

# GJB gets silent treatment

There's been an estimated 80 new FBI agents assigned to the Seattle area in recent months, but that couldn't have anything to do with the renewed bombing and expropriations offensive of the urban guerrilla George Jackson Brigade.

In fact, if you believe the federal government and the mass media, there's hardly anything unusual happening these days in the Pacific Northwest, revolutionwise.

The government's new soft-sell approach bears the stamp of the Carter administration's more sophisticated line on containment of subversive activities. Gone is the Nixonian brand of sensationalism, which, after all, only tended to draw the public's attention to the why's and wherefore's of guerrillism.

Item: In a Mayday communique, the GJB announced it was back in the bombing business after a year's hiatus in which it had pulled off six successful bank robberies (expropriations) in Oregon. (See *Open Road*, No. 3, Summer 1977.) The day after the communique was issued, the U.S. Attorney in Portland revealed that secret grand jury indictments had been issued months before against two alleged GJB members for bank robbery—indicating the government knew of the GJB's involvement all along, but had suppressed the fact.

Item: Not a single wanted poster has been put up publicly for any alleged GJB members, including one member who was busted out of jail earlier this year and is assuredly high on the FBI's list.

Item: The highly-publicized grand jury circus, which

caused the Seattle Left to mobilize in its own defense, has been quietly allowed to die (although it could be revived), and the current FBI investigations are being conducted in a very low-profile manner.

Item: The GJB pulled off

two robberies in the suburban Bellevue area and announced the fact sometime afterward, but neither the local police nor the FBI ever bothered to confirm it until much later.

This downplaying of guerrilla activity is part of the Carter strategy of projecting an image of harmony throughout the land. In large demonstrations, as well, the administration's objective is to avoid confrontation where possible so as to defuse the force of protest: federal officials don't want to repeat the mistake of Seabrook, where 1,500 arrested demonstrators stoked high the fires of public sympathy.

At present, the GJB is one of the most successfully-active guerrilla forces in North America. It suspended

increasingly anti-elitist, non-rhetorical, non-vanguardist and non-dogmatic con-

Meanwhile at Walla Walla, the prisoners are waiting to see which promises the new liberal administration will choose to keep following the conclusion of a 47-day work stoppage among the general

would be used for stashing up to 100 prisoners at a time, and not just prisoners who had broken rules of the institution or had taken hostages, etc. You could earn a stretch of many months in the hole for filing a lawsuit against the administration, talking union or putting up a "provocative" poster in your cell.

Vinzant has now ordered the "release" of two-thirds of the hole's prisoners into the general population. This includes Carl Harp, who was told previously he would never get out of the hole until he renounced anarchism, and GJB member Ed Mead.

The guards are furious with Vinzant, and have started organizing against him, including issuing public statements and submitting petitions to the legislature.

The prisoners struggle at Walla Walla for an end to racial discrimination by guards, lack of meaningful work and poor medical conditions has been

growing more intense in recent months. The guards' counter-offensive itself needs to be countered with a show of support from the outside.

To get in on the Walla Walla defense, check with United Families and Friends of Prisoners, c/o American Friends Service Committee, 814 N.E. 40th, Seattle, Wash.

News and communiques on the George Jackson Brigade and on the Walla Walla situation are available from Left Bank Books, 92 Pike Street, Seattle, Wash. 98101.



operations in Seattle late last year after one of its members was killed in an abortive bank robbery, but since its re-emergence it has pulled off a clean bombing—in support of prisoners' struggles at Walla Walla state pen—and four robberies.

Four individuals—three men and one woman—have been publicly identified as members or associates of the GJB. Most of them have a working class/lumpen background, history and style, and all have been active in the prison movement (three from inside the walls).

Recent communiques by the GJB have projected an

socialism, with clear pro-feminist and pro-gay positions. The GJB spent a year rethinking its politics while in Oregon, and it is now asking for public criticism of its words and actions. Rumour has it that a major political statement by the GJB will be forthcoming shortly.

population and a full three-month sit-down by prisoners in the hole.

The big changes so far are that there's a new warden, ex-clergyman Douglas Vinzant (the old, hard-line warden got kicked upstairs), there's been a general paint-up and clean-up around the institution, and the hole has been substantially depopulated.

Prior to the strike, the hole

## BETTER BLACK THAN RED OR DEAD Anarchy is liberty, not disorder

By Mark Brothers

A large number of prisoners, feminists and one-time authoritarian Leftists have recently become conscious anarchists. Often this move has been prompted by negative experiences—the rejection of Marxism-Leninism or capitalism—rather than a firm understanding of anarchism as a positive revolutionary alternative. Many of those who turn to anarchism quickly abandon it because they see little being built and feel that it offers no organizational forms. But, in fact, anarchism contains solid structural alternatives to other forms of socialism.

There have been three major forms of socialism—libertarian socialism (anarchism), 'authoritarian' socialism (Marxist communism) and democratic socialism (electoral social democracy). The non-anarchist left has echoed the bourgeoisie's portrayal of anarchism as an ideology of chaos and lunacy. But anarchism, and especially anarchist-communism, has nothing in common with this image; anarchists are social

revolutionaries who seek a stateless, voluntary, co-operative federation of decentralized communities—based upon social ownership, individual liberty and autonomous self-management.

Organizationally, they differ from the authoritarian revolutionary socialists, the Marxist-Leninists, in, primarily, three ways. Anarchists reject the M-L notions of the **vanguard party**, **democratic centralism** and the **dictatorship of the proletariat**, and *have* alternatives to each of them. The problem is that almost the entire left, including some anarchists, is completely unaware of anarchism's tangible structural alternatives of the **catalyst group**, **anarchist consensus** and the **mass commune**.

### Catalyst Group

The anarchist alternative to the **vanguard party** is the **catalyst group**. In order to make a revolution, large-scale, co-ordinated movements are necessary, and their formation is, in no way, counter to anarchism; what anarchists are opposed to is hierarchical, power-

tripping leadership and undefined, ambiguous leadership which suppresses the creativity of the bulk of those involved. Obviously, some people are more experienced, articulate or skilled than others, and these people will play leadership roles (although there is a conscious attempt to continuously pass on skills to each other), and they may form groups which drive forward, and help crystallize the potential for revolutionary change. The members of these groups reject hierarchical positions—having more 'official' authority than others—and, unlike the M-L vanguard parties, they won't perpetuate their leadership after the revolution. Instead, the catalyst group will be dissolved and its members, as individuals, will be absorbed as equal participants into the new societies collective decision-making process.

We don't want a group of authoritarians "leading" us, then establishing themselves as a centralized decision making command. Instead of "withering away," Marxist-Leninist parties have perpetuated authoritarian institutions to maintain their

own power. The apparent effectiveness of such organizations—"we're just as efficient, disciplined and centralized as the capitalists!"—masks the way that 'revolutionaries' who pattern themselves after capitalist institutions (domination, hierarchy) become absorbed by bourgeois values, and completely isolated from the real needs and desires of ordinary people.

### Anarchist Consensus

While anarchist groups reach decisions through **anarchist consensus**, the M-L's organize through **democratic centralism** by which each member of a group—ultimately of a society—is subordinate to a "higher" member until one reaches the central committee. Members must participate when told to, even if they're unresponsive of the proposed project, or face expulsion by the central committee.

In anarchist groups, proposals are talked out by members (none of whom has authority over another), dissenting minorities are respected and each individual's participation is volun-

tary. As anarchist writer Murray Bookchin points out:

"Co-ordination and self-discipline must be achieved voluntarily, by virtue of the high moral and intellectual calibre of the revolutionary. To seek less than this is to accept, as a 'revolutionary,' a mindless robot, a creature of authoritarian training, a manipulable agent who's antithetical to any society that could be remotely regarded as free."

Anarchist organizations are structured around ongoing work-group committees. Unlike M-L groups in which new, inexperienced "cadre" are shoved off into the shit jobs of 'lower' committees (like leafletting or stamp licking committees), anarchist work-groups are equal, structured around the interests of those involved and new members of the organization join the committee of their choice or start their own.

When the size of the work-groups (which could be groups organized around media, actions, theatre, finances, ...) becomes cumbersome, the organization can be decentralized into two, or several, autonomous

organizations, still united in one large federation. This enables the group to expand limitlessly while maintaining its anarchic form of decentralized, self-management.

Anarchist groups aren't even necessarily organized loosely; anarchism is flexible and structures can be practically non-existent or very tight, depending upon the organization demanded by the conditions being faced. For instance, organization would tighten during military operations.

### Mass Commune

Unlike members of Leninist parties, whose daily lives are generally similar to present bourgeois lifestyles, anarchist organizational structures and lifestyles (through communes, tribes, affinity groups, ...) attempt to reflect the liberated society of the future. Since the M-L's don't build co-operative structures, the nucleus of the new society (anarchists built them throughout the Spanish revolution), while tearing capitalism apart, they want to seize state power and institute their own dictatorship of the proletariat instead of

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