

On Gogol Boulevard

Neither East Nor West/ NYC

1996

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.

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

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Defense of Prague's Ladronka Squat Continues

PRAGUE, Czech Republic—The campaign in the support of the squat Ladronka began in February 1995. At the end of May, a public meeting was arranged within the grounds of Ladronka (a former farmhouse) and was attended by 50 people. Squatters, trade officials, investors and local people from the neighborhood, all participated in the discussions.

At this meeting, the Terminal Club presented its business plans for the transformation of Ladronka into a hotel. However, the neighbors showed complete support for the squatters and refused outright the hotel project. Despite opinions of the locals and squatters, the City council representative declared that financial needs are more important.



The first demonstration in downtown Prague against the eviction of the Ladronka squat by business interests

However, the reconstruction of Ladronka as a hotel would seriously damage the historical character of the building and, moreover, would have a negative impact on the surrounding environment. The farmhouse is situated in the middle of a park, and if the hotel was constructed, it would be necessary to build roads, a parking lot and other infrastructure.

In July, the squatters organized their next protest demonstration. During the march, the 500 participants carried slogans such as "Eviction is not a solution" and "Money + profit = new jails." The demo passed through the center of Prague and culminated in a "happening" outside the Town Hall.

Throughout the summer, the squatters continued to repair the house and arranged many concerts. Friends from Poland again showed their support for the Autonomous Center by demonstrating in front of the Czech embassy in Warsaw.

A festival against the impending eviction and in celebration of two years of Ladronka was held Aug. 31-Sept. 8. Several hardcore and reggae bands performed as well as the theater group Teater Novogo Fronta.

Just prior to the festival, a cozy wine bar and tea room was opened in the cellar. Also, a new infoshop for anarchist, environmental and alternative literature began. On Sept. 2, 300 to 500 people (including members of autonomous groups from Poland and Western Europe) again demonstrated for Ladronka and against state housing policy.

Aside from traditional banners, also new ones appeared: "Free houses for free people," and "Houses for people, not for speculators."

In mid-September, we learned that the Terminal Club was not given sufficient funds from its foreign partner to begin reconstruction of Ladronka. After monitoring press coverage of the protests, and hearing the publicity generated by the campaign, the foreign company became reluctant to finance the project. Later, however, the company director announced to the media: "If we get enough finance, we will ask squatters once again to leave. If they don't, they will be forcibly removed."

Work is scheduled for Spring 1996. We do not believe the situation is lost and the struggle for the Autonomous center will continue. Ladronka has much support.

It's a long, cold winter coming up, so, we would appreciate help. This community gets no grants, has no sponsors, no funds; everything is D.I.Y. The situation

is still open—it's up to us and our friends at home and abroad to resist the pressure of power and money.

Contact: Ladronka, Tomanova 1, Praha 6. Mail: Autonomie, P.O. Box 223, Praha 1, 111 21, Czech Republic. Phone: 6514442, Roman Laube, 402131; Alena Vosahlova

Anarchist News from The Czech Republic

In the anarchist movement in the Czech Republic, the Anarchist Federation does not exist anymore. The majority of their activists do not consider themselves anarchists, but autonomists, ecologists, anti-culture, hardcore fans, animal rights activists or squatters. The AF magazine only appeared once in 1995.

The few remaining anarchists began publishing a new anarchist magazine in Prague. Svobodna Misl (Free Thought) already has published three issues. On August 25–27, the first congress of the new anarchist federation was held.

The first radical 1st of May demonstration was held since 1992 which brought out 400 anarchists. At first, anarcho-syndicalists spoke about the struggle against the IMF, NATO, and the European Union. Then, the demonstration marched through Prague. On the way, punks demolished shop windows at McDonald's. There were clashes with police and people broke through the Nike line, screaming, "On to the Bastille." Two cops and five autonomen were injured and several were arrested.

—from Summer 1995 *A-S Info*, *Bulletin of Anarchism & Syndicalism in Eastern and Central Europe*, produced by friends of the International Workers Association

Poles Denounce Nationalism

In every country there is a group of people interested in the propagation of nationalistic tendencies. In the period between the two wars, Polish merchants were very anti-Semitic because they feared Jewish competition. The talk about the Polish nation was just a way of maximizing profits.

The slogan, "Let all power be in the hands of the Poles," is the slogan of those who are greedy for power, and argue that their supposed racial purity gives them the right to be the leaders. This is obviously an absurdity. A government isn't good because it is made of Poles. Anarchists don't give a damn about the race

of their rulers. and neither do they care if they are circumcised. We don't want Poles or Eskimos to rule us and to steal from us.

It has lately become fashionable among youth to be a nationalist. It is really pathetic that such an ideal of lobotomized freedom should have so much influence on young people who ought to be expressing their independence more than anybody else. To be a nationalist is to take part in the dirty game of politicians trying to control the population. When you add to this the violence displayed by skinheads, you have a genuine kind of fascism, which certainly doesn't serve the nation, but totalitarian power. Anarchism is the struggle against authority in the name of individual and collective freedom.

—Declaration of the Polish Anarchist Federation—
from ULICA #25

Letter from Slovenia

Dear Fifth Estate:

I am writing you from Slovenia, from the northeast ex-Yugoslavian republic. As a representative of Collective of Anarcho-Pacifist Activities (CAPA) from Ljubljana, I would like to invite you to some closer relations between ourselves. If I start with introducing, I can tell that CAPA was formed in winter 1993 in deserted military barracks, which were squatted a few months before our establishment.

From then until now we organized a lot of rock, punk, and other concerts. We also run a small alternative theatre group which is very successful and very well accepted around here. We did two massive demonstrations, one against Darry and McDonald's, which happened in April 1995, and one against nuclear power in front of French embassy in December.

Despite of being without water, electricity and other resources, we fortunately still exist and also fight against government and police pressures, also a few nazi-skinhead attacks. We are not some kind of formal or registered organization, and we are not receiving any money help, so what we did was exclusively from our money and our hands.

We are also trying to run a sort of a distribution, so we could spread some informations about an outer world, about anarchism, ecology, how you do it, how we do it. So, for a start, I hope if you could send us some issues of your Fifth Estate newspaper so we could try to distribute it here. Unfortunately we don't have much to

offer, maybe a few booklets and leaflets that have been translated in our language and maybe some pictures from our demonstrations, or at least our story.

Rok Bernardic, Primoziceva 1, 61231 Lj-Crnuce, Slovenia, Europe

The Social War goes on in Greece

On Nov. 17, anarchist and other social strugglers enter the Polytechnio refusing to follow the museum-like character of the march towards the U.S.A. embassy. An occupation commences, chants of solidarity towards the hunger striker Kosta Kalarema and the prisoners at Korydallos, are heard.

At about 6 a.m. heavily armed riot police appear firing hundreds of canisters of choking gas and other chemical substance. The protesters erect barricades and take part in clashes at Patisision street.

There are many injuries, but cops refuse to allow ambulances and doctors inside. Later they allow them to take the injured away. The state fury leads them to arrest the injured in the hospitals and to beat them inside the ambulance vehicles.

The next day the cops encircle the building and saw their way through the chains of the building. All occupiers gather in front of gate to form human chains, but fall hostage to the enemy. They sing and chant slogans surrounded by the beast.

The cops drag the rioters into the police vans, 1,000 people gather in solidarity.

A-News, Information Bulletin from Greece, #11, by Anarchist Intervention, Box 30557, 10033 Athens, Greece

CNT Debates Membership for Nigeria's Awareness League.

Members of the International Workers Association (AIT) Permanent Secretariat, plus many members of the National Confederation of Labor (CNT-the Spanish section of the AIT) met September 1994 in Alicante, Spain.

A member of Nigeria's anarcho-syndicalist Awareness League (AL) was present to explain the principles and activities of his organization. The AL had previously applied for admission to the AIT, a matter which will be considered at the next Congress of our International.

According to our Nigerian comrade, the organization began in 1989 with 900 members, mostly in university radical Marxist groups, which, with the events in the East, began to move toward libertarian positions.

Our Nigerian comrade gave a geographic, historical and political statement about the Nigerian nation in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial states, describing the different ethnic groups and their linguistic, religious and ideological characteristics. He also described past and recent presence of foreign powers, whose internal administration dominates the economy of this nation of 100 million inhabitants, a nation rich in oil, uranium and strategic minerals.

Responsible for initiating and ending the Biafra War, these powers are, in order of influence: England (the colonial power), the USA, the (then) USSR, and France. In order to serve the interest of these powers, after several military coups in 1990, a military dictatorship was established.

The 1993 democratic elections were won by the Social Democrats, but nullified by the dictatorship, and their leader, Aviola, incarcerated. The country has 70% illiteracy, an external debt of about 40 billion pesetas, 40% unemployment and per capita income- of \$60 for skilled workers.

Our Nigerian comrade said that nothing in the AL statutes conflicts with anarcho-syndicalism. He stated that the AL's main task is to put an end to the military dictatorship and to do so it had actively intervened in the election campaigns in favor of the Social Democrats and presently participates in political activities with other partisan organizations.

These declarations gave way to a lively debate with our Nigerian comrade, translated by the AIT's general Secretary, Jimenez. The Director of the CNT stated anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism cannot contain a contradiction between theory and practice. It is a social, not a political struggle, and the means must not differ from the ends. This is one of the sharpest distinctions between anarchism and Marxism and was the fundamental cause of the split in the First International.

Our Nigerian friend based his counter-argument on the Nigerian population's ignorance of anarchism, on the urgent necessity to create a democracy in order to develop an anarcho-syndicalist organization, and on the strength of military repression.

All present reminded him that Spain endured 40 years of one of the fiercest dictatorships, and that in Russia, the Czars had been among the worst of

despotic powers in spite of which anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism evolved in both Spain and Russia.

Some of those present pointed out the grave danger if the AIT opens up to those sections that have political programs and who participate in state institutions, a feeling which seems to be spreading throughout some sections of the AIT. There was unanimous agreement that our organization's purpose must be defended.

—from *CNT*

Chernobyl Demo Busted

Five Russian activists were arrested near the Ministry of Atomic Power in Moscow on April 26, - the ninth anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe. According to the police report, their arrest and detention for three hours resulted from the crime of "staying near the Ministry with clean white paper in their hands."

The five activists held the "clean white paper" as their desired future map of nuclear power plant locations—their way of calling for an end to nuclear energy and the expensive and dangerous Russian government program to build 26 more reactors.

For more information, contact: ECODEFENSE!; Moskovsky Prospekt 120-34, 236006 Kaliningrad/Koenigsberg, Russia; tel/fax +70112 437286. e-Mail: ecodefense@glas.apc.org

—Thanks to *Nuclear Resister*, P.O. Box 43383, Tucson AZ 85733

Neither East Nor West Support for the A.L.

While we normally allow text to speak for itself, we feel compelled to add our opinion this time. The CNT is criticizing the AL for backing the Social Democratic presidential candidate. It did so, because they felt it was a common sense tactical way to find some reprieve from tyranny. As close supporters of the AL, we know they have no illusions about bourgeois democratic practices. If they feel their survival depends on voting for a reform candidate, then so be it.

We respect the CNT's opposition to electoralism, as we do too. But the implication is to deny the AL entry into the IWA. We believe that denying Africa its first representative in an international anarchist body would be overly formal and dogmatic. To put it simply,

the AL's position is no big deal and certainly hasn't caused damage.

As some of us in NENW are also IWA members, we support and will fight for AL's admission to the IWA at their Spring 1996 conference.

—Bob McGlynn for NENW

—Kif Davis

Russian

Rainbow Keepers Flame The Rich

On March 23, 1995, cottage which built in Shukinsky Poluostrov Nature Preserve (Moscow) was burnt by member of the radical environmental movement, Rainbow Keepers. New Russian riches often build cottages in places which closed for other people. Each new cottage will be destroy like this," say one of the Rainbow Keepers.

After this action, one of sponsors of the Rainbow Keepers, Institute for Soviet-American Relations (ISAR) shut down all new project with Rainbow; Keepers. Russian ISAR office staff say that Keepers is terrorists. Keepers was not worry because considered independent their organization and not orient to sponsor's thinking. But ISAR stopped not only direct action projects. other too (for example, publish of Third Way magazine), and now Rainbow Keepers look for new sources.

—from *The Third Way* #7. This zine was established in 1988 and reports on the Green and anarchist movement in Russia and other countries. Contact them at P.O. Box 14, Nizhni Novgorod, 603082, Russia; phone: (8313) 54.38-96; e-mail: tretypu@glas.apc.org

White

Russia May Day Demo Repressed

On May Day 1995 a peaceful demonstration of anarcho-syndicalists, independent unionists and leftist groups took place in Gomel, White Russia. Without warning it was attacked by the special police forces (OMON) in a very brutal and violent way. Seven activists were arrested, beaten up and threatened with weapons at the police station. They are accused of "disturbance of law and order."

This is only one event in a wave of political repression, which has spread over White Russia by the dicta-

torial regime of President Lukaschenko during recent months.

The White Russian anarcho-syndicalists and the other activists ask for your help and your support! Show your international solidarity and write protest letters to the diplomatic mission of White Russia in your country and organize picket lines.

—Group of Revolutionary Anarcho-syndicalists (GRAS), Friends of International Workers Association, Moscow. Vadim Damier: GRAS, 142530 Moskovskaya Oblast, Elektrogrost—1 aya 31, Russia

Zimbabwe Attacks Gays

After overt pressure by the Zimbabwean Ministry Of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, the state-funded Zimbabwean International Book Fair (ZIBF) formally barred the country's only gay and lesbian group from participating in this year's fair.

The last minute decision to exclude Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) was motivated by a strongly worded communications to the book fair from the government which expressing "shock and dismay" that GALZ' s application had been accepted. The letter went on to discretely warn that "continued cooperation with [the] Government" was contingent on their willingness to bar GALZ, a not so subtle threat that can only be termed blackmail.

The ZIBF is one of the largest events of its kind in Africa drawing exhibitors from 120 countries. Ironically, the theme of this year's five day event was human rights and justice.

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's speech at the book fair opening was a virulent attack on lesbians and gays, rare because of its intensity and that it came from a head of state. Among his many pronouncements, "We do not believe that lesbians and gays have any rights at all." Government agents also made sure to remove posters protesting GALZ's exclusion from the fair.

Despite the resignation of four of the 18 trustees of the ZIBF, and high level protests from human rights organizations, foreign governments and well known African authors, the government stood by its decision. Mugabe has a history of harassing lesbians and gays. In the past he has called homosexuality " a white problem," and government officials have threatened to arrest gays and lesbians.

Write to: H.E. Robert Mugabe, President, Republic of Zimbabwe, Private Bag 7700 Causeway, Harare,

ZIMBABWE; Thrish Mbanga, Executive Director.
Zimbabwe International Book Fair 78 Kaguvi Street
P.O. Box CY1179 Causeway, ZIMBABWE;- fax: +263-
4-751-202 e-mail: zibf@mango.apc.orgMinistry Of
Information, Posts and Tele-communications, P.O.
Box CY 1276 Causeway, Harare, ZIMBABWE.

—from International Gay and Lesbian Human
Rights Commission Emergency Response Network,
1360 Mission St., Suite 200, San Francisco CA 94103.

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Fifth Estate #347, Spring, 1996

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