

On Gogol Boulevard

Neither East Nor West/NYC

1995

About This Section

On Gogol Boulevard is produced for the *Fifth Estate* by New York City/Neither East Nor West, which links alternative oppositions in the East and West, and prints news and documents unavailable in the corporate or left media. OGB sometimes involves Third and Fourth World activists in these efforts. A similar section also appears in Black Fist.

Neither East Nor West is responsible for the articles although the Fifth Estate is in general agreement with their content and OGB's general purposes.

OGB is not only for anarchists but for all movements seeking paths outside of capitalist and state bureaucratic models.

Gogol Boulevard takes its name from a popular hang-out for Moscow counter-culture youth. Address correspondence to OGB/ NENW, 528 Fifth St., Brooklyn NY 11215; tel.: (718) 499-7720.

Squatting in Prague

Introduction by Bob McGlynn

From July 7 through 10 I attended an international anarchist conference in Prague, sponsored by the Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative. I represented Neither East Nor West-NYC, and met partied with anarchists from Argentina, Russia, and everywhere in between. I was taken on a tour of the city's squats and also the Black Hand, a self-managed alternative center under construction. (People from around the world have volunteered there and are still needed. Interested? Call me at 718-499-7720.)

I was interviewed by Prague's two major anarchist publications, A-Kontra and Autonomia. Both asked many questions about squatting, and gentrification in New York City—the Tompkins Square Park struggle being well known.

Being a syndicalist conference, I also represented bike messengers as a member of Bike Messengers United. I told the conference about a proposed law that would allow the NYC cops to confiscate our bikes if we were caught riding them on the sidewalks. The Czechs and others were interested in my idea to picket the U.S. embassy over the issue, plus support for our drive to unionize. On the planning day for it, though, my back went out (due to a messengering injury!) and we had to scrap the idea. Oh well, next time.

The Following is From the *Anarchist Federation Info Bulletin #0, April '94:*

Another sphere where the Anarchist Federation (AF) is engaged, is squatting. The very first house squatted by anarchists in Prague was in May 1991. Until March 1992 it housed about 10 people and when this squat was "social," in September 1991, it was attacked by skinheads.

Another house was squatted in March 1992 in Prague-Holesovice. It was inhabited by a few legal tenants, but most of the rooms were empty. In Spring 1992 there opened the first info-cafe. This squat was a target of many fascist attacks. The biggest attack was in October 1992, when 100 to 300 skinheads attacked the squat.

Never ending provocations from fascists and pressure by authorities and the police led to its evacuation. In December 1992 the squat was again attacked by 150 skinheads. There were only 7 persons in the house (4 boys, 3 girls). Defenders offered resistance for about 10 minutes. After that skinheads with police broke the main gate and invaded. The cops arrested the squat defenders and let the skinheads destroy the interior and beat up the residents. Nobody knows about any arrest of skinheads.

Out of Prague also came an endeavor to squat. An autonomous group in Teplice (Northern Bohemia) squatted for a few days in one of the dilapidated houses in the town, but after many police attacks the anarchists left the town. Another autonomous group in Trutnov inhabited an empty hotel Varsava in the centre of town in the summer of 1993, where anarchists stood for 60 days. Police used a highlift platform and attacked squatters in the early morning hours.

The Ladronka Squat

In September 1993 activists from AF inhabited an old farm called Ladronka in Prague, not far away from the city line. They wanted to create a cultural, social, and autonomous center.

There were many concerts in Ladronka. One of the bigger actions was the first underground squat festival which ran for two days. This Okupa (October) Fest had many Czech and Moravian hardcore bands play, plus a few from Poland. Another big action was "The Second Autonomy Party" in December 1993, to celebrate the second anniversary of the monthly AF magazine *AUTONOMIE*.

Squatters from Ladronka also have had their problems with the police. The police disconnected the electricity many times, but there was a big difference between Ladronka and the last squat in Holesovice. There was a tendency toward leaving the place, but not so in Ladronka; the capacity is exhausted (10 to 20 people) and the interest about living in the squat is still there. In the winter, even when the electricity was disconnected, there were concerts where many Czech and foreign bands played.

In February 1994, the pressure from authorities led to an eviction notice. Here, criminal law makes it possible for police to sentence unlawful occupants of property to a two year term.

This pressure started a campaign to defend the people of Ladronka. A petition appealing to the owners, the City Council and the Ministry of Culture to have talks with representatives of "alternative initiatives" was proposed, in addition to benefit concerts in Ladronka itself. In March there was a press conference at the squat which also opened an exhibition of the squatter movement in Bohemia.

Ladronka is a large enough place for many activities, for example: the main hall — concerts, lectures and theater; bar, info-cafe and tea room; vegetarian restaurant; rehearsal studio for bands; studio and exhibition spaces; rooms for foundations and other organizations; floor space.

According to *Squatter* No. 5, negotiations continued until June, when an agreement was signed with the owners. It agrees that squatters are temporary users of Ladronka, but the squat continues as of this writing (Dec. 1994). International efforts continue to support Ladronka to raise funds for its much needed reconstruction.

Prague Squatter Arrested

Jaroslav "Bovi" Unger [famed in the past as a dissident musician from the underground Czech band The Plastic People, and signatory of Charter 77, the opposition group which started in protest against repression of the Plastics in 1977] was arrested in April 1994. He was accused of attacking a public servant and rioting. The police state the incident occurred in December 1992(!) when he wanted to remove his personal stuff from the squat in Holesovice which was the day before the eviction. The police were standing guard at the squat and stood in his way.

Bovi was released in late May.

Contacts:

LADRONKA, Tomanova 1, Prague 6 — Brevnov 16 000, Czech Republic

AUTONOMIE (AF), P.O. Box 223, Prague 1 11121, Czech Republic

AF-BRNO, Borek Meznik, Barvicova 75, Brno 602 00, Czech Republic

A-KONTRA, P.O. Box 552, 170 00 Prague 7, Czech Republic

Mac Pariadka

Mac Pariadka is a Polish anarchist monthly started in 1990. People from the Polish anarchist movement write for Mac. In each issue are: analysis of Polish and international news; anarchistic visions; the anarchist past; alternative culture; and lots of drawings and comics. In the middle of each issue is an alternative music insert on yellow paper called “The Yellow Papers.”

Mac Pariadka doesn't represent any special anarchist wing—we are trying to present all possible options of the anarchist idea. We are looking for cooperation from abroad, especially anarcho-syndicalist ideas. Articles, news and graphics are very welcome.

Mac Pariadka POB 67, 81-806 Sopot, Poland

[Mac is the best @ zine in Poland. We can't figure the subscription price so send a couple of US\$.—OGB]

OGB Stasi Secret Police Files Found!

The Stasi were the former East Germany political police. In Spring 1994, Uwe Bastian, a prominent member of the former anti-authoritarian, socialist underground discovered in his Stasi file materials relevant to Neither East Nor West member Bob McGlynn. McGlynn is also a member of NYC's Independent Courier Association (ICA), a bike messenger labor group. The ICA had sent an appeal for petitions/letters of support to eastern oppositions when NYC bike messengers faced a racist, discriminatory and gentrifying ban of their working in midtown Manhattan. Months after the ICA sent the appeal, Bastian responded with a postcard to McGlynn, but by that time, the ICA had won its struggle (with the aid of petitions from Poland).

Included in the Stasi's Bastian file was a copy of a letter from McGlynn responding to Bastian's postcard; a copy of an article by Bastian from an On Gogol Boulevard section in the former Torch sent by McGlynn with his response; and the following Stasi file (translated) on McGlynn:

Berlin

April 26, 1988

Main Section XX

Director

Gen. Generalmajor Kienberg

In the framework of control work of Division M we worked on material sent to Bastian, Uwe, 070657 4-2111 5, Grossenhain 1058 Berlin Sredzkistr. 22. The sender is Bob Mc Glynes [sic] 528 5th St. Brooklyn, New York 11215 USA who already several times has surfaced as the sender of a publication “On Gogol Boulevard”, which serves as an inspiration to the “Independent Peace Movement” in the socialist countries.

From the content it becomes evident that the sender is a member of American pacifist organization, “Neither East nor West” and that he would like to maintain contact with the political underground of the DDR. Material that has been sent by Bastian to the sender is being prepared for further study in the USA and Canada. [This statement is cryptic. Only one postcard was received by McGlynn from Bastian, and this was in reference to receiving the plea from the ICA. According to our translator, “further study” could possibly mean by Stasi agents in the USA and Canada-OGB.

Strobel

Generalmajor

Reports from a World Being Destroyed: Life in Bosnia & Resistance in the former Yugoslavia

Sarajevos of the mind

Ironically the majority of Muslims in Bosnia are against Islamization. No one calls for a Muslim Bosnia except the international community in its plan to divide Bosnia. Amazingly, only the Muslims of Bosnia are against the plan.

What if the multi-ethnic state in Bosnia is destroyed? What does that mean for other multi-ethnic states in the world? What does that mean for the U.S., the world's biggest multi-ethnic state? Our problem is more than a moral problem for the U.S., it is a real political problem. The U.S. cannot accept fascism and racism in Europe and think it has no long-term effect in America.

The greatest threat to the aggressors outside Sarajevo is everyday normal life. This siege is a siege against normal life. Americans should realize that normal life in Sarajevo actually shows the happiness of living together. It means a multi-ethnic and multi-religious history is real. It means tolerance and love are possible. Normal life for us means there is no chance for fascism and racism.

We ask: How is it possible for something like this to happen at the end of the century in the heart of Europe? How is it possible that all the basic principles of civilization are proving to be a joke? Maybe we are again at the beginning of a historical period where force is everything. If that is true, then in Sarajevo we want to be alone because we are not a part of that world. But if that is not true, I can tell you only one thing: "Even if you don't care about me or about us, at least care about yourselves."

—Zlato Dizarevic, journalist for *Oslobodjenje* (Liberation), the only independent daily still publishing in Sarajevo.

Zlaginflatch?

Also, recommended is Zlaginflatch/Mr. Onion, do Ark/ZAPO, Tkalciceva 38, 4100, Zagreb, Croatia. e-mail ZIF@ZAMIRZG.ztn.zer.de, a monthly 4-page zine which calls itself "Zagreb Information Potlatch; Anti-authoritarian info from former Yugoslavia. News on @ movement, squats, resistance to government.

Serbian anarchists Need Aid

(from *Torpedo News Flash* #1)

January 10, 1994, is an important day for libertarian struggle. On that day we set up the first revolutionary libertarian group, Torpedo, in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia). After hard work and a lot of problems, we organized ourselves in struggle against this rotten state, the dictatorship of a minority from the ruling party, and against a new bourgeoisie growing from the economic collapse, the black market, and a dirty war.

We will also try to set up new libertarian groups and organizations in any town where it is possible. The libertarian movement in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia) is just born and we have a big job to do.

But we desperately need your help, comrades. We know that nobody lives good and without problems these days, but maybe you have something that we really need—any kind of office supplies, libertarian books, pamphlets, leaflets, newspapers, fanzines or magazines, and new experiences in struggle. If you don't have anything to send us, please just write. We need international support.

Your help is part of the revolutionary struggle. You can help us to spread the word and educate people here where the libertarian movement is just born.

Torpedo, c/o Milan Djuric, M. Velikog 12/10, 11300 Smederevo, Serbia-Yugoslavia.

Nationalism in Croatia

What you already heard about Croatia is probably only about war and the violation of human rights. Yes, war in ex-Yugoslavia is our reality and it is really fuckin' shit happening here! But there is also a strong underground scene existing in Croatia.

The Nationalist-Socialist government of Serbia and Serbian fascists still manipulate the Serbian people in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to fight for a so-called Greater Serbia. In the name of the protection of the Serbian population they started one of the worst wars since World War Two and Vietnam! Victims, mainly innocent people, children, women, old and sick.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is unbelievable. I know some refugees from there and what I heard from them is just insane! But not all Serbs are nationalists. Also, there is a lot of nationalism on the Croatian side and in all the republics of former Yugoslavia.

After the fall of the Communist dictators and the socialist system, nationalist leaders [many who were Communists—OGB] took over the rule of the territory of ex-Yugo. They are dividing people, talking about national pride and history, but what really happens is a new dictatorship instead of the old. Nationalism and patriotism are just good ways to control people by those in power. This is what I learned from this pointless war.

(excerpt from the Croatian zine *Fecal Forces* #1. Half in English and Croatian. For a copy, send some well hidden western currency: Boris Milakovic, Kapavac 30, 55300 Pozega, Croatia)

Nigerian Anarchist Dies in Car Accident

Anarchists from around the world have campaigned to free four political prisoners from Nigeria's anarchist Awareness League (AL). By mid-November, they're still out on bail.

However, we're sad to report the AL lost one of its founders, Ifeanyi Chukwu, in a fatal car accident. On top of their ongoing legal expenses, they are contributing to the education of Ifeanyi's first daughter plus publishing a book on African anarchism. Send cash donations or blank American Express checks to us and we'll forward them: NENW-NYC, 528 5th St., Brooklyn NY 11215.)

They need books on American anarchism, Bakunin and anarcho-syndicalism. New address: Awareness League, POB 1920, Enugu State, Nigeria.

A Call to Reclaim May Day

Protest the IMF & World Bank on May 1

The main purpose of the Cold War was to prevent our movements for a better life, our class and our organizations in the First World, the East and the Third World from coming together. Such alliances would have seriously threatened the existence of all exploitative institutions whether they are ruled by corporations or by the state, whether they call themselves capitalist or socialist.

The end of the Cold War was the result, at least in part, of the refusal to accept this division by people in the First, Second and Third Worlds. But the end of this form of rule has led to the tyranny of one global system of exploitation managed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (IMF/WB), backed by the military repression of the United States, the UN, and virtually all other governments.

The IMF/WB were created at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference in the U.S. to constitute a capitalist international. The Communist and Third World nationalist bureaucracies gradually became active collaborators with the IMF/WB, using their foreign debts to discipline their working classes. This year, the IMF and the World Bank are arrogantly celebrating their 50th anniversary.

We at Neither East Nor West-NYC are calling for a day of action against the IMF and the World Bank on (or around) Monday, May 1. We have chosen May Day to reclaim the tradition of worldwide working class unity. May Day, which began as a commemoration of the martyrdom of five anarchist organizers sentenced to death following a general strike for a shorter work week in the United States in 1886, has become hollow for those raised on Communist bloc war parades, empty leftist marches in Europe, and Law Day in the U.S.

We need to work together independent of official borders for worldwide coordinated actions to expand a badly needed planetary alliance against these institutions which have so damaged people, communities, cultures, and the environment world-wide.

In choosing this day, we are also building on an older May Day tradition of celebrating the annual re-awakening of the earth in spring. We are reclaiming our planet from desecrators of the land.

The IMF and World Bank are located in the U.S, but are funded by the richest industrial countries as a way of penetrating and controlling the economies of weaker, particularly Third World economies. However, suffering of people in First World countries is the result of IMF and World Bank policies no less than in other parts of the world. The growth of homelessness, loss of farms and jobs, destruction of neighborhoods and communities, slashing of social programs and education, decapitalization of local industries, creation of artificial famines, and repression of labor and other social movements have all grown as a result of IMF/World Bank policies.

A day of action can help create contacts and networks between people in every part of the planet. Such contacts have until recently been limited and made more problematic by the division of the world into Cold War blocs and by the political loyalties which developed around this division. Nearly every country in the world, regardless of political ideology, “capitalist” or “communist,” has been devastated by so-called “structural adjustment programs,” debt crisis, and development schemes organized by the IMF and World Bank.

Demonstrations and revolts against the IMF/WB have taken place in dozens of countries from Russia to Mexico, from Melanesia to the West Bank, from Lagos to Berlin. The time has come to act together for an end to the IMF and World Bank. Statist solutions of the past are repudiated, and nearly every government has collaborated with or surrendered to the IMF/WB, imposing austerity and repression.

Only a new movement for a world without supranational government can free our lives from the authoritarianism and exploitation of “structural adjustment,” “privatization,” “liberalization,” the “free market,” “the global economy,” “budget austerity,” “democracy.”

Not everyone has an IMF or WB office to protest at, but everyone has various state or corporate offices that enforce IMF/WB policies. Your protest doesn’t have to happen exactly on May 1, just near enough. NENW will do a mailing about proposed plans, and will send out an IMF/World Bank information packet. Please contact us, so we can start planning for May Day 1995. When it’s over, we’d like reports and photos from the various actions.

Send communications to OGB

c/o WSA, 339 Lafayette St. #202, NY NY 10012 USA; (718) 499-7720.

This call is also available in Russian, Japanese, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian, and German.

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