through and through. We need more police on the beat like we need a hole in the head. They beat on youth in the streets of black, Asian, and working class neighborhoods, on workers on picket lines and on protestors at anti-capitalist demonstrations.

We need to take organised self-defense and extend it to our own communities to control anti-social crime. That way we can get rid of the police for good - and protect ourselves from them.

We must support the youth who tried to defend their community, and demand no prosecutions.

"They (the cops) were calling us Paki bastards and everything. I said to one of them the next day, 'why don't you arrest the racists?' and he said to me, 'Don't tell us how to do our job. We don't tell you how to clean the streets!' He was saying to us we're scum only good for cleaning the streets. It's out of order." - Riaz

"How can it be racist if most of the refugees are white?"

When anti-racist organisations condemned the tabloids saying refugees were bogus or criminal, the Sun's response was "how can we be racist when most asylum seekers are white?" What's more, many people who aren't anti-black, have black friends or partners, and enjoy a multicultural society often are anti-refugee - so are some black and asian people. The problem is, to say that there's too many refugees implies that there are some people who belong here and some who don't. That argument has a natural extension onto black and Asian people, even if they have been here for generations. The proof is that every time there is another tabloid or politician fuelled attack on asylum seekers, racist attacks towards all black people increase. William Hague made a speech about Britain becoming a foreign land in March, and race attacks shot up by 300 percent, according to Scotland Yard. Anti-refugee scapegoating gives racism a legitimate, popular face. And it points people in the wrong direction to channel their anger at - the government and system that creates the poverty. Poverty is increasing in Britain and people know there's not enough decent housing, hospital beds, schools and job creation. They live it everyday and see it in their local communities. Big business cuts jobs and moves profits overseas to secret tax havens like the Jersey Islands, while people going the other way are stopped and arrested. They are then deported back to dictatorships or third world poverty ...created by the West's multinationals and governments, for whose power and profits there are no borders.



The Election X-Files

where are the missing voters?

40% of voters didn't bother to vote in June - 60% of 18-25 year olds. This

was the lowest turnout since 1918. New Labour's "landslide" was based on only 25% of eligible voters. Disillusionment with the whole political process is growing: "They're all the same!" No wonder when Tory papers the Sun, FT and Times all came out for Labour. Rightwing magazine The Economist called Tony Blair "the best Conservative candidate".

Millions have rejected parliamentary elections and will seek an alternative. We have already seen this in the ever growing anti-capitalist movement across the world.

Over 75% did not vote for Blair's programme, yet over the next four years we will now see a rapid acceleration of privatisation (or PFI in new Labour-speak) of schools, hospitals, the tube, prisons and GPs surgeries. These will affect the lives of millions of workers and stir many into action.

The Socialist Alliance fought on a reformist platform and gained 56,000 votes across the country, keeping 2

deposits out of 92. This showed that workers have not yet made

revolutionary party, not another Old Labour style reformist party. This is the big question facing the Socialist Alliance: Reform or Revolution?

the break with Labour. Many working class people decided to "give Labour one more chance". Many more just didn't bother voting at all.

However, the anger against New Labour's big business agenda is rising fast and the Socialist Alliance could act as a real catalyst for change. Trade Union members are more disillusioned with the Labour Party than ever before. This was reflected in the decision of the Fire Brigades' Union to end automatic funding of the Labour Party. A third of the Communication Worker's Union (postal workers) voted to do the same. Indeed the Socialist Alliance candidate who polled the best result, Neil Thompson, was a firefighter himself. Now Unison, the biggest union in Britain, has voted to have a debate in the union about disaffiliating from Labour, forced against the leaderships argument against any such debate. A crucial task for the Socialist Alliance is to get the trade unions and lead the fightback against privatisation and the racist attacks on asylum seekers.

For example, what would reformists have to say about the Asian youth in Oldham defending their communities or workers breaking the anti-trade union laws? They would at best seek a solution within the confines of the existing capitalist laws. More Asian police officers and "community policing". A return to work under better conditions. At worst, they would denounce the resistance as violent "mob rule" and crush it. Revolutionaries, on the other hand, would seek to develop the self-defence organisations as alternatives to and defenders against the police and would encourage workers' control as an alternative to the dictates of management. Far from being a potential electoral embarrassment, we see workers' self-organisation as crucial to the fight for socialism.

Indeed, if the Socialist Alliance were to get into government and face the power of the capitalist state, it would need a revolutionary programme, or just end up buckling under the pressure of the police chiefs and generals, the judges and bureaucrats - the unelected state machine. We want a party that is built on foundations of steel rather than a footing of clay!

To do this the Socialist Alliance must turn itself into a

.....from alienation to
Revolution!

The Future & the Socialist Alliance

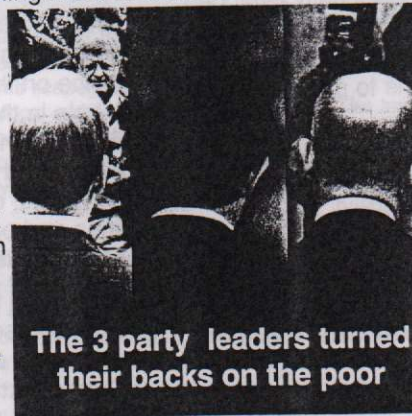
BNP gets a big vote

The British National Party achieved a breakthrough result in the general election, gaining an average of 14% across Oldham - more than 12,000 votes - and a significant 11.25% of votes in Burnley.

The BNP's vote can be explained for several reasons:

In four years time politics may well be very different from now with an untrustworthy Tory leadership and Tony not doing anything more to earn his pay increase. In this changed political climate what prospects does the Socialist Alliance have?

The inevitable meltdown of our services will only further disenfranchise people from politics, especially the young who see no real point in voting. We are approaching the situation where nobody bothers to vote except the party faithful who are blinded by their loyalty and cannot see the bigger picture. They cannot see that their party will not fulfil its promises or perform well. Labour promised to improve the NHS and failed. It won votes with a big smile and Tory incompetence. People were apathetic on the 7th of June and let Labour have another chance, but you don't have to be a genius to work out that in four years the public will say enough is enough and power will once again shift and any party with enough credibility will be able to take power.



The 3 party leaders turned their backs on the poor

1. In Oldham, the BNP have capitalised on the 25-26 May riots sparked by fascists marching through Asian areas (see p. 11)
2. In areas such as Dudley North the BNP have taken advantage of the despair felt by many at the huge job losses at the Rover car plant in the spring of 2000.
3. Across Britain mainstream politics, which offers those in poverty nothing at all, makes people look to radical alternatives and someone to blame - the BNP has targeted people in the bracket of this last point and has 'toned-down' its politics in an attempt to look like a "respectable" racist party.
4. Labour and the Conservatives also scapegoated refugees in the run up to the election, opening the door for the fascists. Indeed as Nick Griffin, leader of the BNP

stated, "The Tories' 14 pint skinhead has unwittingly become the BNP's second best recruiting sergeant." - Jack Straw's shameful support of Anne Widdecombe's attacks on asylum seekers is also to blame. (see p. 10)

It has only been four years since Tory rule and many of the electorate will still remember the Thatcher years, some even suffering from the withdrawal of free school milk with rickets! How many people will see Michael Portillo or Anne Widdecombe as the next Prime Minister?

by TOM in ORPINGTON

In the next four years what is to stop the Socialist Alliance from making a real impact in the electoral results; could it persuade the working class that it, not Labour, can create a better society? The SA has an uphill struggle, but the main obstacle is the negative attitude peddled by the press. The same negative attitude tells people that socialism failed in Russia so it cannot work here and that a vote for the socialist Alliance is a wasted vote. The real focus for the future is the reversal of this negative attitude. If a third of those who did not vote, voted SA then they could win the election.

The Socialist Alliance programme stands up for the rights of asylum seekers. But it needs to convince workers not to vote for the fascists, it's not enough to just say "Don't Vote Nazi". Only with socialist answers on poor housing and poverty and the exposé of billionaires profits can stop the spread of fascism among the hardest-hit white communities in areas like Oldham. And the Socialist Alliance must not flinch from a direct confrontation with the fascists. We must organise worker's and community defence groups to smash up their meetings, stop their marches and deny them a presence on the streets.

by Kath & Daniel, S. London

not a nice puff...

shut sheffield's incinerator

On Friday 25th May Greenpeace activists finally ended their week-long occupation of the chimney of Sheffield's Bernard Road incinerator. Their protest was aimed at pollution levels at the plant, labelled the worst in England, and drawing attention to the problem of burning waste.

The plant, sited at the heart of Sheffield city centre, and close to residential areas, has exceeded official pollution limits 156 times in the past 2 years. The Environment agency itself admits that accepted pollution limits were set at levels that are technically achievable rather than having any reference to what is safe for human health.

Incinerators have been touted as an environmentally friendly alternative to disposing of waste in landfill sites. They are nothing of the sort. They release hundreds of tonnes of toxic gases such as sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, as well as quantities of toxic metals such as cadmium, lead and mercury and produce large amounts of greenhouse gases. Of particular concern is dioxin produced during the incineration process itself, which can cause cancer, reduced fertility, birth defects in children and damage to the immune system. Recent studies have shown that children living near British incinerators were twice as likely to die from cancer, whilst Swedish incinerator workers showed increases in deaths from lung cancer and heart disease.

Clearly incineration is an unacceptable method of dealing with the problem of waste disposal, so obviously New Labour are committed to the construction of 170 new plants. We say these plans should be scrapped, and existing plants should be phased out as soon as possible. What is required is a fundamental re-appraisal of what we do with our waste.

Currently only 10 per cent of waste in

nationalise the multinationals:

for workers and consumers to take control of environmental planning out of the hands of business

the UK is recycled, the lowest rate in Europe. Several European cities have recycling rates of nearly 70 per cent. Much of the waste currently dumped in land fills or burnt is organic, which could be turned into an energy source through the production of biogas and then sold on for use as fertiliser. However the easiest way of reducing waste is not to use it in the first place. Most of the packaging in our throw away society is unnecessary and uses up vast amounts of energy in its production and disposal.

Despite spending nearly £25 million improvements to the incinerator Sheffield City Council have failed to improve it's safety, and only succeeded in building up a massive debt, which they say can only be reduced through privatising the cleansing service – out of the frying pan and into the fire! Accordingly Onyx will take over refuse collection on 1st August and will become the new owners of the incinerator. If Onyx's track record is anything to go by the people of Sheffield will see a deterioration in service and their health will continue to suffer.

Currently the bin men are working to rule in protest against the imminent privatisation. We must build support for them and the campaign must be stepped up – loads of youth care about the environment, especially when it so clearly affects their life. It is not in the interest of the people of Sheffield for a private company to make millions from the collection of their rubbish. Because Onyx's first priority will be to make a profit, it far less likely that more environmentally friendly but expensive collection methods will be introduced, such as door step collection of recyclables.

Revo says – Support the Bin Men in their struggle against privatisation. Shut the incinerator and for a massive, council-funded recycling effort, paid for by taxing the rich and big business, and redeploying the workers to similar jobs and equal wages.

by Simon in Sheff

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Kick the Profit out of Pride

This year's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras will doubtless be an exuberant, festive and colourful experience, turning London pink for a day, giving the tourist-friendly impression of a city of tolerance that revels in its own diversity. It will have a march, floats, performers, big name bands, glitter and plenty of pizzazz, Something for Everyone, with only one thing lacking: politics.

Mardi Gra used to be known as Pride, an event that was initiated by the radical Gay Liberation Front and a movement kick-started by the Stonewall uprising of 1969, where queers who were regularly beaten by the police for refusing to disguise their sexuality fought back and physically defended themselves. Considering its militant and political birth, the extent to which the event formerly known as Pride has been stripped of all political significance is astonishing.

Even if you have problems with the concept of sexuality being something to have pride in (any more than being something to be ashamed of), the renaming of the festival to something far less threatening is a clear sign of the way the queer rights movement is being watered down to make itself more palatable to Middle England. Despite a nominal call for partnership rights, you'll be struggling to find any sense of purpose to this year's march beyond an excuse to party.

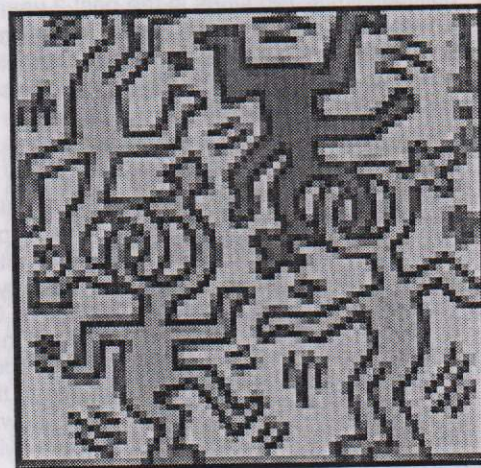
Optimists may think that this is because the war is nearly won. If a strong contender for the Tory leadership can have had homosexual experiences, surely prejudice is dead in the water? Or is it because Pride, like much of queer culture, has been subject to a corporate take-over and big business (as ever) is anxious not to scare off its paying customers by taking a stance, instead of rocking the boat.

by Neil in Marble Arch

The festival certainly isn't free as it used to be: these days you get to pay fifteen quid for the privilege of being fenced off from the outside world in Finsbury Park. Making any kind of ethical stand against the cut back of disability access, the (un)ethical records of sponsors such as Ford (air-brushing ethnic minorities from their adverts), the whole raft of drinks companies (for a demographic with an already disproportionately high incidence of alcoholism) probably would jeopardise the event's only real purpose: as a commercial venture.

Mardi Gras is just one example, however, of how queer culture's shift towards mainstream acceptability has come on leaps and bounds since corporations discovered the existence of the pink pound. More than simply paying Old Compton Street's extortionate prices for a pint, the sprouting of such services as gay travel insurance and gay rest homes show the extent to which 'gay' has become a commercial brand not just a sexuality. With all brands (in a notoriously image-conscious community) its adherents are prepared to cough up to get that exact look, that exact lifestyle which has been labelled 'gay.'

So what's the problem with this? Shouldn't we just be happy that being gay has become so acceptable? The problem is that branding is all about identification (if you wear Nike it means you're cool) and so to brand queers is to limit their identity. It means that rather than accepting queers integrated into it, society is only comfortable with them in their commercially exploited ghetto, both physically (metropolitan areas, gay bars) and culturally (stereotypical tastes, lifestyles, even behavioural traits,) and at the chance of this degree of acceptance queers are only too happy to flock to the ghetto.



However, as soon as they step outside of these limits, as soon as sexuality is simply a matter of who you want to fuck, not buying into an image, queers stop being a readily identifiable other and an appetising commercial prospect, and run back into prejudice from all sides, as the suspicion drawn by hard to pigeon-hole groups such as bisexuals demonstrates.

It'd be wrong to be dismissive of the advances in attitudes to homosexuality that have been made in recent years, but equally wrong to imagine that being able to walk around hand-in-hand with your boyfriend unhassled in a few square miles of central London is a utopia of tolerance. There are still many environments, particularly rural areas, working class communities and some ethnic cultures, where to be openly gay invites ostracism and violence and we are never going to change that by silencing our demands for inclusive equality in exchange for a corporately created ghetto to shelter in. Or by hiding behind a fence in Finsbury Park.

phone for information on a non-commercial alternative on June 30th

take pride

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