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A Southampton Anarchist Paper



FOR SOCIAL ARSON -
FIRE THE BOSSES & THE RICH!

WHAT A SHAM!

By now most of you probably know the story of the battle between ASDA Superstores and the Totton squatters but for those who don't I'll give a brief history followed by my own personal views.

Plans were formed to squat the 20 houses in Ringwood Road after ASDA announced plans to knock them down and build 120 car spaces. ASDA had been refused planning permission for the spaces but were still going to demolish the houses. A quick look at them revealed that most were in good habitable condition. And so, on 4th August, about 15 of us moved in and occupied the buildings, just 24 hours before demolishing was due to start. Local media was contacted, major headlines made, ASDA were publicly embarrassed and everyone, for the first few days, threw themselves into making the squats a political statement about local homeless people being kept on the streets because ASDA put profit before people. A good rapport was established with residents, which was very surprising as most are white middle-class Tories and we are mainly young scruffy anarcho-types. These squats were really the first major piece of publicity for SHAM (Southern Housing Action Movement) and I honestly thought that some good would come of it.

What I am going to say now will probably make me the least liked person at the squats. I don't care. I had no reason other than my total support of squatting as a political action to help them (I have a bedsit of my own for various practical reasons).

Because of access to a typewriter and duplicator I offered to produce a leaflet which the others said they would distribute. With help from a friend this was duly done. But when it came to distribution it was a dead loss. The leaflets and petition forms remained stagnant in one of the houses while the others waited for the public to come and get them. This was no good as people have to be confronted to listen to anything. A token effort was made but it was pointless.

I also spent quite a lot of time, as did the others, doing up the houses we were occupying. Carpets and furniture were brought in, water connected up and even a hot shower was rigged up. However the first weekend that the house I shared with 2 others was left unoccupied it was

abused by the others. We came back to find our lounge looking like a bomb had hit it. Of course everyone denied doing it but as 'our' house was the information centre as well, I would have thought that it would make sense to keep it fairly tidy for when the public and press came in (trying to dispel the myth that squatters are dirty smelly hippies!).

After a week in Totton we received news that there could be an illegal eviction attempt. Appeals were made for help and several people turned up to give us a hand. On the morning of the threatened eviction, however, most of the SHAM collective stayed indoors smoking and chatting, leaving a few of us with the task of organising defence, keeping watch for builders etc. It should have been the collective not our supporters who were doing this. An eviction was not attempted, thankfully, but most of our helpers went away with a bad opinion of SHAM.

The final straw for me came the following day when I saw one of the collective walking around outside with a plastic bag, glued up out of his head. It would have been all ASDA needed if the public or press had walked in and seen him (after all it was open house). So I had a serious think and decided that enough was enough. If these people (who are, admittedly, genuinely homeless) were not prepared to take some responsibility, then I certainly wasn't going to run my ass off for them. I left the squat that night.

I would say that their attitude would have been fair enough if all they wanted was a roof over their heads, regardless of public support (although this fucks it up for any future squatters). But they claimed that they were trying to make a political statement and in that respect it's been a total balls up. They now have until October 1st to get out, thanks to the efforts of a local housing co-op who went to the High Court to get some time. I was hoping for at least token resistance on the 1st but I've just discovered that they're going without a fight. Ever felt like you're smashing your head against a wall?

If the squatters want to reply to these criticisms they are more than welcome to use this mag to do so. I'd like to hear their defence!

- Ranting Rogue.

"THEY SAY IT'S WORTH MILLIONS - BUT LOOK WHAT THEY PAY US!" WORKING FOR MINIPACK

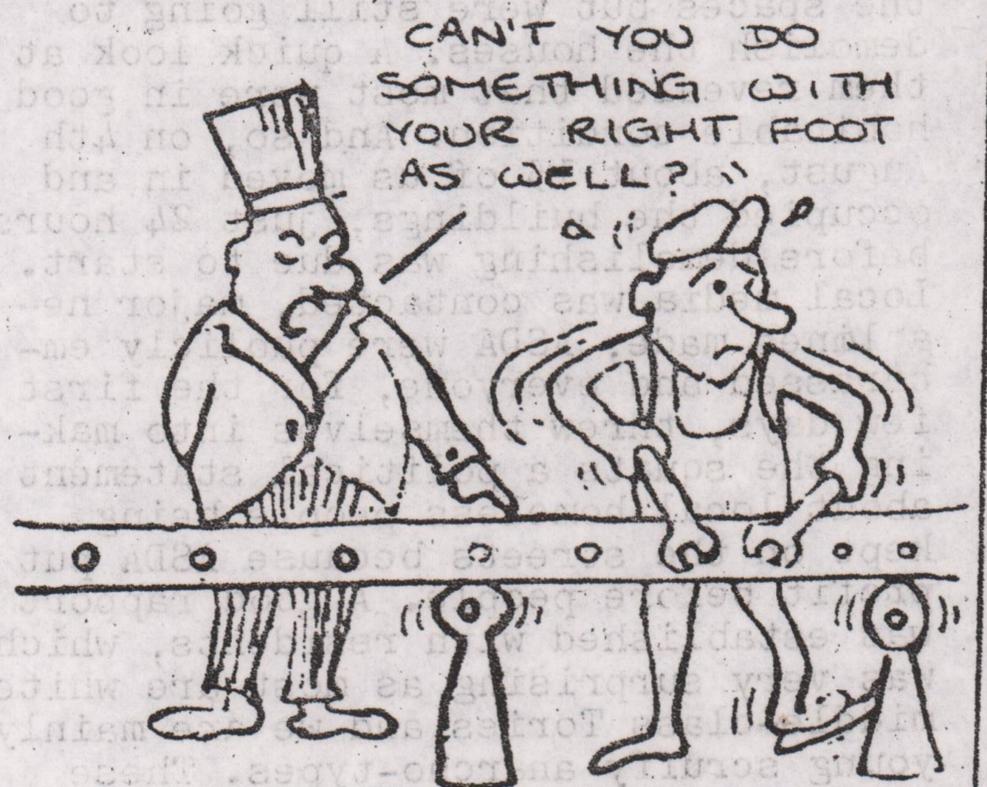
In the current economic crisis the main task of the employers is to secure their profits and attempt to carry on business as usual - which means cutting overheads and reducing labour costs, through wage cutting, sackings, increasing productivity, the use of casual labour, etc. In this the employing class has an ally in the government which, by relaxing health and safety rules, dropping minimum wage restrictions and sacking procedures, is making life easier for employers and harder and more unsafe for workers. As more and more companies increase the pace and intensity of work and worsen conditions for employees, so the state forces more of the unemployed into these low wage jobs through cutting the dole and general harassment ('snoop squads', B + B legislation, etc.)

One such company is Minipack Ltd., at the Waterloo Trading Estate in Hedge End. It specialises in packaging promotional samples of new products - coffee, sweeteners, cosmetics marmalade, etc. - distributed via women's magazines, door-to-door, etc. It is a subsidiary of the Tinsley Robor Group which makes record sleeves.

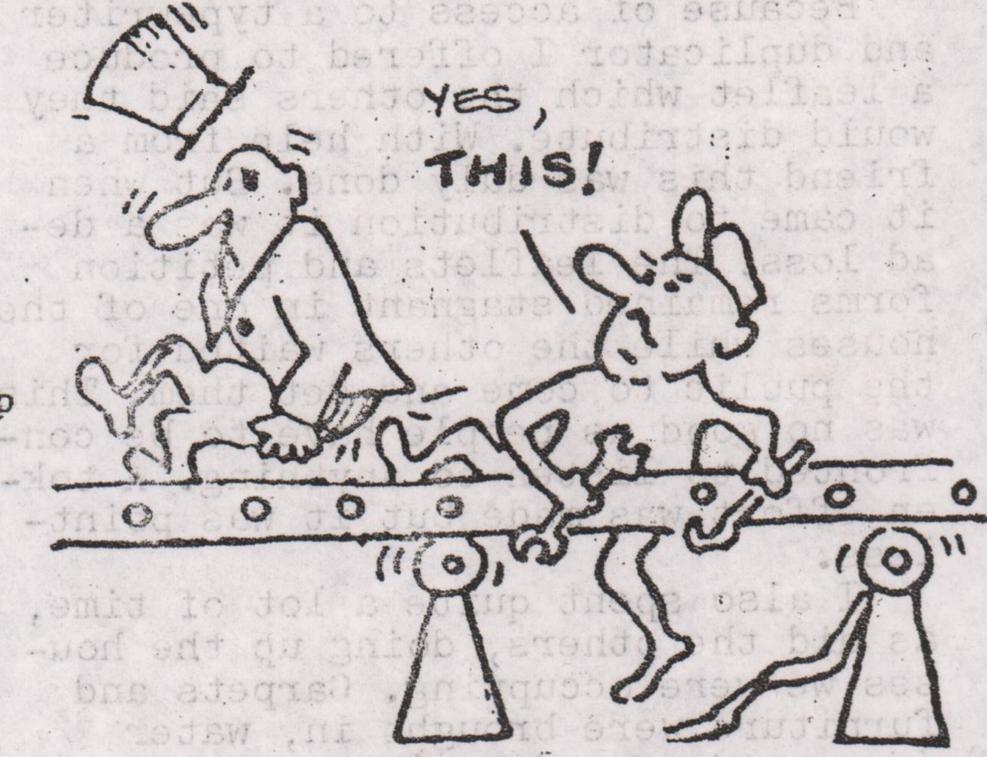
As you'd expect from a company that doesn't even allow the minimal protection of a union, there is no job security, the pay is shit and work is continuous, apart from half an hour for dinner and two ten minute breaks. There are three divisions of employees - the 'permanent' staff (about 30), most of whom are on £1:94 per hour (for a 40 hour week); the casuals (numbers vary) on £1:84 ph and the TAV agency workers on less, because they pay TAV for the 'privilege' of working there. Casuals on the night shift get £2:04 (!) after taking a pay cut. For Minipack the advantage of using casuals and agency workers is that they don't have contracts of employment - meaning no sick pay, bonuses, redundancy money, etc.; they can be sacked at any time and their numbers regulated according to how much work is on. As for the core of permanent workers, some are machine minders, paid an extra 20p an hour, and others are older women trying to keep up payment on mortgages, etc. They are supposed to feel 'lucky'.

There are three shifts worked - 2-10, 10-6, 6-2, plus a 'normal' day shift:- round the clock production with regular calls to speed up from watchful foremen and managers. One woman who couldn't keep up with the pace of the machine had it slowed down by the minder. The production manager promptly strode over and told the minder to speed it up - "I want this lady to earn her living". The same manager was still keen to see more productivity when he found two line workers chatting - "I want to see less talking with your mouths and more talking with your hands." For a time some of us had the relative coziness of sitting round a

table assembling marmalade packages, allowing us to 'take it easy' and have a chat. Management put a stop to that by installing another conveyor belt for us to stand around and try to keep up with. Not much conversation then, but the more the rate of work increased so did the number of mistakes. With so many faulty batches returned from clients and the number of rejects littering the floor, a hefty profit must be being made if they could afford that wastage.



Of course, once production targets had been reached then we could be dispensed with. On the last day the foremen were buzzing round exhorting people to speed up or keep on working. At four the 20 casuals were summoned, a foreman "Oh, as from now all casuals are suspended until further notice." All day this slime had been badgering us and lying through his teeth about the number of lay-offs. It was obviously all right for management to lie and spread false rumours, but only casuals could be sacked for passing gossip, as one found out a few weeks previously.



There was some resistance to the job, though much of it was necessarily hidden. One bloke who had lambasted the company for being

"THEY SAY IT'S WORTH MILLIONS....." (CONT.D)

Mickey Mouse outfit while in the canteen was sacked on the spot. Resistance often manifested itself as a lack of pride in the work (mostly among the casuals and temps), with good products being trodden on, defaced, generally damaged and mixed in with 'good' batches. Samples would be wrongly placed on the belt - clogging up the machine and giving a three minute break to have a chat or stretch out. Sometimes the distaste was more open:- a casual, seeing signs of over-enthusiasm from her colleague, told him to "Slow down. We're not paid enough to work fast." Also, two trainee storemen walked out after being told by a foreman to sweep the floor: "You can stuff your fucking job!" Arselickers and toadies were given short-shrift. One casual working hard to be made permanent was greeted with calls of "Cardboard!" - "Stiff!" from other casuals whenever he was around. On the day we were laid off he was made permanent - "For licking the boot that kicks him," as someone observed. Meanwhile, on the nightshift four people were sacked for smoking dope in the bogs - a popular place to escape to. People's disgust with the place was also reflected in the rush to get out of the door, either forever, or for the day.

Companies like Minipack present problems for anyone wishing to openly confront conditions because there is no 'safe' ground to stand on. However, these places do need to be supplied with materials from outside in order to carry on working. There is nothing to stop workers or sacked ex-employees striking for reinstatement, compensation, union recognition, etc. and mounting pickets to stop supplies, etc. In this respect union backing would be advantageous, to get the co-operation of drivers, blacking, boycotts, etc. Producing publicity and getting public support (moral and physical) is also important. This proposal should not, however, play down the effectiveness and persistence of other forms of struggle in these workplaces, described to some extent above; and these acts of everyday resistance should be publicised and encouraged.

This article is the first of a series on work. The next issue of Boot 'em will have the first part of a long article on working in the P.O. in the 70's. If you have any particular views on your place of work, we'd be glad to hear from you.

QUESTION TIME

1) Who said the following ;

"They are a subculture that seemed to manifest hate and evil to any who opposed them."

Was it? :

- 1) A railway guard talking about B.R. management.
- 2) Desmond Morris discussing the Cabinet.
- 3) An unemployed person talking about the rich.
- 4) A prisoner's view of the police.
- 5) Donald Smith discussing the Convoy.

2) Who made the following comments ;

a) "Your Board does not however share the widely expressed view that the planning system has totally failed to respond to the industry's needs."

and

b) "Your Company has ably demonstrated that the investment of private sector funds into areas of urban dereliction can act as a stimulus for industrial, commercial and housing development."

Was it? :

- 1) David Bellamy talking about urban development.
- 2) The captain of the *Burmah Endeavour* discussing his plans for the redevelopment of the docks.
- 3) The Chairman of ASDA, A.N. Stockdale, in ASDA's 1984 report.
- 4) Richard Nixon on Watergate.
- 5) Geoff Ranger discussing his plans for the change of use of the Labour Party's offices to an amusement arcade (or is that what they already are for some?).

The answers can be found on page 8.

A VIEW OF SKOOL



OUR DOLE OR

It is now fact - the Tories mean to cut our dole money and state hand-outs. The reasons are essentially two-fold. First, the economics of the situation; the so-called economic revival has turned out to be just another mirage in a long parade of mirages. In their ever-desperate efforts to help the rich by trying to help industry and commerce to make bigger profits the Tories have now recognised that they must divert more state expenditure towards the rich.

After having sold off a fair few of the state's heirlooms they're looking at the gas, electricity and water industries. However, flogging them off will not by a long, long, way pay out state benefits to the increasing numbers of people getting them. Revenue from oil will begin to fall in the next two years irrespective of the manic selling of oil by the British Government. It is an interesting aside that no longer do we hear cries of 'get the price of a barrel of oil down to 2 or 3 dollars' from the Americans - mainly because it would ruin the British economy. Anyway, the Tories have seen the writing on the wall - Labour's alternative is to cut nuclear defence costs and divert resources to create jobs as opposed to attacking the rich, capitalism and the state. Labour's policy will fail just as well as those of Thatcher. Either way, the state is going to force us to pay 20% of housing costs, all the water rates and if you're under 25 have a fiver knocked off your benefit if you haven't any family to support. Another interesting aside is that the Tories will be forcing people to squat in even greater numbers and if you're married to have children (the latter case costing them more - it's supposed to be about saving money, ain't it).

The second reason is political. Thatcher having won the battle against the miners in the short term - although as stated in Verbal Assault before it will be a pyrrhic victory - her attention has switched to reducing wage costs by making benefits so low that people will allegedly rush out and find one of these new low wage jobs rather than being on the dole. The theory is bullshit and so is the practice. Thatcher wants to cow the unemployed completely - a tactic not working anywhere. It is a point that unemployed people take part in the class

struggle that dominates our society just as much as anybody else.

Thatcher will attempt by this present set of measures, which commenced with the reintroduction of tramping for under 25's on April 29, to show some reduction in the dole figures. Although legal action has temporarily stalled this at the time of writing, it was on a legal technicality. The Judge, Justice Mann, in fact said that 4 weeks was sufficient for anybody to find out what job prospects are like in any given area. This view is not presumably based on experience - we hope one day soon to make all judges redundant.

It's no good waiting for the next Labour government or whatever bunch of failed video performers we get lumbered with - the cuts will be in and we'll be suffering. A rough example; if you're under 25 and pay £15 a week rent (with no water rates) you're gonna be at least £8 a week worse off. That's a 20% increase in the standard of poverty you're gonna suffer. We know the Tories have given £40 million to their supporters in Scotland to help them pay their rates but we're not after liberal justice. All we want is to attack. We suggest that local Tories should have their lives made a misery of: a list of local Tory councillors follows this article along with their addresses and telephone numbers. Other ideas include a permanent picket of Conservative offices and social clubs, sit-ins in dole offices, job shops, MSC offices, etc., etc.. The time for sitting back is over. Our slogan should be; if they cut our dole then we should cut their throats. There is no other choice left

A LIST OF TORY COUNCILLORS

All of these are Southampton addresses and telephone numbers unless stated.
1) Leslie Frank Aldred - 4, Bassett Court, Bassett Avenue. (Tel. 769738)
2) Michael John Andrews - 408, Winchester Rd. (Tel. 767001).
3) Eric Bertram Ashcroft - 20, Vermont Close, Winchester Rd. (768722).
4) Joan Pearl Victoria Baker - 16, Exleigh Close, Bitterne (Tel. 445878)
5) Christopher William John Barber - "The Lilacs", 61, Archery Grove, Woolston (Tel. 449083)
(continued overleaf)

THEIR THROATS

- 6) Norman Alexander Best - Eaton Court Hotel, 32, Hill Lane (Tel. 331794)
- 7) Dorothy Brown - 660, Bitterne Road (Tel. 447490).
- 8) Bramwell John Deacon - Hilltop House, Hurdle Way, Compton, Winchester (Tel. 0962-713963).
- 9) Paul Deacon - Plot 4, Elizabeth Close, West End (Tel. 474082).
- 10) Anthony James Hall - 37, Ampthill Road, Freemantle (Tel. 777069).
- 11) Wilfred Victor Husk - 198, West End Road, Bitterne (Tel. 462012).
- 12) Vana Winifred Mary Lightfoot - 24, Woodlea Gardens, West End (Tel. 472065).
- 13) Leonard Louis Lush - 3, Glen Eyre Road (Tel. 768695).
- 14) Eric John Mintram - 49, Porlock Road (Tel. 773396).
- 15) Christopher Kingsley Mitchell - II, St. Francis Avenue (Tel. 462506).
- 16) Brian Edgar Parnell - 22, Redhill Crescent (Tel. 760485).
- 17) Sydney Sutton - 2, Longleat Gardens, Lordshill (Tel. 733296).
- 18) Brian Edward Welch - 66, Wilton Road (Tel. 772086).
- 19) Ivy Theresa White - II, Wellington Avenue (Tel. 463341).
- 20) Arnold Vivian Zinn - 29, Cobden Crescent (Tel. 559868).

All these bastards are worthy of our attention - go to it!

All the above information is of course freely available from your local council.

MORE LOCAL NEWS

NOW THEN !

After anarchism was flavour of the week for local headline writers, the Advertiser headlined a battle between Ms. Atkins and Duluxbonce for the Labour nomination for one of the 2 local parliamentary constituencies the following week. Well, as a battle between an ex-YCL'er (now 'Marxist Militant' - spot the difference) and an ex-YL'er (now trendy lefty Labourite - ever got your hands dirty working, Al, old boy?) it's about as interesting as watching paint dry. Meanwhile, the local Labour council strikes ever onwards in its struggle for oblivion. Not content with hassling local graffiti artists, local vicars (for allowing the SWP to hold meetings which they had the cheek to advertise via flyposting) and threatening local pubs if bands do likewise, they've now taken up moving everybody except paper-sellers from out of the precinct. This has had the bizarre result of their 'Trucks For Africa' appeal losing money. Why, - because a local pavement artist used to practise his art on Saturdays down there and give the receipts to said appeal. Whilst, we're on strange events, a keen-eyed Boot 'er saw a ten-year old girl delivering electoral registration forms the other day. These forms contain a card from Southampton City Council requesting information about Housing. What we'd like to know is why are Southampton's trendy lefties employing child labour (and Nalgo allowing it) - perhaps they're trying to outdo Thatcher in pursuit

of Victorian values ?

Miners' Strike Rears Its Head

As the battle continues in the coalfields the strike has been cited as the cause of many problems from the railways to a certain dummy's salary. However, this one will take some beating - on Wednesday, 14 April at Winchester Crown Court Sergeant Michael Schmidt (aged 36) from Stubbington was given 9 months (6 of 'em suspended) for forging a witnesses's signature on a court exhibit label. He claimed he did it because of pressure of work resulting from the fact that loads of local filth were busy on duty during the miners' strike last December. Sgt. Schmidt worked at Bitterne nick where we gather Verbal Assault was assiduously read.

A Palaver Over A Picnic

Well, well the local gutter press got themselves into a right lather over Southampton Anarchists' little get-together in Hoglands Park on August Bank Holiday. 'Anarchy Picnic Protest' and 'Kill Thatcher Picnic' were only 2 of the headlines - you'd have thought we were gonna publicly execute Thatcher. Well, we didn't and our plans to burn her effigy went somewhat wrong when

(continued overleaf)

NO HURD UNSTONED

On 7th September, black youths on Derby Rd. stoned racists in cars whilst over the past few months people in Toxteth have attacked police so much so that the cops have been asking for extra protection (quite who by, god only knows - the Army, perhaps?). The battles of black workers in South Africa have been raging for some long while as they increasingly reject the negotiators and cretinous churchmen who wish to establish some form of liberal capitalism. The ANC (tomorrow's managers) meets South African businessmen (today's managers) to discuss the share out of the spoils in the near future. Suddenly in Handsworth the pure unsullied spirit of working-class revolt bursts out once more. Already attacks have occurred in Toxteth and a police station in Muswell Hill has been petrol-bombed. Meanwhile police (and plain-clothes cops in unmarked cars) appear in ever greater numbers in the Derby Rd./St. Marys area.

However, once again the gutless liberal fools on the 'left' (sic) - Kinnock, Rooker, etc. - join the right in condemning working-class people as they act against capitalism. The expulsion of Hurd was magnificent and the refusal of a white working-class family to be interviewed with Hurd (or even to talk to him) is just one small sign that the action had nothing to do with inter-racial conflict as the media are trying to say. A most welcome sign was the battering the blue scum took - community control took the real form of petrol bombs, barricades and so forth not the pathetic committees boosting local politicians' egos.

The puritanical left has united with the obsessive right in tut-tutting the events of Handsworth; evidently, it's alright if it's in South Africa but oh no, not here. These pathetic fools - along with the proponents of black capitalism - cannot see class struggle in front of them. They couldn't see it in '81 (Eric Heffer wanted working-class youth arrested) and they can't see it now. We support the working-class people of Handsworth in their rejection of police, property and the state. That revolt must and will spread!

TOXTETH - HANDSWORTH - SOWETO : THE SAME STRUGGLE WORLDWIDE

A PALAVER....(cont)

the effigy lost its torso in a football game. Thanks to the I00 or I20 who turned up and we hope you had a good day - we did. If you would like a copy of the infamous 'macabre' poster, send us a donation plus a s.a.e. to our address. Next time, Chilworth village green?.....

Could You Live On £1,500 a Month?

Recently-fired Lord Gowrie (ex-Minister for the Arts) claimed that his gross salary of £1,500 a month was not sufficient for what people need for living in Central London. Indeed, it isn't either for those of us who live on state handouts and poor wages anywhere in the world. We're torn between demanding parity with Gowrie or just wanting to puke all over him and his sort (well, to begin with).

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ANSWERS TIME

Question 1 : It was infact Donald Smith, chief constable of Wiltshire, discussing the Peace Convoy. The Battle of 'Henge' is now reported to have cost £800,000 at least.

Question 2 : It was the esteemed A.N. Stockdale, Chairman of ASDA, who presumably likes demolishing 30 houses so people can see his supermarket. Our theory is that they really want a bloody big advertising sign so that they can't see the car parks that are never full !!!

BENEFIT FOR THE MURRAYS

A benefit gig for the Murrays is being held at the West Indian Centre on Six Dials on Thursday, September 26th at 7.30p.m. featuring THE Sack, The Mad Thatchers, General Belgrano and Flick Spatula and The Risky Picnic - all for £1/50p (UB40/Unwaged).

Marie and Noel Murray were framed and given life sentences in the Irish Republic in the 70's. They are fighting for the right to have conjugal relations in prison. There is no legal aid available to them and therefore they need money and lots of it. So, if you can't make it to the gig send us a few bob instead.