Friday 6th April 2001

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TERROR FIRMER

"If a genuine and serious grievance arose, such as might result from a significant drop in the standard of living, all those who now dissipate their protest over a wide variety of causes might concentrate their efforts and produce a situation which was beyond the power of the police to handle." Frank Kitson, Low Intensity Operations

Last Saturday morning 200 police took part in a dawn raid on the Button Factory in Brixton. Cops claimed that the centre was "A secret training centre for anarchists who are planning to bring chaos to London on May Day". Apparently, "Anarchists from across Europe were due to gather... this weekend for riot training and planning."

The raid is part of the hysteria leading up to the planned Monopoly May Day protests, with stories in the papers getting more and more ludicrous as the day approaches. The cops feed the media and the media feeds the cops until broken skulls and mass arrests are seen as essential to stop marauding anarchists from leaving the capital and city in ruins.

But it's also part of a wider picture - in this country and across the world - of resistance and opposition to injustice, ecological destruction and poverty being criminalised. As campaigners against single issues like roads or genetics are increasingly cottoning on to the fact that it's the whole damn capitalist system that needs to be overthrown, they're finding themselves being described as 'terrorists'. The stakes are being raised.

The British State is the most experienced in the world at quelling resistance. General Frank Kitson (who worked in Malaya, Ireland and then Britain in the early 80s) wrote the British state's handbook on dealing with 'subversion', Low Intensity Operations, way back in 1971. In it he emphasises the importance of intelligence gathering using "a large number of low grade sources", "psychological operations" such as propaganda against opposition groups, use of the media to target individuals, and the use of infiltrators. The aim of this activity is to divide and destroy the movement by encouraging ineffective opposition (voting for 'left-wing' MPs, marching from A to B, listening passively to public speakers at rallies, signing petitions...) at the same time as using the media, police, courts and prisons to destroy effective opposition. As Kitson puts it, the way to smash a movement is "to associate as many prominent members of the population, especially those who may have engaged in non-violent action, with the government" and "to discover and neutralise the genuine subversive element".

Since May Day 2000 this strategy has been actively pursued in Britain. The police used May Day itself to gather an enormous amount of intelligence and get its mates in the media to portray such actions in the future as 'unacceptable' and those involved as 'criminal'. Alongside the arrests, raids and imprisonments, it was not long before "prominent" people "involved in non-violent action" were joining in the police's attacks on the Mayday action and specifically on alleged organisers. These people were quickly used by groups uninvolved in direct action to promote some kind of third way between direct action and doing nothing - a sort of being annoyed at

BUTTON UP!

Without any sense of irony, the UK's brand spanking new Terrorism Act came into effect just two days after the UK and good ol' USA bombed Baghdad. We've mentioned the new Law plenty of times, but going to the People's Global Action Conference in Milan we heard first hand from across the globe how different governments are dealing with the growing anti-capitalist movement. And hey what a surprise, it's a pretty standard formula: spread propaganda that these people will eat your babies and that the only way to stop them is more repressive laws.

But the fact remains, it isn't anti-capitalists, environmentalists or even those dastardly animal rights protesters who have been bombing Baghdad or Belgrade (yeah, we know - it was 'humanitarian' bombing). It isn't protesters who wel-



capitalism while tut-tutting people who do something about it. The prominent individuals proposing this sort of ineffectual opposition soon find themselves getting newspaper columns, appearing on chat shows and generally being promoted by those in control of the media. Unless they show support for effective opposition on the streets, that is - in which case they can kiss goodbye to their newspaper columns.

Kitson pointed out that it's no good just repressing opposition when people have genuine grievances - you must allow people to let off steam, but only in ways that don't have any effect. Our job is to make sure that our resistance isn't just about letting off steam, shouting at the telly and cheering people at rallies - but about taking effective action.

REBEL ALLIANCE

The premier of the new Prague video 'Crowd Bites Wolf - The Czech Connection' at the Rebel Alliance- the haphazard happening of Brighton's creative action crew, next Thursday (12th). Food at 6:30pm, videos from 7pm, also music, bar, workshops. Venue to be announced- call SchNEWS from next Wednesday (11th) for details

comed with open arms Russia's President Putin after he'd bombed Chechnya back into the dark ages. It isn't protesters who sell Hawk jets to dictators, refuse AIDS drugs to Africans because they're poor, dump toxic chemicals in the poorest countries in the world. We could go on...

Quite by chance however, one clause under the UK's Terrorism Act states that its OK to bomb Baghdad as "nothing in this section imposes criminal liability on any person acting on behalf of, or holding office under, The Crown." It's just when you protest against government policy that you become a terrorist. As the saying goes, "you can't be a terrorist if you've got an airforce".

BUTTON MOON

The Button Factory was opened as a social centre late summer last year, and has been used for a variety of different benefit gigs, gettogethers and parties. But that's now all come to an end after the owner and his hired heavies used mechanical diggers to make the place uninhabitable. So let's get this straight - the police en masse raid an empty building and take 'materials' from it. The owners then smash up the building and make it uninhabitable. The police then keep the building guarded and under surveillance so anarchists don't try and meet there and make plans for er, smashing up buildings.

MEETTHETERRORISTS!

EUROPOL

Police chiefs from the European Union were joined by heads of police from other countries and representatives from the European Commission, early this year in Madrid. The meeting was the first European Conference on Terrorism, organised by the Spanish Ministry of the Interior and Europol. Out of this meeting Europol (the new European Union police similar to the FBI) has started attacking-narchists, anti-capitalists and street violence at mass demonstrations as terrorism. It now wants Europewide powers against terrorism.

Special security intelligence agency for activist groups and are using informers. The fear is that local people will start occupying things as well especially as there are so many completely useless infrastructure projects happening at the moment."

COLOMBIA

Oscar was working for a Colombian human rights group when he was arrested at a demonstration and charged with being a member of a guerrilla group under special Public Order legislation. "The intention of the special legislation is too scare people and to attack opponents of the government. I was put in a small room with a big mirror. Behind the mirror is the judge who you can't see. He talks through a microphone that distorts his voice. A secret witness accused me and it is impossible to know who that person is. I refused to take part in the trial or use a solicitor - if you are charged under the legislation you are going to be sentenced, everyone is found guilty. If you kill somebody in Colombia you can be sentenced to 10 years and you'll just be in prison for 5, but if you are charged with being a terrorist you can be sentenced to 20 or 50 years. For example, if you are sentenced for throwing a stone at a demonstration you can be put in prison for 20 years. I was in prison for four years. I went on hunger strike and I was temporarily released. Amnesty International bought me a ticket to come to London where I got political asylum. If I go back to Colombia I face 10 years in prison.

When SchNEWS asked Oscar's wife what it was like living in London she looked behind both shoulders "At least we are not looking behind our backs anymore."

GREECE

A new umbrella anti-terrorism law is currently before the Greek parliament representing an attack on the mass movements in general and includes a very broad definition of what constitutes terrorism. It encourages the use of agent provocateurs, and allows facial mapping of suspects and DNA samples to be taken by force.

UNITED STATES

An anti-terrorism bill has just been approved by the state government of Oregon, and is waiting to be ratified by the US senate. Under the bill, tree spiking and sabbing animal research or livestock production would be reclassified as organised crimes with increased penalties. Protesters could face up to 20 years in prison for such 'hate crimes', and victims of 'eco-terrorism' would be able to seek civil damages. The measure is aimed at curtailing the activities of groups like the Earth Liberation Front, which has caused \$19.2 million in property damage since 1996. A Republican supporter of the bill said, "The FBI recognises the Earth Liberation Front as one of the nation's leading single-issue domestic terrorists," and then went on to compare the way the ELF operates with the mafia!

PRAGUE

Chris is a well-known activist and cartoonist who went to last September's demonstrations against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Prague. Police arrested her in a school field away from the Conference Centre. What happened to her over the next few days is the stuff of nightmares. "The police asked for my camera and I refused so about seven of them started hitting me and then threw me into a police van knocking me half-conscious.

When I got to prison I just lay on the floor for the first six hours. After a while when they kept refusing us phone calls, all the women in the cell started making lots of noise until they handcuffed us onto the bench in contorted positions. They made us pay a fine saying we would be released but it was a lie and we had to stay the whole night. In the morning I asked to go to the toilet and on the way back I just refused to go back to the cell. I held onto objects while they hit me all over. I was bleeding really heavily and eventually they took me to a hospital where I had loads of stitches. They took me back to the cell and it was empty, all my friends had been released, I freaked out and asked why I was still here and they laughed really ugly. They then took me upstairs to the interrogation room and they start telling me I was going to jail for 20 years minimum for assaulting seven police officers! They said I'd be held for a few months before I even got a hearing. I was afraid of being in four walls for a long time; I couldn't imagine myself staying sane in there. I saw the open window and jumped. I didn't know how high it was or what was at the bottom. I hit the ground - it was the hardest thing I ever felt in my life, I nearly vomited my insides and I started screaming. I thought if I went to hospital they would treat me humanely and the police would have to leave me alone - I was so wrong.

"The Ministry of Interior made the hospital like a fortress. These were not normal nurses and doctors - basically I should have been operated on in the first 24 hours to save my leg and they didn't do anything, they didn't even give me ice or painkillers. They would shake my leg really strong and I was screaming, and they would laugh informing me that I was a terrorist and that's why they treated me like this: 'You come here to destroy Prague so you deserve this.' and 'It's a war zone, you can't expect to have your human rights respected. They put a cage around my bed even though I had a broken spine, and locked me in a storage cupboard with the doors closed with guards outside so nobody could hear me scream. There was an information embargo about me. My friends called the hospital who told them I wasn't there - many dissidents and important Czech personalities called as well and they got lied to too. I didn't know if anybody would ever find out about me, that's why I was so scared, they refused me any contact with the outside world. It wasn't until all the media hype that I was eventually taken to Austria. My leg literally exploded, and for one month in Austria they wanted to cut my leg off. While I was in hospital in Austria, I was sent a big bouquet of flowers with a card 'with best recommendations - the Czech Embassy.'! The last six months I've been in hospital or laid up in bed. It really did stun me, and I lost a lot of motivation. I haven't drawn any pictures - I was too vulnerable. I made notes in the Prague Hospital on little bits of paper and when I re-read these I was so shocked. I'd forgotten everything, I

started shaking. All these memories were so incredibly horrible, it was like a nightmare, I couldn't believe the whole time that it was happening - it didn't seem possible that people could do such cruel things." On the positive side (such as it is), Chris praised "the wonderful solidarity of the people all over the world, regarding the prisoners of Prague. I think that this kind of thing must fascinate even the police and their likes, just because of the immense commitment and frighteningly chaotic strength and self organisation that these campaigns have."

* Since the Prague protests the authorities have been rushing ahead with new laws. Graffiti can now get you a lengthy prison sentence, and there are plans to crack down on public gatherings.

HOLLAND

Gay marriages, smoking cannabis on the streets, laws on euthanasia - Holland is seen by many in Europe as a liberal paradise. SchNEWS spoke to someone from Groen Front! (Dutch Earth First!) who helped dispel some of the myths and tell us about some of the new Kafka style laws in operation. "They have just introduced a new criminal organisation law specifically targeted at anarchist groups. It describes leadership as 'inciting or organising any initiative that other people can act upon.' This is exactly what activists do - organise demonstrations and encourage people to come to them, but it doesn't mean that you are the leader. Another new law is public violence. Recently in the eviction of a squat in Amsterdam, people who'd cooked that night and one person who took part in a pirate radio show got arrested for public violence, after someone threw stones at the police. This is because the new law says that if one person throws a beer can at a police officer on a demonstration, that is public violence and everyone at the demonstration can be arrested for it. Even more bizarre is that if you make a sandwich for someone going to a demonstration you can also legally be arrested!" (This is part of new 'collective responsibility' laws introduced under the cover of stopping football hooliganism at Euro 2000!). "On International Women's Day a group of Groen Front women occupied a construction site and were held for six days. Some got 20 days in prison when usually the fine for trespass is only 60 guilders (£20). During the Climate Convention in The Hague there was an anti nuclear demonstration that was surrounded by the police and everyone arrested. People were later convicted of ignoring police orders and fined 200 guilders. They said they didn't want this demonstration because they didn't have enough police but there were 5,000 police in The Hague during the Conference!

This sort of thing is happening more and more. It shows that they're really scared and they're extremely paranoid of us. They often target individuals. For example one person who has been doing covert actions was put in a psychiatric hospital saying that he had a 'sickly love for nature' and 'disturbing non-realisation of authority.'You can smoke a joint on the street, but if you pass a certain point, or when you get effective they try to really smash you. They have now set up a special security intelligence agency for activist groups and are using informers. The fear is that local people will start occupying things as well especially as they are so many completely useless infrastructure projects happening at the moment."

GroenFront!, PO Box 85069, 3508 AB, Utrecht, Netherlands www.antenna.nl/nvda/groenfront



AUTONOMOUS ZONES

The demolition of the Button Factory is as good an example as any of authority's fear of people coming together – unless of course they're shopping or paying for entertainment. Having your own autonomous space is crucial for organising, socialising, for breaking down the barriers that set us against each other.

Here's a few examples of European autonomous zones in action:

MILAN

Italy has "three or four hundred autonomous social centres" and the Leoncavello social centre in Milan is the oldest and biggest, kicking off the whole movement in 1974 after two people were killed by fascists. It has been forced to change location several times, once after being demolished by the authorities who didn't leave a wall standing.

They have been in their latest location since 1994 – an impressive old factory complex that is roughly the size of Huddersfield. It includes a massive concert hall, skateboard ramp, cinema, courtyard, several bars including an outdoor one with barbie, café, kids space, table-football, art exhibitions and masses of workshop space. The centre employs full-time office-workers, cleaners, cooks, organisers and printers.

One of the collective members told SchNEWS how important the centre is for organising. "It's fundamental. Everything to develop needs a space." But what really impressed us was the range of people using the place. At Monday's open collective meeting ("every week we have an assembly where we manage the building, anything from 30 to 200 attend"), some are dressed very straight like they've just come from their job in Milano, along with all the people just mentioned who work at the Centro Sociale. SchNEWS saw them all shouting, rolling their eyes, banging the table, standing up, sitting down, pointing, heckling and talking over each other in a spirit of communal unity and collective purpose. As far as we could make out (not speaking Italian) the proposal to keep broccolli on the menu was carried.

On Saturday night 5,000 people came in to see Goldie play in a mini Glastonbury style setting. While probably not all gemmed up on the politics of the place the anti-corporate feel no doubt rubs off. For starters, it was just £3 to get in and there were no overbearing bouncers to spoil your fun. As our man told us, "we are very open to everyone as long as people behave. What is important is what people are like not how they dress."

And maybe, just maybe when they see people who run the centre that helped put on such a good night portrayed in the media as terrorists they will remember buying beers at the Ya Basta bar and begin to question....

www.faustoeiaio.org.

BRITANNY

'La Marmite' is a new centre squatted after a Reclaim the Streets party at the beginning of a month long Festival of Resistance in Rennes, Britanny. SchNEWS spoke to one of those involved.

"The main focus of the festival was the opening of a new autonomous zone. We opened on the day of the first ballot of the French local elections. A lot of people from different backgrounds are using the centre, working people, '68 survivors, squatters, organic farmers, students, unemployed people, artists."

There's been daily hot organic meals at £1 a go as well as round-table discussions, video showings, street theatre workshops, painting, actions, an alternative library and musical activities with everything from acoustic and salsa to punk and techno. "The occupation echoes a myriad of similar actions round the world aiming at creating areas of freedom and creativity safe from the grip of market. It is part of the global movement against capitalist globalization, boredom and cultural homogeneity."

And perhaps the best thing of all is that "people who were not involved before have now got involved."

As SchNEWS went to press La Marmite was facing eviction.

* La Marmite is based at number 7, rue de l'Hotel Dieu, Rennes. http://resiste.net/rennes

COR BLIMLEY ...

It's issue 300, so next week to recover from this momentous occasion we are taking a well earned week long break to plant seeds on our sorted assorted allotments and help the book crew get the next one to the printers in time for the festie season (as long as foot and mouth doesn't stop 'em 'appening).

We'll still be updating 'Party and Protest' on our website for those of you with the technology because we're nice like that.

IT'S A SchNEWS TRAINING DAY! WEDNESDAY 25th APRIL

We need some more help with writing stories, so if you've got any spare time on a Wednesday or Thursday come along to the next SchNEWS Training Day to find out how its all done. 12 noon onwards. Call the office for directions (01273) 685913

P.S. Don't forget extra stuffers always needed on a Friday!

EURO DUSNIE

EuroDusnie is an amazing collective from Holland that sprang out of actions against European Unification in April 1997. They have three squatted buildings in Leiden, and have about 10 different projects on the go. These are organised by independent groups whose 'representatives' meet up every two weeks for a joint general meeting.

Amongst other things they produce a free monthly newspaper, run an info-shop, food coop and café, put on cultural evenings, make regular visit schools to talk about the disadvantages of European unification and help run a pirate radio station. They also have a pie-throwing group and a 'collective without money' which organises free train rides to capitalist conferences because "demonstrators, just like the official assholes going to political topsummits, don't have to pay for going there." They also run a Free Shop where the motto is 'happiness is not for sale'. They are also involved in fighting local unwanted commercial 'developments' by bringing people together as well as showing alternatives with locally based projects.

As they point out, "We are firm believers in the idea that when you want something done, you have to go for it yourself rather than expecting that politicians will do it for you. Parliamentary democracy has degenerated into a puppet show. Politics has bartered people away to trade and industry and international institutions like the European Union and the World Trade Organisation. This shows clearly what happens when you let the government make decisions on your behalf..."

Visit the EuroDusnie office, Boerhaavelaan 345 in Leiden. Open most weekdays between 2-5pm. Tel/fax: 071 5173019 email:eurodusnie@squat.net

Send post to EuroDusnie, Postbox 2228, 2301 CE Leiden The Netherlands http://eurodusnie.nl

Launch of the Campaign Against State Terrorism

Sunday 8 April 1-5pm University of London Union 3rd floor Malet Street, London WC1

Tel 0845 458 2966 web: http://go.to/ta2000 e-mail: ta2000@go.to



DISCLAIMER

Making these every week isn't a piece of cake. Honest

SEED OF DISSENT

Minister - we've got the pesticide resistant crop. A species which can eat it is in the pipeline.

question is, where do Monsanto's rights end and mine begin?"

Percy Schmeiser, Canadian farmer.

Imagine you're a farmer growing a crop and saving some seed to sow the following year. Now imagine that unbeknown to you, your crop gets contaminated with genetically engineered pollen, then you get taken to court and sued! Er, is this some kind of April fool?

Well, in Canada last week a judge ruled that a Canadian farmer, Percy Schmeiser, violated Monsanto's patent by "unknowingly and unwillingly growing genetically modified (GM) oil seed rape." He now faces a bill for \$105,000 and after 40 years of saving seeds and developing his own strain has had to purchase new seed wasting a lifetime's work.

Under Canadian patent law, as in the US and many other industrialised countries, it is illegal for farmers to re-use patented seed, or to grow Monsanto's GM seed without signing a licensing agreement. If biotech bastards such as Monsanto get their way, every nation in the world will be forced to adopt patent laws that make seed saving illegal. The ruling against Schmeiser establishes an even more dangerous precedent, meaning that farmers can be forced to pay royalties on GM seeds found on their land, even if they didn't buy the seeds, or benefit from them.

The GM oil seed rape that drifted onto Schmeiser's farm was engineered to be resistant to Monsanto's weedkiller, Roundup. He didn't use Roundup on his crop, because that would have killed the majority of his oil seed rape plants that were not genetically modified!. Schmeiser didn't take advantage of Monsanto's GM technology, but the court ruling says he's guilty of using the seed without a licensing agreement.

Monsanto are so zealous about protecting their fat profits that they send around 'gene police' stealing crops from random farms and then testing them to see if they contain Monsanto's gene to tolerate their own pesticides. Monsanto has threatened to 'vigorously prosecute' hundreds of seed saving farmers, but Schmeiser's was the first major case to reach the courts.

About the ruling Percy said: "I was really alarmed at the fact that it said in the decision that it doesn't matter how it gets into a farmer's field - whether it blows in or cross-pollinates, or comes in on farm machinery - it doesn't belong to the farmer. It

belongs to Monsanto.

Percy is now considering an appeal and has filed a counter-suit against Monsanto, but his family faces enormous legal costs. Contributions to Schmeiser's legal defense may be sent to "Fight Genetically Altered Food Fund Inc", Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, 603 Main St, Humboldt SK, Canada, SOK 2A0.

For more: www.percyschmeiser.com

Sow What?

The verdict is being hailed as a landmark victory for Monsanto, but it may spark a biotech backlash. North American farmers grow three-quarters of the world's commercial GM crops, and now they're showing signs of biotech battle fatigue. Illegal traces of Aventis' StarLink maize (unapproved for human consumption) have disrupted grain markets and jeopardized exports. Unsold stockpiles of US maize are at their highest level since GM crops were commercialised. The US government announced last month that it would spend \$20 million in taxpaver money to bail out the biotech industry, using money that would normally go to disaster relief for farmers!

Now American farmers are reluctant to plant GM crops, the chief executive of the American Corn Growers Foundation complaining "Consumer resistance in Europe, Asia, Australia, Canada, Mexico, South Africa, Brazil and the growing resistance in the United States makes it unlikely that many market opportunities will be available for GM crops".

Aventis in the UK

In last week's SchNEWS we told a tale that wamed our cockles, about a Sussex farmer who pulled out of a farm scale trial of oil seed rape. The farmer had originally contacted the local press and said he was pulling out because of the possibility that the scientists conducting the tests could spread foot and mouth disease. When asked about whether the protests against him had had an effect he said, "I'm not bothered about the antis. I enjoy a good debate". Two hours later though he changed his tune saying he pulled out "due to the unbearable level of intimidation and threatening behaviour that has been targeted to-

SchNEWS & *SQUALL* YEARBOOK 2001 Schnews and Squall's Yearbook

2001 is out next month. With issues 251-300 of SchNEWS, the best of SQUALL magazine, lots of photos, cartoons, in their own words reports from those building a free world, a full on contacts list, and more..

If you lovely lot stump up some cash up front for advance orders to the tune of £600. we can afford to print more copies. When we work out how the ISBN numbering system works, we'll let you know so you can order the book for yer local library (if it hasn't been closed or privatised). Copies of Yearbook 2001 are going for £7 plus £1.50 for 280 pages. If you'd like to make a prisoner's day, how about buying two copies of the Yearbook? Nominate the prisoner you'd like it sent to, or let us do that for you.

wards me and my family.". So why the change of mind? Well considering that the new press release had Aventis' (the biotech company running the trials) fax number at the top, it looks more likely that he had his mind changed for him!.

For a complete list of all test sites see www.geneticsaction.org/testsites

* Aventis' application for Chardon LL maize to be the first commercialized GM seeds to be approved for the UK National Seed List has been indefinitely postponed after it was discovered that French authorities had only tested the crop for one year, rather than the two required under EU law. The hearing brought up issues including the failure to test the GM maize on cows, and 'suspicious' higher death rates among GM-fed chickens during trials.

How comes the countryside remains closed to everyone except anyone involved in GM crops? Scientists from 5 institutions will be making regular visits to all of the trials, moving between farms and counties. The trials are non-essential and pose a serious risk of further spreading of the disease. And the government tells us that foot and mouth travels miles but that geneticaly altered crops somehow won't. Yeah right, try telling that to Percy Schmeiser!

POSITIVE SCHNEWS: **Outlawed Vegetables**

In the UK 97% of the vegetable varieties available in 1903 were no longer available just eighty years later. Does it matter? - well the Henry Doubleday Research Association (HDRA) think so, and have set up the Heritage Seed Library, because as one of their gardeners pointed out "genetic erosion is a mass extinction every bit as important as the loss of species from tropical rainforests.'

Every year seed companies decide not to register certain seeds, and because they aren't on the National Seed List they can't be sold. Plants that may have characteristics that might be useful in the future would be lost if it were not for the amazing work of the Library. You can join the Library and choose some outlawed vegetables and they'll 'lend' you a few seeds.

Just 3 corporations control a quarter of the world's entire seed market: Monsanto, Dupont and Syngenta. The corporations that have been steadily buying all up all your favourite garden seed companies, are the very same bio-tech giants that are trying to get us all to eat our genetically modified greens. But as Bob Sherman from the HDRA points out, "the risk of concentrating so much commercial power into the hands of one corporate empire is that we have become subject to the dreams and aspirations of a very few people. Do they care about bio-diversity? Not as much, I suspect, as they do about profit."

> Heritage Seed Library 01203 303517 www.hdra.org.uk

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