

# CONTACTS

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# FREEDOM



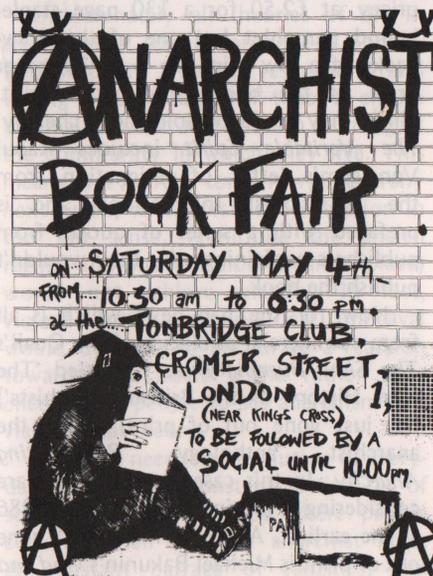
## The Dismal Science Sex and Power Chile CND



## Thank you

**DEFICIT FUND**  
 Wales TB £19.75; Wolverhampton JKW £2; Wolverhampton JL £6; Derbs KB £1.75; Salop HB £5.75; USA HS £14.11.  
**February Total = £49.36.**  
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**Total for 1985 = £725.79**

**PREMISES FUND**  
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**February Total = £32**  
 Wolverhampton JL £13; Anon £1; Middx BS £1.65; UK JB £1; London RA £3.70.  
**March Total = £20.35**  
**Total for 1985 = £223.31**



## LIBERTARIAN IMPLICATIONS OF INFORMATION SCIENCE

If anyone is interested in setting up a Libertarian Information Science group to investigate this topic please contact P Cerny c/o Solidarity, 123 Latham road, London E6

The Mary Ward Centre Meetings will continue after the Easter break from 26th April. Fridays 8:15pm. 17th May: Ken Weller on 'The struggle against the First World War in London'.

**ANARCHISM: THEORY AND PRACTISE - PAST AND PRESENT.** Third series of six weekly talks by Nicolas Walter, followed by discussions, begins in Central London on Tuesday evening, 23rd April 1985. Information from the Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AQ.

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# FREEDOM

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### CONTRIBUTORS PLEASE NOTE

*Freedom* is a professionally typeset paper, which means that articles for *Freedom* need to be typed, on one side only, triple-spaced with a large margin down both sides of the page. Neat handwritten material should be on lined paper using every other line. Keep your own copy rather than ask us to return the original. Don't make work for us, and remember the editors don't get paid.

The editors

*Freedom* is edited by David Peers, Colin Johnstone, Bella Melville, John Anderson, Stu Stuart, Nick d'Nib and Cam.

### MEET THE EDITORS

Every Thursday at Angel Alley.  
Thursday 9th May: Discussion about Freedom Press Centenary, 7:00-9:30pm  
Thursday 16th May: A Distribution, 6:00-8:30pm  
Thursday 23rd May: Freedom Layout (not a good time for long chats)  
Thursday 30th May: A Distribution and Freedom mail-out. Everybody welcome (and needed), 6:00-9:30pm and drinks afterwards

Last copy dates for *Freedom* June issue: Tuesday 21st May, July issue: Tuesday 18th June



## Editorial

When the new *Freedom* editors got together a year ago we decided not to cut or obviously alter articles or letters sent to *Freedom*. However, the smaller page size appears to make it almost impossible to stick to this policy. As you've probably noticed, the people now doing layout are fairly new to the game and the complex fiddles which Colin and Stu used to employ to get everything in are no longer applicable to the new format.

Before January '85, the only people who'd had their stuff cut were Stu and Nick Walters. Since then at least one article has had to be cut for each issue,

and it's silly to always cut Stu's one to avoid injuring your occasionally touchy egos. If you want an all or nothing approach to your contribution, please make that clear. Experienced, helpful writers tend to indicate the sections they would least mind losing!

Please, please note that the new format is still small and there is absolutely no room for 8,000 word block-busters. We get 1,000 words to a page and are very reluctant to go beyond two-page articles.

Letters should be less than 300 words. The preferred length for news, reports and reviews is under 500 words, with an absolute maximum of 1,000 words. For analysis and debate we would prefer the

same length with exceptions up to 2,000. We would indeed like to have more pages since we already get more letters and articles than we can print and a 20-page *Freedom* is a distinct possibility in the near future, if the money keeps rolling in.

It is extraordinarily difficult to get *Freedom's* layout and contents up to a reasonable level at the same time as using such a high level (80%) of material sent in from outside. Please try to be grown-up about it if your contribution gets left out. For a start, try counting up the number of words you've used and note that figure at the bottom of your article.

The editors

that sentence mean? How can *reified* (*objectified*) be a comparison or distinction, or indeed take any second term?

Please note that these are not mere stylistic quibbles: it is important that what we write should make sense. No intelligibility — no communication; so ideas become meaningless, to ourselves as well as to those to whom we try to communicate them.

And while I am in the business of complaining, let me correct a factual error in the second paragraph on page 8. In the 'Dangerous Illusions' article on CND, Andy Brown refers to CND's faith in non-violent direct action. Unfortunately this is the exact opposite of the truth. CND's belief in 'non-violence' includes the approval of standing armies and conventional weapons, of NATO and of 'balance-of-power' politics, of police forces and the whole apparatus of law-and-order enforcement, etc, etc. And their opinion of direct action is such that, in

the late '50s and '60s and to some extent even now, it was quite common for CND organisers to collaborate with the police in attempts (mostly unsuccessful) to prevent the carrying out of radical actions by such groups as PYAG, DAC, and later the Committee of 100.

I fear the notion that CND approves of non-violent direct action is itself a dangerous illusion! Greetings from

Oliver Mahler  
(ex PYAG, DAC, C/100,  
old LAG and old lag)  
London

[Eds: Now you're in London, why don't you pop in and do some sub-editing for us?]

### Dear Freedom,

The article 'Anarchism as an ultra-leftist stunt' condemned the Bedford Anarchists saying the results of their actions were nil. Much of our work has been directed

against NIREX who want to dump nuclear waste nearby. Since the recent smoke-bombing of the NIREX office and a raid where over £1,000 worth of damage was caused, the attention we drew to the nuclear dumping issue has seen the campaign as a whole grow. (Bedford Against Nuclear Dumping had problems getting 40 people to a meeting — since our actions the last meeting attracted almost 400). Also, *The Mole*, our first magazine, sold all 250 copies in less than 3 weeks, and most were sold in Bedford. The magazine was not brilliant but it has helped to bring local public awareness to our cause.

Other news: Five comrades on a hunt-sabotage were arrested with five others under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Also — a second issue of *The Mole* will be out shortly, but under a new title. Yours for anarchy, liberty and peace

Paul-Francois Guillotine

PS Donations for three comrades appearing in the Crown Court shortly would be gratefully appreciated.

Box A, Bedford College of H E,  
Polhill Site, Bedford MK41 9EA

### Dear Freedom,

I agree with Mick Larkin when he says that *Freedom's* tendency towards front covers which show Thatcher grinding people into dust is at the very least a bit depressing. I think you are unwittingly making propaganda for the State by dwelling on such images. Right wing death squads in El Salvador, the unofficial arm of the State, do not try to hide the mutilated bodies of their victims but deliberately dump them by the roadside for everyone to see in order to intimidate and frighten the population into submission. Likewise the State here depends heavily on the (false) image of being strong, victorious and all powerful in order to demoralise, pacify and disorientate opposition and grind down our will to fight.

By filling our papers with pictures of row after row of riot police or mounted police running down the pickets at Orgreave, for instance, are we not absorb-

ing and internalising this propaganda? Surely *Freedom* can help lift our spirits and boost our morale by occasionally showing images of us winning for a change. Take for example that lovely picture that was in the press recently of a woman bashing a neo-nazi on the head with her shopping bag — just great!

Paul Patard  
Reading

[Eds: Images of us winning? Do you want us to bury our heads in the sand? Surely we can at least laugh about how bad things really are? Black humour is better than retreat into fantasy.]



### Dear Freedom,

The recent appearance of a group calling themselves *Class War* raises several questions which I would like to hear answered in your magazine.

First of all, if slinging mud at people they disagree with and shouting slogan-type abuse is their way of conveying their message, how are we supposed to know what that message is? If non-violence is part of the message, how does the behaviour tie up?

If it isn't, how is the message different or better than hundreds of others that most 'peace people' have been seeing through and discarding for years? Why aren't most members of anarchist or libertarian groups angry that the description 'anarchist' (already badly misunderstood by the public) is being used yet again by people who don't appear to understand anything about it? I would like to know...

Dorothy Percival  
Kent

Dear Freedom, I'm writing to put forward my thoughts on the anarchist press in Britain today. It seems to me that the only people getting out and reaching Joe Public are *Class War* and other related groups. Too many anarchist rags around are written for consumption by other anarchists in the 'Let's show so-and-so from University how intellectual I am' vein. Surely it's time we spent more time explaining the basic rudiments of anarchism in readable intelligible language. A bit more humour wouldn't go amiss too.

It's dangerously naive to think (as some anarchists do) that people are somehow genetically predisposed to anarchic organisation. While the majority of non-anarchists I'm acquainted with are anti-authority and anti-rich, they simply can't envisage anarchism as plausible. We've got to get out of our safe peer group ghettos and explain things like how crime should be dealt with, the causes of crime, organisation of syndicates/workers councils, etc.

It's all very well to put an attractive, funny anti-establishment picture on the front of papers, but unless we give people more positive things to work on, we'll just get treated as jokes/freaks/lunatics (delete where applicable).

Flogging papers and giving out leaflets on demo's doesn't make us Trots (as *Black Flag* suggested). We aren't into party recruitment or profit making, but relating anarchist principles to partial struggles and linking them up to the wider fight shows people that we do care, especially if we can also add physical and financial support.

We need to stop pissing about with self indulgent intellectualism (not to mention self indulgent sectarianism) and communicate with the 'oppressed masses' with decent, intelligible literature that isn't just negative, destructive 'Smash the State' crap, and we might find a slightly greater acceptance of libertarian ideals. Yours fraternally

Hazel Wilson

PS Please give the May 11th 'Bash the Rich' march a plug. It starts at Ladbroke Grove at 2:00pm.

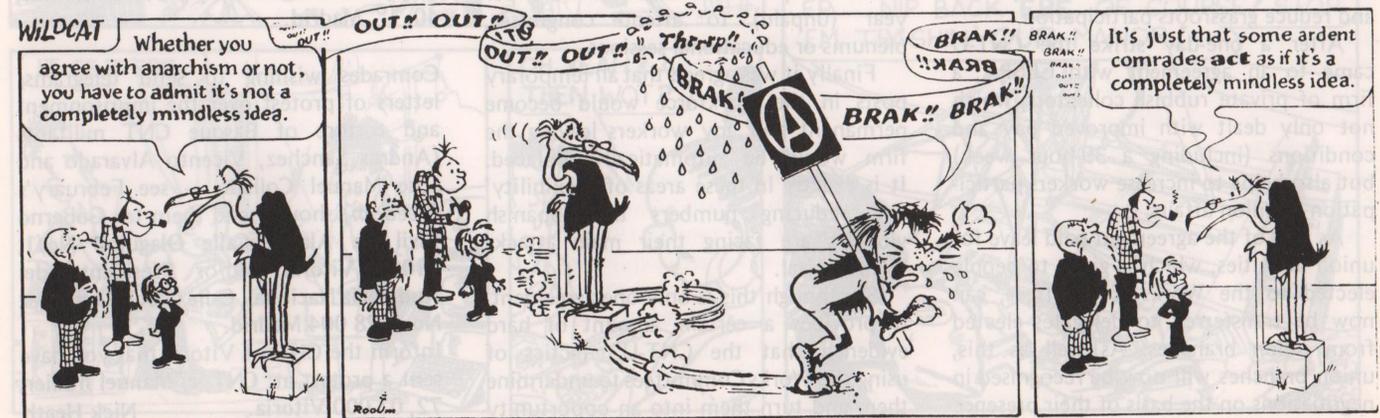
Hazel Wilson

## LETTERS

### Dear Friends,

In John Griffin's article 'Sharing Responsibility' in your April issue, at least one sentence appears to have been mangled. At the bottom of the first column on page 13 there appears: 'This is the firm foundation upon which those delegated to organise, (on the basis of known ability) ultimately rests'. Even if — per impossible — this were a grammatically correct sentence, it would still be unintelligible. Should it perhaps be: 'This is the firm foundation upon which the position of those delegated to organise (on the basis of known ability) ultimately rests'?

And let JG look to his vocabulary. In the next paragraph he appears to write: '... networks, which become reified from those who work...' What the blazes can



LETTERS

# DAMNESTY WORKER.

Neurotic hysteria over 'true, active, paid-up', DAM membership figures!

Dear Freedom Collective,  
As you are well aware, in the last issue

## STAMPED WITH DISAPPROVAL

Dear Freedom,  
International organising is an absolute requirement for effective anarchist activity, neither I nor the Hamburg comrades in *Freedom's* last issue nor others deny that. Prerequisites for the success of such an organisation must include:

1. Efficiency and stability (through secure funding);
2. Reflecting the needs of, and opening dialogue between, all anarchists/anarcho-syndicalists and fellow travellers;
3. Broadcasting revolutionary ideals further (eg through co-ordinating solidarity action) in other, receptive, areas of society.

To compare my ideas for an international with the International (AIT) I have found:

1. Strings of unanswered letters to AIT and AIT-affiliated groups, even requests for magazines ignored. This is, however, no harsh criticism — nine years as an anarchist activist (stamped and approved revolutionary references available — joke) including four years with an AIT-affiliated group, tell me this is annoyingly normal;
2. The structure of the AIT, representation through one national group per country, hinders communication and

of *Freedom* (April 1985) at the bottom of the article on IWA on page 4 the copy was altered to read, "... DAM has less than 5 members ..." rather than "... DAM has less than 50 members ..."

This was done without the consent of the Aldgate Press Collective. We apologise for any inconvenience and embarrassment this may have caused and assure you that

excludes most activists. Why do I have to talk to my Hamburg comrades through *Freedom*? Why do they rely on information about the miners strike from Marxist groups when other non-AIT-affiliated anarchist channels are available (eg the Clydeside Anarchists *Mutual Aid Fund* group)?;

3. Many AIT-affiliated groups are seen as increasingly dogmatic ('pure?') anarcho-syndicalists who are purging themselves into an increasingly small corner, isolating themselves from contact with larger syndicalist trade unions who are contemptuously dismissed as 'reformist'.

The anarcho-syndicalist international of my ideas would be divided into two parts. One, a federation of *functioning* radical and (anarcho)-syndicalist trade unions, eg CNT (Spain), IWW (USA), COB (Brazil), SAC (Sweden), etc connected to a second part, a confederated network of anarchist groups who, through the international, pump our ideas into the workers movement, much as the FAI did with the CNT in Spain in the pre-civil war period.

My suggestions are, of course, no part of the long-agreed upon aims and principles of the AIT. Thus I say to anarchists not in the AIT, make sure you support (or not) this group for good reasons and

there will be no repetition of this kind.  
Aldgate Press

[Eds: We certainly hope so. Since nearly all London anarchist and libertarian papers are printed here, the news that a member of S London DAM, who works for you, may arrogantly censor their pages will not be widely welcomed.]

see it as it really is, and to comrades in this narrow federation I say, be prepared to accept fair criticism from other anarchists.

Rob  
West Germany

## POINTS OF INFORMATION

Sources for my figures of anarchist/anarcho-syndicalists given in *Freedom* February 1985 and later queried (*Freedom* April 1985).

- 1 150,000 self-defined anarcho-syndicalists presently in W Germany is from survey by *Stern* in three parts February 1983, quoted by *Spiegel* 1983, partly reprinted in *Tageszeitung* on the occasion of Souchys death, and for British readers, referred to in *Anarchy* 37 (Winter 1983).
- 2 300 membership of (I)FAU-IAA was told to me by a member in summer 1984 and verified by a member of another AIT-affiliated group around the same time. I speculate this represents a significant over-estimation following recent splits in the group. Perhaps, in the interests of accuracy, the Hamburg group would care to rectify their previous omission and give the anarchist general public a concrete figure.

Rob

for the various unions in a workplace to meet on their own terms is not as ridiculous as some people would have us believe.

Mick Larkin

PS Information about British events, requests for solidarity, etc, can be sent to the CNT-U's international secretary who can read English (though not fluently, so it is probably a good idea to keep it brief): Paco Marcellan, CNT, c/Infantas, 40, 1<sup>o</sup>, Madrid.

Comrades wishing to send telegrams/letters of protest over the imprisonment and torture of Basque CNT militants (Andres Sanchez, Vicente Alvarado and Jose Manuel Collado — see February's *Freedom*) should send them to: Gobierno Civil da Alava, Calle Olaguibil No/1, 01004 Vitoria and/or Presidente del Audiencia Nacional, Calle Garcia Gutierrez No 1, 28 004 Madrid.

Inform the CNT of Vitoria that you have sent a protest at: CNT, c/ Manuel Iradier, 72, 01 000 Vitoria.  
Nick Heath

# IWA-AIT Congress

In the aftermath of the miners' strike and following other major industrial disruption throughout Europe, it was natural that these disputes, and to a lesser extent unemployment, should dominate the debates at the Congress of the International Workers Association (IWA-AIT) (Northern Section) in London over Easter. In all seven countries represented at the Congress counting delegates and observers.

Reports from all the sections showed up the involvement of the organised international anarcho-syndicalist movement in these industrial and social disputes.

The Danish ASO is active in the current wave of strikes over Government imposed pay restraint.

In Germany the FAU is in the forefront of the fight for the shorter working week, which produced widespread strikes among metal and printing workers last year. The working week is now 38½ hours in some industries.

In Britain the DAM has worked hard to back the miners' strike and has helped co-ordinate solidarity action both nationally through its own branches and internationally in the IWA-AIT. DAM is currently doing what it can to support an amnesty for the sacked miners. As an attempt to mobilise the grassroots labour movement, in response to the challenge from the State, North West Regional DAM has joined together with other local organisations to co-ordinate a Rank and

File Conference on 20th April.

NSF of Norway has given massive solidarity support to the miners in Britain, as well as retaining links with labour organisations in Poland and Latin America.

The representative of the International Secretariat in Madrid announced a coming campaign throughout much of Latin America to reinforce contacts and advance the influence of the IWA-AIT in that area. Countries named for special attention include Brazil, Columbia, Bolivia and Costa Rica. In Bolivia, during the recent successful General Strike, there have already been many communications and contacts from sections of the syndicalist union — the COB — with the IWA-AIT in Madrid. The COB is not as yet affiliated to any of the International Labour Movements.

In a private conversation I was told that since the outbreak of strikes in many areas of Spain — in Galicia, Cadiz, the Basque region and elsewhere — much of the sectarian in-fighting within the CNT has ceased. Many CNT-AIT militants are now fully engaged with others in the social struggles with the bosses and the State.

The CNT-France gave a report as observers: They claimed most success with the agricultural workers of France. Though in some areas, such as banking, they have good relations with other unions.

For the OBU (Holland) another observer reported a membership of 15,000. This union has members in fishing in the Port of Rotterdam and the Hague, among taxi drivers in several towns, teachers and the jobless. Many unemployed workers lacking support from their own bureaucratic unions are, it seems, turning to the OBU for support. The OBU, which is not in the IWA, is less sectarian and ideological than most of the sections of the International. As a result it seems to have had more social impact than most. It has produced pamphlets which put a basically direct actionist case without using the labels of libertarian politics, and setting themselves up as sitting ducks. Their approach is more subtle than many on the libertarian left in Britain.

## The Miners' Strike

Perhaps those who advocate General Strikes at every turn will now grasp that the fragmented structure and the attitude of British labour at shopfloor level, make mass united action more difficult than they would have had us believe.

If DAM is not to become just another party of sectarian sleepwalkers, beating their own revolutionary drum, they must face up to these industrial realities and produce common sense policies. Then they must act upon them, instead of waving their 'Aims and Principles' like some religious gospel.

Brian Bamford

# Rubbish Collectors

## CNT-U WINS MORE WORKERS' PARTICIPATION

A recent agreement signed between the CNT-U and a firm in Victoria on 25th February provides further evidence that their decision to make use of the 'Works Committees' is not necessarily a move which will make them more reformist and reduce grassroots participation.

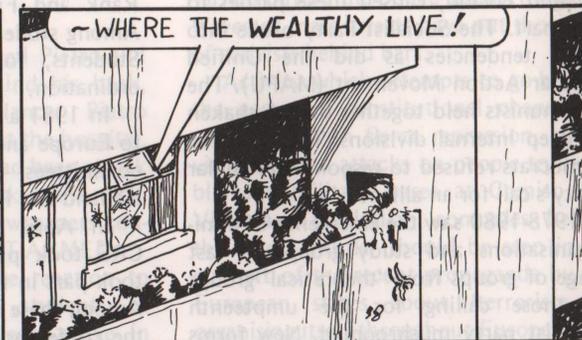
After a one-day strike the CNT-U came to an agreement with CESP, a firm of private rubbish collectors, which not only dealt with improved pay and conditions (including a 39-hour week) but also helps to increase workers participation in union affairs.

As part of the agreement paid leave for union activities, which is given to people elected to the Works Committees, can now be transferred to delegates elected from union branches. As well as this, union branches will now be recognised in negotiations on the basis of their presence

amongst the workforce, ie without the usual preconditions that bosses have used to date to exclude the CNT before it began standing for election to the Committees. The agreement has also got all union members up to five days off work per year (unpaid) to attend congresses, plenums or educational sessions.

Finally it was agreed that all temporary posts in the workforce would become permanent and any workers leaving the firm would be automatically replaced. It is exactly in these areas of 'flexibility' and reducing numbers that Spanish workers are facing their main attacks from Capital.

So, though this is only one agreement, it provides a certain amount of hard evidence that the CNT-U's tactics of using the Works Committees to undermine them and turn them into an opportunity



# Hope in Chile?

## A New Anti-authoritarian Movement

The Chilean masses suffered deeply after the coup. All social security cover was taken away and they were delivered bound hand and foot to the bosses. The years 1973-1978 were the black night of fascism. The least sign of movement resulted in mass sackings, and the least attempt at organisation was bestially crushed.

In these conditions all political and union organisations were swept away during '73-76. The CUT, the main trade union body, in exile and underground, lost all influence; Communists, Socialists and extreme left turned in on themselves. Only the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), following its Castroite theories to the letter, engaged in suicidal armed struggle, ending rapidly in the disappearance of its militants. All cells of resistance were wiped out in 1976.

In 1978 came authorisation of union sections, divided in three colleges; workers, office workers, management, and with no right to co-ordinate. Despite the limits of this legislation, which the government hoped would mean tame unions, autonomous union organisations did develop, made up for the most part of the 'new generation' who had been between 10 and 20 at the time of the coup.

Parallel to this, the old parties of Popular Unity (UP) went into crisis. The appearance of Eurocommunism, Afghanistan and Poland, caused these parties to fall apart. The Socialist Party broke into many tendencies as did the Unified Popular Action Movement (MAPU). The Communists held together though shaken by deep internal divisions. The Christian Democrats refused to respond to Popular Unity's call for an alliance.

1978-1980 saw the emergence of mini-organisations and study groups. A vast range of groups from 'theoretical' groups to those calling for the umpteenth Leninist party mushroomed. New forms of social organisation at the base and in the shanty towns were born and began to co-ordinate with the emerging union groups.

There was a wide gap between those who learnt the lessons of UP and developed anti-Leninist, anti-authoritarian ideas and the old parties who were trying to build the old organisations (like the CUT) from the top down.

In this context the group Socialist Thought and Action (PAS) was created in 1979, and the Committee for the Defence of Union Rights (CODES) in which libertarians had a key role in 1981. The PAS gathered together libertarian

militants, libertarians who had gone into the UP in 1970, and elements that had split from the Socialist Party. A national meeting was held in July 1982. It recognised the revolutionary syndicalist tradition and called for a break with 'the political habits of the bourgeois republican democrats' and 'the habits of traditional trade unionism, characterised by a bureaucratic structure'. They called for 'collective thought, critical and permanent critique of reality, direct action, control and recall of delegates. A second document from November 1982 called for the autonomy of the working class, reinforcement of union organisations and neighbourhood village groups.

On the official level, the years 1977-1978 saw the relaunching of the FUT (United Front of Workers), the trade union body under the control of the Christian Democrats. Within this was a group of unions calling for the autonomous reorganisation of the union movement. Two or three years were enough, and they were forced out. These unions formed the CRS (Commission for Union Renewal) at the end of 1980.

Parallel events were attempts of libertarians to create a co-ordination of the neighbourhoods, like the attempted co-ordination of Santiago in the San Miguel quarter, the TAB (Autonomous Rank and File Tendency) in 1980-81. Among students was the United Front of Students, followed by a Student Co-ordination.

In 1981 a representative of CRS came to Europe and met exile groups. Support committees were set up in Belgium, Holland and France.

In April 1983 a conference of the CRS took place in Chile. New groups took part in the project called 'Renewal'. Among these was the PAS. At the end of the conference a new organisation was set up — the MRS (Movement for Social Renewal) with many autonomous organisations supporting the ideas of 'renewal'.

The MRS proposed a long term work, rejecting all intervention from the parties. It put the accent on the development of work and popular education, creating schools in the poor villages for youth, children and adults. Union schools were also created, organising debates and conferences to explain this new social project that hoped to create a society of direct democracy based on the 'autonomous organised social power of the workers'.

What was the attitude of the political

parties? Some ignored it, others attempted to infiltrate, some dissident groups joined the MRS full of hope. In practice, renewal shows the difficulty of controlling such a mass popular movement.

In certain interviews given by delegates of MRS in Santiago, they stated:

*'In regards to propositions of aid to develop tasks such as the creation of schools, co-operative workshops or other initiatives, we reply that we need all sorts of help, but we will accept no conditions for this aid by any group of any ideology . . . We have refused several offers of important aid, which we need, because of conditions attached . . . Our social project is the only real reply to 60 years of struggle of the workers movement. Today all the political sectors only think of the fall of the dictatorship and are already quarrelling about who will take over. We are not preoccupied by this problem. The struggle for the political power of the State does not interest us. We are looking for other things; to educate, inform and teach every comrade how to run society, and what are the possible solutions to daily problems. In other words that every worker, peasant, student, young person understands that they can be responsible for their own lives; that in every workplace, every neighbourhood, in the municipalities, popular organisations are created capable of controlling and envisaging solutions to all the social problems.'*

*'The union movement must be the motor and the backbone of the social movement formed by all the workers of the different sectors, at different levels and across various organisational expressions, those of the town and village committees, of the peasants, of the co-operatives, of youth, of women, who aspire to the building of the Autonomous Social Power of the Workers.'*

The popular movement in Chile has never been of such a size and has never known such dynamic. This everyday practice of struggle to search directly for solutions to the most important problems, with no go-betweens, is leading to the discovery by the Chilean working class of methods of organisation forgotten since the 'golden age' of struggle in the '20s and '40s.

**Libertarian Communist Discussion Group, c/o Box 5, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1.**

# International News

## ITALY: ANTI-MILITARIST MARCH



About 1500 anarchists from all parts of Italy marched to the centre of Bergamo in northern Italy on March 23rd to protest against militarism. The march was organised by two anarchist groups from Bergamo — Tribu Liberate (Liberated Tribe) and Freccia Nero (Black Arrow).

The march represents an attempt by the Italian anarchist movement to place the issue of militarism in a wider social and institutional context and to take the initiative in giving the peace movement a more radical direction.

A large number of punks took part in

## ITALIAN ACTIVIST MURDERED BY POLICE

On 9th March in Trieste the police shot and murdered Pietro Greco, an activist in the workers autonomy movement. State repression in Italy had forced Pietro to go on the run. He was accused of 'subversive association' and participation in 'an armed band' (vague charges that made no reference to specific crimes) and of possessing arms (no arms were ever found). These charges were laid as part of the mass arrests of 25th February 1982 — if Pietro had not fled then, he would probably have faced years of 'preventative detention' before trial.

When Pietro returned to his flat in Via Giulia, Trieste, shortly after 11am on Saturday March 9th, the police were waiting for him on the landing. They fired at him on sight. Probably already hit, Pietro ran out into the street, shouting 'Help, they want to kill me'.

Three policemen were lying in wait. They fired around 20 shots at Pietro as he tried to hide behind a parked car. He collapsed on the pavement. One policeman walked towards him and fired another shot into the back of his neck.

The policeman then searched Pietro and handcuffed his hands behind his back, before calling an ambulance. Pietro died shortly after arriving at the hospital. It was announced that he had been struck by 7 bullets, one in the back of the neck. Both the police and the newspapers confirmed that Pietro WAS NOT ARMED.

There was an immediate reaction to Pietro's murder. School students in Padova, where he had been active in many struggles over the years took strike action. Through leafletting and the autonomist Radio Sherwood, Pietro's comrades denounced this 'premeditated assassination' by the state.

After the mass struggles of 1977/78, the Italian State hit back with a series of repressive measures; the 'Emergency' laws. These include 'prevention detention', whereby people could be detained for up to 12 YEARS before trial (recently reduced to 6 years). The 'special units of death' are used in the prisons to impose an exceptionally repressive regime on political activists. Torture as horrific as practised in South America, has been

the march which stretched for about a kilometre. Present also, among the marchers, was Pietro Montaresi, an eighty-year old veteran who travelled all the way from Brussels to be there. The march was extremely lively and colourful with plenty of banners and red and black flags.

Police had set up road blocks which prevented some people from getting to the march on time. But only two people were taken away by police for questioning.

The march went smoothly with only two moments of tension. Once when the march was passing a hotel, still under construction, but destined to be used as a nuclear shelter, some people managed to enter the hotel to leave behind anti-militarist banners. The second incident occurred as the march approached the centre of the city. A spontaneous sit-in developed but trouble was prevented by the efficiency of the organisers who quickly placed themselves between the marchers and the police.

An important aspect of the demonstration was that slogans were not directed against the communist party, as they often are especially by marxist-leninist groups. This reflects a growing conviction that the anarchist movement is mature enough to play an independent role and not use the communist party as a point of reference.

JA

(source: Umanita Nova, Rivista A)

carried out by the police against militants. Waves of mass arrests have put thousands of activists behind bars.

Activity which attempts to go beyond the accepted constitutional channels is often met with fierce repression, eg the vicious police attacks on people trying to blockade military bases at Comiso and Vicenza. The Italian comrades believe this latest murder should be seen in the context of the recent propaganda by the European states about 'terrorism reorganising itself throughout Europe'.

Despite the clamp-down in Italy and the great weakening of the movement of opposition to the system, the state has not succeeded in crushing all opposition. In their publications denouncing his murder Pietro's comrades assert that they will continue to struggle against the system of exploitation, and for a better quality of life, as Pietro himself always did.

Mike

More information from: Centro Di Documentazione Antinucleare Anti-imperialista, Via Belzoni 14, 35121 Padova, Italy, or Box 81 c/o 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

# Gandhi, Sex and Power

How is it that a man who described himself as a kind of anarchist, who admired the ideals of both Trotsky and Kropotkin, who was profoundly anti-militarist, and who wanted to create a decentralised, libertarian, agrarian social order, came to be used simply as a tool of the nationalist bourgeoisie? Certainly Gandhi came from a wealthy middle class background, and it is equally salient that all his activities (whether in respect to his ashram or to the Congress Party) were financially supported by business interests, vast sums of money given by wealthy industrialists such as G D Birla. It is important to note too that Gandhi shied away from supporting any *direct* challenge to the status quo, and declined to support the untouchables in their efforts to enter Brahmin Temples and the peasants in their rent boycotts. As Arnold (1983) and others have noted, he sought always to maintain harmony between peasants and landlords, and between capital and labour. But why the discrepancy between Gandhi's vision and his political practice and influence?

It is my contention that the premises from which Gandhi's political philosophy sprang, and the psychological motivations that underpinned them, were profoundly influenced by his attitude to sexuality. And the discrepancy and the limitations of his philosophy, were based essentially on faulty premises. For like other mystics Gandhi seemed to conflate sex and violence, and in reacting against the militarist ethic simply offered its mirror image, a philosophy that expressed a profound devaluation and negation of the phenomenal world, in particular the body the senses, the emotions.

Although Gandhi's life was punctuated by a series of life-negating gestures (fasts) which was his way of reacting to events that seemed beyond his 'control', two traumatic events stand out, one personal the other more public.

The first was his reaction to the death of his father in 1885. His father, who was Prime Minister of the petty state of Porbander, had been badly injured in a road accident, and become bed-ridden. The young Gandhi, aged 16, and having been married just three years earlier, was devoted to his father and spent the evenings at his bedside massaging him. One evening Gandhi left the bedside and went to his wife's bedroom. 'Blinded' with 'animal passion' he recalled, he woke his pregnant wife. A few minutes later Gandhi was informed of his father's death. About this 'dreadful night' he wrote later in his autobiography:

*"The shame of carnal desire even at the*

*critical hour of my father's death . . . is a blot I have never been able to face or forget . . . It took me long to get free of the shackles of lust, and I had to pass through many ordeals before I could overcome it."* (1949; 26). As the child died shortly after the birth, he saw this event as a "double shame". In 1906, when he was 37 years of age and practising as a lawyer in Johannesburg, he finally took the vow of continence or brahmacharya, only informing his wife Kasturba of his thoughts when he had made the decision. He had however been attempting to practice 'self-control' for a number of years, mainly, it would seem, as a method of birth control (172).

The second event, which became a public scandal, occurred in the chilling winter of 1946-47, the "winter of Gandhi's discontent" as Shirer (1981; 234) puts it. Aged 77, Gandhi had reached a crisis point — both personal and political. His wife Kasturba, who had been a life-long companion, had died nearly two years earlier. His closest political colleagues, Nehru and Patel, had broken with him over the partition of India, which Gandhi bitterly opposed. Throughout northern India communal rioting and violence had broken out between Hindus and Moslems. Gandhi, Mehta writes "had lost his will to live, lost all hope for a united, free and peaceful India, lost confidence in his ability ever to become a perfect instrument for the practice of satyagraha (truth force) and ahimsa (non-violence)." (1976; 190).

Accompanied by the Bengali anthropologist Nirmal Kumar Bose, who was acting as an interpreter, Gandhi had set on foot through the district of Noakhali in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) hoping to stem the violence. In was in Noakhali that news broke forth that Gandhi had been sharing his bed with his nineteen year old grand niece Manu Gandhi and several other young women co-workers. Bose, though an admirer of Gandhi, was shocked and left Gandhi's service over this issue: he was later to publish a record of their disagreements. He felt that Gandhi was exploiting the young women, using them instrumentally for his own 'experiments' in brahmacharya.

At prayer meetings Gandhi acknowledged that he had been sleeping with young women, explaining that this was not only for bodily warmth at night, but in order to test his self control. He had, it appeared, been sleeping with naked young women for a number of years, but had not disclosed the fact in order to avoid public controversy. In a letter to Bose, Gandhi defended his actions: the

experiments he said in no way implied the inferiority of the women; nor had he ever slept behind closed doors (Bose 1974; 153).

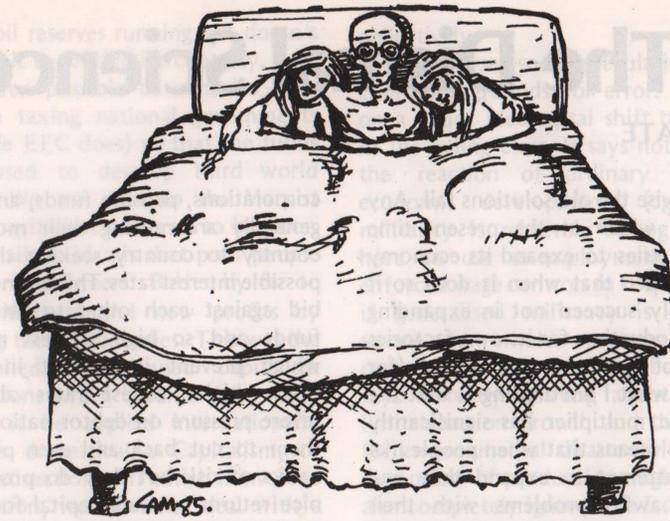
These two events tell us a good deal about Gandhi's attitude to sexuality, and, using extracts from his numerous writings on the subject of brahmacharya (chastity) we may briefly summarise this. Firstly, all sexual relationships are seen by Gandhi to be (if not solely for the purposes of procreation) impure, disgusting, and to imply hierarchy, and either a loss of control or a relationship of power. As he wrote; the "day when I began brahmacharya our freedom began. My wife became a free woman, free from my authority as her lord and master, and I became free from my slavery to my own appetite which she had to satisfy."

Elsewhere he writes: "My wife was 'inferior' when she was an instrument of my lust. She ceased to be that when she lay with me naked as a sister".

Sensual enjoyment is viewed by Gandhi in disparaging terms, as 'lust', 'disgusting', 'sinful' and as 'the root cause of many a disease' (Gandhi 1955; 107). Whereas Wilhelm Reich viewed sexual orgasm as a necessary prerequisite for health and well-being, Gandhi, in contrast, saw sexual pleasure as the height of depravity and detrimental to physical and mental health. That women might have sexual feelings or desires does not appear to have occurred to Gandhi. That sexuality may be a vehicle for intimacy, or an expression of affection and reciprocal love between two people seems also to be beyond his understanding. Sexuality is lust, and lust implies violence or a loss of control, (and Gandhi had almost an obsession for 'control' and 'mastery' over both his own feelings and instinct and the events around him).

Thus if only a married couple think of themselves as brother and sister can they be "freed for universal service". This idea is deep-seated in Hindu mystical tradition: the Rudolphs call it "a theory of sexual and moral hydrostatics" (1967; 42). Briefly this idea suggests that the conservation of semen is a source of power, as well as being essential for physical and mental strength, while, conversely, its loss causes disease, and a loss of control. It has obvious similarities to Freud's theory of sublimation (of Cantlie 1977), although Freud saw the repression of the libido as intimately connected not only with cultural creativity but also with neurosis, hence his essential pessimism.

Given the mystical connection which Gandhi appears to have assumed between his own sexual and moral condition and



external events, it is not surprising, as the Rudolphs perceptively suggest, that: "When things went wrong around him, he felt helpless to shape events, he would conclude invariably that his impotence to do so was the consequence of a lapse into lustfulness or anger. In such moments he would retreat to fast or observe other austerities, to renew that inner purity that could give him the strength to affect external events" (1967; 56).

It is not surprising that when he began to feel that he no longer had control over events at the time of independence, he should indulge in more severe tests of self control.

It is clear, as both Bose (1974) and Erikson (1969) have cogently explored, that Gandhi, like the 19th century Bengali mystic Ramakrishna, attempted "to conquer sex by becoming a woman". His own mother was a deeply religious woman, and when Gandhi left for England in 1888, she made him take a vow, in the presence of a Jain monk, to remain chaste, and not to touch meat or wine. Under her initial influence, and in his attempts to increasingly 'purify' himself through the repression of his sexuality, Gandhi sought to make himself politically 'potent'. Bose also suggests that this repression may have been something of a penance which Gandhi imposed on himself for having neglected his father during the last moments of his life (167).

Through his purity Gandhi therefore sought to become a worthy instrument for non-violent action. And in this he identified himself with womankind. As he wrote: "Woman is the incarnation of ahimsa. Ahimsa means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure . . . It is given to her to teach the art of peace to the warring world thirsting for that nectar." (175).

It is well known that Gandhi surrounded himself with young women, and though affectionately called *Bapu*, he seems to have looked upon himself more as a

mother than a father, and Erikson writes of his "Passion" for nursing (1969; 11). What he admired in his wife Kasturba was her self-abnegation and her capacity to 'lose herself' in the service of *his* cause. Whether this was entirely fair to Kasturba is open to question, for Gandhi clearly had a deep and obstinate sense of his own righteousness, and he seemed to be no less severe on those around him than he was on himself. When Erikson remarked: "Who can imagine Gandhi ever as an inmate in somebody else's ashram", he gives a good indication of the kind of man Gandhi was.

In Gandhi's writings and pronouncements, particularly as these relate to sexuality and to his views on non-violence, one sees a complete *inversion* of those tenets associated with the authoritarian state and militarism. Consequently all the key concepts — power, control, hierarchy, courage, mastery, violence, suffering — are retained. What Gandhi does is to give them justification and meaning only as they relate to the moral rectitude of the individual. Thus no other options are possible or envisaged.

"Suffering", he writes, "is the law of human beings: war is the law of the jungle". So one either suffers or one is violent. Suffering he believed to be the more powerful, but to what end? Thus the alternative to violence against others is to resist evil so that the wrong-doer is forced to inflict suffering on the non-violent person. So nothing is envisaged between 'heroic self-suffering' and overt violence, the former process relying on the moral conscience of the evil doer. The numerous innocent people who have throughout the centuries been hanged, tortured or burned alive while protesting their innocence or their cause, should make us suspect the feasibility of this 'infinite' capacity for suffering to engender social change or a change of heart on the part of the oppressors. The "vindication of truth", wrote Gandhi, is "not by the infliction of suffering on the opponent but on oneself". To define

truth (and love) only in terms of suffering and self-sacrifice is limiting and extraordinary, and could only be done by someone who was riddled with shame and guilt.

Linked with this is Gandhi's incessant preoccupation with courage — of whatever kind. Self-sacrifice is seen intrinsically as a virtue. Gandhi always extolled military courage. But the image of the lone Pathan tribesman charging down a mountainside armed only with a sword to attack "the whole British force" — a "splendid sight" Baden Powell remarked (1933; 194) as they gunned the tribesman down — is countered by a higher type of courage where one *allows* without resistance, protection or challenge violence to be meted out — but on oneself. The possibility that something might be achieved without recourse to either physical violence or self-suffering Gandhi never fully explored — hence his ambivalence towards industrial strikes that were more than 'symbolic' and towards rent boycotts.

'Control' and 'mastery' are other concepts which Gandhi accepts without critical comment. But again these are turned on the individual and internalised. Violence is done to the individual voluntarily, for as Gandhi wrote: "The conquest of lust is the highest endeavour. Brahmacharya . . . means not the suppression of one or more senses but complete mastery over them all" (1955; 109). Hierarchy is likewise internalised, and those 'inferior' aspects of the human personality "the flesh" and "sensual enjoyment" must be controlled and dominated.

And finally, as noted above, Gandhi was obsessed with the need to control, to have 'power', over himself, over others, and over events. But this was to be achieved not through external control or by violent means, but by self-denial, self-control, self-suffering: Gandhi seems to have had an extraordinary, almost omnipotent belief that by self-purification, and hence suffering and violence to himself, he could somehow control the world. To counter the ethic of militarism and industrial capitalism — with its stress on meat-eating, self-expression, violence and aggressive sexuality — Gandhi advocated an alternative way of 'mastering' the world, a way consonant with the Hindu mystical tradition. It involved vegetarianism, self-denial, heroic suffering and the complete repression of sexuality.

But it was a way that retained the imagery of power, hierarchy and repression. Anarchist though he was in many ways, Gandhi never came to explore a path that tried to avoid these two extremes — the one suggested by Taoism, ecology, socialism and social anarchism. If the peace movement follows the mystical and heroic path of Gandhi is it too doomed to self-destruction?

Brian Morris

# Bad News From The Dismal Science

## WORLD MANAGEMENT AND THE SUPER-STATE

The difficulties which face the Western world economies are currently particularly acute but they are not insurmountable. Most of them can be traced to one source. Over the last five years the old national economies have been transformed into a genuine world economy (or at least a genuine Western world economy) as the volume of world trade has expanded but the management agencies are insufficiently international.

In 1972 the value of imports into the UK was £11,072,800,000. By 1972 it had risen to £56,940,300,000 (for comparison purposes prices rose 3.74 times over the same period). This amounted to £1,000 of imports for every person in the country. This expansion of trade is a worldwide phenomenon and its significance is that it means we are back in an era of genuine competition between firms.

In the 1950s and '60s in most wealthy nations there were usually only three or four firms making each product or offering each service. This made agreement between the various firms easy and prevented price wars being too serious or too frequent.

At the same time the various national states were able to control their economies via deliberate manipulation of the level of demand. In essence this idea is very simple. The idea was that whenever there was a sign of a slump the government simply printed money and spent it on, say, road building or investment grants to industry. The extra money boosted people's incomes which boosted sales which boosted production. This extra production meant there were more goods available for the money to be spent on so you didn't get inflation. In other words what was being done was to put people to work to make the goods which they themselves bought.

This system worked to achieve rapid economic growth and good profits for industry (though very poor interest rates were paid). From 1945 to 1970 unemployment in the UK never went above 4% and this was coupled with low inflation and rapid growth rates. Other countries did even better.

This controlled expansion lasted so long that it cannot be looked upon as a boom. It represented a genuine change from uncontrolled competitive capitalism to a nationally managed form of capitalism which if applied internationally need never experience a slump of the classical variety.

The problem at the moment is that since a world economy now exists the system needs to be managed on a world

scale otherwise the old solutions fail. Any government which at the present time deliberately tries to expand its economy has to consider that when it does so it will probably succeed not in expanding sales and production for its own factories but sales of goods made abroad (for economists what I am arguing is that the value of the multiplier has significantly fallen). This means that when people like Mitterrand attempt to expand they end up having awful problems with their balance of payments and so they have to totally reverse their policies. Reagan's expansion of the USA economy (forget the rhetoric — a huge budget deficit and an 8% growth rate is an expansionary policy of major proportions much of it fuelled by defence spending) is likely to run into the same problem.

The nature of the situation can perhaps best be illustrated by considering the history of American car production over the last few years. It is not so very long since firms like General Motors, Chrysler and Ford were comfortably confident of their sales on the American domestic market. They competed on things like producing new models and on advertising strategies but they were very cautious about competing on price. Between 1978 and 1982 production of passenger vehicles in the USA fell from 9.2 million vehicles to just under 5 million vehicles.

What was happening was genuine competition was taking place on markets which had once been the secure province of a few stable firms. As the 1920s and '30s demonstrated real competition is very bad for business. It forces them to cut prices and creates a genuine risk of bankruptcy. It also tempts them to introduce labour saving machinery and cut back the workforces. The result is rising unemployment.

If this damaging competition is to be avoided an international managing agency will have to be created which is as powerful as the national state — a kind of super-state. This is what politicians like Edward Heath and Willy Brandt are groping towards. Such a managing agency could take action in a whole number of areas.

1. An international agreement could be reached to boost all OECD countries at the same time. Such an agreement would have to be enforceable by the super-state authority but it would work to ensure a planned end to the current slump without balance of payments problems developing.

2. The effects of the movement of enormous sums of money between countries could be reduced. At the moment Arab oil countries, international

corporations, pension funds, and the rich generally are moving their money from country to country seeking the highest possible interest rates. This means countries bid against each other to attract these funds and so high interest rates exist which prevent investment in industry. These high interest rates also create severe pressure on debtor nations forcing them to cut back and even put weaker banks at risk but they do produce very nice returns on their capital for the rich. In the UK real interest rates have moved from *minus* 13.7% in 1975 to *plus* 2.5% in 1983, leaving people like home buyers seriously struggling to get by.

At the same time these movements of funds between countries cause wild fluctuations in currency values making it virtually impossible for firms to plan ahead and so prevents investment. For instance, the pound was worth \$2.40 in 1980 and only \$1.07 in early 1985. At the moment it is fluctuating wildly day by day.

No one state is powerful enough to control the currency movements which are causing these rapid changes and so conditions exist in which a virtual collapse of one or other major currency may even be possible. Central bankers are, however, slowly moving towards the idea of collective inter-state action to protect their currencies and this international management will eventually come and then currencies could be pegged in value. Agreements on the level of real interest rates could also be reached.

3. Broad trade agreements might be reached, eg to peg the proportion of imports into a country or to slow down the rate of change of import penetration under threat of the increasing use of artificial trade barriers. Strict quotas could be imposed on imports from third world countries to shut them out of OECD markets. More likely, however, is that international competitors will merge or co-operate so that there are only three or four firms in the world making each product for which there is a world market, and these firms will not compete on price.

4. Minimum safety precautions and pollution measures could be agreed worldwide to prevent third world countries drawing firms out of the rich countries by offering Bhopal style safety checks and ruthless suppression of workers. At the moment third world countries are out-bidding each other in the vicious nature of their 'free trade' zones.

5. Energy conservation measures could be encouraged worldwide so that the

threat of oil reserves running out doesn't create a limit to productive capacity.

6. It is even possible to conceive of a super-state taxing national governments (just as the EEC does) so that the funds can be used to develop third world countries. We are used to the Marxist idea that capitalism wants us to be poor. A more realistic idea is that poor people make poor consumers. Better by far to get new markets and new profits by developing these economies. This was the logic applied by planned capitalism within nations which became rich — why shouldn't it be applied internationally as well as domestically. Capitalism, or at least that section of it which is involved in production, would rather deal with a world of hard working dutiful consumers. It is therefore more realistic to expect the growth of more middle class nations than a deliberate driving down into poverty of the third world, but this development can only be pursued by the rich nations

collectively.

Of course such speculation creates enormous grounds for error. It depends on a major ideological shift taking place in the ruling class. It says nothing about the reaction of ordinary people to economic developments (eg if wage militancy is relatively strong they may have to use unemployment or rigidly enforced wage controls to keep us in check, if generalised militancy is sufficiently strong the whole economy could be organised on a co-operative basis). It also says virtually nothing about ecological limitations on growth and the potential for environmental disaster which a huge expansion of production might create. It also completely ignores the fact that since we are now back in an era of competition we can presumably expect normal trade cycles to operate again and a boom might take place for cyclical reasons.

Nevertheless, on one essential point I think I am unlikely to be wrong. We can

expect to see a steadily increasing role for remote international bodies like the IMF which could develop into effective world management agencies and steadily reduce the independence of national states. If this develops ordinary people will become even less capable of controlling events which directly affect the way they live their lives than they are at present. An economic system carefully run by a super-state can be permanently successful at providing an endless supply of jobs, wages and consumer goods. What it cannot provide is freedom of thought and action and a life which you control yourself.

A K Brown

PS This article is an attempt to drastically reduce ideas which would have occupied a complete issue if all the background had been filled in. Criticism is welcomed, but could critics try and quote happenings in the real world rather than happenings taking place only in Karl Marx's head.

## Lost in the Permanent Depression

There is a marked tendency amongst anarchists to write at a very complex level, usually 'losing' the average reader without actually revealing the underlying principles or forces involved. It's all rather like a detailed discussion and argument about the orbits of various planets, which somehow never mentions gravity. So here's a mini-version of 'Keynesian economic analysis and the current People's Crisis'.

What was 'new' (1936) about Keynesian economics was his observation that *what was true for an individual firm or consumer (micro-economics) was not necessarily true for the economy as a whole (macro-economics)*. This division between small scale (micro) and large scale (macro) effects is to be found throughout the physical world. To use Proff Searle's now 'famous' example, individual molecules of H<sub>2</sub>O are *not wet*. Liquidity shows up as a *feature* of their interaction. While common sense is certainly better than bad theory, macro whole-system effects are frequently *not obvious* in social life. Our individual experience will even mislead us into seeing them as 'obviously' wrong/silly 'nutter's theory'.

In economics, individual saving makes for individual prosperity. However, Keynes pointed out, at the national level where one person's spending is another person's income, saving leads to unemployment (unless its re-invested in Capital Goods).

Contrary to popular belief, the Keynesian solution to unemployment was *not* huge government borrowing and

spending, which merely transfers resources from the private sector to the state sector. The solution was, quite literally, to control the rate of interest, *print a little more money* and spend that (preferably on something worthwhile, but Keynes joked that you could bury money in holes in the ground and pay people to dig it up again).

This seems like something for nothing, but as Keynes pointed out, unemployed people and resources are just going to waste. The wealth they could have produced is simply *lost to us for once and for all*.

Why then do we have mass unemployment now? Well, during periods of 'controlled' full-employment capital accumulates faster than the demand for it. Being a commodity, its price therefore falls. Indeed, Keynes predicted an *absence of a rate of return on accumulated wealth* as a result of a 'generation' of state-managed full-employment.

This is not mere theoretical whimsey. It actually happened, here in the UK in the mid-70's. The Left, of course, utterly failed to notice this real 'crisis of capitalism' (from the capitalist's point of view). The Left seemed to expect the capitalists to take it lying down!

After 1974 and the miners' victory, the Right did a massive rethink and examination of their position. Somewhere, someone realised that if you could run the National economy to produce *full* employment, then you could also run it to produce *any level* of unemployment you cared to name and hold it there, steady. The same computer model would

do for either job.

All it needed was to abandon the political goal of full employment without a revolution (managed by the Labour Party who left 1.5M unemployed) and under the guise of an 'attack on inflation' substitute the aim of maximising the rate of return on accumulated wealth.

This depression is a deliberate, controlled political act. How far Thatcher's side really know what they've done I cannot say. Perhaps they don't realise Keynes is alive and well and living in the Treasury Computer. He would be stunned to see his equations put to exactly the opposite task to what he had in mind.

The important thing to notice about all this is that computer guided, nearly scientific, post-Keynesian economic theory says the same as us. That running the economy from the point of view of Capital (a thing) leads to less total wealth and treats labour (people) as a disposable commodity. 'What is Labour? Nothing. What should it be? Everything.' Who said that?

The return on Capital is now at historically high levels. The rich have solid political and economic reasons for keeping things exactly the way they are now, plus the means and knowledge to do so.

We have had our 'generation of full employment' . . . welcome to the Stable, Controlled, Permanent Depression.

Stu

PS Nobody's perfect. **THEY** could fuck it up.

PPS Did you get 'lost'? Sorry.

# CND and Effective Action

Rather than go tramping around the absorbent fields of Molesworth last Easter Monday I devoted the time to the following comments on Andy Brown's 'Dangerous Illusions' (*Freedom* April 1985).

To dispose of the criticism of AB's piece, it does a lot of what it correctly accuses CND of doing, shadow boxing around the reality of issues of political power and (nuclear) peace. This is regrettable because there are real issues buried beneath the tramp of apparently pointless marching feet, particularly pointless when they march miles away from anything other than wire and uniformed minions. Those of us who have seen the lack of point should be directing our energies to the resolution of these issues.

One reason for the decline of CND last time round is not very acceptable to anarchists. It was not exhaustion caused by ineffective action, but the fact that the middle class bureaucracy which held it together packed up. Why? As more than one such worthy said, and honestly believed, "Now we have got a Labour Government everything will be all right".

That particular lesson may have been learned, but in many places CND is simply a Labour Party front, acting as a funnel for the politically naive. But there are some differences. Last time around direct action was anathema to CND, hence the Committees of 100 in which many of us spent our time; now they are actively encouraging non-violent direct action.

CND was never anti-war. It is not therefore illogical for it to support excursions such as the Falklands, or culture clashes like Belfast or Beirut. And there is a qualitative difference between a few thousand (or millions) of humans devoting themselves to mutual annihilation, which is fairly acceptable, and the option of planetary biocide, which is not.

The point about the politics of *respectable people* is surely this: it does not matter whether their assumptions of the reality of the democratic process are correct or not; what is important is that the government is committed to pretending that they are correct. Both government and protestors can then be viewed as being

engaged in an escalation of credibility. Both deal in moral assertion and numbers, currencies which will reach limits of exchange. When these limits are reached, then credibility begins to break down. It is what happens at this point that should concern us initially.

There is no short cut. People have to test the illusions of their culture. Many never do, and remain content within that culture, but it is among those who are led to do so that we may expect to find new converts to sanity and anarchy. But we have to accept that the majority will not be able to face the implications of a breakdown of credibility, cognitive dissonance takes over very easily to protect us from different realities. One reason for the triumph of the bomb in our culture is probably that many people realise that you can't just get rid of nuclear weapons and leave everything else the same; they want the rest of the culture as is, even though it produces biocidal weapons.

So we need to change our culture. Anarchists accept this, but are more than vague on suitable methods. It may be that lots of people trying the mental shift required for nvda are taking a step in the right direction. There is a key factor within the concept of nvda which is rarely discussed, but which is entirely consistent with my idea of anarchy. It is this: in place of force nvda puts the responsibility and choice of any action upon the person it is being used against. (Your freedom ends where theirs begins.)

The scenario used to illustrate the principle was this: if the bomber (this was some time ago) is about to take off, and you wish to stop it you could a) throw yourself into an engine, or b) lie in front of the wheels. Which is nvda? Obviously the latter, because it puts the choice and responsibility for your death upon the pilot. He must make the conscious choice to run you over. Holding him up while his engine is un-gummed is not the same thing at all.

Whether the success of such actions may be worth staking your own life on depends on the degree to which you and the pilot share the same system of values. In the days when Gandhi was unsettling the British Raj, or even when Vietnamese Buddhists burned themselves passively to death, individuals who were prepared to make this sacrifice might have cut some ice. But is nvda relevant in this sense today?

We all know that under an increasing number of circumstances governments need little encouragement to kill people who inconvenience them. One could still die as an act of absolute moral conviction,

although such deaths would have diminishing returns, particularly against a background of general unrest and tension. For those who would choose this path timing and a sense of theatre are probably of prime importance. For most though, nvda will increasingly be seen as a tactic rather than a conviction.

As such it will probably be the final tactic in the breakdown of credibility of the moral rules of the culture for many. In this it has a place and should be encouraged. Police clubbing and booting of the pacifist middle-classes from the bloodstained wheat of Molesworth, in contrast to the same thing happening to miners on coal tips, could be a climatic final scene in the logic of the current round of people versus government in the matter of provision for genocide.

AB is right of course, governments will simply brush aside such protest in the final analysis. The trouble is, most people simply do not believe this. A sort of cultural cognitive dissonance operates at this level. Hitler's gift to governments of the world of open plan genocide is kept well hidden from the likely victims; each generation has to discover the possibility for themselves.

So what of answers? I hope it is not what I think AB means when he says that "it (nvda) can be replaced by some useful political activity". Surely that is what happened to those left high and dry in CND last time round: how does this help?

We have to try something new. To defuse both biocidal weapons and governments we have to develop cultural structures which avoid the possibility of such aberrations. The problem for all of us, from 'concerned, Croydon' to the purest anarchist, is that we are all playing on *their* pitch, with *their* ball, by *their* rules, (yes, of course the referee is on *their* side). What we have to do is invent new life games that avoid this dependence, and to start to play them for real.

If we are right in opposition to 'them', then they will become as irrelevant as many of the other socio-cultural artefacts which humanity has left behind in its evolution. Of course politicking can offer ego boosting excitement, but its danger is that it simply reinforces that which it confronts. In the end (or if there is to be no end) a new socio-cultural paradigm is the only answer.

The keystone which has to be removed first is that which underwrites most undesirable human activity: our institutional structures. The task we should be addressing, whether as anarchists or pacifists, is the means of destructuring the institutions which generate the problems.

Colin Johnson

# CND Debate

I agree with Andy Brown, the nuclear disarmament movement collapsed in the 1960s because of delusions. Anarchists and others tried to tell people what was happening, but the deluded could not understand our warnings. The cult of 'non-violent direct action', however, did no harm; the delusion which caused the collapse was faith in democratic leadership.

We must distinguish between the campaign for nuclear disarmament, ie a campaign, and the (capital letters) Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, ie an organization with membership fees and paid officers. Anybody may be a *member* of CND who will pay the sub, but the *policy* of CND is decided by a committee. Before about 1968 there was a permanent committee (doubtless they were re-elected annually), consisting of Canon Collins (chairman) and the other founders of CND. None of them favoured 'direct action'; their sole plan for getting rid of nuclear weapons was to convince the lawmakers by reasoned argument. Without exception, they were members of the Labour Party. Their professional organizer, the remarkable Peggy Duff, was another keen Labourite, fully committed to the CND line.

The first two Aldermaston marches, one by a lone elderly pacifist and the next by some tens of thousands, were quite independent of CND; examples of 'non-violent direct action', marching to Aldermaston to argue with the workers in the atomic weapons factory. Seeing the numbers prepared to march, CND undertook the organization and turned subsequent marches towards Westminster, in conformity with their policy of converting the people who commanded the work rather than those who did it.

The marches now became the principal



activity of both CND and the nuclear disarmament movement outside CND, so much so that the movement and the organization became confused in people's minds. Gerald Holtom's famous nuclear disarmament symbol, designed for a group called the Direct Action Committee, came to be thought of as a CND trade mark. CND was mis-credited with various 'direct' actions which they opposed. The confusion persists to this day, as we see in Andy's article.

Hugh Gaitskell, faced with a ban-the-bomb decision at the Labour Party annual conference, said in a famous speech that he would continue to fight it. Harold Wilson, faced with a similar decision, did not say either that he would fight it or that he would accept it; he said 'We had totally reserved our position.' Taking non-committment to mean acceptance, CND diverted all their resources and used all their influence to

the end of getting Labour into power.

It was obvious Labour in power would keep the bomb, and like many others I thought at the time that the controllers of CND were a crew of cynical political tricksters. It soon became clear, however, that their only fault was misplaced faith in human nature. Canon Collins published an 'Open Letter to Denis Healey' (the new Labour Minister of Defence), so expressive of disillusion and frustration one could almost see tearstains on the printed page. Peggy Duff resigned from the Labour Party, after many years as a Labour Councillor, with well-publicised expressions of disgust. All the officers of CND, both honorary and paid, resigned their offices.

The movement in general trusted the CND leadership, CND had trusted the Labour leadership, and everything had gone phut.

Donald Room

# A far-too-long Debate Reply

It is really good to see *Freedom* coming up with some good articles which discuss present day problems and issues. It seems to me many anarchists have become stuck in the 19th century along with their long-time protagonists, marxists (and, for that matter, conservatives), as Bookchin writes, 'just as the emergence of private property became society's original sin in Marxism orthodoxy, so the emergence of the State became society's original sin in anarchist orthodoxy'. In the Stu/Mick debate over delegation of power, Stu argues that Marxism has no theory of political power, but I am also beginning to wonder how far anarchism has progressed in developing its theory of political power,

as I am not one of those people who believes all theoretical, and consequently, *practical*, problems have been solved.

As far as I can see, Bakunin was correct in his analysis of the importance and function of state political power, but what exactly does 'smashing the state' (which Marx also enthusiastically advocated in the Communist Manifesto) mean today. For example, the State of Bakunin's time did not fund or run hospitals, playgrounds, day-care centres and the like, institutions which comprise our welfare state, which, in true libertarian fashion the present radical Tory Government is 'smashing' with terrible consequences — it was recently estimated in the *Guardian*

that 40,000 old age pensioners had died last winter because of cuts in benefits for heating. Bakunin's State, especially the despotic tsarist regime he lived under; and in whose prison he was incarcerated, which existed in order to protect the interests of a ruling elite and expanding

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## From page 13

capitalism, through external domination and internal security, does bear some resemblance to the minimal State advocated by the radical right, ie Milton Friedman, Hayek, Libertarian Alliance, which the Government would like to create, or return to.

I think there is, therefore, some danger in Mick's idea of minimal authority, which in practice means a minimal State, and there seems to be some problem in modernising the early anarchist theory of the State, as overthrowing it seems to mean, in practice, sweeping away the labour reforms of the past 50 years, in effect, kicking the sick, old, poor and young out on to the streets. It also seems to me to be rather unrealistic to think about smashing the modern minimal state, with its sophisticated terrorist techniques for control and surveillance, eg Star Wars type weaponry, and such actions as people take to do this, in the west, end in political suicide, sadly, helping no-one, as your writer Zeno points out.

At the same time I think institutions which control our lives, such as the Welfare State, should be accountable to us in terms of the treatments dished out, the racism, sexism and ageism they reproduce. Thus it seems more realistic, and less depressing, to theorise, or think, in terms of creating alternative strategies for achieving accountability and autonomy in our lives, possibly, in the decentralisation of power and its diffusion into the community, whilst holding on to the

progressive reforms of the past century in England, which have at least laid down some foundations for practical altruism in the creation of a Welfare State. Before you all jump down my throat, you might remember that in the third world the first aim of all revolutionary governments has been the welfare of its people, in building hospitals, schools, etc along the English model — are you going to be the ones to take that away?

I can't really comment on the delegation of power as I am not really involved in the situation, but it seems to me the arguments about DAM, as I have gleaned from *Freedom*, all involve this idea of accountability of delegates and also representation. Once you elect someone, as we *have* to in a highly populated and complex society as our own, it seems to me you are practising political power, in the same way as any State practices power if on a smaller scale, and unless this is recognised then you won't know what you are doing or get anywhere. Practical anarchy, therefore, involves practical politics and the organisation of power which should be confronted honestly and discussed — but maybe you are doing this, I don't know. I am afraid I feel that a lot of anarchist diatribe against the State and political power has become a rather unhelpful and paranoid ideology which is tying us in knots.

Also I agree with you that people should listen to each other a bit more and get off their soapboxes, but having read the 'rules of the game'! perhaps we could expect that the rulers practice what

they preach. I feel your article on Heroin indulged in some slugging off of drug users in its assertion that 'for once the blanket, anti-street-drug propaganda is correct' — well it isn't as far as I'm concerned. Whilst I realise that *social* and physical addiction to heroin is tragic, especially for young people, all the studies of the problem, including those done by rehabilitation units themselves involved in helping addicts, show it to be a relatively small problem and easy to cure with the right resources, compared to the vast and increasing social and physical problems created by mass alcoholism.

This was recently stated on television by a professor who works in the Alcohol Research Unit of Edinburgh University. I feel your article was somewhat factually incorrect — people sell heroin usually because they are addicts or because people ask them for it, and people buy heroin because it is cheaper and easier to get than dope, not for the reasons you state. Also the article smacked of what is known in drug cultures throughout the world as the white mans attitude, or cultural imperialism. Reproducing the hysteria of the mass media in your pages does not help those kids in Dublin but gives legitimacy to increased police powers and actions against drug users, and area of police activity where the worst abuses of civil liberties take place in this country, depending on the colour of your skin.

May the spirit of Bakunin deliver us from God, the State and Anarcho-Evangelism.

Flo

## Life Without Leaders ?

In *Freedom* recently there have been a number of articles discussing the 'delegation of power' in an anarchist society. To quote John Griffin: 'Some form of delegate system seems to me inevitable ...' In my mind a delegate system would see a gradual move back towards a hierarchical society, where once again we would see the emergence of a powerful and privileged ruling elite. I always thought anarchy meant total co-operation between individuals. By delegating power to 'organisers' we remove the responsibility of individuals when it comes to decision making.

In an anarchist community people would use each others various skills and abilities to provide everyday necessities such as food, power and clothing. A constant 'feedback' between individuals (stuff capitalism — no rewards for work — that's what makes it slavery), would ensure that everyone had enough to live comfortably. Likewise a market economy where communities, each specialising in various forms of industry, would trade

with each other (by 'trade' I mean 'provide') so that food, clothing and the luxuries in life could be provided to all in need.

Unfortunately all theories of life in an anarchist society presume a population who are trusting, responsible and willing to co-operate at all times to ensure the maintenance and smooth running of the community in which they live. This means that anarchy tomorrow, or anarchy next week, is impossible. Revolution in the old sense, (guillotine the ancien regime and put new dictators in its place) would not achieve anarchy. In fact, violent social and political upheaval would do more to encourage a reaction towards the fascist right rather than encouraging people to see anarchism as a viable social theory.

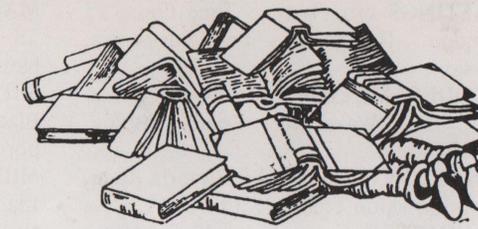
What we need is a 'revolution of everyday life' — the constant setting up of squats and peace camps where people can live their lives on anarchist lines. A constant barrage of fanzines, gigs and magazines where we can promote

our ideas, and a constant stream of direct action (demonstrations, sit-ins, violence against monuments and properties which help to perpetuate the oppressive nature of our society at present), and slowly we will together transcend this shit-awful existence into one of peace and liberty.

Its up to us to work collectively at subverting the obligations imposed by State and church, to use each others skills to live constructively and productively. We have a lot to prove; many see us as delinquents and trouble-makers, content to live in a drug-imposed utopia, making no contribution to society. We know these impressions are wrong; its up to us to prove to people that our grievances are just, and that the society we believe in should be worked for by everyone. Our resolve must be firm and strong, and we must show that whatever action the State takes against us, we will never give in. Together we will never be defeated. Anarchy, peace

Paul-Francois Guillotine  
Oppressed Artist Collective

## Reviews



### Collective Experience — Articles and poems about communal living

A4 52 pages £1.50 plus 30p post, from Freedom Bookshop or direct from Communes Network, c/o SPIL, 85 Evington Road, Leicester.

I believe that those anarchists whose revolutionary zeal is not expressed by living in communal squats tend to view the last two decades of alternative living typified by the British Communes Network with a jaundiced eye; opinion on its relevance seeking the easiest route to casual dismissal. I tend to go along with this trend.

The problem is that it is enjoyably easy to look at those living in such communities as irrelevant dregs of the frolicking spirit of the '60s. Participants tend to come from a narrow privileged band of society, or at least to aspire to the values of that band. There are those who wish to maintain their inclination towards large landed gentry houses and

acres by commuting their claim to a personal washing machine to a collective facility, and attempting to live off the savings. Others have more positive aims, ill-defined 'better ways of life', encompassing notional ecology, traditional religions, the resurrection of obscure rituals, organic cultivation and advocacy of a plethora of alternative medical practices. Both stands can be identified by the mini eco-disasters which traditionally mark the sites of such lofty endeavours.

A decade ago *Oz* concluded that 'those who have failed at everything else are now going off to the country to fail at communes'. Not entirely true, as the writing in *Collective Experience* illustrates. It also indicates that it was never that simple in the first place.

The problem for anarchists, with their traditional belief in community, if not communality, is that those communities which succeed are the wrong ones. They tend to be the reactionary religious traditionalists, rather than the radical

## Goodbye Mo!

Since this will be my last opportunity to write the bookshop page (by the time you read this, I'll have left the Freedom Press Bookshop) I thought I'd bore you all with a few words on the nature of anarchist publishing. First of all, though, news of a few new titles.

Rebel Press have just brought out Louis Adamic's *Dynamite*, which has the sub-title 'A Century of Class Violence in America 1830 — 1930'. A fascinating story of strikes and lock-outs, shootings and bombings, demonstrations and sabotage, *Dynamite* considers the causes of violence in the class struggle, and also its usefulness. The book costs £4.50.

Not yet published but on its way is a reissue of *Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow*, Colin Ward's updating of Peter Kropotkin's classic work first published (as a book) in 1899. Given the upsurge of interest in ecology over the last few years this new title from Freedom Press will be a particularly useful one. No price or date of publication yet and the same goes for another of Kropotkin's books, *The Conquest of Bread*, which is being published by Elephant Editions. As soon as they're published both books will be available from Freedom Press Bookshop and the details

will appear in *Freedom*.

Just available is *The Collective Experience*, a collection of articles and poems about communal living. The articles were selected from the newsletters of Communes Network and the price is £1.50. One last title, *The Veritable Split in the International* is a collection of documents relating to the collapse of the Situationist International at the end of the sixties. A bit pricey at £2.50 for a 130 page staple-bound pamphlet but one of the drawbacks of a low print-run is a high cover price. If the books sold better (hint, hint), they could be sold more cheaply. *The Veritable Spirit* includes Raoul Vaneigem's letter of resignation from the Situationist International and is prefaced with a series of quotes from publishers explaining why they wouldn't publish the book.

Now for the bad news which is all from commercial publishers. John Quail's *The Slow Burning Fuse* (subtitled 'The Lost History of the British Anarchists') has just gone out of print, as has the anarchist anthology *Re-inventing Anarchy*. In this case the publishers are considering a reprint but not until 1986 at the earliest. A book which hasn't gone out of print is Michael Bakunin's *God and the State*. The bookshop has just received

anarchistic groups. The latter, from their privileged perch, seem to muster courage, and with little knowledge or equipment, leap into puddles where they flounder continuously.

*Collective Experience* elusively illuminates and blurs this philosophical paradox. There is much excellent writing which alone would commend the publication; I particularly liked 'The Top Right Hand Drawer' by Catriona of Lauriston Hall. Many of the poems and songs produce echoes of the situations and emotions which generated them.

If the writing is good, the intellectual content is minimal. The communes network remains a movement without a cause, and little vision of the need for one. For anarchists seeking to change culture the question remains: are such communities part of the answer, or simply the old problems in a new guise?

Perhaps the question is unrealistic, since each community will be different. They seem to waver in no-person's land; they are neither a satisfactory answer, nor are they totally a part of the problem. They may contain seeds of a new and better future.

*Collective Experience* can be looked upon as a guide to some of the flora that has germinated so far. As a rough guide to a new garden it makes good armchair material, and may inspire some movement.

Colin Johnson

a fresh supply and the price for this 90 page book has gone from £3 to £3.50. Ouch.

The reason why I'm telling you all this is so you'll understand that we have to do our own publishing. Commercial publishers cannot be relied on to bring out anarchist books and so if we want to see anarchist books in shops we have to publish them ourselves. Getting more people involved in publishing is one of the reasons for Phoenix Press.

Last month a letter was included in all the *Freedom*s sent to subscribers in Britain. The idea was to raise the two thousand pounds needed to print Alexander Berkman's *The Russian Tragedy* by getting people to lend money in multiples of twenty pounds. For each loan of twenty pounds you get a copy of the book as soon as it's printed plus the twenty pounds back when the print-run has sold out. (Which might take quite a while.) Thanks to all those of you who've already sent money in but there's a long way to go yet. Cheques made out to Phoenix Press, please. You can sign up by post, in the Freedom Press Bookshop, and at the Anarchist Book Fair on Saturday May 4th. (Details were on the back page of the last *Freedom*.) See you at the Book Fair.

Chairperson Mo