

SUPPORT CLASS STRUGGLE PRISONERS

For most of us life is a struggle. In a society where a tiny minority owns the wealth, the land, and runs the businesses and governments, we grow up seeing little or no future, knowing there's a wild and exciting life out there but its for the rich and not for us. The rich live in luxury, while we work to keep them there. From birth they label us, lie to us, and try to control us in every way they can: schools, work, drugs, the press, the dole, disneyland. All our lives we work for them, knowing that if we give up our "secure" job, we'll lose our house, etc, and seeing the boss reap the profits. Many people's lives are full of boredom and depression, stress and poverty. Adverts tell us we need to buy the flash goods we made in the first place. Racism, sexism, anti-gay prejudice are spread to turn us against each other. **WE HAVE LITTLE OR NO POWER OVER OUR OWN LIVES.**

If we work hard, obey orders, don't answer back, we are told we can "make it", or live a reasonable life - until the next recession. We can help our bosses keep others down, as police, prison officers, soldiers, or bailiffs, and in return we get security, good pay, a bit a bit of power over others.

Out of all this comes "crime". If we try to take back any of the money or consumer goods we've made, but can't pay their price, if we strike for decent pay or conditions, if we resist the control and abuse in our lives, we end up on the wrong side of the law - a law made by the ruling elite for their benefit. And we face police, courts, and prison.

THE BIG STICK

Prisons are the bottom line in their control over us. They are filled with our friends, relatives - our class. Prison destroys our families, splits us up, alienates people. Prison life is filled with boredom and routine

brutality, driving people to despair, suicide, drugs, preying on others.

And if we refuse the social roles they try to educate us for, such as women who won't lie back and take abuse, people who express their sexuality freely, or if we break down from the daily stresses of living, we'll likely end up sectioned into the mental health system, from where many of us never get out.

94% of recorded crimes are property related, because property is the base of power in this world. About a third of prisoners are there for non payment of fines, taxes and debts. 1000s are on remand - many will be found not guilty. Many others, especially black & irish people are framed up by the police, like the Tottenham 3 or the Birmingham 6, partly to improve crime clear up rates and partly to intimidate us in our communities. Prisons are concentration camps for working class people, designed to control our resistance to the exploitation forced on us from birth.

THERE FOR OUR PROTECTION?

On the outside the fear of prison is held over our heads to stop us fighting back against the injustice in our lives. Myths are created about prisoners to divide us. There's no doubt that crime is a cancer in our communities - people who rip off their neighbours, rapists, violent anti-social individuals and gangs spread

fear and hatred, preying on us and each other.

Its true that a lot of prisoners, like many on outside, can be vicious. But most are working class people, just like us. The tory press hypes violent crime up because the more we live in fear of one another the less we can unite, and the more we will rely on the state and the police to sort out our problems. If they can make us think of all prisoners, the strikers and shoplifters as well as the rapists and child abusers, as "scum", "evil beasts", then they can isolate those of us fighting back against their power.

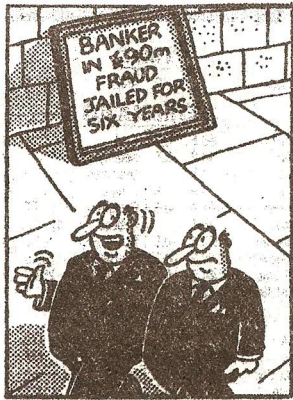
The violence and crime comes from the violence, power divisions, consumerism and abuse we grow up with. We don't control our lives, we get angry and feel powerless, we take it out on each other, fighting for a bit of power in our life. There is a buzz, a feeling of control, that comes from joyriding, shoplifting or waving a gun waving a gun about, or from lording it

over someone weaker than you. In many ways the rich like to see us turning on each other - it keeps us down. It's when we turn on their banks and their police they don't like it. And it is their manipulation and destruction of working class communities, which allows people to feel they can rob and attack and blame each other.

When it comes down to it, the police and prisons don't stop crime anyway. We all know how little effort the cops make if we're burgled - what they care about is protecting the rich. And prisons *strengthen* the violence in people, so they come out in a worse state. On release prisoners are often left poor and homeless, so many go back to the quickest way of survival: crime. It should be up to us in our areas to sort out anti-



social criminals, we can do a better job than their so called justice system which controls us in the name of law and order. It's the capitalist system that's truly anti-social - while it exists there will always be violence and exploitation.



"He'll be out in two months' time with the right symptoms"

THE REAL CRIMINALS

Since the rich make the laws, it's our crimes that get punished. Not the crime of robbing us every day of the proceeds of the work we do, not the crime of mass murder in their national wars, not the crime of millions starving in countries paying back huge debts to the big banks, or the crime of twisting our minds from birth till death. The laws are there for their protection. You rarely see bosses in court, even when

they break these laws out of sheer greed. The Guinness directors swindled millions and got suspended sentences or were let out after a few months. **WE GET 25 YEARS.**

FIGHTING BACK.

But just as the class war goes on in our daily lives, it carries on inside prisons. Many prisoners resist the prison system - individually in their own cases, or hundreds together, striking for better conditions, refusing food, taking to the roof, or taking on the prison and tearing it apart, as at Strangeways in April 1990. Their battles inspire ours and ours theirs - its no accident that the Strangeways uprising followed the day after the anti poll tax riot in Trafalgar Square.

Inside prisons or out, we're surrounded and kept down by walls and locked doors, visible or not. Lets tear them down.

WE'RE OUT HERE FOR THEM

At any time, any of us can end up inside, because of the power controlling our lives. We have to support prisoners in their day to day fight for better conditions, just as we should be supporting each other in strikes and community struggles. We need to break down the lies about prisons, and reject their definitions of crime. The solutions lie with us, taking control of our community, working out ways of sorting out anti-social crime. We can't reform this crooked society they have forced on us, its loaded against us. We need a social revolution that will tear down the prisons along with the rest of the capitalist system. We can run our own lives for ourselves, better than they ever could.

THE ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

The Anarchist Black Cross stands for practical solidarity

with prisoners of our class. We support people imprisoned for collective resistance to the rich and their system, or for fighting for a better life : from anti-poll tax prisoners to people imprisoned for self defence, like black people resisting racists and women who fight back against violent partners. We support working people imprisoned for trying to survive, and people framed by the police. We support and publicise prisoners resisting and organising on the inside. We try to work through letters, visits, some financial help, as well as demonstrations and spreading news about prisons. We welcome support from prisoners, their families and friends and anyone interested in our work. In all of what we do, we try to create links in and out of prisons and work towards a class based movement that will destroy capitalism to build a real classless society. People working together without exploitation, bosses or leaders, for a world community based on co-operation, not profit. Its our world, we've built it with our own hands, lets take it back.



This leaflet was produced by the A.B.C. Network. For more info, news on prisoners, prisons, cops, crime and solutions, "justice", or a list of prisoners, contact your nearest group.

LIST OF ABC GROUPS

Birmingham ABC - c/o PO Box 3241, Saltley, Birmingham, B8 3DP.

Bradford ABC/Huddersfield ABC - c/o 1 in 12 Club, 31 Manor Row, Bradford, BD1.

Devon ABC - c/o SWAN, PO Box 4, Buckfastleigh, Devon, TQ11 0YZ.

Essex ABC - c/o Box A, 12 Mill Rd, Cambridge.

London ABC - c/o 121 Raiton Road, London, SE24.

FAX 071 326 0353.

Manchester ABC - Box 8, 1 Newton St, Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 8HW.

Oxford ABC - Box A, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford.

Inside Info, Pigeonhole Cl, 11 Forth St, Edinburgh 1.

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contact London A.B.C.

