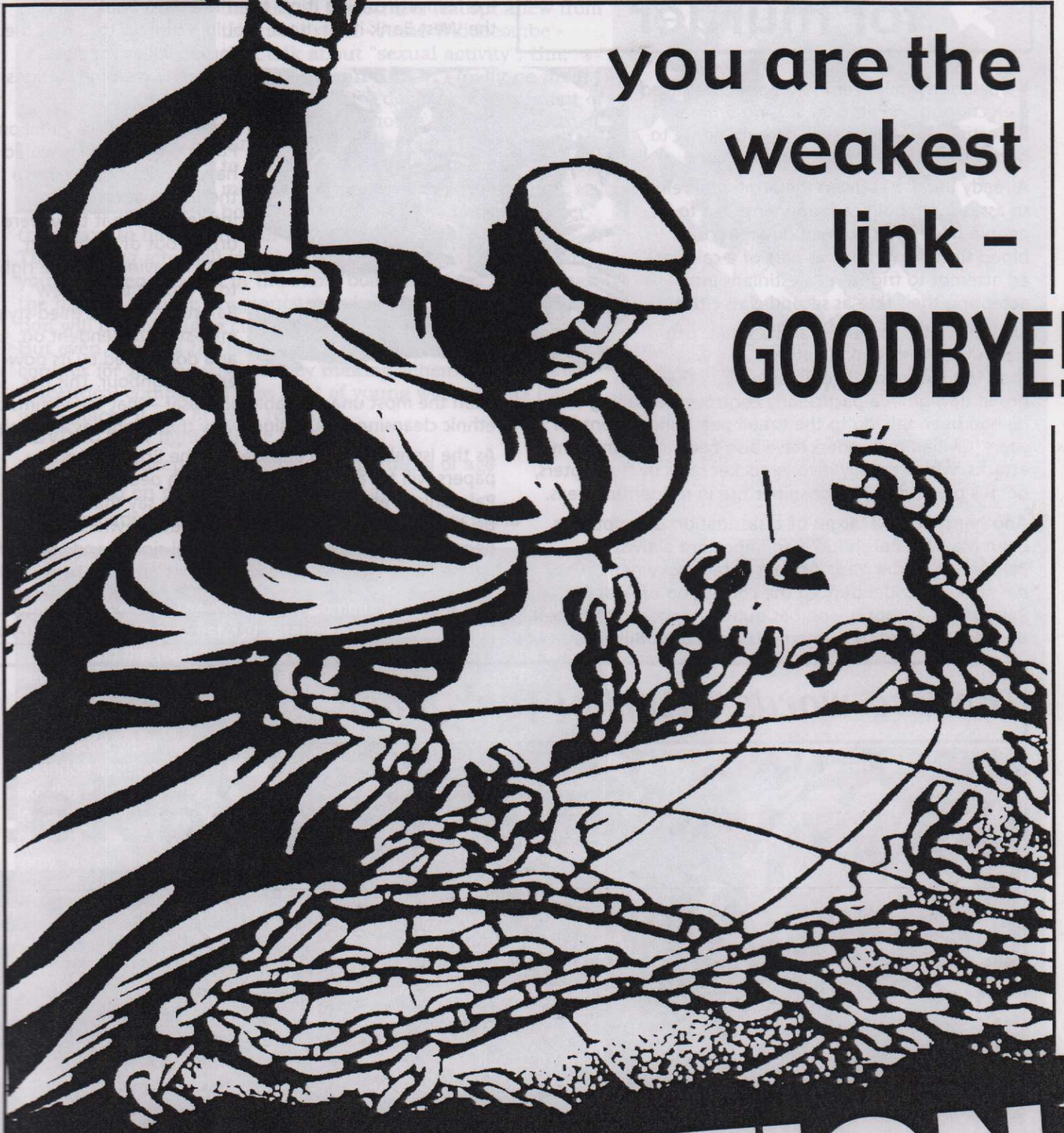


CAPITALISM

you are the
weakest
link -
GOODBYE!



REVOLUTION

ISSUE 41 ✪ 20p/donation

Israel: Barak seeks a new mandate for murder

Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak has called elections on 6 February. It is no ordinary election. He will be seeking a mandate to batter the Palestinians into submission.

Already Barak has given the army free rein to assassinate political opponents. Up to 30 people have been gunned down in cold blood since November, as part of a calculated attempt to frighten Palestinians into accepting their fate as second-class citizens.

Thabet Thabet, a dentist and a senior official in the West Bank health service, was shot 15 times and killed outside his home in broad daylight – a particularly controversial killing since he had been talking to the Israeli peace movement for 12 years. Civilian bystanders have also been killed in many attacks, which usually involve rocket raids by helicopters, bombs planted in cars or sniper fire in residential areas.

Another repeated target of assassination attempts has been Marwan Barghouti – an important activist in Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat's Fatah movement, who has repeatedly denounced the corruption of Arafat's Palestinian Authority and has publicly opposed the latest deal put forward by outgoing US president Bill Clinton.



Under the Clinton plan, the Palestinians would have a "state" – without an army to defend itself – in 90% of the West Bank and all of the Gaza Strip. Jerusalem would be divided between Israel and the Palestinians. Israel would keep the illegal settlements to the east of the city – effectively cutting it off from the West Bank – and in the West Bank itself. Israel would maintain troops in the Jordan valley for 3 years, and early warning stations for 10 years.

Additionally, the 3.7 million Palestinian refugees would have no right to return to the towns and villages inside Israel that they were driven out of by force in 1948 – having only the right to "return" to the new Palestine, an apartheid-style mini-state dependent on and dominated by its powerful neighbour. This has

been the most unacceptable proposal – that the victims of ethnic cleansing should sign away their rights as a people.

As the Israeli election approaches the British TV and papers will try and present Barak as a peacenik, and the Palestinians as a terrorist problem. We say that there can be no peace until there is a single state in which both peoples are equal citizens with equal rights, and to which all the Palestinian refugees have the right to return. And to achieve that, the terrorist Israeli state will have to be smashed.

BY MARCUS IN CLAPHAM

The two words InterPol fear most ...



Now the 'tuta bianca' syndrome is spreading throughout Europe, with affinity groups setting up their own self defence squads.

But Ya Basta! is not just a synonym for 'tuta bianca' and the right to protect yourself whilst demonstrating against the capitalist system and its guardians (read: the police).

The Ya Basta! association is a network of autonomous social centres across Italy, where

youth, unemployed, insecure and casual workers, young people searching for their first job can hang out, get advice, organise. Many of the centres started out as squats. They are united by their opposition to neo-liberalism, demanding a universal basic income and better conditions of life for everybody.

A helmet, a tyre, a shield, a 'tuta bianca' (white overall) and a toy water pistol. This is the identikit of any member of Associazione Ya Basta!

You would have seen them in Prague on the infamous 'suicide bridge', using their bodies as a weapon to push through police lines (and, in Prague at least, tanks too!)

Ya Basta!

There are more than 200 such self managed social centres in Italy, acting both as autonomous cells and as part of Associazione Ya Basta!. The 'tuta bianca' is therefore not a movement, just a means to an end.

Ya Basta! was formed in 1996 after Italian militants participated in the first Zapatista Encuentro (meeting) in Chiapas. Socialists and anarchists joined in and created a network of social centres, websites and initiatives. Ya Basta! has initiated, for example, ADL (Workers Defence Association, www.adl-cobas.org), in association with COBAS (an Italian Trade Union), whose main activity is legal as well as physical defence for workers. Another initiative is Razzismo Stop, which works side by side with immigrants for

THE MORNING AFTER THE NIGHT BEFORE



When it was announced that the morning after pill could be got over the counter, most women in Britain were dancing in the streets (except a few from the rabid right - Anne Widdecombe - that talk about "sexual activity". Um, don't you mean **SEX?**). Finally no more hassling to get a doctor's appointment or waiting up to 4 hours in a family planning clinic. Now you can just stroll down to the local chemist. Women have gained more control over their fertility, their bodies and the right to choose whether they want to have a child or not. Or so it would seem...

The morning after pill is to be restricted to those over 16 so young women are still in the same boat as before. Britain has the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Europe and this restriction will do nothing to change this fact.

But even worse is the fact that the pill will be SOLD over the counter for £20 (another money making scheme for the pharmaceutical companies). For a lot of young women, this high price places it out of their reach.

REVOLUTION fights for:

- ☆ Free contraception on demand regardless of age
- ☆ Abortion on demand regardless of age
- ☆ Informative and complete sex education in schools

the defence of immigrant rights.

And there's more. The 'Sherwood Communications Agency' is also part of the Ya Basta! network and involves a massive use of the internet and the media, so as to give voice and visibility to the whole network, from Ya Basta! and the social centres to ADL and Razzismo Stop.

The ideology behind all this? Well, in their own words: 'We chose to abandon ideologies. We have analysed some aspects of society - like the modification of the production system, the dominant role of information and the importance of the environment and other themes until now considered 'social' rather than 'political' - and to act accordingly, we cut the chains that tied us too tightly to Marxist orthodoxy'.

But Marxist ideology is a tool. Marxists have to update it, make it relevant and apply it to current issues.

For example, Karl Marx could not have given us the answers to Global Warming in 1848. It did not exist! But Marx gives us a framework that allows us to understand the way capitalism works and a strategy to destroy it.

Global warming is the direct result of capitalism's blind drive for short-term profit and its inability to plan for the needs of the planet as a whole. The Marxist answer? Nationalise industrial production under the control of the workers and local communities. Make it safe or replace it with safer technology. Develop greener forms of energy production like solar power. Abolish the nation state so we can tackle global warming internationally.

In other words Marxist ideology can only become stale if it is treated like a bible, never updated or developed. Maybe we'll have to send Ya Basta! more copies of Revolution - they can pay for them in 'tuta bianca'!

by Francesca in Peckham

WANKER OF THE MONTH

by P.A.N.ts in Peckham



This month's winner even did us the favour of including a handy "W" in his name: George W Bush, president-elect of the United States and therefore "leader" of the world's most Capitalist country.

Bush is the archetypal Capitalist, for whom W**ker of the Month is too generous a tribute. So where to begin? Well, we could mention that he has signed 145 death warrants in his time as Governor of Texas believing it to be a "necessary deterrent" in the fight against crime. In truth, like the incarcerations he presides over, they are merely a means of controlling the ethnic minorities and the socially oppressed. Or perhaps his anti-abortion stance that seeks to make terminations illegal in the US by taking them out of the hands of the mother in question and sending them to the Supreme Court.

There is also his racist immigration policies and his support for the "Southern Confederation" which in practice is a desire to return to the days of slavery and oppression of ethnic minorities. Not much has changed in the "Land of the Free" (perhaps the biggest joke of all) since those days of lynch mobs and prejudice. Bush takes over an American state riddled with social injustice, exploitation of youth and workers.

This State operates a foreign policy specifically designed to strangle and bully the 3rd world into a position from where they are forced to eat from the palm of rich countries' hands and thank them for it.

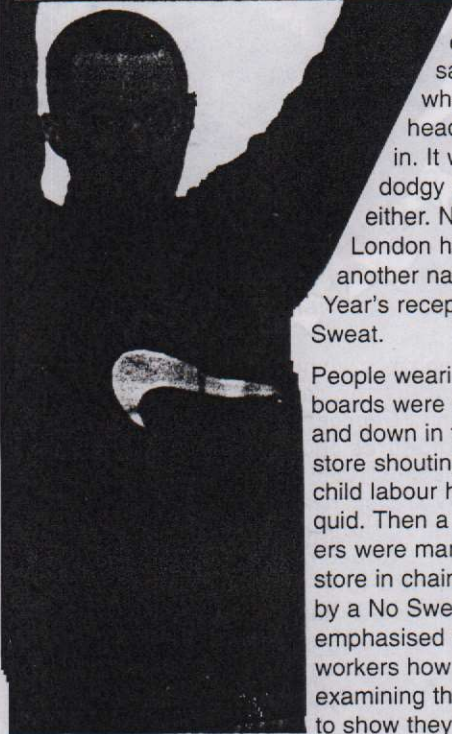
He then demonstrated his immense concern for the welfare of the masses by announcing that he thought the concept of state health care was outdated and that private healthcare was the way forward. The way forward for his corporate, rich friends and colleagues that is.

I feel that the last word should be left to Bush himself, and a few of his more choice demonstrations of stupidity:

"The holocaust was an obscene period in our nation's history. I mean this century's history. But we all lived in this century. I didn't live in this century" (yeah, like we hadn't realised!) And to just prove that not only does he not live in this century, but not even this planet, "Mars is the same distance from the sun, which is very important. We have seen pictures where there are canals, we believe, and water. If there is water there is oxygen and that means we can breathe."

NIKE = sweatshop slavery

No Sweat campaign JUST DO THEM



The Nike board of directors had barely finished toasting last year's megaprofits (\$579 million!) and wishing each other more of the same in 2001 when the headache kicked in. It wasn't the dodgy champagne either. Niketown, London had received another nasty New Year's reception by No Sweat.

People wearing sign-boards were walking up and down in front of the store shouting "Get yer child labour here, 4 kids for a quid. Then a row of child workers were marched up to the store in chains, hurried along by a No Sweat auctioneer. He emphasised and what hard workers how fit they were, examining these wage-slaves to show they were healthy.

Each child held up a contract with one clause such as "I agree to work for 70 hours a week", "I agree to be locked up in a dormitory at night" "I agree not to have a baby". The selling began - prices started at an unbelievably low 25p!

Still, even that was too high. Nike security bid for the first child (at least we were sure that we saw them give us the sign) but then

The No Sweat January sales: Child Labour at Rockbottom Prices!

they refused to have any of it. The auction was

opened up to pedestrians and customers but, while enjoying the offer, they refused to sink to Nike's depth. It looked like the sale was a flop!

Then to our amazement a Nike child labour buyer* came out of the store, pushing his way through the security, and started off the bidding! 25p was evidently way too much. Nike paid much less for child labourers in China and Cambodia - we'd have to do better. Then another fatcat turned up from Gap*, saying he heard there was a



Dec 17th No sweat xmas xploitation xposé the elf liberation front at Niketown

child labour sale going on and the bidding got truly intense as buyers shouted each other down to get their bid in. It even began to turn into a tussle - scandalous how those capitalists behave when they sniff a bit of cheap labour!

After a half an hour of wheeling and dealing, one of the slaves had enough, and she began to unionise the workers. "They need us, we don't need them! There's only one solution-" "REVOLUTION!" Everyone ripped through their (paper) chains, seized the auctioneer's hammer and piled on the oppressors, ultimately chasing them off around the corner.

Groups of customers clustered in front of the pillars of Niketown's entrance, watching the auction, and hundreds more stopped and signed a petition demanding that Nike accept independent inspections of its factories and allow unions.

Management finally sent someone out saying they'd like to meet up and discuss the campaign, asking people what their addresses are...yikes, the Niketown men-in-black come knocking on your door late at nite...** Now they're the ones starting to sweat because they know we're for real, we're not going to go away. They've got that one right. There's loads

everyone in protest! No Sweat sez

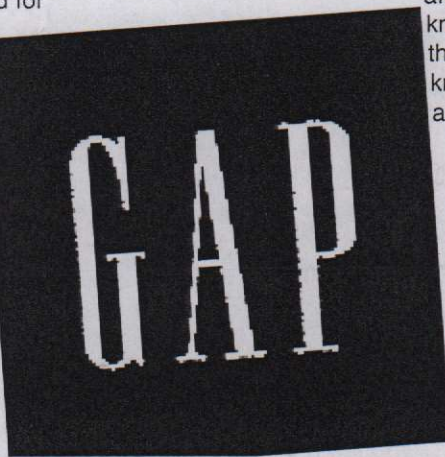
Zap the

birmingham

Birmingham S26 Collective has taken up the No Sweat campaign. Formed to organise the Prague demo against the IMF last September, the collective has decided to keep going as an anti-capitalist united front. After watching the Panorama programme on TV we plan to take the cause to the doors of the local branch of Gap. We found the US No Sweat websites and produced our own leaflet "There's some Gaps in their story" which details the sweatshop conditions of their workers.

On Friday 19th January we are hosting a video evening at Friends of the Earth and planning action for the following day. Birmingham S26 Collective includes anarchists, socialists & environmentalists.

This is our mission statement: "Birmingham S26 collective; an anti-capitalist collective, fighting united and in solidarity for an end to militarism, globalisation, privatisation and all forms of exploitation and oppression" You can contact us on s26@hotmail.com



sheffield

No sweat in Sheffield has been concentrating its activities in ensuring the opening of Gaps new store in the city centre passes without a hitch! Most weekends we can be found advertising Gap. Advertising it's use of sweatshops and child labour that is. We are building a campaign to ensure Gap gets a nasty surprise when its doors first open for business. As well as leafleting and stunts we are also in contact with the shop workers union Usdaw to try and unionise the shop. If you want to get involved phone 07779 021508 or e-mail sheffnosweat@yahoo.co.uk

cardiff

The manager of Cardiff Gap warned staff to expect trouble after Panorama exposed Gap's use of child labour. Revo supporters made sure he got it. On December 2nd we arrived with a stack of leaflets exposing Gap's dirty linen - the 12 year olds they employ and the wages of 35p a day they pay. Security staff were not happy but there was nothing they could do. Hundreds of shoppers picked up the leaflets and several signed up for the No Sweat campaign.

After this first action, Revo won the support of the Cardiff Socialist Alliance for No Sweat. On 16th December we hit Gap again - with twice as many leaflets. This time the response was even better, with dozens signing up. The campaign, however, has only just begun. We'll be hitting Gap again in January and February, with a public meeting planned for Tuesday 20 Feb (upstairs at O'Neills), and a fundraising gig to follow. Though Gap is our main focus, we're opposing all stores who use sweatshops - and that means all the major clothes retailers. contact jonjblake@aol.com

No Sweat
JUST DO THEM

Build a
No Sweat
campaign
in Britain

No Sweat! Is off to an excellent start. Already it has shown the potential for a broad-based, militant campaign in Britain. So far, the anti-capitalist movement here has focused on big events: May Day 2000, Prague, Nice. For some activists, Genoa, where the Group of 7 major capitalist states plan to meet in July, is the logical next step. The problem with this is that there is only a limited number of committed activists who can hop from one international summit to the next.

If we are to build a mass anti-capitalist movement with roots on every campus, in every school and town, then we have to start making the links between thinking globally and acting locally.

Globalisation may mean mega-profits for the mega-corporations. But it also makes them mega-vulnerable to solidarity action. We can make a difference locally as well as globally. That's why we urge every anti-capitalist to join the No Sweat! Campaign and build a movement that has as many local fronts as Gap and Nike have stores.

of action coming up. RevolutionTV got this action plus the xmas "Niketown Santa's Sweatshop" action together into a short video. This is only the beginning - Nike, Gap, be afraid, be very afraid.

>>> WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Download some petitions with the code of conduct, posters and leaflets from the website, and invite a no sweat speaker and video to your school, college or union.

*ye olde No Sweat disclaimer: obviously these were no sweat members in disguise, not REAL buyers from Nike or Gap, before all the corporate lawyers out there start drooling over their briefcases.

** a joke, we in no way mean to imply that Nike uses death squads here or anywhere else in the world. No, in places like China they rely on the "legitimate" force of the army, secret police, and repressive and undemocratic laws to imprison strike and union organisers.

LETTER FROM A NIKE STRIKER

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are workers at the Kukdong Internacional SA de CV factory. We make sweatshirts for Nike, some with university logos. We have been working for a year and month, during which we have suffered mistreatment from the Korean supervisors. Some talk to us in their language, and though we do not understand them at the moment, after researching the words, we know that what they call us the most means "trash".

We write you to ask for your support and solidarity with the work stoppage we have begun. We don't want to hurt the company, we just

want to remove the union, since we were forced to join it and threatened with being fired if we did not. People who started work in the factory were made to sign their affiliation without knowing what they were signing. The union gained power, but this power was not to help the workers, but to serve the union's and the company's interests. Therefore we were forced to stop work to show our disagreement, and to be heard. We thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Josefina Hernandez Ponce

Messages of solidarity (preferably in Spanish): librado@gofairtrade.net

Take action!

Fax or email your protest to Nike and Kukdong, and demand they recognise the independent workers' union and force the factory to reinstate the sacked workers:

Phil Knight, chairman and CEO of Nike Inc. Fax: 00 1 503 671 6300

Kukdong International-Mexico Fax: 00 52 2446 1024

Email: kukdong@avante.net.mx

Send contributions made out to "No Sweat Campaigning Fund" (write Kukdong on the back) to No Sweat! BCM Box 7750, London, WC1N 3XX.

A Nice Revolution

These capitalists sure choose great venues for their get togethers. First Prague, then Nice ... but I suppose Blackpool isn't really an option for the world's ruling elite. Still I'm not complaining, a couple of days in the south of France with a riot thrown in, can't be bad.

A group of British Revo members, together with comrades from France and Germany, joined up with thousands of trade unionists, socialists, anarchists environmentalists and other anti-capitalists to protest against and disrupt the European Union summit.

On the day before the summit, 100,000 trade unionists from all over Europe flooded into Nice. They came from Italy, Spain, Portugal, the UK and even as far as Slovenia, Hungary and Poland.

However the march was overwhelmingly French. It was inspiring to see the working class in action. Many had gone on strike to attend, and hundreds of flares and firecrackers were burnt creating a carnival atmosphere as each contingent waited to move off. And for some it was a long wait, the rear of the march eventually setting off 5 hours after the front!

Militant though it was the aim of the trade union leaders was clear, a passive show of force. Even more disappointing was the fact that the vast majority left that evening, rather than confronting the summit directly the next day.

Unlike the Czech authorities, the French knew what they were doing. They undemocratically stopped a thousand members of Ya Basta (see page 3) making the short journey from Italy. We joined a protest of around 4,000 that marched on the central station demanding they be allowed through the border. Reaching the station we were confronted by tooled up

riot police which we quickly outflanked. Realising they were severely outnumbered they hastily retreated. A sweet moment, which unfortunately didn't last long as reinforcements arrived and started firing volleys of tear gas. A taste of things to come.

Next day we woke early from our makeshift sleeping arrangements in a sports hall filled with a couple of thousand anti-capitalists. By 7 am we were on the streets marching towards the conference centre, our ranks swelling all the time. As we neared our objective we lined up behind the barricades. We eyeballed the cops. Then, without warning, the tear gas started. We fell back and regrouped, then marched forward once more to cries of "Tous ensemble! Tous ensemble! Oui Oui" (All together! Yes!). As the gas canisters came flying once more we rushed towards the barricades and started pushing. But the gas was getting thicker, and the cops started raining blows on those at the front.

Eventually we had to make an orderly retreat. Assembling all the forces together we marched defiantly, if not a little red eyed, around Nice and returned to the convergence centre.

The experience of Nice highlights the problem facing the anti-capitalist movement. If 95% of Europe's most militant trade unionists hadn't been directed away from the fight by their leaders things would have been very different. The anti-capitalist movement needs to unite with the organised working class - when this happens it will be a mighty force indeed.

A great opportunity exists to achieve this on May Day, the workers' day. Not a response to an attack, or a bosses summit, but a celebration of working class solidarity and strength. A day, which can unite the millions around the world who have been taking action against the IMF, against poverty, against privatisation, against capitalism. A day in which millions of workers, youth and oppressed across the planet can unite in a single cry of "Enough!"

By Simon in Sheffield

www.destroyimf.org/nosweat/nosweat.html

THE BIRTH OF CAPITALISM

TURNING PEASANTS

Economists and politicians all argue that capitalism is the only economic system that works, that it is as natural to human life as the air that we breathe. Not only do they try and cover up the brutality of capitalist exploitation today, but they hide the true history of how it came about from the text books we get at school.

Four to five hundred years ago there was no such thing as capitalism. The economic system that dominated the world was feudalism. In feudal societies all the power and wealth lay in the hands of a small despotic elite who ruled over the mass of poor peasants. Most people were peasants, forced to scrape a living off the land which was owned by a feudal lord, who just took his cut of the food grown by the peasants. Under feudalism, the peasants were actually tied to the land from birth to death and not allowed to leave the Lord's manor. This kind of semi-free labour, where people were not directly owned by their masters (slaves), but neither free to quit or move from their master's estate, is called serfdom. Peasant families and villages were pretty much self-sufficient. The Lord would grant his peasants the right to stay, to use areas like hills and forests for their own economic activity like gathering wood, herding, hunting and using these raw materials to make such things as clothes and tools. It suited the lord because he would take a cut of all these products too.

This system had existed in various forms for thousands of years. So how did capitalism come about?

Capitalism began in England. It was a ruthless system that had to be imposed on working people by new property owners and the legal system they devised. It was so unnatural a way of living that people had to be robbed, beaten, locked up and hanged in order to comply with this new regime.

It is a system based upon industry where a small ruling class of millionaire capitalists own what Marx called "the means of production": the factories, power plants, land and transport, all the means to produce the things we need.

The rest of society is made up of people who own nothing but the ability to sell their labour. In order to survive workers are forced to work for the capitalist who in return pays the workers a wage, takes what the workers have made and then sells it on the market for a hefty profit.

Capitalism may be global today, but it started on this tiny island. How did this process begin, of turning peasants into workers?

To really take off it needed a captive labour force that had no land to live on, and so no alternative but to work for a boss. With the wage they received in



exchange, they would buy food and shelter instead of producing it themselves. The capitalists didn't need the peasants on the land, but they did need them in the factories. But to create a working class the capitalists had to throw the peasants off the land, which was the source of their livelihood, and it was not a peaceful process. It was an act of brutal force. They were forced off the land through the use of enclosures.

The enclosures: the biggest heist in history

You may have heard about enclosures at school. It went on for three centuries in waves. It was about forcibly stopping the communal use of the land for planting or pasture, and redefining it as private property: forests, grass, soil, water, wildlife, everything. The reason was that as towns arose and trade developed, the lords could get a lot more out of their land if they produced for the market, selling food and other agricultural goods for a profit, rather than just taking their cut from the peasantry. This economic incentive to produce food for a market rather than consumption was the driving force behind the enclosures.

They took place in 1450 on a massive scale and within 50 years half the country was enclosed and "a mass of free

unattached proletarians hurled onto the labour market". Between 1600-1760 a further 30% of the land was enclosed. Small plots gave way to big estates: by 1700 big aristocratic landlords held 75% of all cultivable land and were using it to farm for profit.

With the loss of the land began a new form of relationship to production. In 1400 the vast majority of peasants were tied for life to a feudal manor. By 1640 40% had been pushed off the land – about 2 million landless peasants. In 1560 only one in ten peasants were wage labourers, but by 1688 this figure was 56%. A proletariat was in the process of being born.

Get a job!

For long time wage labourers could also work for themselves part-time and escaped full proletarianisation.

Capitalism in land and industry had not developed to the point where it needed a massive force of full-time waged workers. But during the 1700s the global market expanded to the point where it did. The feudal system of industry under which production took place in small workshops and guilds no longer sufficed for the growing needs of the market and manufacturing took its place. Capitalist farmers wanted the rest of the land and early manufacturers needed labour to fuel their mills and mines. The result was one final all-out war on communal land, by means of Acts of Parliament beginning in the 1760's. Anti-vagrancy laws said everyone had to be employed, to force the landless into work. These were enforced by an extension of the death penalty and hangings, and using the army to suppress riots and put down revolts. In the 1780s the number of those in prison rose by 70 per cent and the number of executions almost doubled.

The enclosures laid the basis for large scale, capitalist agriculture that ultimately, through its efficiency and use of machines, freed the majority of humanity from the endless, repetitive drudgery of farming and the narrow horizons of village life, with its superstition, ignorance and oppression of women and children. Whether such a thing could

PEASANTS INTO WORKERS

have occurred through a voluntary, just process is debatable, but what emerged was progressive compared to all previous societies. It provided the possibility of developing a society where we have many different things we can do and buy, and many different opportunities open to us: not the single option of a lifetime of backbreaking labour to make just enough food to eat and remain vulnerable to famine, disease and plague. But the enclosures were at the same time a "massive violence exercised by the upper classes against the lower". Marx called it an act of "ruthless terrorism".

The rise of industry: turning people into machines

By 1600 industry was already developing out of agriculture. Rural society along with the growing cities provided the mass market for industry (small tools, house fittings, footwear and textiles). Up to around 1700 these things were made by farming households, as a part-time profession of farmers and their families. Metalworking and textiles developed in the North on this basis. Peasant craftsmen were gradually transformed into merchants and employers who then employed the many more of their kind who were being pushed off the land by lords or by their inability to compete on the market. Those who were more efficient and invested and concentrated production (and their workers) into one or a few workshops gained over those who remained locked into primitive and small-scale methods of production.

Until well into the 18th century most exploited workers did not work in factories. This form of work was still exceptional: it was seen as a form of punishment and loss of independence. Early factories were set up as a sort of "houses of correction", sucking in child labour since people would not easily volunteer to go and work in these hell-holes. Between 1786 and 1805 a third of all apprentices died, ran away or went back to their parents.

But that changed as the market grew larger and the scale of operations grew

larger to feed the market; new machine techniques increased the productivity of each worker and lowered the cost of the product, allowing greater profits and driving the building of more and larger factories.

Inside the factories work discipline was resisted. The habit of punctuality and not stopping for breaks and working steadily had to be drilled forcibly into people. The capitalists' ideal was to "make such machines of the men as cannot err", to quote Josiah



Wedgewood, one of the first large-scale pottery manufacturers. His harsh system of factory discipline meant that in 1783 he had to call in the army to deal with a workplace revolt against his rules - one leader was hanged.

Again, at the time, the propagandists of capitalism did not try to hide the shameful facts. As one admitted: "the modern industrial proletariat was introduced to its role not so much by attraction or monetary reward, but by compulsion, force and fear forged over a fire by the powerful blows of a hammer."

This system didn't just come about. It had to be forcibly imposed on the people. The old feudal state, based on the landed aristocracy which stood in the way of capitalist production had to be swept away too. The English Revolution of 1649 was the first of many bourgeois revolu-

tions that swept Europe and ushered in a new epoch - capitalism.

And it's still happening...

Of course, this bloody story is not just a history tale. Across Africa, Asia and Latin America hundreds of millions endure these very same horrors as they are being forced to flee the poverty of rural life to the equally miserable city slums and shanty-towns. In China many peasants are being pressganged into factories as capitalism is being forcibly imposed on the country. Trade unionists are imprisoned. In Colombia thousands of peasants are cleared by death squads and the army off the land to make way for big capitalist ranchers.

One of the key components of the growing anti-capitalist movement is the peasantry of the third world - from the KRRS Indian farmers association struggling against Monsanto's expensive GM seeds to the Brazilian Sem Terra movement of landless peasants. The Zapatistas began their revolt as an insurrection of the indigenous peasants of Chiapas in Southern Mexico, where the NAFTA free

trade agreement threatened to take away the last remnants of land left to them after centuries of enclosure. We must support these struggles for the right of peasants to work their land. However we don't want a return to the village where everyone farms for subsistence. We want to take what was progressive about capitalism - technology and mass production - and use it to meet human need instead of profit. A socialist system that does not rely on the forcible exploitation of the many by the few but relies instead on the planned collective use of the earth's limited resources would release the millions of desperately poor from a life of servitude and begin to raise the quality of life for all across the globe.



by Richard and Andy

"It's legal, but it's bribery."

That's Linda Wade's verdict on the New Labour government. And she should know. When Linda started to campaign against the local council's plans to grant permission for a new housing estate on a green-field site just outside Newbury in Hampshire, she unearthed a startling discovery. The council had accepted gifts and services amounting to £100,000 from the construction company wanting to develop the site.

George Monbiot's new book, *The Captive State*, is full of stories like this one. You can read about how the people from the Isle of Skye were ripped off by an American Bank who built a much-needed bridge, then charged the islanders £5.70 just to use it.

But it gets worse. Not only are capitalists determining the shape of our cities and countryside, they have also bought their way into the corridors of power. George Monbiot gives us "The Fat Cats Directory" – an indispensable guide to sleaze and corruption. Check out the facts in the table above, and try Lord Sainsbury, the richest man in Britain, for size.

review by Jeremy in Camberwell



Campaigners like Linda simply wanted to keep a beautiful piece of countryside – a reasonable request since the new estate could have been built on a brown-field site in the

town centre. But the company wanted to build houses that would go for £100,000-plus, not affordable housing for workers, which is what the town really needed. So to hell with the environment! To hell with what workers really need! The council backed the profiteers who demanded the right to build a new estate that would be attractive to yuppies and commuters.

Commercial interests

- Chairman of Sainsbury's, the supermarket giant that has been referred to the Competition Commission for anti-competitive practices
- Chairman of the Food Chain Group which fights for food retailers' interests
- Investor in biotechnology company Diatech
- Built genetic engineering centre Sainsbury Laboratory

Government responsibilities

- Minister to whom the Competition Commission reports
- Head of the government's Food and Drink Foresight Panel which sets regulates the food industry
- As Science Minister lobbied the US government on behalf of Diatech
- Controls the research council which gives public funding to Sainsbury

Bribery and corruption. But what is Monbiot's answer? This, as he admits himself, is the weakest part of his book. The very title shows where he's coming from: *The Captive State*. As if all we have to do is free the state from the grip of the multinationals and the millionaires and all will be well.

But it won't be. The state is a capitalist state: always has been, always will be. It exists to represent the interests of the

ruling class. This is why it brings unelected billionaires like Lord Sainsbury of Turville into the cabinet rather than Linda Wade of Newbury.

This state does not need to be set free, it needs to be smashed and replaced by a totally different kind of state: one based on democratic workers' councils where the ordinary people of Newbury, and the Isle of Skye can debate and decide on their priorities, directing the resources of the planet and society to fulfill their needs rather than the bosses' greed.

Blackboards

The second major film by Samira Makhmalbaf, a 20 year old Iranian woman, has confirmed her position as a serious and courageous film-maker growing up under the Islamic regime.

Blackboards takes place against the lunar landscape of the mountainous border between Iran and Iraq. Visually, the director combines hand-held camerawork that makes it seem like a documentary with dizzying wide-angled shots of the sparse terrain.

The film opens with a small group of men standing rooted to the ground on a barren hillside as their loose-fitting trousers billow in a howling wind, each carrying a chalkboard strapped to his shoulders. Suddenly, whirring helicopter engines drown out the wind and the men run desperately for cover, sheltering beneath the boards. The men are itinerant teachers



seeking to trade literacy for walnuts but there is little demand for their skills as written language isn't of importance among the people whom they meet. This is a land where everyone is a nomad: they are all Kurds displaced from villages on the Iraqi side of the border.

The film focuses on 2 very different characters who ultimately end up on similar path, both teachers: Said and Reeboir. With his blackboard serving as a dowry, Said "weds" the only woman in a group of refugees returning to their bombed out village. Reeboir stumbles on a band of young boys who eke out an existence as smugglers of unspecified contraband on behalf of unnamed bosses. Makhmalbaf and the largely amateur cast create a deep empathy with the displaced Kurds who struggle to retain a human dignity amid the bestial circumstances arising from war and enforced exile.

it's your turn on the box when its

CCTV

As you can see, we've had our eye on you for some time now, Mr.

Video surveillance is open to massive abuse, and the pawns of the system waste no time in targeting ethnic minorities or the homeless. Women are also often subjected to entirely voyeuristic spying. A study carried out at Hull University, further states that, "the gaze of the cameras falls on those who are stereotypically predefined" and concludes that CCTV is nothing more than a tool of injustice, encouraging discriminatory policing and control.



Anderson...[we even know] you help your landlady carry out her garbage."

Ever had the feeling you're being watched? Well, in New Labour's Britain, you are. Scenes like this out of "The Matrix" are a reality as the state continues its insatiable quest for control and domination over ordinary people to protect the rich, their profits and property.

Tony Blair will tell you that Britain is a "world leader" in video surveillance and he's not wrong: £250 million is spent every year on a surveillance industry that now has an estimated 300,000 cameras covering everything from shopping centres to public facilities.

CCTV is an integral part of the government's social control programme. Promoted under as a primary solution for urban dysfunction and crime, it is nothing more than a continuation of the police state that capitalists the world over are imposing on the working class.

PAULO (PARANOID?) IN PECKHAM

But the Blairites do not stop at such measly measures of control! Image-recognition CCTV has already been implemented in Newham and the passing of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIP) Act means the government has the right to read and use against you, any messages, phone calls or Internet sites that you write, make or access. This violates just about every elementary human right you can think of, from the right to a fair trial to protection of privacy. Your e-mail can now be accessed by MI5, and you can be prosecuted if the content poses a threat to society (like overuse of the words "freedom" or "rights" probably).

REVOLUTION calls for an end to these controls that infringe on peoples' rights. It's time to bring down the apparatus used by the police state to control and intimidate.

REVOLUTION TV page

the revolution is televised...with mixed results. Rebel Heart is a BBC drama about the struggle for Irish independence. It comes highly recommended... bigots like David Trimble, head of the Ulster Unionist Party, want it banned!

The first episode deals with the 1916 Easter Uprising, showing how well-armed the army was, with cannon and armored cars ranged against old rifles and handguns. It ends with the Brits executing the rebel leaders.

The drama is encapsulated by two brothers, one with the rebels, one in the British army. Irish youth were sent to die in the trenches by the same Empire that kept their country in chains. As script- writer Ronan Bennett says, the tension is "in the arguments between those who ended up wanting to cut a deal and compromise, and those who said let's fight on."

The central character is the idealistic nationalist son of a doctor, just out of university. He is nicely dressed, with a piece of cake in his pocket from his mom. As a foil, there is an older, shabby and weathered working class fighter. He makes cynical comments, along the lines of "it's easy

being brave when you have a nice

home to go back to, a nice life to pick up, something to look forward to when you've had enough of playing soldier," and emphasises how there is no route for someone like him but to struggle.

However, the youth proves to be brave in the fighting and committed to his ideals. At the end, after

surrender and imprisonment, with his comrades being executed all around

him, he is offered a chance to leave. His respectable father has pulled strings for him, but he refuses to sign an order saying he will never fight again, and so stays in prison. The worker is executed.

Tellingl, at one point he asks his middle class ally, "Why would I want to trade an

English boss for an Irish one?" This fact - that different classes have different interests, even in a national liberation struggle - is unfortunately not developed. It is however one of the most important lessons of the Irish struggle: that the workers need to keep their political - and ultimately their military - independence if they are not to be shafted by their own bosses.

The great socialist leader James Connolly made just this mistake when he put his Irish Citizens' Army under the control of the middle class Irish Republican Brotherhood. And it was Republican leaders like Michael Collins and Eamonn de Valera who ultimately compromised with Britain and settled for the partition of Ireland.

It will be interesting to see how the series develops towards the war of independence.

It is well-acted, well-scripted and well worth checking out. And if it inspires more British youth to read up on this important struggle, so much the better.

Rebel Heart, Sundays at 9 pm, BBC2 - Andy in Peckham



“I’m not racist, but . . .”

Cumali Sinankili, a Turkish refugee, lies in a coma fighting for his life. Even if he recovers he is expected to be permanently brain damaged. On Christmas Eve he was viciously beaten; kicked, punched and stabbed in the eye in an unprovoked attack outside a South London pub.

On New Years Eve an Algerian man was stabbed repeatedly in the head, neck and chest as he celebrated New Year at a West End restaurant with his wife. He died two days later from his injuries.

These two cases are extreme examples but they illustrate a point: racist crime in Britain is on the increase. This should come as no surprise. The past year has seen a vicious hate campaign directed against asylum seekers. Politicians have competed with each other to appear the toughest on immigration. Newspapers have whipped themselves into a frenzy over so called ‘bogus’ asylum seekers.

In March of last year the Daily Mail wrote “The pool of potential beggar criminals – call them what you want – is deep. A generation ago it was just the Republican Irish and the West Indians. They have been joined by the West Africans... There are potentially millions more from the Balkans, the Caucasus, Ukraine, and Russia. Then there is Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and above all, India, with a billion people. Some of them have not yet even heard of Britain. But they will, they will.”

This is a typical “I’m not racist, but...” argument. Why are immigrants “potential criminal beggars” not white English people? Indeed, why is begging a crime

and not the cause of begging, poverty? Just because there are a billion people living in India, is it reasonable to assume that all of them are thinking of, or will think of living in Britain? Of course not. This is just whipping up irrational racist fears. This in turn creates a climate in which thugs like those who attacked Cumali Sinankili feel they can operate.

80% of people questioned in a recent Mori poll said they think Britain is a “soft touch”. 63% said too much is done to help immigrants but when asked to estimate how much asylum seekers get a week, their average guess was £113. In fact, the amount is £36.54 – less than income support! On average, respondents also thought immigrants made up 20% of the population whereas the actual figure is 4%.

The newspapers’ smears and peoples’ ignorance are linked. Throw enough mud and some of it will stick.

With a General Election coming up, we can expect things to get worse. Politicians will use immigrants as pawns in their quest for power. Blair and his cronies will want to win votes by scapegoating refugees and asylum seekers for the failings of his government. Tories like Ann Widdecombe want to lock all immigrants up in secure units – i.e. prisons.

The fight against racist crime must begin with the basic right of self defence. Black communities should organise to meet racist violence with anti-racist violence. But the racist ideas - which lie behind the violence - have to be fought as well, patiently but forcefully.



The roots of racism lay in capitalism

There is nothing natural about racism. It has not always existed as some people argue. Before capitalism there were certainly wars and oppression but it was never based on notions of racial superiority. Racism began with the rise of colonialism. With the growth of the cotton plantations in the Americas the bosses realised there was a huge labour shortage which could not be solved through European emigration alone. The only solution would be to forcibly enslave millions. But how could the ruling class

justify this when at home they portrayed themselves as the great defenders of liberty and equality?

The theory of modern racism was the answer. To defend their right to trade in humans the capitalists had to present some people as less than human. African blacks were the main victims initially. Soon scientists started to put forward theories suggesting they were more ape-like than human. Church missionaries were sent to civilise the wild savages. The theory was soon generalised to

include Asians and orientals, wherever the money men went to spread their system of exploitation the ‘natives’ were demonised. But it wasn’t until the twentieth century that this racism became common among working class people. Initially workers fought for the abolition of slavery and supported the union in the American civil war. But the bosses saw the danger of a united working class and encouraged racism, even fostering right-wing terror groups like the Ku Klux Klan, the

British Brothers League and the Nazis.

Theories of Aryan supremacy reached their logical conclusion with the holocaust. But even now Western capitalists use racist ideas to justify their exploitation of the third world. The terrible suffering and poverty the system creates is explained away by blaming it on “backwardness” and “laziness”. Capitalism created racism and keeps it going today which is why smashing their system is the ultimate answer to the racists.

ATARI TEENAGE RIOT

Atari Teenage Riot are fast becoming the most important political voice within the music industry. Not since the Clash has there been a band so full of hate for the system, move over Zack de la Rocha, Alec Empire is here to teach us a lesson! Justin from Camden (ish) has the low down.

JB: What are yours, ATR's and Digital Hardcore Recordings politics as a whole are you a Marxist or an anarchist or...

AE: I mean first of all, of course not everybody at DHR has the same kind of opinion ya know, but I would see myself as an anarchist. Most of the other bands they are very left you know but its like if you are for example 19 years old, a lot of these musicians they of course say "yeah anarchy" and stuff. But that doesn't matter so much as long as the music functions and kind of motivates people to question the system and stuff. That is the idea of the label and of the music.

JB: When did you first get into politics or become politically aware?

AE: I think it was really kind of early my family has a little tradition. For example you know my father was always very left but he's more like a social democrat or something but his father, my grandfather was a socialist and he was killed in the 3rd Reich in a concentration camp for that. So that's maybe why my father told me a lot about it and stuff and to be honest when I was in the punk scene in Berlin during the 80's like the whole punk scene was political. You know the German punk scene was always more political than maybe the one in England apart from a few bands. There was a lot of squats and my first shows were in squats and it was very political at the time.

JB: Would you consider yourself to be a revolutionary or a musician first?

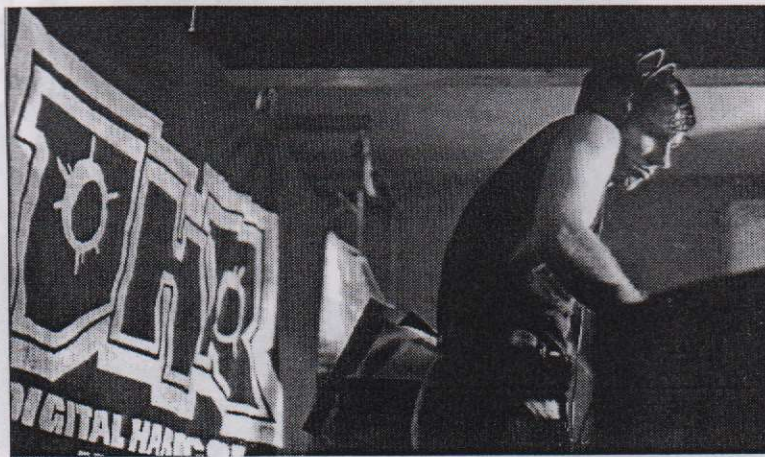
AE: I don't know if anybody could consider themselves a revolutionary. I guess that depends on the future and if we have achieved anything if we have created a change I only do the music because of the political situation I started making punk because I hated the system so much and all the consequences

JB: How do you think we can further the struggle against the capitalist system?

AE: That's very difficult because I think a lot of the old strategies have to be questioned I truly believe in, in anything that does damage to the system is good! You know for some people it's maybe it sounds to simple or something I think a lot of the

ideas in our band are really about ok " Go out in the street and do damage" . We think it helps the system to implode because the costs are rising and at some point a bigger part of the population will do that and the minority on top the ones who make all the profit will have to pay more and more out so....

JB: One argument that people have about smashing up McDonalds during demon-



strations is that it focuses all the media attention on to that and takes away the focus of the demo as a whole like Mayday last year when all the media focused on the McDonalds being smashed up

AE: Ok but that's what they will always do. You know I think that its so bourgeois if you look at the 'Black Panthers' in America and any radical left movement or something its always like " hey these people are violent they are terrorists fight 'em" it always kinda propaganda strategy from the bourgeoisie basically I think so! And the media is only for....

JB: You're saying that you can't escape from it?

AE: Yeah, yeah I think actually that if there wouldn't be any violence, and most of the time it's the police starting it by kind of like provoking it or even starting it. So I think that if there wouldn't be any action like that maybe it (the demo) wouldn't be mentioned at all in the media. *Laughs* Its like with us I see that all the time when we do interviews for examples and they cut most of the stuff out. To be honest cops for me are like the worst arseholes. I don't even draw lines like "yeah these ones they maybe help women". Its like they are all like fascists because they would just follow any order you know and

the weird thing is it's so schizophrenic in a way because they are being fucked by the system they protect people they shouldn't protect. I don't have problem with it.

JB: What is D.H.R.'s purpose, because a lot of so called revolutionary bands like Rage Against the Machine and the Clash were signed to major labels, would you say that setting up DHR was a conscious political decision to get away from that or was there more of an artistic reason?

AE: Yeah I mean for us it was a protection as we call it from the capitalist system. To set something up like this is very capitalist but because we have the control and we can make all the decisions we are very powerful and as musicians there is no compromise in what we need to do. For me to even sell records in a record store is already a compromise, but it's very difficult in a

world where MTV and all these kind of things get music out to people. Of course over the Internet but its still a very elitist kind of thing and sometimes its important to place records in record stores because that's where kids check stuff out. The idea is to take the profit and invest it again into the label and put records out that nobody else would buy. What else can we do?

JB: Ok last question. At the last gig you did at the London Astoria 2 you made a big speech

AE: *laughs*

JB: About how there was a total lack of British DHR type acts obviously with the exception of Lolita Storm who supported you that night, has that changed since last year?

AE: Not too much there is this new guy Fidel Villeneuve who's gonna play tonight he's from England he's good, I mean its not only about DHR bands with that sound I'm missing people who are criticising these days....

JB: Yeah you seem to be the darlings of the British music press what with NME; they seem to be licking your arse....

AE: Next year we change....

JB: Go pop....

AE: No, no, no they will hate us *laughs*

NIKE FACTORY

ON STRIKE!

800 women workers occupy Mexican factory

All 800 workers went on strike in a factory producing Nike goods for a whole slew of abuses. Some went directly against the code of conduct Nike has adopted under pressure from campaigners, such as forced overtime and failure to give benefits like maternity leave. Others were directly against Mexican law, such as forcing minors to do overtime, or against Convention 87 of the International Labour Organisation guaranteeing the right of workers to organise their own unions. The rest were just plain exploitative, like wages paying \$30 a for a 45 hour week, serving shite food in the canteen and verbal abuse.

The workers are rightly in revolt against all of them. Most importantly, the factory management had signed up everyone to a company-friendly union, without many even knowing. Now one of the main demands is to be able to form their own independent organisation and have it recognised by the company.

When 20 workers were sacked for complaining about the food, wage, and xmas bonuses, all 800 went out and occupied the factory, gaurding the gates with the support of the local village communities and the unions in the nearby Volkswagon factory. Then 300 police came to kick them out, led by the head of the stooge union. Despite surrendering before the police even got to the gates, the picket of 300 minors and women, many of them pregnant, were attacked and 15 hospitalised. The 2 independent

union organisers were kidnapped by the police and threatened before being released.

Now Nike's code of conduct "compliance" officer is down at the factory, but it is unclear if they will talk to the workers and their real representatives, rather than the stooge union and the management. You can do something about it:

LETTER FROM A
KUKDONG STRIKER p. 5

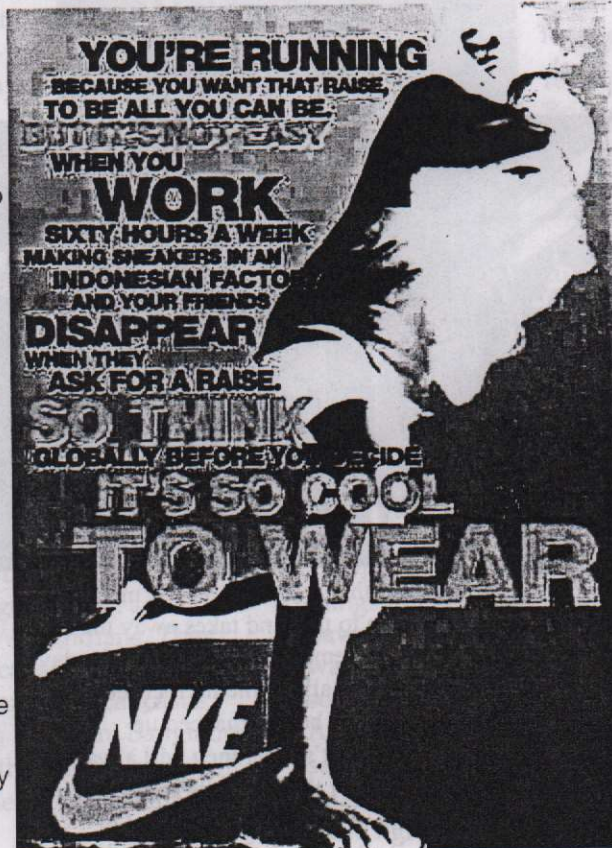
& one striker for Nike...RONALDO

As part of their bid to control the world of sport, Nike signed a \$100m contract with Brazil's football team and a \$1m deal with their star striker Ronaldo. This seemed like money for old rope until the 1998 World Cup Final.

Bizarrely Ronaldo was dropped from the teamsheet because he was violently throwing up, was restored to the line-up minutes before kick-off ... and then played as if he was about to throw up again.

Did Nike demand a say in the team selection? Millions of football fans believe so. The Brazilian parliament is even demanding to see Nike's contracts to see if there is a clause saying who should play when. So far Ronaldo is refusing to comply, which only raises peoples' suspicions - no one gives away \$100m without something in return.

Is this the face of corporate football to come? Will Manchester United, who are on the verge of signing a £300m deal with Nike, have to hand their team selections and transfer deals over to Nike's board of directors? There's only one way to be sure - drive the mega-corporations out of sport!



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