ANARCHIST NETWORK NEWLETTER

NEXT EDITIONS DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS 21st FEBRUARY. February 1991

P.O. BOX 150 EAST BRUNSWICK 3057

Union Street Dinner

The next Ⓐ house dinner Saturday 2nd of Feb at 7pm. All welcome.

SPIDER
45 MILLER STREET
NORTH FITZROY
3068

Extraordinary Meeting

On the 11th July 1990 an extraordinary was held to discuss UNION STREET, the C.C., and the future of the house. At that meeting's conclusion it was decided to review all decisions ect. in 6 mths time. That 6mth period is now up and it is proposed that another extraordinary meeting be held on Mon 4th of Feb as per the meeting decision. Thus:

An Extraordinary Union St Meeting
4TH FEBRUARY
6.30 PM
UNION STREET

Rowan On behalf of Melb local (ASF).

Agreements from the July meeting

1. To rent space in Union St.
2. To look at renting it to Daniel and friend.
3. Money collected as rent to go to owning body of the house to be used for the house at present.
4. Daniel, Cliff, Rowan, Robert to work out legal and practical arrangements.
5. Responsibility for bill payments and repair of house be the users, i.e. ASF, Press, Residential tenants, Darkroom users.
6. To review all the above in 6 months time if not before. To be called via the Newsletter by the Management Group.
7. The other structures formally lapse, except extraordinary meetings called as above.

Newsletter News

The Newsletter has been produced by a number of different people over its two and a half years of existence.

There is still the opportunity for different individuals and groups to produce different issues. The people currently putting it out have however made some decisions about the issues they produce.

The first was to define the Newsletter as, 'a communication tool for anarchists to advertise our activities and discuss relevant issues amongst ourselves'.

One consequence of this definition is that some material has not been printed, because it was about general events not specifically organized by or for anarchists (e.g. nude swim nights organized by someone to make their income). The Tim Anderson meeting we weren't sure of but printed it anyway.

Another consequence of this definition is that the mailing list has been culled as described in the September Newsletter, to get rid of names and addresses that were not seen as appropriate (although the fuller list has been kept).

So we do not see the Newsletter used to recruit new members, or to educate the general public, but as a way for us to keep up with each other, tell each other what's happening, and discuss and argue about issues that are important to <u>us</u>.

We have also decided to be more active - so that instead of just printing whatever comes in we will endeavour to gather information and ask specific people to initiate or respond to discussion.

The layout of the Newsletter follows the pattern of:-

front page	Union Street news
rest of front and next	News of coming events, activities
next	Reports of stuff that has already happened
next	Letters and articles

All of these changes have been talked about in previous issues so they should come as no surprise. The response we have received so far to the plans has been positive and encouraging.

If you've got any suggestions about how we can improve the Newsletter, have any questions about joining the collective, or about putting out an issue, get in touch!!

Vivien + Gary

The Warehouse

International Workers' Club

The International Workers' Club (IWC) is an ASF initiative as a space is needed to house its resources, the press and other facilities at union st, as well as provide a large space which will be used for public meetings, socials etc. So some months ago an ASF special group formed to work on turning this idea into reality.

IWC will be housed in a warehouse of 300-400m² which will cost ~$300-400 per week to rent. To pay the rent we'll need a constant income, so a system is operating where people can pledge a certain amount of money each week. Already there is $100 coming in each week, but we'll need about $1500 to cover bond, 2 months rent and renovation costs before we find a warehouse.

I.W.C. will be an incorporated body of members with elected delegates acting as secretary, treasurer and public officer. General meetings will be held at least once a month to decide on the running of the warehouse.

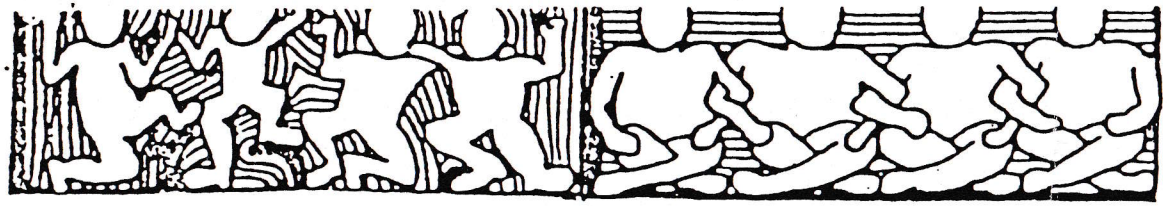
As well as working on becoming incorporated, the main function of the warehouse group is to raise money. So far there is $3,500 which has come from pledges and a gig held in november.

So if you have any good fundraising ideas or want to get involved with the warehouse group we meet once a week at union st, 6.30 alternating mondays and tuesdays. If you have any skills which may be useful when we find a venue, there is a skills list on the kitchen wall at union st.

If you would like to pledge money or make a donation to the warehouse fund then contact members of the group at the next union st dinner.

MARGOT

MEETINGS 6.30PM	22nd JANUARY TUESDAY
	28th JANUARY MONDAY
	5th FEBRUARY TUESDAY
	11th FEBRUARY MONDAY
	19th FEBRUARY TUESDAY
	25th FEBRUARY MONDAY



Letters!!!

Dear ANN fans, 1/91

Here is another contribution to the (shock! horror!) violence/non-violence non-debate.

VIOLENCE IS THE ONLY STRATEGY

At least this is what Chris and Bob appear to be arguing against. Yet, curiously, no one has argued for it. I have put forward that self-defence takes many forms (something that Chris and Bod have either missed or ignored, as they both repeat it as if it has not been said). I think that ginen certain circumstances or situations, self-defence could take a violent form, but not necessarily so. I prefer non-violent methods of self-defense. Doesn't everyone? I recognize that some methods of self-defense may be violent.

Chris talks about the real conflict between values and emotions but does not explain what he means by this. Perhaps I missed it - I don't know (but I bet Bob would). I would like to learn how to diffuse the violence of the state. In particular, I would like to diffuse a truncheon with my head. It sure would be long term useful.

Chris says we cannot hope to compete with the state where they are strongest. I was disappointed to read this as it made me realize that all the time and money I've spent on my nuclear bomb has been all for nothing. If only I'd known!

MEN ARE BIOLOGICALLY AND INHERENTLY VIOLENT

Chris concedes that men do not have a monopoly on violence (Bob missed the joke about the Molly McGuires - too subtle, I guess). Chris points out that most murders, most rapes, most violent crimes, most police and military personnel, most picket-line aggro is practised by men. But he did not tell us how many of them were black or, if white, whether they had blue or brown eyes, and what percentage of them had clubfoot or speech impediments. If we had this information we could make a biological profile of them and then round 'em up and resolve the conflict between their values and emotions. A final solution to violence!

THE REAL ISSUE

Jokes aside, violence is a non-issue in the Australian anarchist movement today. I do not know of any violent acts perpetrated against the state by anarchists or anarchist groups in the last ten years. Nor of any anarchists or anarchist groups in Australia advocating violence as a strategy. This issue of violence/non-violence is a cover for the real issue in the anarchist movement today; class analysis/power analysis.

Both Bob and Chris alluded to this in their last letters when they made passing references to "sides". Under the guise of engaging in a debate about violence an oblique attack has been made on the ideas of anarchists who have a class analysis and recognize class struggle.

Bob and Chris have sought to imply that to advocate class analysis is to advocate violence (something the Murdoch press do). That Chris once rejected class analysis, then embraced it, and again has rejected it suggests that his position is more influenced by those he associates with than any committment on his part.

Bob, however, has consistently taken the posiyion of power analysis over class analtsis. He has sought to imply that power analysis is modern (which it is not) and class analysis is "old", as if the two were hairstyles or fashion accessories.

Bob has used the expressions 'new anarchism and 'old anarchism'; 'unofficial anarchists' and 'official anarchists' to describe differences of position. This is confusing, deliberate or otherwise. For me, we are talking about liberalism and anarchism. 'New anarchism' looks like anarchism but tastes like liberalism, in that liberalism seeks the most amount of individual freedom attainable within capitalism. Anarchism seeks to eradicate capitalism.

Where there is capitalism there always will be (and always has been) a struggle between classes. Class analysis is power analysis but 'power analysis' denies class analysis. Chris says "there are no enemies, only potential allies" i.e. there are no classes or, at least, there should be class co-operation. This 'classessness' is exactly what John Major, the new Prime Minister of Britain advocated in his first speech to parliament as PM. Are we not told by the Murdoch press that we are all aussies together? Would the Murdoch press not have us beleive that there are no (class) enemies, only potential allies? The only group of people in society that talk of class struggle alienates are those in whose interest it is to maintain capitalism.

Anarchism is the theory that came from the labour movement in struggle. Small 'l' liberalism is the pontifications of those chin-stroking, port-swilling, pipe-smoking intellectuals (who know best) who seek the most amount of freedom for themselves without threatening the 'freedom' of class mobility.

Let's dispense with this bullshit about violence, let's adress the real issue that cleaves the anarchist movement today. I invite those who are genuine in their desire for discussion about clas and power to engage in some meaningful dialogue. Let's stop discussing things we already agree on or know. (Is that not the point of this newsletter?)

Reject Burrowes; embrace Bakunin!

Leigh Kendall

Letters!!!

Dear Comrades,

The debate about violence in the pages of ANN seems to be composed largely of people talking past each other, but at the risk of doing likewise I've decided to join in. I used to be a pretty orthodox anarcho-pacifist, but I was forced to change my position after consideration of some uncomfortable facts.

> Fact 1. Virtually anybody under physical attack will defend themselves if they see any prospect of success. To do otherwise is to accept the tyranny of those who use violence to achieve their objectives.
>
> Fact 2. To do nothing while another is under attack is to accept the result of the existing balance of strength. This allows aggressors to plan the course of events to their advantage.

However, neither of these facts do away with the pacifist critique of violence. The only way out of this apparent contradiction is to recognise that though the use of violence produces harmful results *even if the "right" side is victorious*, it is still the lesser evil to use reasonable force in defence of life and limb.

In recognising the right to self-defence, we must be aware of four things:

> (a) We do not surrender this right when we engage in political activity. We have just as much right to defend ourselves against cops and fascists as against muggers and violent intruders. The steps taken, of course, must be reasonable in the circumstances as they are known at the time.
>
> (b) This right derives from the human condition and is thus universal. We cannot condemn our enemies for defending themselves against threats to life and limb. On the other hand, we can condemn them for defending oppressive and violent social relationships.
>
> (c) Arguments cannot swim, and it is all too easy to drown them in blood. Once the violence starts, people stop listening. The more our activities threaten oppressive institutions without threatening life and limb, the greater the political success.
>
> (d) It is power, not co-operation, that grows from the barrel of a gun. The more violence we use, whether justified or not, the more problems we store up for ourselves afterwards. This point and the previous two are therefore powerful arguments for pursuing non-violent strategies of political change.

I believe that only this approach, or something close to it, offers a way out of the sterile name-calling that often passes for debate in the Anarchist movement about violence. To avoid authoritariaism, but also to survive, it is incumbent on us to plan carefully to avoid violence, and to be ready to defend ourselves if these plans fail.

In other words, I want a revolution, but not over my dead body.

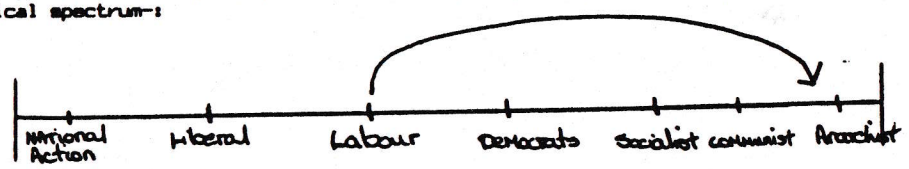
Greg Platt

A CHANCE FOR REAL CHANGE

The first time I ever voted was not long after my 18th birthday. It was also the last time that I voted. Even before I 'became' an Anarchist I had decided that my one paltry vote could not affect a change in government.

Revolution is the obvious answer, a coup. Just overthrow the government but in reality that also means overthrowing a pretty large percentage of the population. The reality is that a lot of people believe in capitalism, like the idea of lots of possessions ect.

Anarchists come from a pretty radical end of the spectrum and a majority of the population are not going to jump from voting Liberal/ Labour to taking over their industry. It is a big jump !! Picture a pretty simplistic diagram of the political spectrum-:



Even for Labour voters to jump the distance we are talking about they would have to use a huge pogo stick and a lot of people are scared of jumping.

So how do we start affecting realistic change? I know a lot of arguments for not voting. If I stop voting and you stop voting and then everyone else stops voting, a sort of no-confidence motion, then volez. No government. But isn't that all a bit unrealistic?

In countries where voting is not compulsory governments are often elected on less than 60% of the possible vote. In the last Australian Federal election the amount of 'no-confidence' votes was less than 10% and a lot of this figure is said to be from people that didn't understand how to vote. So I suggest that the no-confidence' reason for not voting doesn't work.

One of the major reason why I don't vote is that there are no parties in whom I trust or whose policies I really agree with and I doubt that there ever will be. So why vote for someone who once again not going to give me what I want?!

I believe that Victoria will go Liberal at the next election. I believe that Federally we will go Liberal/National at the next election. This country has tied itself into a 'if it's not Labour, it's Liberal' knot and from my point of view (I want change soon, not when I'm dead) both Liberal and Labour are pretty much the same.

Real political change only seems to occur when change only seems to occur when change is already happening.The chance of any sort of Revolution under a Liberal Government is slim. Under the Labour Government it is not much better. Under the Democrats it might be better.

I don't really know a great deal about the democrats and I'm sure I would disagree with a lot of their policies but on a lot of issues they seem to be more left than the major parties and I see more possibilities for real change under a democratic government. I live under a fascist Liberal Government and I see fascism rearing its ugly head a lot.

I will vote for the Democrats at the next elections and I will encourage my friends to do the same because I want to bring the possibilities of real political change a little closer.

DAVID WALES