

anarchist fortnightly

# Freedom

Vol. 53 No. 1                      11 JANUARY 1992                      FIFTY PENCE

“A new form of  
economical structure will  
necessarily require a new  
form of political  
structure”  
P. Kropotkin

## THE MEDIA HACKS ABANDONING THE SINKING TORY SHIP?

As part from such die-hard Asycophants as *The Sunday Express* and *News of the World*, the media as election year loomed up, were beginning to hedge their bets. For a year they have regurgitated uncritically all the government handouts as to an early upturn in the economy, the end of recession. Cuts in interest rates, a 'dramatic' decrease in the inflation rate were splashed across their front pages while the real inflation rate (the underlying rate which, shorn of mortgage rate reductions and other items which do not affect the cost of living for most of us, continues to rise) was consistently either ignored or just mentioned in a bracket in

passing. Yet the poor and the old who depend on the state's pension scheme and/or social security have been assessed for the April 1992 increases on the artificial 4½% inflation rate and not the real 7% underlying inflation rate. After all, how many of the growing army of the poor and the old age pensioners had mortgages around their necks in 1991?

The media which for years went along with Thatcher and so-called Thatcherism is now 'discovering' that most of her ideas, *even for a capitalist society* have proved disastrous in all respects. The most obvious include the poll tax and the campaign for a 'property owning democracy' and the

selling off of council houses and then preventing councils from using the money from the sales to build more houses for renting. Result: the army of homeless increases every week added to by the thousands of suckers who fell for the 'property owning' propaganda and have now had their homes repossessed by the moneylenders for non-payment of the exorbitant instalments.

*The Independent* (a serious newspaper of the right) recently published two whole page features which will certainly not please the Tories. With a heading "So who's sorry now?" over eight columns, it sums up the promises of the spend, spend, spend '80s.

"In the mid-eighties some people believed every small business venture led to a fortune and property prices would grow for ever. So they took out vast mortgages, set up companies, or both. Then they went bust."

In the second article, again with an eight column heading "Fun while it lasted", the writer suggests that "Now the party's over, our infatuation with houses may have gone for good". Maybe, but the problems are still at an early stage.

The statistics are staggering. The private rented sector dominated the market for eighty years ago at 90%. It now represents a mere 7% of the market. Council house building was down to 26,000 starts compared with 214,000 in 1967. And housing  
*(continued on page 2)*

### Our Trigger-Happy Police

Our police seem to be making a habit of shooting to kill. With the excuse that they cannot tell whether an obviously disturbed individual waving what looks like a rifle is threatening them even though he, at the same time, presents a perfect target, they shoot not to wound or incapacitate but to kill. In the latest shooting near Halifax the police marksman fired three shots and killed. There were witnesses who maintained that the man could have been 'taken alive'. But the most damning indictment of the police action came from his father who said that he had told the police that his son only possessed replica guns. He also asked them for a loud-hailer so that he and his wife could appeal to him to come out. They took no notice.

Obviously replica guns - *all guns* should be destroyed. But also knives. Apparently now there are shops selling only knives - *knives to kill*. And with television providing a constant ration of violence with knives and guns and run-away cars crashing into any obstacle in their way, is it surprising that people who are

already disturbed will seek to act out these television fantasies?

The four latest victims of police killings were all obviously disturbed individuals. Only one was a 'professional criminal' and he actually fired at the police. The other two, one a former psychiatric nurse who was shot dead by Cheshire police after he had killed his estranged wife, and the other was a 24 year old psychiatric patient and according to his family the police knew of his mental condition but did not show enough patience in dealing with him.

Even in an anarchist society there will be 'disturbed' individuals and if they were violent they would have to be restrained. But we would like to think that in an anarchist society where the *nuclear* family would be replaced by the *community* family, problem individuals would be a community responsibility rather than, as today, an institutional or family responsibility, neither of which appears to be satisfactory either for the individual or the family, and the institutions almost invariably become inhuman.

### IMPORTANT

If you received a green subscription reminder with the 14th December issue and have not renewed your subscription yet, please do so now.

Readers who received renewal notices in *October* and *November* and have not yet done anything about renewing are advised that this may be the last issue they will be receiving until we hear from them. You can easily check with your address label. If the number above your name is 5219, 5220, 5221, 5222 or 5223 these are the *October* and *November* issues.



THE MEDIA HACKS ABANDONING THE SINKING TORY SHIP?

(continued from page 1)

associations and alternative self-build schemes account for less than 3%, which is not surprising, so long as land for housing can only be bought on the open market.\*

To add to the problems of those who originally bought when the 'fun' was at its peak, and paid funny (fancy!) prices on the strength of their prospects as households with two salary earners on the up-and-up, is the fact that unemployment in 1991 has risen officially by more than 700,000 (unofficially by a lot more) and has especially hit the prosperous, mortgaged South-East, no longer sparing Thatcher's 'entrepreneurs', the experts, managers, consultants - all the overpaid who tell the underpaid how to do their productive jobs.

The other problem for those who went for large mortgages on expensive properties is that many of them now have mortgages greater than the present depressed market value of their properties and there is no possibility of that market picking up in spite of all the government 'incentives' (such as to remove sales tax on properties - not for too long - just up to the next elections!).

Curiously enough - and anybody who tells us that the capitalist system is efficient please read on - according to the writer of *The Independent* article on "Fun while it lasted":

"Since the mid-1970s there has been a crude housing surplus - an excess of houses over households. In the 1980s this reached a million. Mainly because most of these houses are unfit, empty or undergoing repairs they have not affected prices."

In addition to that surplus (?) there is now an additional 150,000 houses a year being inherited and many of them will go on to the market. (Readers may recall that *Freedom* some months ago drew attention in its columns to the new generation of 'rentiers'.) According to the City finance house Philips & Drew, there will be a total of "500,000 repossessed, newly completed or inherited homes waiting to

\*Brian Richardson in his excellent *Self Build Book* (reviewed in *Freedom* on 16th November 1991) tells would-be self-builders that they must reckon on paying £40,000 for the plot on which to build their dream house!

be sold" to which *The Independent's* writer can only comment that "the measures aimed at taking 40,000 of the annual total of 80,000 repossessions look paltry by comparison".

One cannot spend too much space exposing the government's policy on housing and the media's hitherto abject support. As usual they are wise after the event, just as *The Independent* on Sunday's editorial (2nd December) with the heading "No comment needed". The only editorial introduction is to say: "We are content to reproduce without comment, what our chancellors have told us in the past two years". And they quote John Major when he was chancellor in December 1989 saying: "I do not myself believe that a recession is likely or necessary ... the underlying state of British industry is one of rude health". And they end with a longer quotation by the luckless Norman Lamont full of hope and good luck, ending with the usual reassuring bedside talk: "We have all the classic ingredients for recovery in place".

We expect all this and the other

propaganda crap - "I think we are at or around the turning point" (Lamont, 16th September) - from the politicians. But the media are the more dangerous because they have much greater influence than the politicians (they make and break them) and manage to persuade the gullible (majority) public that they are independent, which is just another big lie in the propaganda warfare between the capitalist and communist worlds. The latter was controlled by the state, the former is still (pace the biggest capitalist press crook-tycoon Captain Bob, whose journals mildly supported the Labour Party because it was profitable to be the only ones that did) a millionaires' press.

In 1963 that same capitalist press, after twelve years of Tory blunders, was less blindly loyal and realised that the Labour lot would sort out the capitalist chaos and then take the blame for the austerity programme they had to impose and for their pains be thrown out at the next elections. We sense that this is again their tactic after another thirteen years of the Tories blatantly financing the rich (on New Year's Eve they even confirmed that

they would introduce a bill to cut the rate of inheritance tax\*\*).

The headlines point to this conclusion. Even *The Sunday Times* (29th December 1991) main eight-column headline reads: "Tory panic as economic optimism slumps". *The Independent* reports: "Uphill struggle ahead after Tory poll gloom", "Confidence slumps on rate rise fears". "Economy on course for worst years since Second World War" (*The Guardian*, 21st December 1991). "Ministers learn that home is where the vote is" (*Sunday Telegraph*, 22nd December 1991). "Debt hangover ruins Lamont's Party" (*Sunday Times*, 22nd December 1991), and so on and so on.

Of course you can't be sure how the media will turn in the coming weeks and months (in our opinion the elections are months away). After all, journalists (like politicians) according to Arnold Bennett (1867-1931): "Say a thing they know isn't true, in the hope that if they keep on saying it long enough it will be true".

And when that doesn't work they change their tune, but never apologise or say that they had misled the public. They are always right and Right, the bastards!

\*\*In 'More for the Rich' (*Freedom*, 19th October 1991) we referred to the intention of the Tory Government to encourage, in Mr Patton's words, "people to build up wealth of their own which they can pass on to their children".

THE BISHOP PROTESTS TOO MUCH

We had our say about Sunday opening for shops ('Whose Sunday?', *Freedom* 14th December 1991) but the reactions, especially by the Church, and the 'threat' that Sunday opening would continue after Christmas are both amusing and interesting, worthy of a comment.

The top level objector in the Church is the Bishop of Oxford, the Right Reverend Richard Harries, an interesting man, perhaps more involved with down to earth issues than with heavenly problems. For instance, he was recently involved in a legal battle (which he lost) to force the Church Commissioners to redirect their huge investments (probably more than £3,000 million) "to take account of Christian principles".

He has cleverly contrasted the way the powerful supermarkets can break the law on Sunday trading with impunity, yet if:

"... some poor old woman goes into a shop and steals a pair of stockings ... the police are on to her in a jiffy: she goes up before the courts. These huge firms, they're breaking the law Sunday after Sunday, and what's anybody doing about them?"

A valid point, surely?

On the other hand, the three leaders of the God worshippers - Protestant, Catholic, Jewry - could only work up a joint letter to the Prime Minister saying that: "People should have one day in the week which is different". For some families, alas, an excursion to the hypermarkets is indeed an occasion for a family outing even if they can't afford to buy anything.

But what are we reduced to if with all the modern technology being employed to put millions out of work there are other millions who can't spare the time to have a day in the week which is 'different'!

Other militant Church leaders actually led a group of the faithful into a Tesco superstore one Sunday "to hold a service with hymns, guitars and balloons". Hot air?

But trust the journalists, even their own, to pour cold water on the efforts of the militants. An editorial in the *Church Times* maintains, as *Freedom* was pointing out, that a lot of people want to go shopping on Sundays (in Catholic countries it's commonplace - in Paris there are street markets selling fresh produce) adding that: "The churches are caught in an awkward posture if they are found opposing the popular will where no specifically Christian interest is engaged".

Perhaps no "specific Christian interest" is involved, but wait a minute, Sunday is *Business Day* for the Churches. Not only does the collecting plate go round, so we are told, before the end of the show but a *Guardian* letter writer, C. Whitehouse, points out:

"As I left church this Sunday ... [I] fought my way past the queues of parishioners purchasing religious ephemera from a stall in the entrance."

So that's what goes on within the grim walls! *The Guardian* correspondent being with it in this age of consumerism and entrepreneurialism, far from suggesting, as with the money lenders, that the stalls should be driven out of the churches, has the right business approach and suggests that the Attorney General could solve the problem of Sunday opening by decreeing that "the major supermarkets should open side-chapels". Well, well!

The Acceptable 'Economic Asylum Seekers'

In the debate on the Asylum Bill (*Freedom*, 30th November) the Home Secretary emphasised that most of the asylum seekers were only wanting to come here in order to better their standards of living. And this the poor should never do! Quite another matter when the asylum seekers are professional people, doctors, scientists, top managers, qualified nurses, researchers in specialist fields, etc. There is a demand for them worldwide and though in the last few years a growing number have been trained in the third world countries and have been, in a sense, upsetting the market that was once almost exclusively supplied by white European professionals, it would seem to have only affected top jobs in the Arab countries.

According to the Science Editor of *The Independent*, the Brain Drain of scientists to the US will actually increase. "The market pressure to attract people from Europe is expected to increase". Whereas the US National Institute of Health (the government body that funds medical research) "has had a tremendous increase in its funding", Britain instead spends less than one third of one per cent of its NHS budget on medical research.

So as our professionals seek profitable 'asylum' in the USA, the Home Secretary and his cronies will be 'welcoming' the professionals from Egypt, Lebanon, Pakistan and India who are also seeking 'economic asylum'. But they are different and we won't check to see whether they are genuine political asylum seekers. What hypocrisy!

How the other half lives

Last year we published a Wildcat cartoon in which Mr Block informed the Pussycat that his chairman had taken a 20% salary cut, from five million to four million pounds a year, a figure chosen by our cartoonist as preposterously large. It seemed obvious to us that such a salary could only be paid in a cartoon. This showed our ignorance of the real world.

It emerges from the Annual Report of Walsham Brothers, the insurance brokers, that Mr Brown the chairman has taken a 10% salary cut, from £7.9 million a year to £7.3 million a year. This in spite of a rise in profits after tax from £20.5 million to £23.1 million.

(continued on page 4)

Pity the Poor Rich

A heart-rending case was before London magistrates last month. The man, "an international sales manager" (whatever that may mean), and his wife, "a public relations consultant" (no shortage of them), were charged with photocopying a £143 season ticket which was used by the wife to travel from their home in Farnham to her job in central London.

The husband gave a tear-jerking account of the "difficult few years" they had been through and concluded: "It's put great strain on our marriage, but I think we are beginning to turn the corner and see the light at the end of the tunnel".

The magistrate, Ronald Moss, almost in tears himself, conditionally discharged the couple, ordering them to pay £71 compensation and £9 costs and added his blessing: "It is inevitable to feel some sympathy for two young people who got into trouble, now heavily in debt to the tune of £60,000".

Surely more than "some sympathy". They forged a £143 season ticket and he charged them only £71. And he even subsidised them on costs of only £9.

We have left the best and most important part of this saga to the end. These two young career yuppies are earning between them £60,000 a year. For you weekly wage-slaves that's £1,150 (one thousand one hundred and fifty pounds) a week. That's what an old age pensioner (or so-called senior citizen, which sounds nicer) gets to live on for five months (22 weeks).

The 'hard luck' story which obviously seduced the magistrate was that the couple bought a house "at the height of the property boom and had to sell at a loss". And the man said they now owed £60,000, including £15,000 to the bank and individual loans of £8,000, and one assumes the other £37,000 is on yet another mortgage. The report we have seen doesn't say what kind of property these yuppies bought in the first place.

We don't apologise for being unable to join the magistrate, even with crocodile tears, for these victims of the capitalist system. They are the new capitalist blood par excellence and we can only feel contempt for the society they and the magistrate represent.



When the new term begins this month at universities, polytechnics and colleges of higher education around the country, administrators and directors will be bracing themselves for what will hopefully be a renewed and increased wave of student militancy. Last term's action may well have been the most intense since the early 1970s, with around twenty colleges in occupation in the early weeks of December and others taking action in other ways.

Middlesex Polytechnic seems to have been the most politically conscious (they seem to have had more need than other places). The majority of their sites were in occupation for weeks, action which was supported by a large number of students who were angry but who were also able to use library facilities 24 hours a day thanks to the occupation. At other colleges, such as Paisley and Glasgow Polytechnic, concessions have already been won in terms of rent and canteen prices through occupations and rent strikes.

The SWP have tried to make canteen prices the focus of resistance. At Middlesex Poly, for example, food is more expensive than in Leicester Square! Yet, even here, the SWP have been left behind as, through the struggle, aims and tactics have changed. Middlesex Poly students cite the massively increasing intake numbers (without proportionate provision of funding), staff reductions and inadequate library facilities, on top of student poverty, as among their grievances. Importantly, they stress that their demands are national – this is why they are calling for a national occupation of all higher education colleges. Their ten-point plan for occupation is printed at the bottom of this article (though not necessarily endorsed in total by this writer). I attended the Middlesex Poly students' demonstration outside the High Court on 16th December where the director tried to get an injunction to stop the students occupying. Since it was the end of term, the students finished their occupation anyway; the injunction was not granted and the authorities will have to go through the whole procedure again when the next occupation takes place.

It is essential to see what's happening in the national and international economic context. The student revolts of the late '60s and the early '70s were relatively successful attempts to claim aspects

## A new student revolt

of education (organisation, curricula) from the interests of the capitalist state. Since then, and with increased ferocity, the ruling class counter-offensive has robbed us of money (freezing of grants, loss of dole, loss of housing benefit), time and space. Since many of us now have to work as well as study, we have less time for ourselves – education is increasingly less about *our* needs and desires than those of capital.

Recent articles on children and primary education in *Freedom* (particularly Denis Pym a few weeks ago) have very properly asked what education is all about, and have suggested that children's refusal to learn is understandable if not a positive thing. The same goes for higher education. Student Union meetings are all too often dominated by wishy-washy liberals who just want a slightly less oppressive capitalist system. They are content to argue on the administration's terms and have a localist mentality. They want 'less hardship' (we will be offered the solution of the intensified two-year degree course as a means for alleviating hardship in the summer months), they want 'better funding of courses' (we will be offered top-up fees), and so on. Let's face it, what we really want is *less work, more money, more resources and freedom in how we use them* – and that's just for starters! The only way to get these things is to seriously threaten the administration through disrupting the functioning of the university (from their point of view, at least). It is no good carrying out symbolic, tokenistic 24-hour sit-ins in unimportant buildings, or having petitions. A real struggle is needed. And the good thing about a fight is that it does not simply affect the administration (putting the shit up them), it alters the ideas of those involved. The aims change in the struggle, so that what start out as polite mild requests for a less abrasive brand of oppression often become demands for the complete destruction of present relationships of control and regulation. And instead of focusing on local issues (such as the peculiar arrogance of a particular admin), those involved often come to link what's going on in their college with the national and indeed international rationalisation of education with other attacks on our class, such as homelessness, unemployment and poverty generally. And when existing structures (Labour and Green-dominated Student Union executive committees and procedures) and parties are recognised as irrelevant (and indeed worse than useless) in the fast-changing situation of conflict, new methods, new ways of organising evolve spontaneously – the chain of command and obey and respect for authority is challenged and the mass take over from the institutionalised leadership. This is an experience the importance of which it is difficult to over-estimate – it is something people carry with them into future struggles.

There are probably some people reading this, and I must admit I used to think so myself, that student struggles are just a load of middle class kids playing at politics in an area cut off from the rest of society. But we need only to look at how our enemies respond to us, and we also need to drop narrow Labour Party / liberal sociologist / Stalinist divide-and-rule conceptions of what constitutes the working class. To the ruling class, student revolt is potentially more dangerous than strikes in many industries. Students twenty years ago created havoc and were instrumental in helping to make this country almost ungovernable. And on two occasions in the last ten years in France, students, along with other sections of the working class as a

whole, have forced humiliating climb-downs from the government there. John Major personally told the director of Middlesex Poly not to give in to the students. These people realise, and we ourselves should realise, that students are the qualified labour-power that capitalism needs to be reproduced in order to sustain itself and to expand. Our enemies, the ruling class, clearly take students very seriously – students should take themselves just as seriously.

### Middlesex Polytechnic's Ten-Point Plan for Occupation

1. Ensure that your meeting is carried out constitutionally and that the motion is easy to understand.
2. Report the result of the meeting to the VC or dean, immediately occupy all buildings and form picket lines at each entrance to the site.
3. If you are a multi-site college, work together, organise an inter-site committee to negotiate with management, draw up general and specific demands. Do not let divide and rule tactics be used against you.

4. Organise a press/publicity committee, release agreed press statements, get support from NATFHE, NALGO, NUPE, etc. Advertise to your own students and the general public.

5. Liaise with other colleges in or considering occupation.

6. Organise rotas for duties – keep the building clean.

7. Organise an occupation fund for food and drinks, etc. You won't usually have access to canteen facilities. Get funds from the Students Union.

8. Organise entertainments. Keep your library open 24 hours a day. Organise study groups so that education continues.

9. Don't become insular – get outside speakers in from other local colleges. You will not be alone in your efforts.

10. Be prepared to negotiate, but be firm. Remember: it's not illegal; you can win.

Middlesex contact/information/help numbers – tel: 081-804 1958, 081-499 9254 or 081-440 5944.

See also *Against Debt, Discipline and Rationalisation! A New Student Revolt?*, available with sae and donation from: B&B, c/o Unemployed Centre, Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton, East Sussex. Highly recommended.

Johnny Yen

## Occupational Therapy

### The Lancaster University students' occupation

This has been the most politically active term at the University for ages. First the University was visited by Tories Enoch Powell and Norris McWhirter, and then there has been the rent strike.

The University raised the rents by 12.75% and so the students came out on rent strike. 450 students paid their rent money into a special SU (Students' Union) account. The University, for its part, refused to negotiate, and so on Thursday 14th November the Union voted to occupy the senate room at the top of University House.

The occupation lasted ten days and in its way was a major success. People who were part of it gained a greater awareness of their own power over their lives and a greater confidence.

The University responded by applying for court injunctions against eleven named individuals, some of whom were prominent 'organisers' of the strike. The student newspaper *Scan* mysteriously failed to appear when it was accidentally wiped off the SU computer by person(s) unknown.

The occupation was given publicity on the local television news and in the local papers. The Deputy High Sheriff of Lancashire (a court official) came to order them out, afterwards giving interviews to the BBC and ITV cameras, obviously enjoying every moment of his twenty seconds worth of fame.

The occupation may possibly have provided some impetus to other student occupations, notably the one at Middlesex Polytechnic. During the occupation non-essential administration did not take place, unsurprisingly life on the rest of the campus continued much as before, thereby demonstrating the superfluity of the management echelon.

The anniversary of the fall of Thatcher passed unnoticed. Pressure was put on the rent strikers in the form of threatening letters demanding that the striking students report to residential services to explain why they had not paid their rent. Students responded by occupying residential services.

The end came for the occupation early on Saturday 23rd November when County Court

bailiffs carried out all 250 occupiers bodily. After this, the strike started to lose its way in that during the occupation no follow-up campaign seems to have been worked out to maintain and build up the pressure, for example in unpredictable occupations of other arms of the university administration octopus. Though the eviction made it onto national television news, the lack of a follow-up plan resulted in the campaign losing momentum. Stupidly, many students took their rent out of the strike fund and paid. The occupation as an end in itself failed to make the university back down and negotiate, the lack of further strategy seems to have broken the back of the strike.

A packed union meeting in the Tuesday following the eviction decided nothing, following that the campaign descended into the gesture politics of a soup kitchen in the University Square, and a candle-lit vigil outside the Vice Chancellor's house. On Friday 29th November a national protest of 2,000 gathered in the square, causing the University to close the library and other adjacent buildings. The mass protest was attended by Terry Fields and Paul Foot, with groups from other universities present, and representatives of the four and twenty Marxist sects peddling their wares plus one brave and cold seller of *Class War*.

Where to now? The SU plans to place a full-page ad in the *NME* showing the students being brutally evicted by the state-hired gorillas. The University has responded by saying it will cut off their funding.

The occupation itself was a good thing in that it brought individual people together, increasing their collective self-confidence. The strike called attention to the issue of student poverty, the stopping of benefit entitlement during the summer and the issue of student loans. It remains to be seen whether the conflict will be resolved via fresh actions in the new year, or whether the eviction of the occupiers has damaged the credibility of the Students' Union. Watch this space!

Kevin Klubman

## Nuclear Proliferation

On 27th November, I went to a talk given by Richard Leventhal on this topic. This was at Kings College, Cambridge, and was arranged by SANA and the Medical Campaign against Nuclear Weapons. The speaker had studied this problem for several years as an advisor to US Senators. He said that by the end of the century, the quantity of plutonium in the world would be more than double the present levels. A large part of this, more than that in the present US and Russian arsenals, would be held by Japan. The large amount of plutonium would make it virtually impossible to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons worldwide. The safe storage of this artificial element poses yet unsolved problems. Dismantling of missiles does not dispose of the plutonium and all industrialised countries can produce missiles. There is clearly great concern in the US Senate about this problem which underlines the need for peace activities in view of the manifest lunacy of governments.

Norman Albon





Living in a world full of headlines about ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia, religious strife in the Middle East, the revival of old nationalisms in what used to be the Soviet Union, it is hard to believe there ever was such a thing as class struggle. First published in 1912 by the Unofficial Reform Committee of the South Wales Miners, *The Miners' Next Step* belongs to the golden age of class war – a classic text of British syndicalism.

The force of the text – “a suggested scheme for the reorganisation of the Federation of Miners” – is that it was written by miners for miners. As David Douglass says in his introduction: “the best plan forward will always be determined by the men and women at the point of production because they know best”. Yet it is amazing how many smelly sects on the political left claim to know better, as Dave makes clear from his own experience as an NUM Branch Delegate in Doncaster.

**The Miners' Next Step**  
published by Germinal, 32 pages, £1.50

## Where we went wrong

The text has a straightforward style which is rare now in this age of party political clap-trap. It is concerned with the nature of their union bosses' power: “... on things that matter, the executive have supreme power. The employers respect them. They, the leaders, become 'gentlemen', they become MPs, and have considerable social prestige because of this power.”

These leaders – the union bosses – “become corrupt in spite of their own good intentions”. The writers propose the alternative of decentralisation of negotiation so that the “lodges become responsible and self-reliant units, with every stimulus to work out their own local salvation in their own way”.

**Eliminating the boss**  
‘Industrial Democracy’ was the aim of the Reform Committee. This entailed, for them, the ‘Elimination of the Employer’, but they wanted no truck with nationalisation of the

pits – exchanging the private boss for the state employer. They say: “To have a vote in determining who shall be your fireman, manager, inspector, etc., is to have a vote in determining the conditions which shall rule your working life. On that vote will depend ... your safety of life and limb, of your freedom from oppression by petty bosses, and would give you ... control over your conditions of work.”

Such control over the working life by the workers themselves, it is claimed, is more meaningful than the ‘snare’ of parliamentary democracy. The writers argue: “An industrial vote will affect the lives and happiness of workmen far more than a political vote”. All nationalisation means for the Reform Committee is that it gives the worker the right: “to vote for a man to represent you in Parliament, to make rules for, and assist in appointing officials to rule you”.

In 1912 *The Miners' Next Step* provided a clear set of signposts on how working people, and their trade unions, should proceed as a movement. No to the state! No to the politicians! No to the bosses!

**Where then did we go wrong?**  
The answer seems to be that after the First

World War the workers' leaders, derided in this pamphlet, either took off down the Bolshevik Blind Alley or adopted the parliamentary path to power. These false steps, we now know, led elsewhere to socialist despotism, or to ‘autocracy’ as the Reform Committee had called it, and here in this country to a smug socialism little distinguishable from careerism.

Will the spirit of socialism ever recover? Do the working class still have a historic role? In the end it was the ‘politically clever’, rather than the workers, who were most taken-in by Marxism and Labour Party Fabianism. The pre-First World War maxims of workers quoted by Standish Meacham (in *A Life Apart: the English working class 1890-1914*): “Politics never did anybody any good”, or “of course all politics are crooked”, or “there’s nowt to choose between ‘em [of political parties]”, are still alive today.

And yet, among the clever, the temptation to believe in what Fred Jowett of the ILP, in 1909, called the “jiggery-pokery of party government”, is a powerful force. Mr Douglass is himself a Ruskin College man, and a kind of Marxist with an anarcho-syndicalist background. Our universities turn out Marxists like McDonalds turn out hamburgers. This in no way detracts from the pamphlet, which the fans of anarcho-syndicalism will want.

Brian Bamford

## News from Northern Ireland

The Catholic Primate of All Ireland has spoken out against the possible re-introduction of internment here on the grounds that it would play into the hands of the IRA at a time when the Cardinal and many others feel they are on the political ropes even as they lean away militarily. And Peter Brooke has distanced himself from the strong noises coming out of Army HQ at Lisburn and other places that the time is right for the introduction of internment. When I hear commentators and politicians on my morning radio calmly dissect the issue and timing of internment I know I’m living in a really weird place. Various renaming has gone on since the last time internment was introduced. It is now called ‘selective’ or ‘executive’ internment, which is code for the belief that the security forces have better intelligence now than they had in the ‘70s and that only the real terrorists would be locked up. Of course it doesn’t take a bundle of intelligence to see the flaw in that kind of thinking. And Ian Paisley does not have a bundle of intelligence so he quite pertinently asked the obvious question: “If intelligence is so good now why aren’t they all locked up already?” And internment may yet come, even though all this chat about it will

have deadened the edge of surprise the army would have liked.

The sixth anniversary of the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement came and went in mid-November with small, almost church-parade type protest marches. The ‘diktat’, as unionists and loyalists call it, is still in place and the Secretariat it set up is used when the two states need to tweak each other’s ears softly on issues like the use of the UDR or extradition. The Agreement’s most abiding legacy is its failure to deliver what it set out to deliver: an end to violence.

Multi-national machinations were evident yet again recently when the Viyella group announced from its headquarters in London the closure of one of its plants in the north of Ireland because of over-capacity. The company scoffed at the story that it was in fact shifting production to Mauritius as a way of preparing for the Single European Market by locating in a place with significantly lower labour costs. The company closed a plant in Castlereagh, just outside Belfast, and fears exist that the plant in Derry may be next. Word had it that it was a toss up for the company which one went and that the fact that the Fair Employment Agency is breathing down their neck meant they chose the Castlereagh plant with its largely protestant workforce. Rubbing salt into the wound is the fact that the Industrial Development Board granted the company £2 million a few months ago.

The most amazing political uproar recently has become known as the McDaid affair. Charlie Haughey, struggling through a series of leadership challenges and votes of no confidence, kicked out a few cabinet members and tried to bring in some of his own team. One of them was the Letterkenny-based TD and medical doctor James McDaid. However, he only lasted a few hours in the job as opposition parties charged after his reputation on the basis of his support for the campaign not to extradite Letterkenny man Pius Clarke. Amid the hullabaloo and the accusations, Deputy McDaid got up and resigned as Minister of Defence designate, and returned to Donegal to a hero’s welcome. I’m guessing that he’ll be back as Taoiseach himself in a few years time. We do indeed get the politicians we deserve.

Dave Duggan

## Waiting for the Bus

Mrs Potts was going on about all the immigrants coming over here, Bert. She says we haven’t got the room for them ... Well, I suppose there is a limit, Daisy, but the population of the UK hasn’t risen appreciably for many years. Perhaps Mrs Potts should start worrying about all the ‘brains’ that have been deserting Britain after getting free education from us taxpayers. If it were not for the ‘brain drain’ perhaps we wouldn’t have so many immigrants. Christ, wouldn’t we be in a mess if they all wanted to come back ... The immigrants must be pretty desperate to want to come over here ... The grass is always greener. And they’ve been told how wonderfully democratic we are ... Mrs Potts’ Polish neighbours said they will move if any blacks come on the estate ... Jesus wept, if I can put up with Christians, surely the Poles can put up with a bit of pigmentation? ... Her Jesus hanging up outside St Ethelberts doesn’t look a bit Jewish to me ... Not surprised. Nobody knew who his father was ... I didn’t like that Class War chap on the television. Are they anarchists, like the papers say? ... Well, anarchist is a negative term, so I suppose they’ve a perfect right to use it, but that one came across to me as a bit of a bully ... Some of the things he said between the threats and curses struck me as being true ... Too right, Daisy, but the trouble is that people will tend to go along with his assessment of society, like I do, and then approve of his method for changing it, which I don’t ... What, like beating up coppers and burning rollers? ... That’s right ... Do you feel sorry for the coppers? ... I feel sorry for anybody that gets hurt, but I save my tears for women and innocent children who get caught in the middle. Coppers, like soldiers, have to put their consciences in the dustbin along with their brains when they join up and take the oath to carry out orders from Majors and Kinnocks and Stalins and Hitlers and ... Okay, you’ve made your point. What about Magic Johnson. Do you believe he’s slept with 5,000 women? ... Bloody sure I couldn’t. They’d keep me awake all night ... Seriously ... Let’s see, he’s 27, that’s about ten years bonking time, that’s 500 a year,

that’s about two a day. Unless he’s got through about 5,000 condoms, I’d say he must have had a few doses of specific and non-specific VD, which means a tidy few trips to the clinic, so he must have missed a few months bonking time. I think he’s talking through his willy ... Fancy them putting up a man like that to warn heterosexuals about AIDS. It would only take about ten local Magic Johnsons to wipe out the population of Slough in ten years ... I suppose he’s what you might call a fine upstanding American boy ... Was, you mean. Someone once said that bonking was the healthiest sport ... Wonder if he’s still alive. Hope he realised that even games have rules ... So Dave Nellist has been kicked out ... Serves the silly man right. There’s no way anybody can do anything in Parliament unless they become Conservative. The Establishment won’t allow any real opposition ... He says he might stand as an Independent ... Either he likes the job or he’s got no sense ... You know you were saying the other day how Roosevelt might have known about Pearl Harbor. Well, it says in the paper that a US National Security official has admitted that the US was receiving Japanese naval messages from our codebreakers at that time. On top of that, one of the British codebreakers, according to his widow, had no doubts that Pearl Harbor was the target ... Very little surprises me, Daisy, but that takes a bit of swallowing ... The Japs don’t seem to want to apologise for it ... Why should one bunch of warmongers apologise to another bunch of warmongers? ... Tell me, Bert, do you think money is a useful thing? ... Well, it’s a necessity for us as things are, but its main purpose is to keep us poor ... That’s daft ... No, it isn’t. Money is useful to the wealthy people because it can so easily be hoarded and guarded, unlike food which they can’t keep in their bank vaults. Money is a convenient means for controlling us and keeping us poor. In the third world, the big companies persuade the people to grow crap like coffee by offering them money for it. So the poor sods stop growing real food and find they have nothing to eat ...

EFC

### How the other half lives

(continued from page 2)

The cut is perhaps a gesture of solidarity with the staff, whose total salary, according to the report, had dropped from £1,938,000 to £827,500, while their numbers have risen from 114 to 124. They are mostly salespeople paid on commission. If the figures are right, their average salary has gone down from £17,000 to £6,500 a year.

Mr Brown’s fellow directors (his three brothers) will not be taking a salary cut, as they only get a million pounds a year each anyway.

In the spring of 1991 a new apartment block was completed just north of St James’s Palace in central London. Flats are now on sale at prices ranging from £2,000,000 to £9,600,000. Owners will also have to pay a service charge of about £20,000 a year.

To encourage sales, a cousin of the Queen is installed rent free in a medium-priced flat (£6,300,000) and giving regular parties. No sales so far.



### Communes and the Green Vision: Counter-Culture, Lifestyle and the New Age

by David Pepper

London, Green Print, Merlin Press 1991, £7.99

Some years ago David Pepper produced a very useful, even if rather dense, text on *The Roots of Modern Environmentalism* (1984). It was rather unique among books on ecology that were then beginning to flood the market, for it did not jettison the ideas of Karl Marx and showed an awareness that many of the 'new' ideas espoused by the 'Greens' – participatory democracy and decentralisation – were anything but new, but had been advocated by anarchists like Kropotkin long ago. Coming out in the same year as Porritt's *Seeing Green*, Pepper's book had both political substance and a historical dimension that was completely lacking in Porritt's eclectic vision. David Pepper's new book on communes is quite different. It is a kind of ethnographic text on contemporary communes, although Pepper has less to say on what goes on in the communes than in analysing the content of a series of long interviews with commune members – all of whom seem to be white, middle class, and extremely articulate, and certainly conversant with the intellectual debates current within the ecology movement.

The book has a more open texture than his earlier work and is focused on the issue as to whether 'communes' could form a viable alternative to contemporary society, whether or not they could lead the way to a more just and ecologically more harmonious society. The book does not purport to be a historical survey – there are many such studies – nor a

## Communes and the Green Vision

sociological study, but rather is in the form of an 'enquiry' as to whether or not people who live in communes have attitudes and values and engage in activities that could suggest that communes might play a part in the creation of an 'ecological society'.

The book is in two parts. The first part provides the framework, a theoretical overview to the work. Drawing on contemporary literature Pepper outlines 'what the Greens stand for', the various political philosophies of the environmentalists, the history of past communes and community-based movements (in seven pages) and the theory behind the key idea that 'communes' are a major agency of social change. With respect to the latter, Pepper discusses the contrasting approaches of those who advocate a collective, materialist and 'conflict' approach to social change – which he himself seems to align with – and those who see change in terms of an idealist, individualist (lifestyle), and consensual (pluralist) form of politics. Most of the commune members he interviews take the latter perspective.

Part Two outlines the results of his enquiries. Although the number is not stated explicitly, Pepper appears to have interviewed some ninety people belonging to twelve communes. One of the problems of the book is that the latter are introduced to the reader in bits and pieces, and in table form, and there is thus no real discussion of the locale and the nature of the communes, which is odd considering that

Pepper is a geographer. Most of the communes were established in the 1970s and some are well-known as educational centres – the Centre for Alternative Technology, Lower Shore Farm and Findhorn, for example. Most members of the communes are middle class and most of their skills and experiences are related to academia, the arts and to the 'caring' professions. They form a white 'humanistic intelligentsia' (like, I suppose, most anthropologists) who are opposed to the world view and strivings of the managerial and technocratic elite, as well as being out of touch with ordinary working class people.

Motivation for joining the communes varied, but most expressed dissatisfaction with conventional society, and an awareness of the ecological crisis – although some did not join from any ecological motivation nor did they particularly want to change society. Around 20% of commune members were anarchists and some 16% were advocates of the spiritual 'New Age' form of consciousness. The latter, the 'Findhorn tendency', seems to permeate, Pepper reveals, not only deep ecology enthusiasts but the whole green movement.

From his enquiries, Pepper concluded that the communes were now less oriented to social change and to green ideas and practices than when they were first formed, and noted that present commune members joined for reasons that were personal rather than

motivated by a desire to change society or live in a 'green' lifestyle. He thus concluded:

"The influx of the 'therapy' school into most communes in the eighties, together with the rise of New Ageism, is just part of a broader move away from socialist notions of community towards liberal individualism" (page 156)

When Pepper, therefore, comes to examine the views of the commune members towards political change most, it seems, rejected 'collectivist' approaches, that change could be brought about through political action, strikes, co-operatives or communes. Using the much quoted aphorism 'the personal is political', many commune members, Pepper suggests, stressed the importance of consciousness raising and promoting spiritualism, with its emphasis on the 'inner self', and on self realisation as the focus for change. One member's response to sanctions against South Africa was to suggest that we neither "picket or take sides" but meditate and thus send out 'energies' (equated in New Age thinking with spiritual force) to the continent. Surprisingly, although there was a rejection of conventional party politics by a majority of commune members (both anarchists and New Age spiritualists), only some 18% supported the Green Party.

Pepper discusses the important changes that were taking place in several of the communes, particularly at Findhorn, which were moving towards privatisation, rampant individualism, consumerism and profit-seeking via management efficiency.

The gist of Pepper's enquiry into whether contemporary communes can be seen as agencies of social change is therefore essentially negative in tenor. He seems to view them, in general, as retreating from radical/green politics, particularly of the anarchist variety. Coming largely from a white middle class background, alienated from capital and its technocratic ethos, but equally lacking any affinity with labour and its traditions of collective political action – members of communes have increasingly veered towards therapy and spiritualism. In their politics they have tended, he suggests, to by-pass rather than confront powerful economic vested interests – Findhorn even running courses for industrial management.

The communes are thus, he concludes, agencies of social reform; they have become part of the society they were originally intent to oppose, and now occupy a particular niche in the Green consumer/New Age movements that are helping to 'clean up' capitalism, but only spiritually.

Given its orientation around questionnaires and its focus on answering some basic questions, Pepper's study is quite different from that normally written by anthropologists, but it is nevertheless a useful and important study.

Brian Morris

## THE RAVEN number 16

The Raven anarchist quarterly number 16 'On Education (2)'

96 pages, Freedom Press, £2.50 (post free)

Although this issue of *The Raven* is titled as a sequel to *The Raven* number 10, it is as unlike it as could be. Actually this one has two themes, education and delinquency, which are explicitly linked in Michael Duane's opening piece where he observes that massive public investment in education has been paralleled by an increase in crime, which Duane is inclined to see as a manifestation of an unequal society. Is this the nature versus nurture argument? In the first place, we need to distinguish between 'crime' and 'delinquency'. Alex Comfort, in the well-known pamphlet *Delinquency* (1950), reprinted here, pointed out that whereas 'crime' is that which is 'against the law', delinquency, or anti-social behaviour, is often of no benefit to the perpetrator; indeed it is often repetitive in spite of the fact that when it is against the law it is liable to land the perpetrator in trouble. While Comfort questions the accepted idea that the state is a protector of society against such behaviour, Michael Duane attacks the "misguided ambitions" and well-intentioned but misdirected provisions of the school system, and is scathing about the conduct of the Labour party (and the Communist party) in the London of the 1960s. Comfort advocates that social ills should be studied scientifically and calls for "a revolution based on scientific study of the things we wish to foster", and also points out that revolutionary activity can be a cloak for the psychopath.

Now either by accident or design the editors have placed after Comfort's a short article by Peter Gibson entitled 'Kropotkin, Mutual Aid and the Selfish Gene', which follows on from his 'Anarchism and the Selfish Gene' in *The Raven* number 6 (vol 2, pages 167-173). In that earlier article Gibson had brought the

perspective of sociobiology to bear on anarchism and had concluded that:

"Much of anarchist propaganda has been aimed at countering political control. However, anarchists have generally failed to understand the problem they have been attacking. The mistake they have made, as I see it, is they have used culturalist arguments when they should have been using sociobiological ones."

When he wrote his earlier article (1988) Gibson had not read Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*; in the current article he applies the theory of kin selection as opposed to group selection to a detailed study of that work. His contention is that Kropotkin was mistaken in his belief in group selection, and that kin selection is correct. Kropotkin, however, would have seen in this 'unbridled individualism'. And Gibson ends: "However that, as I see it, is the basis of both kin selection and anarchism". Now I'm not sure whether or not Gibson wrote that last sentence with his tongue in his cheek, but I believe that he is right about Kropotkin and that he has raised questions which go to the roots of socialism and anarchism. This short article is an important one.

John A. Schumacher's paper on higher education in the United States is difficult to relate to British experience, but having talked to Americans I am assured his picture is true. Denis Pym in 'The Axe, the Chainsaw and Education', provides a commentary on Schumacher along with the tale of how the nice young people who visit his farm ruin his axe-heads and chainsaw blades.

Gaetano Piluso, writing of the children's rights movement, points out that "we cannot be free without the love and support of others". Tony Gibson's 'Sexual Freedom at All Ages' makes a good follow-up to Piluso since he discusses the taboos which affect not only the young but the old, and how the two are related.

Piluso's article reminded me of the recent pamphlet *Children in Society* by Stephen

Cullen, just as Amorey Gethin's 'The New Superpower' reminded me of Brian Martin's *Strip the Experts*. Gethin concentrates on the 'academic experts', or more precisely the power that they wield. His comment: "It must not be left to religious fanatics either in east or west to oppose the scholars and researchers at universities", ties up with the final piece here – David Koven's 'Adrift in the Land of Patriots', for Koven writing of the USA at the time of the Gulf War, notes the presence of both jingoism and religious fanaticism, and the double damage of fascism when these are linked. He notes that these are "strongest amongst the least educated", which brings us back to the beginning again.

CC

## A Structured Anarchism

I have recently been preoccupied with defending myself from heresy charges for suggesting, in effect, that there was little intellectual point or honesty in attributing to hate figures ideas they didn't express. As a result I overlooked equally tendentious reasoning when Brian Bamford, reviewing John Griffin's courageous discussion document *A Structured Anarchism*, decides to condemn him for using Durkheim as a starting point. The reasoning behind this apparently was the conservative nature of much American sociology written forty years later! As I have written elsewhere, this is a bit like blaming Chinese firework makers for the slaughter on the Somme, or (since he is apparently an acolyte of that group within our discipline who considers society an irrelevance in sociology), like blaming W.I. Thomas for Margaret Thatcher's infamous "There is no such thing as society – only individuals and their families". One can trace a connection, but ...

Yes, of course we can find in Durkheim concepts which appear to place him squarely in the tradition of philosophical conservatism. However, although

Durkheim's work, like that of most of us, contains assumptions from a variety of intellectual traditions, it is simplistic to dismiss him as conservative because of the absurdities of American functionalism. Davis and Moore's notorious attempt to justify inegalitarian societies was a bit of a joke in 1945 and was totally discredited by the mid-fifties. In no way does it discredit or refute Durkheim's insistence that social life could not be reduced to the facts of individual biography.

It is absurd anyway to attempt to 'place' someone of Durkheim's level of complexity in any single philosophical orientation. He has been read by Richter as a liberal idealist, by S. Taylor and S. Lukes (separately) as a socialist, by Nisbet as a conservative. In a recent book, *The Radical Durkheim*, Frank Pearce notes that "in Durkheim's texts neither the dominant discourses nor ... partially suppressed fragments, can be construed as inherently conservative or positivistic".

John Griffin need not be apologetic, as he later

(continued on page 7)



## Chekhov, champion of the classroom teacher

At a time when teachers are ticked off in the tabloids and cautioned in the quality press, and education is up for grabs from playground to the latest pull-out extra, it's nice to find someone on your side. Showing Gorky round his garden at the turn of the century, Chekhov declared it "absurd to pay a niggardly pittance to one who is called upon to educate the people".

He confessed to feelings of shame and embarrassment when he met a teacher: "I feel quite awkward in front of him - for his timidity and for his shabbiness. I feel as if I myself were somehow to blame for the teacher's wretched state".

Moved by the plight of teachers, he came up with some great ideas for INSET: "If I had lots of money I would build a sanatorium for sick teachers. A building full of light with big windows and high ceilings. I'd have a splendid library, all sorts of musical instruments, an apiary, a vegetable garden, an orchard. I'd have lectures on agromony, meteorology and so on - teachers ought to know everything."

Compare this to some of the current courses on offer from my local education authority. For English teachers there is the opportunity "to continue the 1990-91 consideration of Key Stage 3 implementation and work of the language in the National Curriculum project. The particular emphasis will be on establishing continuity and progression with pyramids in the methodology of English

teaching, and on practical approaches to assessment in each of the profile components". Give me the apiary any day.

The heartening thing about Chekhov is that he really cared about teachers (he used to look after sick teachers) and believed in "the absolute necessity" for his country to "create exceptional circumstances for teachers". Coming from Health, like Chekhov, I'm sure Mr Clarke is as interested in the welfare of his teachers and as keen to promote 'exceptional circumstances'. It's just the nature of the 'circumstances' I worry about.

I believe that the best circumstances are those which encourage teachers to be themselves, enjoy their work and their leisure time, pursue interests, hobbies, etc., and allow them to return refreshed to the classroom with something to shout about. Not the incestuous round of courses and meetings addressed to particular stages of the National Curriculum. Give them more money by all means, but more importantly give them their time after school, their holidays, their chance to re-fuel - don't make them feel guilty.

Chekhov realised that to be good a teacher must be "an actor, an artist passionately in

love with his work", but what he saw were downtrodden teachers who went to school as willingly as going to exile. Interesting that the dread remains. Talking to a probationary teacher the night before term started, she told me of the sick feeling she had about returning to school. It wasn't fear of the children or the teaching, it was getting embroiled in the system again - getting caught up in procedures like records of achievement and end of unit tests which prevented her from getting on with her work, let alone enjoying it.

Things, it seems, haven't changed much. It is recapturing the passion for work that is so important and not wearing the soul out. Teachers, like Chekhov appreciated, need more light and why wait until they become sick? All the time they are being crowded in.

How many times do you hear teachers, especially primary school teachers, say that there is no fun in it any more? The National Curriculum threw the first shadow and now the compulsory tests are threatening to put out all the candles. Teachers may not "go about in rags" any more (although some do) or "shiver in dilapidated schools, poisoned by fumes from badly ventilated stoves", but their spirits do.

Still there is talk of rewarding the classroom teacher, but when? We all know that the classroom teacher gets the rewards of being a classroom teacher while those with 'positions of responsibility' get the money. And what are those people in positions of responsibility busy with? Well, like Chekhov's inspector, they are "carrying out district circulars to the letter", in other words cobbling together development plans, schemes of work and assessment policies and all the other bits of paper / tangible assets required to present before parents/clients in a market situation. What is not so tangible, the teaching, goes on day after day, carried on the backs of the majority of the profession. And what have we got to look forward to? Appraisal. As Chekhov remarked: "All this is disgusting and a kind of mockery of human beings doing a great and terribly important work".

At a time when so much is being done in the name of education for children, let us not forget the teachers, the other half of the equation, and consider not only their financial rewards but the circumstances in which they operate. Better an atmosphere of freedom and trust than confinement and suspicion. And let us heed Chekhov's advice, create exceptional circumstances for teachers which will in turn create exceptional teachers, rather than burnt-out cases, and really benefit our children.

David Charleston

## Letter from Amerikkka:

Amazing! Apparently, it's not just those totalitarian commies in Eastern Yurp who are in trouble, after all. You know, the miserable-looking ones we see on PNN (Pentagon News Network) every day shoving each other about in front of empty shops in 'Moss-gow'. After months of denying it, Bush has finally admitted that, yes, there are (a few) Amerikkkan families 'hurting out there'. Just a few, mind. Of course, it's not his fault. And it's certainly not the 'free market system' that's to blame either. If all those homeless people out there, God bless 'em all, would just start spending again, buy that new car, take out that mortgage, we could revitalise the automobile and construction industries, create new jobs and get the Amerikkkan economy 'back on its feet'. George has done his part. It's Congress that's holding things up ... or the Japanese. Yes, the Japanese! That's the ticket.

Amerikkkan federal and state governments put unemployment at between three and ten per cent, depending on where you live in this vast rambling country and on who you are. Things can vary quite a bit. If your local economy, say in southern Florida, San Francisco, San Diego or Hawaii, is built like so many around tourism, service industries or the war machine ('defense' contractors, support services for military bases, etc.), you are supposedly doing fairly well (by capitalist standards). The jobless rate in your area is in the single digit range - just enough to keep wages down and union organising difficult. (Less than 20% of US workers are unionised now, and that's counting organisations like the Teamsters and UAW as unions.) Chances are you are employed. Of course, 'employment' may well mean you have two temporary part-time jobs (you couldn't live on one), each paying minimum wage and neither providing medical benefits, sick leave or holidays.

In general, though, if you are white, middle class, have a degree in business, law or medicine, and live in Washington DC, Los Angeles or Miami, you are not only doing okay, you are much better off than you were ten years ago. Your salary has tripled while your taxes have fallen, if you are still paying any at all. You probably drive a BMW, eat out a lot, read *Time* or *Newsweek*, a couple of sports or stylish glossies a month, and have time to glance at a 'serious' paper most days. Choices abound: the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *LA Times*, whatever - all major cities have one, and all dutifully reprint the same State Department, Pentagon and wire-service handouts among endless pages of ads for Sears, car dealers and pizza. For you, the political spectrum extends from right to right. The biggest decision you make every four years is whether to vote Republican or Democrat, a party that gives new meaning to the term 'loyal opposition'. Having gone to a private high school and a 'good' university, you know where Berlin is and that the commies 'lost'. After all, you watch television and listen to

the radio as you drive to work, and every radio and television 'news' show has had at least one story every day for two years now about 'the collapse of communism' in eastern Yurp, 'bread lines in Moss-gow', 'the end of socialism' (all the same thing). Those dumb commies could make nuclear weapons and put astronauts into space, but they could just never get the hang of food distribution. You have no idea what communism is, although you have no idea that you have no idea, but you know it just 'ended'. You do not read *Freedom*.

In sharp contrast, if you live somewhere like Chicago, Philadelphia or Detroit, which once survived on unionised blue-collar jobs in steel, automobiles or other heavy industry, now would be a good time to move. Detroit, for example, has

repeatedly show you cannot identify Canada, Mexico or the Pacific Ocean on a map (true of a lot of the white yuppies too). You don't know what the 200 year old Bill of Rights is. Why should you? It's a Bill of Licenses, not rights, and wasn't written with blacks or women in mind in any case. You can't do simple maths. You do not watch PNN and do not read *Newsweek*, a hobby glossy, the *New York Times*, *Freedom* or anything else, and for a simple reason - you can't read at all. You are told your best chance of escaping the ghetto is a job in the military, provided you are not gay (in which case you are ineligible) and don't have too serious a criminal record. "Be all you can be. Join the army" the ad goes, sung over exciting footage of 'real' men rappelling down a rock face or sitting on tanks speeding across picturesque countryside (no killing, no blood). The army and the marines have programmes to teach people like you basic literacy skills - how to read instructions, for example. They give you a uniform, three meals a day, and vague promises of higher

## The collapse of capitalism?

lost 35,000 blue-collar jobs in the last five years. Now General Motors, the biggest car maker in the world ("What's good for General Motors is good for the country") has just announced that it has lost six billion dollars (15 million a day) in 1991, with a consequent need not for the 'end of capitalism' or, at least, of the executives responsible, but for a major 'restructuring', a significant 'reorganisation' - i.e. factory closings and massive 'layoffs' - to the tune of 21 plants and 75,000 jobs (a quarter of its workforce) in the next four years. The layoffs should not be thought of as sackings, however, since the 'downsizing' will be achieved painlessly by 'attrition', retirements, etc. - a plan which should work well if everyone in the 21 targeted plants agrees to retire on the same day.

It's much worse if you are poorly educated and black or brown - 50% of black youth in some cities are out of work. Most have never had a (legal) job since dropping out of high school and know they never will. The desperate recourse to drug dealing, car theft, mugging and burglary, often as a gang member, is by now all too familiar. The story's final stages - violence, prison, early death - have been routine fare for the television nightly 'news' for years (presented in a political and social vacuum, of course) and have long ceased to have any impact on American minds dumbed by the socialisation process that passes for public education, numbed by watching an average of eight hours a day of Hollywood car-wreck shows and PNN's video game footage of the war of the month - Nicaragua, El Salvador, Libya, Grenada, Panama, Iraq ...

If you are black or brown and poor, you repeatedly see the same images of yourself on television, whether it's the news or the cops-and-robbers shows (hard to tell them apart any more). You make a good athlete, rap dancer or criminal. You have come to believe that's all you are good for. Surveys

education, cheap mortgages and a chance to work with computers (that's if you complete your time - many don't). You get quick respect in what's left of your community, plus the chance to travel widely and kill people from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Like most government statements, the official unemployment figures (and the military adverts) are transparent lies, of course. In Amerikkka the long-term unemployed and workers too discouraged to register as job-seekers are not counted. Nor is anyone who has held any kind of job for one hour or more during the previous month. They were not unemployed during that month, you see. Nor are unknown numbers of other 'non-people' - street people, squatters, the homeless (a quarter of whom are children), the mentally ill, drunks, drug addicts, runaways and several million mostly Latin American illegal aliens too scared to register as unemployed or anything else. They don't exist.

The hacks' protestations notwithstanding, Amerikkka is in a deep recession getting deeper. Even the economists say so, and you know what an exact science economics is. They give a Nobel Prize for it ... usually to an Amerikkkan. Poverty, hunger and homelessness are rising rapidly. The underclass is getting bigger, in absolute terms and proportionately. Half a million new people filed for unemployment benefits last month alone. Social services that survived Raygun are hopelessly underfunded. Most of the 'peace dividend' promised after the threat of communism ended was dropped on Baghdad by night last January (Bush's 'thousand points of light') and what's left is spent on subsidies to prop up Walesca, Yeltsin, Havel, Savimbi, Chamorro, Christiani, Aquino, Collor, Shamir, and all the other new world order glove puppets. The Republicans' solution is to 'jump-start'

(continued on page 7)



# Letter from Amerikkka

(continued from page 6)

the economy with another tax-cut for the extremely rich. The Democrats say that's unfair on the rich.

Bush is getting nervous. His popularity rating is falling (have you ever been asked your opinion in one of those polls?) and his PR people are casting around for a scapegoat. The Japanese look like they're 'it' again. Much whingeing, snarling and menacing talk from Washington about 'level playing fields', protectionism, closed markets, unfair trading practices, retaliatory sanctions (that's not capitalism, surely?), and general Oriental deviousness.

And things are gonna get a lot worse. There's a backlash against the poor and it's becoming overt. David Duke, ex-KKK wizard and cross-burner, won half the white votes in Louisiana on a programme of getting bums (and in due course, no doubt, Jews, blacks and other undesirables) off the public's back, and although he lost the governor's race, he is now running for President not all that far from Bush's right. Frank Jordan just became mayor of 'liberal' San Francisco vowing to 'sweep the streets clean of the homeless'. The Supreme Court – so right wing since Raygun and Bush got to work (didn't you love Uncle Thomas?) that Tricky Dicky Nixon's appointees are now considered *liberals* – is busy savaging what's left of 'civil rights', with a woman's 'right' to choose whether or not to bear children about to be struck down.

Still, every cloud has a silver lining, they say. So what is there to be optimistic about in the belly of the beast?

Well, for one thing, over half the electorate no longer votes, and as we all know, an awful lot more aren't eligible or are but don't even bother to register. Subtracting the apathetic, with a population of about 250 million, that still leaves a lot of unhappy campers out there, people so disenchanted with their current options that they just might look elsewhere for answers if anarchists or anyone else have some that look practical. The politicians are aware of this frightening possibility too, of course, and with each election spend increasingly vast amounts of television time and money

trying desperately to get people to take part in the charade again. Madonna was all over television last time (literally) wrapped in an Amerikkkan flag urging everyone to vote, *please vote!* And she was by no means the only one. Before getting carried away, however, it is depressing to note that the democracy-loving citizens of Louisiana both registered and turned out in record numbers in November when presented with a choice between an ex-Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan and a notorious philanderer and casino gambler, twice indicted for federal racketeering last time he had the job. (The philanderer was their choice, 61% to 39%). By this logic, running two pigs for office would really bring out the vote.

While as yet on a small scale, another hopeful sign is that self-help and mutual aid are enjoying something of a comeback too. I have not seen them myself, but squats are reported in New York and San Francisco. In places I have seen, groups of homeless people have banded together and taken increasingly militant stances in the face of evictions from beaches, train stations, public parks and other areas. There are between 600,000 and three million homeless in Amerikkka now. Tent cities of 50 to 200 people have sprung up, often well organised, with some residents working together on such issues as safety and their children's educational needs. Their plight has also woken up some better-off people with jobs and roofs over their heads and drawn them into efforts to compensate for the blatant failings of the state. Some alliances are being forged. New people are being politicised. Some of them are learning what can be achieved by solidarity and direct action, e.g. squatting, starting their own informal 'schools', and jointly resisting evictions.

Again, however, it would be misleading to suggest political awareness is coming overnight. I know more working class people than rich ones who have gone out to help, and most of the unemployed and homeless (by no means always the same) persist in seeing the state as the solution. They continue to request help from politicians, city councils and church groups, and occasionally receive it amidst great fanfare and

media coverage. Moreover, there are as yet only local efforts to organise the unemployed, something which occurred on a much wider scale during the drastic economic times of the early decades of the century. The IWW was strong in Amerikkka and Canada then. Workers' kitchens fed the hungry, people from different trades who were out of work pooled their skills and expertise (thereby starting the alternative, informal economy essential for any fundamental social change), alliances were forged with those with jobs, and working overtime was recognised as scabbing on the unemployed. For powerful accounts of that period with some clear lessons for today see, for example, *Revolution in Seattle* by Harvey O'Connor (Seattle, Left Bank Books, 1981); *The IWW: Its First Seventy Years 1905-1975* by Fred Thompson and Patrick Murfin (Chicago, IWW Publishing); and *Where the Fraser River Flows: the Industrial Workers of the World in British Columbia* by Mark Leier (Vancouver, North Star Books, 1990).

I disagree with those anarchists who deny the need to spend time on our history and who say we should just focus on today's issues. We need to know our past inside out. 'Today's issues' have often *always* been issues and have been confronted by the anarchist movement many times before. If we know that, we can learn from our previous successes and mistakes and avoid re-inventing the wheel. As a non-anarchist recently pointed out, a long memory is one of the left's strongest weapons.

What will it take, then? Regrettably things will probably have to get much worse. Things aren't yet bad enough for enough people. Also, the power of the media must be broken. Amerikkka is such a vast place that contact between like-minded groups is a serious problem unless you are rich and own some newspapers or radio and television stations. Amerikkans' view of the world and each other is determined to a greater extent than in any other country I am familiar with by some of the most vicious, most sophisticated right-wing propaganda operations seen to date. Perhaps for this reason, some of the very finest radical papers, magazines and radio stations – anarchist and non-anarchist – are also to be found here, and some innovative efforts are afoot to challenge the information stranglehold of the capitalist moguls. I'll write about that next time.

Mike

## More sabotage by Israel

We go to press some days before the third of the American 'Peace in the Middle East' meetings, between Israel and her Arab and Palestinian neighbours, again being held in Washington. Without having inside information we can only repeat what we wrote about the first of these meetings ('Madrid a Damp Squib' in *Freedom*, 2nd November 1991), nothing will come of it because Israel's Prime Minister Shamir has on both previous occasions made it quite clear by provocative actions – at Madrid by starting more settlements in the occupied West Bank, at Washington by not turning up on the opening day of the talks, quite apart from press conferences at which he made it clear that Israel would not give an inch of the occupied territories or meet Palestinian representatives from East Jerusalem which must be part of Israel 'for ever'. And last but not least they would never talk to representatives of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) which whether they like it or not has the confidence of a majority of the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Now on the eve of the second Washington meeting not only has the Likud government given in to the religious minority sects who hold the balance of power in the Knesset over the budget for 1992, which means that more money (which the government hasn't got) goes to further the religious/fundamentalist cause, but also they have committed themselves to build some 5,000 more houses for the Russian immigrants in the occupied territories. This has not pleased their American paymasters who had postponed the guarantee for a \$10,000 million loan that Israel needed for its influx of Russian Jewish settlers, for not only had it been postponed until Israel and its Arab neighbours had agreed about living in peace, but also on condition that no more settlements would be built in the occupied territories.

The latest attempt by Shamir to sabotage the second Washington meeting was to deport twelve Palestinians from the Gaza Strip by way of retaliation for the killing of a Jewish settler there. An Israeli spokesman on BBC Radio 4 expressed their "indignation" at "the Arab violence" in justifying the deportations. Not a word about the *violence* that the military domination of the occupied territories by the Israelis over 25 years means for a million Palestinians.

The Israeli government and its hard-line

supporters will never give an inch at the conference. The only language they will take notice of is that of violence. They have occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for twenty-five years. It is only in the last four years – since the intifada hit back – that they are even taking notice of the opposition. They call them terrorists. Shamir and his friends must sometimes think back and realise that they only succeeded in establishing the State of Israel by terrorism against the British and the Palestinians who had always lived there.

Can they not see that they are surrounded by hostile peoples and in the long run they must either compromise or lose?

## An International Congress of Scientists and Engineers

This Congress to discuss science and peace in a rapidly changing environment was held in Berlin from 29th November until 1st December at the Technical University. There were several thousand participants from many countries – it was my first visit to Berlin. The congress was supported by many organisations including UNESCO and FIFF, an active society of computer scientists for peace and social responsibility.

A large number of groups met to discuss in detail topics related to disarmament and the conversion of resources to non-military use, the responsible use of scientific methods and ecological problems. There were also plenary sessions, a public meeting and a social evening at the Humboldt University. Among the highlights were a talk about the alternative Nobel prize and the unusual style of the lecture given by an oceanographer from Cambridge: Jacqueline McGlade. Her message was that whilst it is not possible to predict when a disaster (natural or man-made) will occur, the probability of such disasters can be estimated.

We learnt that the Technical University does not undertake military work or support staff

## A Structured Anarchism

(continued from page 5)

appeared to be, over using Durkheim. He is a man we return to again and again in our work because, like Weber and the other founding fathers of the discipline, there are always fresh insights to be gained from a re-reading. As John Ebrell pointed out in a recent issue of *Freedom*, one can draw fascist or anarchist lines of thought from Rousseau, democratic or elitist lines from J.S. Mill. A libertarian development from Durkheim is perfectly possible and something similar has been done by non-sociologists like Colin Ward.

I am not sure why Griffin should be criticised for ignoring Garfinkle and Nozick in favour of Durkheim. Garfinkle is marginal to sociology, while Nozick is a philosopher who has non-sociological fish to fry. Garfinkle's attempts to recolonise the domain of social psychology:

- a) is primarily concerned with the trivial;
- b) has no concept of social structure;
- c) consequently ignores the extent to which our

doing such work. This is surely an example which should be followed by all universities.

On the day after the congress, I found that the differences between East and West Berlin seemed to have been exaggerated. I stayed with students in Charlottenburg and was greatly impressed by the enthusiasm of the many students supporting the congress and their obvious distrust of political manoeuvres.

Norman Albon

**By ordering your books through Freedom Press Bookshop you are helping us with our overheads!**

ideas and behaviour are shaped by social factors.

Whatever virtues Garfinkle's work possesses it is marginal to the task John Griffin set himself. Given that he had three pages to discuss sociology he was quite correct to concentrate on Weber, Durkheim and Marx. Sociology has come a long way since then, but it is their work that forms the core of the sociological tradition. As Anthony Giddens states: "these three names rank above all others, they established the principal frames of reference of modern sociology".

Nozick, Bamford's other nomination, is certainly a minimal statist. But he presupposes property relations and regards redistribution as interference with liberty. His ideal may be anarchy but it is not anarchism. As I attempted to show years ago in *Anarchy* number 58, and as Harold Barclay has rather more adequately demonstrated since in *People Without Government*, anarchy does not necessarily imply anarchism; the absence of the state does not necessarily mean the sort of society anarchists would like to see.

Bamford is certainly not in a position to accuse anyone else of lack of rigour. His attempt to push some recent sociological and philosophical fads are pretty dishonest examples of special pleading for fashions, for taking the sociology out of sociology and for propping up inegalitarian property arrangements in the name of liberty. A bit rich that he should accuse John Griffin of something similar.

John Griffin's discussion pamphlet has not only started the discussion for which he hoped but is also an heroic attempt to render difficult ideas in everyday language, and to break through to constructive discussion. Personally, as another sociologist (but one who finds it difficult to view Bamford as a colleague in the same discipline) I disagree with much of what Griffin says. At the same time, I welcome his work as a serious attempt at positive thinking within the anarchist tradition. Anarchism as a political philosophy shares with sociology as an academic discipline many things, among them unfortunately a tendency to navel-gazing, to asking itself what it is. John Griffin's attempts to make complex ideas part of the conceptual armoury of the (sociological) layman, to create some fresh thinking about anarchism among anarchists can only be applauded.

John Pilgrim



## Right of Asylum

Dear Editors,  
I wonder if you are interested in entering the debate on asylum rights for refugees. It seems to me that we are seeing just the beginning of something that could have a profound political effect not seen since Enoch Powell's well-known contribution to compassion and pluralism.

Across Europe the right wing and their Nazi allies are attempting to appeal to crude ideas of nationalism and racism by raising the traditional threat of alien invasion. Just as the rhetoric of David Duke in Louisiana uses the idea of a 'welfare underclass' as a shorthand for black people, so the right in Europe are using the idea of asylum and refugees to the same end.

In this country the government is engineering a massive and racist disinformation campaign around the issue of asylum rights for refugees in an attempt to blur the distinction between illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. The Home Office would have us believe that the majority of people seeking asylum in Britain do so in a fraudulent attempt to circumvent very reasonable immigration procedures.

I think that there is a strong argument in favour of the idea that people have a right to live and work wherever they choose, and if that means escaping some artificially created economic chaos as an economic refugee, then so be it. In my experience, the vast majority of people seem to me to have a strong sense of place and community and, given the opportunity, are quite content to stay where they are with no intention of moving anywhere. Escaping to a foreign and alien place with an unknown language is, for most asylum seekers, an act of desperate last resort.

In a news release of 7th November 1991, the Minister expresses surprise that potential asylum seekers should use modern means of travel to escape. He appears to feel that real refugees should spend days and weeks struggling over the

nearest mountain range, perhaps picturesquely eating their boots or watching their children die for the television cameras. The Minister must know that the majority of refugees do exactly that. The fact is that it is the educated, articulate and politically active people who are most at risk from political persecution. Of this group it is only those people who are very lucky or whose families can afford to pay for their escape who arrive in this country.

The Minister is suspicious of the fact that asylum seekers tend to be young men on their own and carefully ignores the fact that it is young men of military age who attract the attention of police and paramilitary groups on both sides of a conflict. He also claims that the carrier liability regulations are not designed to deter refugees but merely ensure that the airlines contribute to an orderly system of international travel. British government regulations require potential refugees to apply to their local British Embassy for the appropriate visa. It is not hard to imagine the problems of travelling through zones of very hostile military control - from Jaffna to Colombo perhaps, or from Kurdistan to Baghdad - in order to queue up for a visa at your friendly British Embassy visa section, should one exist.

The vast majority of the people I come across are those who can show you the bullet wounds, who know what it is like to be picked up by a death squad, can describe what it is like to be hung from the ceiling in the Palestine hang. I meet people who have had to abandon prosperous lives and leave their families to save themselves. Very often this is not because they are politically active but because they belong to some minority ethnic group, happen to have got on the wrong bus or foolishly tried to discover what had happened to some vanished relative.

We should be careful to recognise the truth of what is happening. It is simply a convenient lie to say that there are millions of people waiting to sweep into Western Europe and take over. The truth of the matter is that the right - whether Bush, Le Pen or Kenneth Baker - are happy to obscure matters to serve their own political ends.

MC

## Animal Rights ...

Dear Editors,  
I believe that one point of the article entitled 'Which animal rights?' (*Freedom*, 14th December 1991) is to argue that, in a nutshell, humans have a right to kill non-human animals for food. But the argument given is rather a strange one to appear in an anarchist journal, for what it seems to amount to is an appeal to tradition - and in particular a tradition involving a hierarchical power relationship. The reason humans have a 'right' to kill non-human animals for food is that they have always done so and

are in a position of dominance which allows such exploitation to be easily achieved. This may be accepted as sufficient justification for the use of non-human animals as food, but then what hope is there for anarchism? For is it not also the case that there is a long-established tradition of human beings being exploited by other human beings who find themselves fortuitously blessed with power-wielding abilities, a state of affairs which seems just as 'natural' as human carnivores.

Anarchists, of all people, should be the last to invoke appeals to tradition, for on such a basis it seems that humans have a 'right' to dominate other humans.

JA

## and Human Rights

*Our editorial writer replies:* There are good and bad traditions so why shouldn't an anarchist paper support good traditions?

But we were not supporting 'a tradition involving a hierarchical power relationship'.

Our correspondent has missed the whole point of the article, which was that here was a programme on *vegetarianism* in which the three participants were all townies: a spokesman for the official vegetarians, one for the meat industry and one for animal rights, and we pointed out that the growers of the vegetables and food in general, of which these three propagandists were merely consumers, were not represented nor even mentioned.

And we doubt whether JA grows his

own vegetables or he would not compare the exploitation of man by man with the necessity for human survival to control the 'non-human' predators who otherwise would have long ago eliminated homo sapiens, and we would not be having to engage in this ridiculous debate.

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

**THE RAVEN - 16**  
**ON EDUCATION (2)**  
96 pages, £2.50 (post free inland)  
from FREEDOM PRESS

## Northern Ireland

Dear Editors,

It is of course true that the violence in Northern Ireland dates back to the three British plantations of Ulster in 1608, 1649 and 1690. Unfortunately one cannot re-enact the past, and not even Sinn Fein calls for the repatriation of the planters' descendants. There are things we have to live with. It is also true that the present wave of the troubles was not begun by Republicans but by the UVF in 1966 and much worsened by the Loyalist attacks on Catholic housing estates in 1969. The Provos were born on the streets in August 1969, quite late in the day.

It is also true that heavy blame lies on the British government for leaving the army under Protestant Stormont control in the critical time from 1969 to 1972, thus giving official sanction to the Falls Road curfew and internment. Further, Wilson allowed himself to be beaten by Paisley and Co. in the destruction of power-sharing in 1974, and Mrs T played

right into the hands of the PIRA over the Bobby Sands hunger strikes. The ten who died saw to it that they didn't die for nothing. And since those days Number 10 has had no policy for Northern Ireland except the Anglo-Irish Agreement which only succeeded in making matters worse. In fact the record all round is the other side of ghastly.

We can't rewrite the record. What we can do is to separate the two issues:

- a) the killing and intimidation, and
- b) the political settlement.

And the first is by far the most urgent and the pre-condition of the second. The government is trying to get a settlement while the war goes on. This will never be possible. You cannot organise peace and conduct a war at the same time.

It is no use Number 10 doing nothing and hoping that the Secretary of State, the GOC and the Chief Constable will somehow cope. The UDA have determined to take matters out of their hands and launch an open offensive on the IRA - to which of course the Provos reply in kind, thus a slippery slope and tit-for-tat killings that only make matters worse.

If Mr Major has decided that there is nothing more that he can do (which seems to be the case) at least he might admit it and do what he has already done over the other 'insoluble' problem of Gibraltar where he has taken steps, with the Spanish government, to call in the EC. A recent leak in *The Observer* (11th August 1991) revealed that London, Madrid and Gibraltar have now done their joint homework and are ready to propose to the EC that Gibraltar becomes a dependency of the EC with Brussels responsible for foreign policy and defence - for the rest Gibraltar will be autonomous. The Foreign Office has also hinted that this formula may fit Northern Ireland as well. It is well worth trying. It could well be that the hates and fears of Ulster are so deep that only an external catalyst will be good enough to see them through to peace. An EC solution

involves the withdrawal of British troops.

I can't make out what kind of alleged 'anarchism' leads Alan MacSimóin to back present horrors in Northern Ireland, but that is what he is doing in actively opposing New Consensus which condemns all the killing in the province.

Back in 1961 the anarchists of this country found some way of so getting their act together that they moved collectively into the Committee of 100, NVDA and civil disobedience against the Bomb. It made a power of difference and it is just that that is called for again over Northern Ireland (and next year over Scotland). I know that Dave Duggan is with me on this. We can agree to argue fiercely as we act, and we can act if we agree to one simple proposition: STOP THE KILLING and build New Consensus all over the country to secure exactly that end.

Peter Cadogan

## Romanticism

Dear Editors,

Whether we call it purpose, aim or whatever (perhaps 'instinctual purpose' would be better), procreation and nurturing is necessary to the continuation of the species, without which there could be no philosophy, no John Couzin, no spoons, nothing. This statement seems to me to be axiomatic. As I observed in my article 'Romanticism', and in 'Purpose in Life' (26th January 1991), humans seem to have disregarded this 'truth' because it is so obvious, but the 'lower' animals, unencumbered with romantic ideas, are more successful because they do it by instinct.

It seems to me that, in humans, it is the male, overwhelmingly, that in failing to play his part in the nurturing process must take the blame for our ills.

I am not a romantic, mystic or otherwise. I do not understand super-naturalism. Maybe my use of the word 'purpose' is suspect, but I feel sure that we should take note of the other animals and put children first in our philosophy.

Ernie Crosswell

## Money

Dear Editors

Having followed the controversy over the usefulness of the money system with great difficulty, may I offer the following thoughts:

1. Money is a means by which people can conceal and protect their power from others.
2. Orchards and cornfields cannot be concealed and protected to a similar degree.
3. Money can be bequeathed, counterfeited and hoarded - orchards and cornfields cannot.
4. Fertile land is the first essential for humans. Money has been responsible for starving millions in countries where fertile land is in plentiful supply.
5. The only reason why sensible people use money is because they have no alternative.

So what is the argument about?

Ernie Crosswell

## News from Angel Alley

know that they won't, not for political reasons but purely for commercial ones. We must therefore create our own distribution network. With the help of interested comrades we must first find a newsagent willing to stock *Freedom* and then a local paper in which is is worth while putting a

regular small advertisement drawing attention to *Freedom* and the local supplier's address. So what about it? Those of you who want to help, please get in touch with us without delay.

Our thanks to all who have contributed to our funds during 1991. We hope *Freedom*, *The Raven* and the new *Freedom Press* titles have justified their confidence in us and that we can continue to rely on their support in 1992.

## DONATIONS

6th - 31st December 1991

### Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund

Thornhill Ont GP £5, Teignmouth MD £10, Abingdon MB £11, Hove HC £3, London NW1 AA £2, Keighley DG £5, Lewes BM £10, Belper JS £4, Stockport DW £10, Wrexham SR £2, London SE3 PJW £7, London SE24 JAJ £10, Poole JAP £2, Colchester TO £5, Newton Abbot GH £50, Norwich BAN £3, Toronto ND £5, London SW20 JFM £10, Valparaiso Cal LO £30, St Colomb Major RW £5.16, Stirling AD £4, Bishop Stortford NA £2, Tewksbury PS £4, Pinner ROM £3.50, Cardiff GP £17, Hounslow DJW £5, Harrow MB £10, Beckenham DP £10, Saltburn TE £4, Gateshead GD £2, Kamakura Japan TS £10, Willaston SC £5.

Total = £265.66  
Total for 1991 = £1162.00

### Freedom Press Overheads Fund

Yarmouth IoW FAF £3, Buckie AF 80p, Teignmouth MD £7, Cambridge AG £6, Cambridge Ma JK £4, London NW8 NIB £5, Keighley DG £2, London SW7 DL £15, Douglas PCC £2, Stockport DW £10, Orpington CRP £10, London SE24 JAJ £1, Colchester TO £2, Saltburn TE £3, Oban GC £1, Newton Abbot GH £50, Hartfield OM £6, Tewksbury PS £2, Pinner ROM £3.50, Queensborough RM £2, Vallejo Cal DK £3, Hounslow DJW £2, London G £3.50, London E1 JR £7.

Total = £150.80  
Total for 1991 = £924.92

### Raven Deficit Fund

Thornhill Ont GP £5, Teignmouth MD £10, Abingdon MB £11, Lewes BM £10, Toronto ND £5, New York FT £20, Valparaiso Cal LO £27, Stirling AD £5, Cardiff GP £10, Beckenham DP £10.

Total = £113.00  
Total for 1991 = £698.00



# MEETINGS

## Anarchist Forum

Fridays at about 8.00pm at the Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square (via Cosmo Street off Southampton Row), London WC1.

### 1992 SEASON OF MEETINGS

10th January - 'Radical Islam' (speaker Peter Lumsden)

17th January - General discussion

24th January - 'Anarchism: Ancestor Worship or Blueprint' (speaker Peter Neville)

31st January - General discussion on John Griffin's pamphlet *A Structured Anarchism* (Freedom Press, £1)

7th February - General discussion

14th February - 'Structural Thinking' (speaker Silvia Bercu)

21st February - 'Co-editing *Freedom* in the 1960s' (speaker John Rety)

We are still booking speakers or topics for 1992. The dates free are from 6th to 20th March and 17th April to 10th July. If anyone would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, please make contact giving their names, proposed subjects and a few alternative dates.

The existing general discussion dates are fairly flexible, but some people prefer general discussions to the speaker-led meetings as the forum's participants often want to introduce a personal interest or current concern for examination. So whilst we do convert some of these evenings into speaker-led meetings there is a strong demand for the open meetings too. Friday is the only night available for the meetings as the centre is booked up by classes on other nights. Anyone interested should contact Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW (Tel: 081-847 0203).

## FREEDOM fortnightly

ISSN 0016 0504

Published by Freedom Press  
84b Whitechapel High Street  
London E1 7QX

Printed by Aldgate Press, London E1

## FREEDOM PRESS new titles

- **Children in Society: a libertarian critique** by Stephen Cullen, 43 pages, £1.20
- **Freedom to Go: after the motor age** by Colin Ward, 112 pages, £3.50
- **Work, Language and Education in the Industrial State** by Michael Duane, 36 pages, £1.00
- **A Structured Anarchism: an overview of libertarian theory and practice** by John Griffin, 37 pages, £1.00
- **The State is Your Enemy: selections from *Freedom* 1965-86**, 270 pages, £5.00
- **Wildcat ABC of Bosses, cartoons** by Donald Rooum, 48 pages, £1.95

Please send cash with order to FREEDOM PRESS (post free inland, add 20% abroad)

Books reviewed in  
*Freedom* can be ordered  
from

**Freedom Press  
Bookshop**  
84b Whitechapel High  
Street, London E1 7QX

Open  
Monday to Friday  
10am-6pm  
Saturday 10.30am-5pm

## The Raven Anarchist Quarterly

number 16 on Education (2)  
out now

Back issues still available:

- 15 - Health / the NHS / Alternative Therapy
- 14 - Voting / Kropotkin's 'Revolutionary Government'
- 13 - Anarchists in Eastern Europe: East — a freedom workshop / Nestor Makhno /
- 12 - Communication: George Barrett's Objections to Anarchism
- 11 - Class: Camillo Berneri on Worker Worship / Class Struggle in the 1990s / Durham Coalfield before 1914
- 10 - Libertarian Education / Kropotkin on Technical Education
- 9 - Architecture / Feminism / Sociology / Bakunin and Nationalism
- 8 - Revolution: France / Russia / Mexico / Italy / Spain / the Wilhelms-haven Revolt
- 7 - Alternative Bureaucracy / Emma Goldman / Sade / William Blake
- 6 - Tradition and Revolution / Architecture for All / Carlo Cafiero
- 5 - Canadian Indians / Modern Architecture / Spies for Peace
- 4 - Computers and Anarchism / Rudolf Rocker / Sexual Freedom for the Young
- 3 - Social Ecology / Berkman's Russian Diary / Surrealism (part 2)
- 2 - Surrealism in England (part 1) / Vinoba Bhave / Walden School
- 1 - Communication and Organisation / Guy Aldred / History of Freedom Press

price £2.50 each from  
**Freedom Press**

## FREEDOM AND THE RAVEN SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	inland	abroad	outside Europe	Europe airmail
	surface	surface	surface	airmail

*Freedom* (24 issues) half price for 12 issues

Claimants	10.00	-	-	-
Regular	14.00	18.00	27.00	23.00
Institutions	22.00	25.00	33.00	33.00

*The Raven* (4 issues)

Claimants	10.00	-	-	-
Regular	11.00	12.00	16.00	14.00
Institutions	13.00	15.00	20.00	20.00

Joint sub (24 x *Freedom* & 4 x *The Raven*)

Claimants	18.00	-	-	-
Regular	23.00	28.00	40.00	37.00

Bundle subs for *Freedom* (12 issues)

	inland	abroad surface	abroad airmail
2 copies x 12	12.00	13.00	20.00
5 copies x 12	25.00	27.00	42.00
10 copies x 12	48.00	54.00	82.00

Other bundle sizes on application

Giro account number 58 294 6905

All prices in £ sterling

## FREEDOM CONTACTS

### Sectional Editors

**Science, Technology, Environment:** Andrew Hedgecock, 9 Hood Street, Sherwood, Nottingham NG5 4DH

**Industrial:** Tom Carlile, 7 Court Close, Brampton Way, Portishead, Bristol

**Land Notes:** V. Richards, c/o Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

### Regional Correspondents

**Cardiff:** Eddie May, c/o History Department, UWCC, PO Box 909, Cardiff CF1 3XU

**Brighton:** Johnny Yen, Cogs U/g Pigeonholes, University of Sussex, School of Cognitive and Computing Sciences, Falmer, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 9QN

**Northern Ireland:** Dave Duggan, 27 Northland Avenue, Derry BT48 7JW

**North Wales:** Joe Kelly, Penmon Cottage, Ffordd-y-Bont, Treuddyn, Clwyd CH7 4LS

**Norfolk:** John Myhill, Church Farm, Hethel, Norwich NR14 1HD

## SUBSCRIPTION FORM

To Freedom Press in Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street,  
London E1 7QX

- I am a subscriber, please renew my sub to *Freedom* for ..... issues
- Please make my sub to *Freedom* into a joint sub for *Freedom* and *The Raven* starting with number 16 of *The Raven*
- I am not yet a subscriber, please enter my sub to *Freedom* for ..... issues
- I would like the following back numbers of *The Raven* at £2.50 per copy post free ..... (numbers 1 to 15 are available)
- I enclose a donation to Freedom Fortnightly Fighting / Freedom Press Overheads / Raven Deficit Fund (delete as applicable)

I enclose £..... payment

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....