

anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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FIFTY PENCE

"Let the people think they govern and they will be governed."

William Penn

DEMOCRACY BEGINS AT HOME!

With the arrogance of once-powerful imperialists, but who still cannot be reconciled to their third-class status in the world today, our politicians, the media, businessmen and all and sundry are offering their services to the republics of the former Soviet Union as to how *democracy* and *freedom* can be made to work in their countries.

After all, are we not one of the oldest democracies? Is ours not the mother of parliaments? Is not our justice renowned throughout the world? And are not our policemen wonderful? Our free press is the envy of the world and our journalists admired by all true democrats. The list of our qualities which commend capitalist democracy to the emerging

ex-communist countries is unending – for the suckers!

The truth of the matter is that there is no democracy in the so-called G7 prosperous nations. Relative prosperity for the majority makes it possible to confuse *laissez faire* with *freedom*, and a *parliament* with government and official opposition, and elections every five years, with *democracy*.

But democracy, by its very definition, is government by the people of the people for the people. The *people* means *all of us*, and that we should run our own lives. This means that society should be organised from below, otherwise how can the individual citizen participate in the decisions to be taken. Of

course, we shall be told that this is all very well for minor day-to-day matters but how can decisions regarding our defence (always the first problem requiring experts!) and all the public services – education, transport, hospitals, justice, etc. – which we all need, be dealt with *by the people*. But these *are* just the problems that affect the vast majority and in a democracy these decisions should be taken by all the people. It's no argument to say that most people haven't any ideas on the subject. Of course they haven't. If all the problems are only known to the government ministers and the civil servants, while the decisions in reality are taken by the latter, and the minister makes the statements in the House ('Yes Minister', the television feature, sums it up) then obviously the people cannot participate.

What we have today are pressure groups, but they too tend to be more often than not professionals acting on behalf of a vested interest. The few mass pressure groups, such as CND was in its hey-day, also tend to concentrate all the decision-making – and so all the information – in the hands of a small full-time team. The result so often is that the support at grassroots drifts away since its role is simply that of marching when told to from on high. It is not uninteresting to note also one or two ex-CND leaders are now either Members of Parliament or aspiring to be.

We are always hearing about our free press which is presented as a model for the former Eastern bloc countries to adopt. We don't have a free press because journals like *Freedom* can be published. We have a millionaire press which is controlled by ever-fewer millionaires (and without being nationalists, it should be mentioned that much of it is in the hands of Canadian and Australian tycoons). A free press in a democracy is one which is *factual* insofar as it presents the news and its opinion sections represent all opinion – the minority as well as the majority. We shall return to this question.

Surely we can limit our comments
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MORE RECORDS FOR THE GOVERNMENT

As we go to press the government's official figures for the new unemployed in January was 122,137. According to the Department of Employment, the number of people out of work and claiming benefit in January increased by 53,000. If we understand correctly the juggling of figures, it means that a number of unemployed from previous months (or years?) had either got jobs or were no longer entitled to claim unemployment benefit. *But the fact that cannot be glossed over is that 122,137 people who were wage slaves have in one month been deprived of the only means that capitalism offers to the have-nots of living some kind of normal life.*

And how many of these 122,137 wage slaves have family responsibilities? And how many are on the mortgage treadmill?

Another government statistic gives an idea of how unemployment is completely destroying the so-called 'Thatcher dream' of a 'nation of property owners'. Last year no less

than 75,500 home repossessions were enforced by the moneylenders. Ten years ago the figure was 5,000 and even in 1990 it was 43,600. But obviously 1992 will be even worse since there are now more than 275,000 families with their mortgage payments over six months in arrears, an increase of 73% over last year, and of these 183,610 were six to twelve months in arrears. And 91,700 were more than a year in arrears – an
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The government's only boast is that the inflation rate has gone down by a few decimal points. This is attributed to the fall in world oil prices and the fabulous discounts being offered by the car industry and the High Street shops to try and attract customers.

Maybe, but what credit can the government take?

However, the oil companies have since announced that petrol is going up by 6p a gallon!

DEMOCRACY BEGINS AT HOME!

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as to 'our wonderful police' and our system of 'justice' by simply referring to the list of prisoners who have been released in the last year (the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four to mention only two) after spending years in prison, their appeals constantly turned down by the highest legal authorities in the land. We will be told that justice did prevail in the end. But how did this come about? Not from inside the machinery of the law but by people outside not giving up defending these victims of the law.

One of the boasts of our 'wonderful policemen' in years gone by was that this was the only country with an unarmed force. This is no longer true and there have been more shootings by the police than against them, which the Home Office invariably defends.

In our opinion there can only be democracy where there is equality. How can there be government 'by the people' when 1% of the people own 50% of the wealth? When it is recognised that a minority enjoy better education, better health services, better everything than the majority? When a minority are in the situation of being able to employ the services of the majority for profit and to dismiss them when their services are no longer profitable? A truly democratic

government cannot exist in a capitalist society.

In fact government today exists to protect the unequal society, whether there is a Labour or a Tory or even Liberal Party in power. There are those political reformists and do-gooders who imagine that proportional representation or coalitions will somehow be more representative of the public good than the present situation where a government with the votes of about 33% of the electorate has an overwhelming majority of votes in Parliament.

Coalitions will do nothing to solve the fundamental social economic problem which is that our society is operated and serves to maintain a privileged and grossly unequal society.

Anarchists are the first to advocate equality, but also the first to encourage individuality. The capitalist society is opposed to equality but, via the media it controls, it seeks to destroy individuality except for competition in the capitalist jungle. And even then when the 'upstart' seriously challenges the capitalist establishment, they give him just enough rope to hang himself (if you don't remember Bloom and his refrigerators in the '60s, then what about Freddie Laker and his Sky Trains, and watch out for the over-ambitious Virgin Richard Branson).

The capitalist western powers have nothing to offer the emerging East European nations politically. Surely they have learned more than enough from their own oppressors over the past seventy years. The 'generous' interest shown by the west in introducing them to the advantages of the 'market economy' reflects much more their concern to develop their exports to these potentially 'expanding markets'. After all, let us not forget that Russia is probably among the richest sources of untapped raw materials in the world. Are they hoping that Russia (and probably China, for Tiananamen Square 'all is forgotten') will provide the markets that will get the capitalist west out of its slump?

Whether it does or not, mark the anarchists' words: there is no democracy here or in any capitalist country whether business bucks up or not.

Democracy means equality with individuality. In a society where 1% own 50% of the wealth there can be no equality, no individuality and, above all, no freedom. We only live one life. Without these things, it's slavery!

If a pink subscriber reminder is included with this issue of *Freedom*, then this will be the last issue we shall be sending unless we hear from you (see 'News from Angel Alley' on page 8).

Destroying the Mines

Freedom has always been in favour of getting rid of dangerous occupations if there were alternatives. The government is set on virtually destroying the coal industry. Pit after pit is being closed down without any kind of protest (at least so far as the media are concerned) and next year, when the contracts between the Coal Board and the privatised Electricity Board come up for renewal it is already known that the coal industry's largest customer will be buying from Australia and Poland and to receive which multi-million pound schemes for deep harbour facilities are already in train. This of course will be at the expense of the coal industry in this country,

which apart from the land is the one major natural source of wealth. Thus more millions or billions of pounds will be added to the ever-growing balance of payments. We will have to find the cash to finance the balance of payments and the redundancy payments as well as paying a miserable pittance to more thousands of miners condemned to spending their remaining working years on the dole. At what cost? And what will the electricity companies save? And how much will they pass on to the consumers, who after all will be footing the bill for the more hundreds of miners on the dole?

Privatising the Post

The present government, hell-bent on privatising everything in sight, is proposing to include the postal monopoly if returned to office.

All these crazy ideas come from the Adam Smith Institute. At their conference on 'opening up' the Post Office to competition Peter Lilley, the ultra right wing Trade and Industry Secretary, pledged to end the Post Office monopoly by allowing companies to offer deliveries at charges "much closer to the price of a first class stamp". In our opinion a more practical proposal by the European Commission's green paper on postal services proposes to end all twelve community state post monopolies with the exception of the basic letter rates. After all, the postal service

is essentially the letter. And the service is contrary to the capitalist system, for it costs no more to send a letter from London to Brighton than it does from Penzance to Edinburgh.

Once a service is costs in miles or remoteness, then it will cease to be a service. The government is intent on doing this. And those of us who live in the back-woods and who only now get one delivery a day will, if the post is privatised, have to collect our mail.

The Post Office in fact has made a handsome profit on the letter mail. The bad news is that 80% of mail today is for business. And here is the really bad news: most of it is what we call junk mail. Who says that capitalism is efficient?

MORE RECORDS FOR THE GOVERNMENT

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increase over 1990 of 154%. Draw your own conclusions. Surely 1992 will be another record year for the Thatcher 'dream' that turned to disaster.

At the same time as all this news was being released the government, in a written Parliamentary answer, confirmed *The Mirror's* 'leak' that NHS prescriptions were going up another 35p to £3.75 - an increase of 10%. This is the fourteenth increase in the thirteen years of the Thatcher/Major regime. When they took over in 1979 prescription charges were 20p! And dental charges are to be increased from April. The maximum charge of £150 (whatever you get for that) now goes up to £225, an increase of 12.5%.

The government's response to the opposition is significant. Mrs Virginia Bottomley was at pains to point out that "a prescription charge is now paid on about one in six dispensed in the NHS". If the country is so prosperous how come that five out of six people are exempt? Who are they? "Pensioners, children and income support claimants are exempt", the minister said. Take away the children and the pensioners and you are left with a hell of a lot of people who are on the poverty line, a fact regularly denied by the government.

Faced with this catalogue of failure Mr Major could only say that the figures of unemployment were 'disappointing'. A British understatement!

Capitalism: competition or monopoly

Competition is the watchword of capitalism. Actually even the Labour shadow ministers are always referring to our 'competitors' in Europe though we are all supposed to be working together as a happy family in the Community.

Capitalism, as anarchists are always pointing out, must inevitably be competitive insofar as it is utterly opposed to co-operation. But in reality this is only true when business is bad, and it's a question of who will survive and then no holds are barred and the weaker get gobbled up by the stronger.

A classic example of this has been provided by the present crisis in air transport. The recession has deeply affected both business and holiday travel. As everybody is being constantly told over the television, air holidays are now being cut by £100 and more, and presumably business firms are being offered reduced fares or incentives. The result is the usual one: competition until someone 'gives'. Pan-Am has gone, TWA are in bankruptcy. It's that old children's story of Ten Little Indians which ends with there only being one.

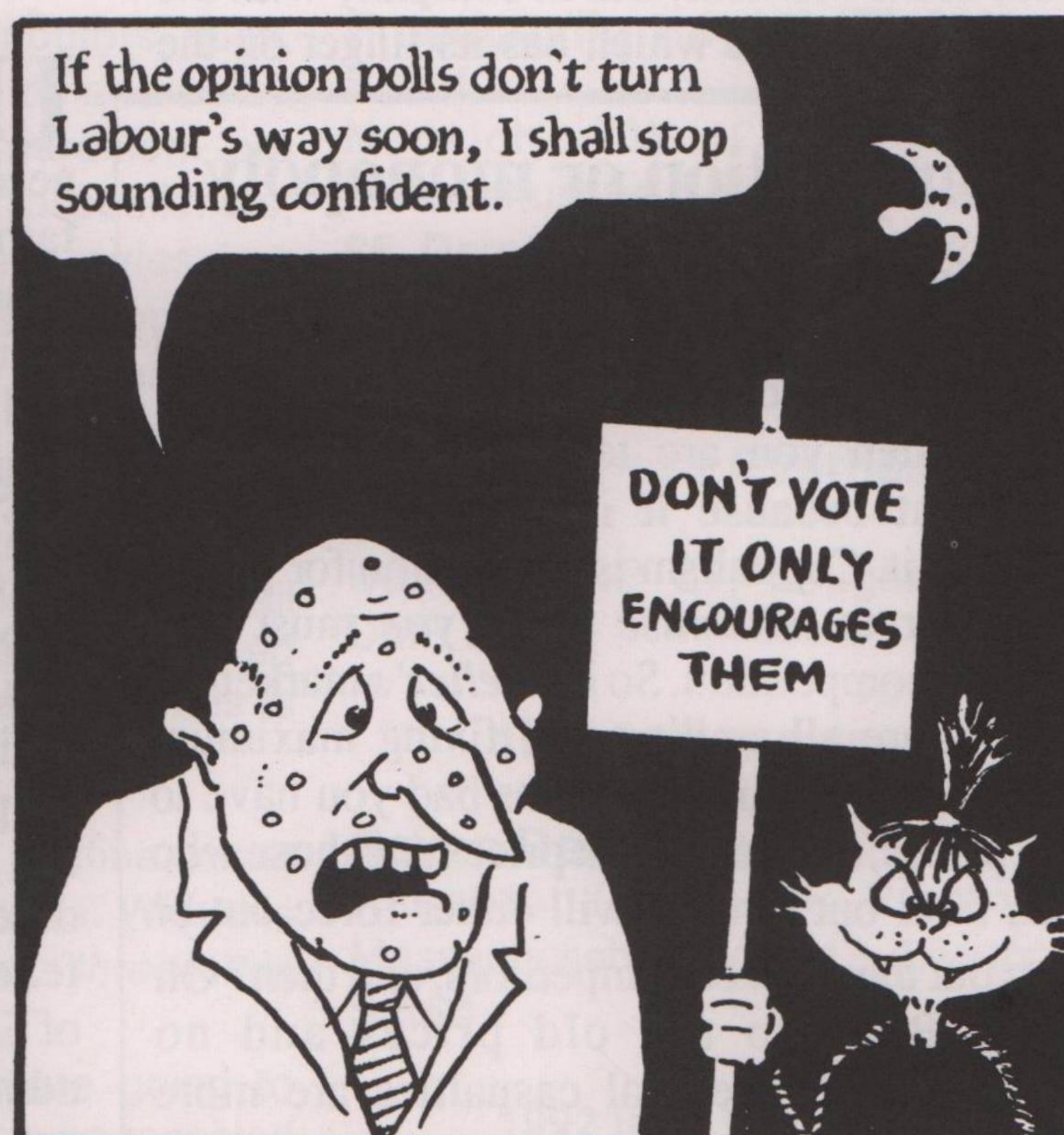
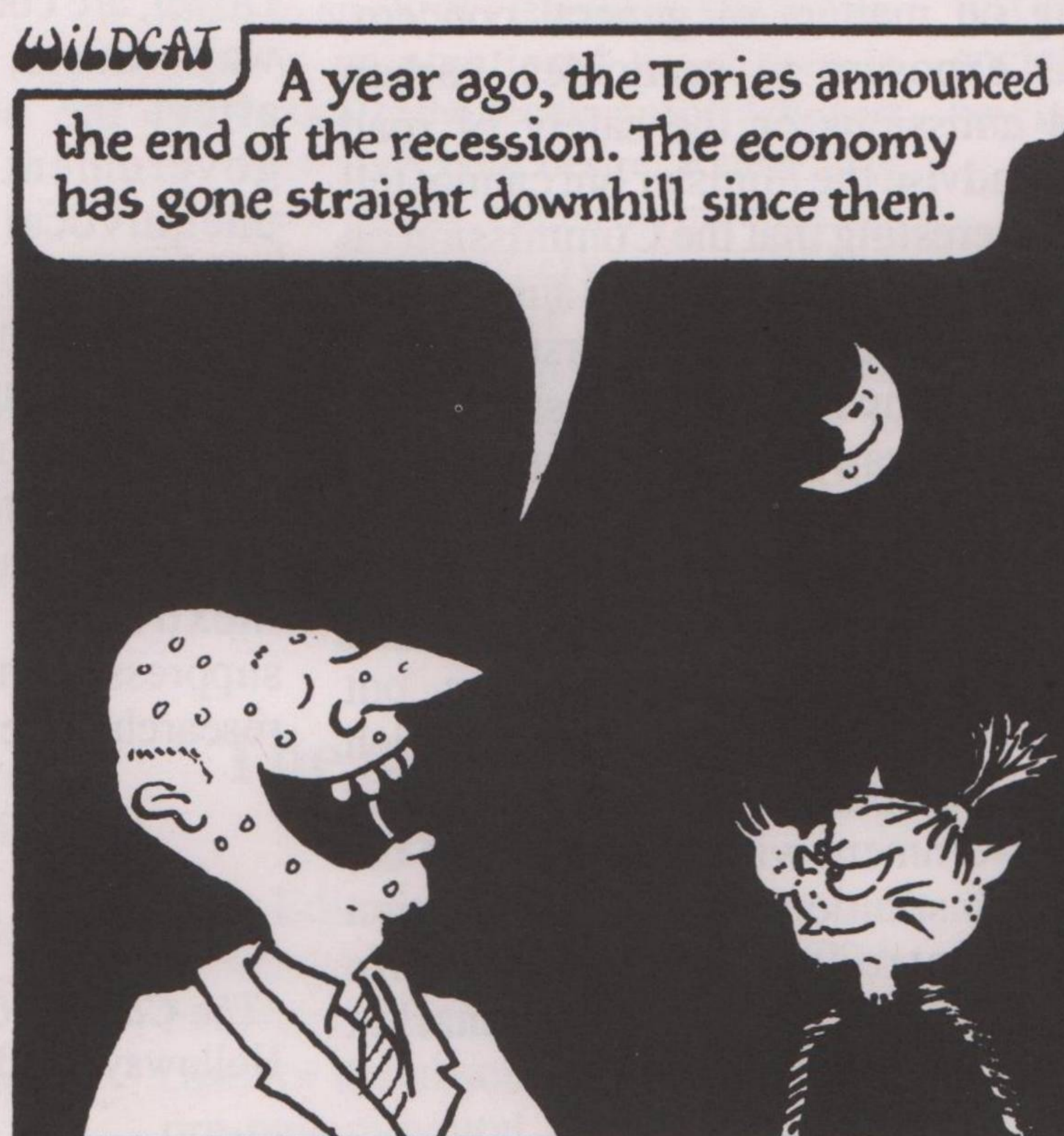
Coinciding with the air business crisis was a feature in *The Independent Weekend* (1st February) on 'The man who fell to earth' which recounts the story of yet another ambitious Thatcher-type capitalist who didn't know when to stop competing with the big boys of the airlines business. He's still in business, though he went bust ten years ago (they all feather their nests in good time. Like Clowes, Laker had racehorses, yachts and Rolls Royces). But Clowes is doing a ten-year stretch and Laker is in business in Florida and declares that he will never again set foot in the country that never appreciated his business genius!

But apart from Freddie Laker's grouse which was given a whole-page spread in *The Independent*, what is interesting is that he considers his business rivals as shits - just as obviously they had similar sentiments about him. It was six of one and half-a-dozen of the other. He wanted to take over the Atlantic and European air travel market and they wanted to

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WILDCAT TEE-SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE!!
PRINTED WITH PICTURE AS ABOVE.
FOR DETAILS SEE BOOKS PAGE,
'FOOD FOR THOUGHT AND ACTION'.



In the state, people are not free to manage their affairs. They are ruled by a few people who tell them what to do and then make them do it by using, or threatening to use, violence. The instructions are called 'laws' and the violence used to enforce them is provided by the police and, when required, the army. Those who issue the orders rule the people, so they are rulers and not leaders as they would have everyone believe. The real rulers of a country are unknown to the people within it, although some may be in the recognised government.

The majority obey the law because they have benefits when they do and punishments when they do not. Many believed that the law should be respected and that everyone should obey it. They believe this because they think that laws exist to serve everyone's interests. In this they are mistaken; the laws are made to serve the

The law has no real power

interests of a few and retain the state. Those who respect the law, however, will behave in any manner, no matter how evil, if there is a law saying that they should do so. They will also refrain from certain behaviour if there is a law against it. Most people can be made to do anything because they have an unthinking respect and awe for the law. Therefore, the rulers can believe, with some justification, that if they want to make the people behave in a certain way, all they have to do is pass the necessary law.

Those who obey the laws without question are losing sight of the fact that behaviour is not controlled by marks on pieces of paper but by force. This is well illustrated by the way many

strike activities were curtailed by the Thatcher government. Laws were passed so that certain conditions had to be fulfilled before people could legally strike and other laws were passed to limit the activities of the pickets. Everyone accepted and obeyed these laws, completely overlooking the fact that when people strike they are rejecting the government's control and acting independently. They are exerting their own power. But the Thatcher government did not have to oppose that power. All they had to do was pass the necessary laws, and the potential strikers of their own volition withdrew their power and obeyed.

So governments can stop what they consider misbehaviour simply by passing laws against it. When people succumb to this control, they are not thinking clearly. In 1991, with overcrowding and other terrible conditions in their prisons, the British government was fearful of mutiny. So they passed a law against it! Those who rebelled in prison were to have an extra ten years added to their sentence. The extra punishment may have been intended to deter people from future mutinies, but the law was also supposed to deter simply because it existed. This is the scenario anticipated by the British government:

The prisoners are gathered in the exercise yard around one of their number who is called Bill. 'Well', says Bill, 'the governor will take no notice of us. We are banged up for most of the day in crowded cells. We cannot go on living like animals, so are we all agreed that we can stand it no longer?'

The men raise their hands in the air and shout 'Yes, yes.'

'Okay', says Bill. 'Charlie, is everything ready?' 'Yes', says Charlie. 'The men are armed as much as possible. A plan of action has been devised, and everyone is waiting for the signal.'

Suddenly, from the back of the crowd another voice chirps up. 'Wait a minute! Hold everything! We can't have a mutiny, there's a law against it.'

'Dammit!' says Bill. 'That's it then. Get rid of your weapons. Everything back to normal.'

This scene is ridiculous because we know that if the men are suffering enough, no amount of laws written on paper will prevent them from mutiny.

So this is a lesson that anarcho-pacifists must learn: As they destroy the state, no doubt they will break many laws. But they must never change their behaviour simply because certain laws exist. The laws will have no potency when they are recognised for what they are. Anarchists and pacifists must emulate the conscientious objectors who refuse to kill their fellow human beings, no matter how many conscription laws are passed. They must usher in the anarchist society no matter how many times they break the law.

Derrick A. Pike

Non-voters poll share up 2%

The ICM/Guardian poll, conducted on the 8th and 9th of February, shows that the proportion of those who declare an intention not to vote, which has stood at 7% for six months, has surged to 9%, overtaking the don't-knows for the first time since 1987.

Don't-knows have fallen from 17% to 8%. Won't-says have also fallen, from 5% to 4%.

In fact, as we all know, there is a 3% sampling error in opinion polls, so a rise of 2% is a random fluctuation of no significance. But newspapers treat every insignificant change as headline-worthy, so why shouldn't *Freedom* do the same?

The main object of the polls is to predict the winner of the next election, so the main figures published are the percentages in favour of the various parties. Those who do not say they favour any party are counted, but neglected for most purposes.

Thirty years ago the old Gallup Poll lumped them all together as 'don't-knows'. The questionnaire included: 'How did you vote last time or were you prevented?', which assumed that all non-voters would be ashamed of not voting, and sounded to anarchists like an insult. Now the polls are more sophisticated. International Communications and Market Research (ICM) separates those excluded from the main figures into three categories: those who do not intend to vote, those who will not say how they will vote, and those who don't know how they will vote.

The statistically significant change, since this long-winded election campaign started last summer, has been in the percentage of

don't-knows. Unsurprisingly, their numbers have fallen. Changes in intended votes for the Labour and Conservative parties have been insignificant, despite all the media fuss. Their support is about equal, which suggests that there will be more Conservative than Labour MPs after the election (there are no solid Conservative seats, but Labour votes are highly concentrated in some places).

After every election there are articles in the anarchist press about the 20% or more who do not turn out to vote. These include the dead who are still on the electoral register, persons prevented from voting, and persons who forget to vote, so any suggestion that they all support the anarchist line on voting is a joke.

Those who tell pollsters that they do not intend to vote are of more consequence. The proportion of intended non-voters has not fallen below 7% since it has been recorded. Of course, not all non-voters hold anarchist or near-anarchist views. They include, for instance, the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Closed Brethren, who disassociate themselves from politics for religious reasons. But it seems reasonable to guess that the anarchist attitude to voting is shared by 2% or 3% of the persons of voting age in this country. At the most conservative estimate there must surely be 1%, which is about equal to the support for the Green Party, numbering about 340,000.

We, who do not vote because it only encourages them, appear to be more numerous than many people suppose.

DR

So the experts were wrong!

There are no experts at *Freedom*, but for more than a year we have been exposing the government's optimistic predictions about the economy being ready to take off to 'prosperity'. The industrialists' trade union, the CBI, has been breathing hot and cold. It's cold at the moment, and in company with the Bank of England which has its finger on the

pulse of our futures, suddenly they are all confessing that their earlier predictions were too optimistic. We would suggest that the media's option for a November General Election mobilised all these 'experts' to give the government party an electoral boost.

Unlike some of those shady countries that have no experience of democracy and need to have independent monitors to ensure fairness, in the very heart of democracy there is no cheating. All we do in this country is to brainwash the public for generations, and just add a few scandals about the Labour Party's connections with the KGB, for instance, as *The Sunday Times* did a few weeks ago, and try and dig up some spicy tit-bits about the opposition leaders' private lives and hope that this will determine preferences among the voting bleating sheep.

Apart from the 'sex scandals' – and if they are influential then we would say that we deserve the rulers we get, and to hell with our fellows! – what is significant is that the Bank of England was prepared to eat humble pie and admit that their optimistic survey of the economic scene was mistaken.

Competition or monopoly

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keep it to themselves. They were both right in considering each other as shits!

So when you are told that capitalism is efficient because it is competitive, don't believe it. Capitalism is production for profit. In order to maximise profit you must first reduce competition. So in a seller's market the sellers are all smiling and fixing maximum prices. When business turns bad you have to cut prices, and you all cut prices and those who can hold out longest will either force out or buy out the weaker competitors, and then? Oh boy! Back to the old prices and no competition. The real casualties are more thousands of unemployed.

Science News

Competition and co-operation are often considered to be mutually exclusive, yet they exist together within the scientific research community to the benefit of all. There is competition, often fierce, to publish the results of one's work and enjoy the consequent rewards, but the same scientists also freely co-operate with each other, exchanging information and offering helpful advice at conferences, in learned journals, even round the bar in the evening. Only if intellectual enquiry is open and rigorous can we be confident that published material can be believed, and we can be reassured that it will become part of scientific received opinion only when it has been independently validated.

This is how the system works; or does it? There are many limitations to this openness. We know that results which transgress scientific orthodoxy and dogma do not easily, and sometimes never, get published. This is a form of censorship and the alternative press from time to time discovers and exposes examples. More serious cases of suppression of information are due to interference by governments, in the claimed interests of the state, or big business and multinationals, in the unclaimed interests of profit. Scientists in industry are gagged, unable to speak of anti-social activities for fear of becoming unemployable, and government scientists working on matters of general concern, such as exposure to pesticides, carbon dioxide emissions or the safety of road vehicles, advise the minister but cannot tell us. It is interesting that the Commission on the Safety of Medicines, which supposedly exists to protect us from the worst excesses of the drug companies, when insisting that a drug is withdrawn from the market gives its reasons to the company but keeps us in complete ignorance.

These and other limitations on the openness of the system are serious, but probably more sinister is the way in which scientists are being increasingly muzzled by the government within the guise of the claim that institutions of higher education need the introduction of economic competition and the action of market forces.

University and poly departments are now having to finance more of their research by making individual contracts with industry. Needless to say, the results are confidential. Block allocations of money from the research councils are gradually being replaced by specific contracts with government departments, often with MoD involvement, and the Official Secrets Act is used to suppress independent publication. Researchers in even the most innocuous areas now must often seek government approval to publish.

According to a recent report* the MoD spent nine million pounds funding academic research in 1984, but plans this year to spend twenty seven million, whereas the money for research supplied by the five research councils and University Funding Council has only increased by 16% since 1979. Only five MoD funded research projects are classified as secret but the MoD funds 800 other projects in Britain's universities and polytechnics and will not disclose what they are. Many projects are funded jointly by the MoD and a research council, making it difficult for scientists who do not want to be involved in projects of interest to the military to get finance.

Seventy projects, to a value of £2.2 million, funded through the chemical and biological warfare establishment at Porton Down, are concerned with the study of the way viruses, bacteria, toxins and gases affect the human body. This from a government which has declared its unequivocal abhorrence of chemical warfare. The information in the report, gathered with difficulty from sources not yet caught up in the secrecy net, fully substantiates its claim that the universities are being increasingly militarised.

The right to say and the right to know are inextricably linked. If the former is suppressed the latter is lost, in scientific research no less than in society in general.

HS

**The Campus Connection*, Student CND, 162 Holloway Road, London N7 8QD, price £3.00

Letter from Australia

In December 1991, the parliamentary members of the Australian Labor Party decided to dump Prime Minister Bob Hawke. This was the first time a serving Labor PM had been deposed by his own party.

In conventional terms, Hawke was doing fine. He had led Labor to victory in an unprecedented four elections, beginning in 1983. He was also highly popular with the public.

Hawke was replaced by Paul Keating, the Treasurer and second most powerful figure in the government for most of the Hawke period. Why was Keating preferred?

Not because he offered an alternative political direction. After all, he had been quite satisfied with the policies he and Hawke had implemented over the years. Nor had Hawke done something special to discredit himself.

Furthermore, Keating was and is much less popular with the public than Hawke. Indeed, Keating is perhaps the most detested politician in Australia. He comes across as exceedingly arrogant. He called himself the world's greatest treasurer and is renowned for heaping abuse on those who criticise him. (Hawke no doubt is arrogant too, but he projects a different image.) Finally, Keating is closely identified with the current recession which he said, before the economy became so bad, was "the recession we had to have". This quote is now frequently used against him.

So why in the world would Labor parliamentarians trade in a proven popular PM for a substitute who had no new ideas and was an electoral liability? The answer: in-fighting and media pressure.

Paul Keating is intensely ambitious and, unlike some politicians, isn't afraid to wreck things to get his way. Keating had long pushed privately and publicly for Hawke to step down so that he, Keating, could be official kingpin. When Hawke stayed on as PM longer than expected, Keating started yet another push for the top office, using various methods to destabilise the situation.

In essence, Keating became PM because his own campaign for the office was causing woeful damage to the Labor Party. Parliamentarians were being lobbied relentlessly by stalwarts for Hawke and Keating. Public pronouncements and leaks were embarrassing the government. The job of developing and implementing policy was an afterthought while the struggle for leadership continued.

After one of his unsuccessful challenges for

Australian political antics

the leadership, Keating moved to the backbench but maintained his campaign. Some parliamentarians eventually supported Keating because it was apparent that he would continue causing disruption until he became leader. They preferred an unpopular PM to continuing instability.

The other main culprit was the mass media, especially the Canberra parliamentary press gallery. In Parliament House, the main focus is personalities. Instability makes for a good story, and so readers were treated to interminable stories about behind-the-scenes power plays. Labor plotters and schemers always had a convenient outlet in the media.

The media helped turn 'instability' into a self-fulfilling prophecy. The substance of governmental policy-making took second place to the ins and outs of power struggles.

The substance is that the Labor government has implemented more policies which have served big business and hurt the average worker than any previous Australian government. Following the ideology of the 'free market', the economy was opened up to the 'winds of competition'. The exchange rate was floated, tariffs were slashed, controls over investment were eased. The result was an orgy of speculation by rich entrepreneurs, later followed by spectacular crashes. Rather than improving the economy, Labor's policies hindered productive investment and caused massive losses through speculative operations. Average real wages declined while the rich became richer.

There is insufficient space to mention the way in which the Labor government failed to implement its promises concerning Aboriginal rights, the environment, foreign policy and many other areas. Suffice it to say that the Liberals - as the conservatives in Australia are called - could not have imagined pursuing such a radically conservative programme.

The former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser has taken to writing newspaper columns. Fraser's government from 1975 to 1983 was considered then to be exceedingly conservative. Fraser now sounds like a left-winger as he criticises Labor policies, arguing that the government should do more to protect the workers and the disadvantaged!

Fraser is also at odds with the present Liberals, who have moved steadily right. Where else could they go with Labor taking over their most extreme policies?

There are a few familiar lessons from this

depressing story. It is pointless to expect progress from a different party in government. Labor has been much more successful in bringing in the serve-the-privileged policies than its opposition could ever have been.

Paul Keating PM symbolises the rule of ambition in party politics, which attracts the worst individuals and brings out the worst in those it attracts. I have not mentioned the personal friendship between Hawke, Keating and various wealthy (and, some say, corrupt) businessmen. Keating is a 'working class boy' but now is more noted for his expensive suits and his passion for expensive antique clocks.

Another lesson is that it is usually a diversion and waste of time to study the in-fighting within governments and parties. While it seems that journalists are providing an insight into the real operations of the state, the sort of perspectives they provide give only a spectator's view of struggles between personalities. Few journalists examine structural dynamics: the mechanisms of capitalism, of male domination, of state power. Fewer still question the role or

existence of these social structures.

Recently I attended a meeting at which a young activist in the New Left Party argued vehemently that the left should be mounting a campaign over the next eighteen months to make sure that Labor is re-elected and that the Liberals, with their ultra-right policies, are prevented from gaining office. This seemed very forgiving of Labor's move to the right since 1983 and its continual rejection of left views.

This is all the more amazing considering that a large fraction of members of the New Left Party are former members of the Communist Party of Australia, which has officially disbanded. It is plausible to think that if the Communist Party had somehow been elected by mistake, they would have ended up not much different than the present government.

The message is that the system of parties, bureaucracies and central administration shapes the people and policies, not vice versa. The system of representative democracy has a remarkably strong grip on people's thinking. The system has betrayed its believers numerous times and survived, and no doubt the believers will persist through quite a few more betrayals.

Brian Martin

News from Northern Ireland

It's all change but no change down south with the resignation of Charlie Haughey as Taoiseach. It was always going to happen and the only amazing feature is the amount of 'dignity' Charlie has been allowed as he stepped down. I can only assume that the mass of people down south are so alienated from politics that they don't give a fuck what the politicians do. Why didn't anybody call for criminal proceedings to be launched against Charlie? In any event, he's move on and, a bit like his friend Maggie Thatcher, his memory is being lionised by the bastards who spent the previous three years trying to stab him in the back. The man most likely to get the Taoiseach's job is Albert Reynolds, variously described as coming from a Republican background and being bland on Northern Ireland. In any event, there is not likely to be any significant change in the south's attitude to political change in the north. If anything it would seem that while the Unionist bogey-man, Charlie Haughey, has stepped down Reynolds may not be 'green' enough to swing his party behind the changes that London and the Unionists seem to be requiring. And through all of this the people in the south can be assured of an ever-worsening economic and social situation and the people in the north can be assured of yet more insensitivity and crassness.

Is this an environment in which anarchist ideas can flourish? Protestant and Loyalist people were furious at Peter Brooke's stupid songburst on RTE television. Then to make matters worse he stayed in Dublin to watch a rugby match. As a Loyalist friend of mine said: "If there was a motorway crash in England, where would you find the Minister of Transport?" The total ignorance and insensitivity of English politicians in the wake of the Teebane Cross murders was further illustrated by the fact that, though he was in Belfast, John Major chose not to pay his respects at any of the funerals of the victims of the IRA bomb. Letter writers to the *Ulster Newsletter*, a Unionist mouthpiece, were furious at the behaviour of the politicians who represent the state to which they

pledge allegiance. How long can that go on? And is that the reason behind the IRA's current phase of military activity? To underline the total lack of will and desire on the part of English politicians to tackle the Irish issue, in any shape or form?

Stiffing workers seems to be what it's all about. The seven at Teebane Cross for working for a building firm erecting a security force base in Omagh, a black-taxi driver for being a Catholic and prominent in Irish language activities, a bread-man in Dungannon for being a Protestant. Various Trades Councils throughout the north have held public meetings under the banner 'stop the killings' and 'smash the bigots' and a mass rally is planned by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in Belfast. Is this a route for the development of anarchist ideas in Ireland? And yet any response to violence that does not set the context supplied by the British and Irish states must surely come to grief. And so where do anarchists in Ireland engage the public in this process? In their unions, their community groups, the dole queues, the workplaces, the leisure centres, the pubs, the shops ... where?

Some friends of mine joined me in writing and performing a drama piece as part of the Bloody Sunday Initiative activities to mark the twentieth anniversary of Bloody Sunday. Afterwards a fellow came up to me and said: "So yeez are all anarchists then?" We hadn't planned or written the piece like that, so his question was a fillip in a day of very exciting discussions and debates. Everything from christo-pacifism to armed struggle Republicanism was aired, and lots more besides, in a very imaginative series of workshops, forums, concerts and other events. It was obviously good to relocate the discussion in the Bogside. It's there, and in places like it, that the real discussions can take place. And it's from those communities that movements for real peace and justice will arise, because it is the people in those communities who best understand the interconnecting ways in which the states and the paramilitaries oppress their lives.

Dave Duggan

French mutualism, yesterday and today

Pierre Joseph Proudhon did not invent mutual aid, but he certainly promoted the concept with more vigour than any of his contemporaries. Having observed the Lyon workers' mutual aid societies, he developed the basic principles of anarchism from them. It was his true genius to have based his anarchy upon the living practice of working people rather than creating some 'perfect system' out of the air as did the utopian socialists. Proudhon extended the mutualist idea to include factories run by workers' association and his famous People's Bank - a forerunner of the credit union. The mutualist principles which are as true today as they were in 1840 are:

- democratic structure
- necessity of maintaining an a-political stance
- egalitarianism
- solidarity
- federalism
- local autonomy
- non-profit (or sharing of profits).

These practices are quite different from those of the capitalist corporation, even though both market and money are maintained.

While the People's Bank was no great success, co-operatives and mutual aid societies began to develop throughout France and other parts of the world.¹ This occurrence comes as no surprise since mutualism was an eminently practical solution to many of the problems faced by workers and artisans. (Much more so than 'waiting for the revolution' or joining a phalansterie.) By 1852 there were 2,500 societies with about 250,000 members in France.² Five years after Proudhon's death the membership figure had grown to 900,000. Expansion continued uninterrupted until the outbreak of the Second World War, when 9,800,000 people were enrolled in mutualist organisations.

Such was the legacy of Proudhon and the French workers' movement. But how fares mutualism today in modern, computerised and consumerist France? With at least twelve

(continued on page 5)

Peter Marshall's *Demanding The Impossible: a History Of Anarchism*

The latest general book on anarchism is also one of the biggest and dearest. Peter Marshall's *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*, which has just been published by HarperCollins (the Anglo-American conglomerate owned by Rupert Murdoch), contains 783 pages, weighs more than three pounds (and costs more than £3 to post) and is priced at £25. (For that money, an anarchist publisher or bookseller might comment, you could buy half a dozen anarchist books or a dozen anarchist pamphlets and learn about the subject at first hand!) The book should have been published at the beginning of January, immediately after the Christmas season, but copies were late arriving over the holiday, so publication was postponed until the end of January. The reviews so far give a revealing picture of the professional treatment of such a work and of the public understanding of the subject.

The first review to appear was a long lead article in *The Times Literary Supplement* on 10th January, three weeks ahead of publication; the price and pagination of the book were also wrong. The reviewer was James Joll, a former professor and author of an earlier book on the subject, *The Anarchists* (1964). His account of the book was perfunctory and superficial, not surprising since he had only seen a proof copy and can hardly have had time to read it. His account of the subject was as emotional and romantic as in his own book, not surprising since he hasn't learnt anything more about it. He managed to add the remark "anarchists don't keep records on principle", suggesting that we reject common sense as well as authority, and showing that he knows nothing about the great collections of anarchist records in several places around the world which are the basis of any serious research on the history of anarchism. No letter in reply has been published.

The second review appeared in *The Independent* on 18th January, two weeks ahead of publication; the price was wrong again. The reviewer was George Woodcock, another former professor and author of another earlier book on the subject, *Anarchism* (1962). Much of the review concerned the reviewer's own book, described as a "minor classic", but he did concede that it is rather outdated, though he didn't mention that it was updated as recently as 1986. This review was in fact an abridged version of the one which will appear in the next issue of *Solidarity* magazine and which will be worth reading in full. (The current issue includes an extract from the book itself.)

The third review appeared in *The Observer* on 26th January, one week ahead of

publication; the price was right at last. The reviewer was David Widgery, the well-known Trotskyist writer and populist doctor, who has long opposed anarchism though he knows nothing about it. The review was full of factual errors and ideological sneers, though it was nice about the book ("massive, scholarly and highly enjoyable"), and it included a nice misprint ("the propaganda of the dead"!). An offensive letter from Nicolas Walter was published the following week, ending with the

A review of the reviews

hope that Widgery is better at medicine than politics!

Several reviews appeared at or soon after publication. The lead review in *The Evening Standard* (30th January) was by Michael Foot, the former leader of the Labour Party, who has a soft spot for anarchism. He wrote enthusiastically about the book and its subject, though he showed little evidence of having read the former or studied the latter. (He added the remark that "Bakunin was a killer, one who would qualify for the modern definition of a terrorist" – which will be news to students of his career.)

The lead review in *The Times* (1st February) was by John Gray, an Oxford academic who was described as "working on a history of political thought". Let's hope he learns a bit more about it, since his review was remarkably ignorant about this particular ideology, though again it was nice about the book ("an exhaustive and authoritative study of its subject which is bound to become the standard account"). By compensation the article was illustrated with a large and magnificent drawing by Clifford Harper, which ought to be made available as a poster. (Incidentally Harper, who must have attracted more people to anarchism through his art than any other single person during the past twenty years, isn't even mentioned in the book.)

The lead review in *The Sunday Times* (2nd February) was by Norman Stone, an Oxford professor. This was the first review to mention any actual errors in the book, but it added plenty of its own, and consisted mainly of wild sneers at anarchism in general and especially British anarchism, showing only how little the reviewer knew about the subject. He said that Continental anarchism "was the mirror-image of the fascism to which it led" and that British anarchism was "just socialism with a sappy face"; he added that English revolutionaries "talked the language of vegetarianism and sandals" and that "the stock-in-trade of

English anarchists" was "just vapid preachiness"; he quoted sneers by George Orwell at pacifists, though few of them have been anarchists, and by Richard Cobb at Mary Wollstonecraft, although she wasn't an anarchist at all. No letter in reply has been published.

There was a similar review in *The Sunday Telegraph* (9th February) by Kenneth Minogue, a London professor. This was written more moderately, but was based on the

Comfort and Stewart [sic] Christie, and it included among "important anarchist movements" the Paris Commune and "the Sidney Street bomb" [sic]. Where do they get these people?

The review in *City Limits* (13th February) was by Arthur Nelson, and gave a straight Marxist attack on the book and the subject.

There have also been a few reviews by people who actually know something about the subject and have actually studied the book. Colin Ward has written briefly in both *The Times Educational Supplement* (31st January) and *The New Statesman & Society* (14th February), and Nicolas Walter has written at greater length for *The London Review of Books*, both trying to draw the attention of outsiders to the topical relevance of anarchism and the particular usefulness of this book.

Let us hope that there will be some more reviews which avoid both prejudice and ignorance and also that some proper reviews of this major addition to anarchist literature will soon appear in the anarchist press. Meanwhile copies of *Demanding the Impossible* may be obtained through the Freedom Press Bookshop at £25 plus £3.15 postage.

MH

Food for Thought ... and Action

Recent additions to Freedom Bookshop stock.

Media Control: the spectacular achievements of propaganda* by Noam Chomsky, Open Magazine Pamphlet number 10. The more excellent writing Chomsky produces the more obvious – and lamentable – it is that there is just no-one of his intellectual stature in this country, or anywhere else in Europe for that matter, on the libertarian left. Here he brings together the early history of propaganda, spectator democracy, engineering of opinion, selective perception and other topics, and concludes with their use during the Gulf War. "This issue is not simply disinformation ... it's whether we want to live under what amounts to a form of self-imposed totalitarianism, with the bewildered herd marginalised, directed elsewhere, terrified, screaming patriotic slogans, fearing for their lives and admiring with awe the leader who saved them from destruction while the educated masses goose-step on command, repeat the slogans they're supposed to repeat while society deteriorates at home and we end up serving as a mercenary enforcer state, hoping that others are going to pay for us to smash the world." Both this one and number 6 in the series, *The New World Order*, are now distributed by Freedom Press Distributors (see below). Half A4 portrait (A4 folded vertically), 22 pages, £2.50.

Drunken Boat* number 1, edited by Max Blechman, Drunken Boat/Automedia. Described as: "The only anarchist magazine specifically devoted to literature and the visual arts. No compromises are made with popular culture – its chief aim being to destroy it." This massive newcomer to the anarchist scene is strikingly and profusely illustrated and has articles by a wide range of writers from Paul Avrich to Peter L. Wilson, with a long and interesting article by Colin Ward on Paul Goodman (taken from a symposium in the '70s, Colin tells me), and a powerful poem by Kenneth Rexroth. The manifesto, covering two pages, is entitled 'Your Titanic is my Noah's Ark' and opens: "Their boat must sink to save ours, and everything must sink with it. State and capital must be confronted, subverted and totally sabotaged ... Their boat must be blown to pieces, destroyed, utterly and completely demolished. It must be mutinied, shipwrecked on the beach ..." Yes, well I think we get the idea. A3 format, 64 pages, £4.00.

Solidarity: journal of libertarian socialism,* spring 1992, special double issue "on liberty's birthday to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the libertarian enlightenment". Four principal figures are looked at: Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin and William Blake. A4, 24 pages, £2.35.

Out of the Ghetto by Joe Jacobs, Phoenix Press. "One man's view of a major period of change – the General Strike, the Great Depression and the rise of fascism colour the account of a life-long militant." Joe Jacobs was born the son of Eastern European Jewish immigrants and grew up in the Jewish district of Whitechapel in the heart of London's East End. First published in 1978, it includes some interesting black & white photographs of the people and the area, including some of the Spanish Civil War volunteers. 320 pages, £9.00.

Wildcat T-shirts! yes folks, you've read the comic strips, now buy the t-shirt, featuring the furious moggy herself in black on white, single colour or unbleached backgrounds. As you may have noticed, there's no room to swing a cat in this column, so no illustration but you can see the exact design of the crafty cat in this issue's 'Wildcat' strip – how's that for coincidence? Designed by the strip's artist Donald Room, the details are: white (large and extra large) £4.50, unbleached (extra large only) £5.25, coloured (large only) £5.25. Coloured ones tend to be at the red end of the spectrum, although there is a snotty-green one too. At the moment the print run is very small (so please include alternative sizes/colours where possible). But if enough people want them this can be increased. If you don't mind waiting a few weeks you can ask for other colours/sizes and it can probably be arranged. Also **Wildcat Shopping Bags** – can you believe it? Same design, at the moment in white on navy, in-black on red or in black on unbleached. £2.25 each. T-shirts and bags in 100% cotton, and washable. See below for postage.

KM

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French mutualism

(continued from page 4)

million people in 8,000 different societies, mutualism seems to be doing rather well. Furthermore, among these thousands of groups there are:

- 13 hospitals
- 60 pharmacies
- 69 medical clinics
- 152 dental clinics
- 59 retirement homes
- 127 holiday camps and resorts.

But mutualism is not just restricted to health and welfare. Co-operatives account for 30% of agricultural sales and 50% of the fishing industry. And there are also consumer co-ops, co-operative insurance companies, credit unions, housing co-ops and worker-run and owned industries. As a share of the French economy, mutualism in its various forms makes up about 6% of the total. This may not seem a lot, but consider the weight of the military sector with 3.8% of the GDP. But no matter what the economic statistics show, there is little doubt in my mind that France

would be a lot poorer place today were it not for the legacy of Proudhon and mutualism.

L. Gambone

1 Mutualist societies were developed in Chile in 1850. In Britain the Rochdale co-op, although not influenced by Proudhon, was organised along lines similar to the French mutualists. Today, worldwide, some 350 million people belong to co-ops.

2 All statistics from *Le Mouvement Mutualiste* by André Devrient, Federation Anarchiste Francaise, 1983.

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There are three occasions in the eyes of the world when the tribal rites allow us to publicly parade our folly and each of us to wear the hypocritical mask grinning or weeping for lost innocence. It is the baptism of the child, the marriage and the burial, and all dominated by the women of the tribe. As we age, and I speak as spokesman for the broad mass of senile geriatric's, the telephoned or posted invitations to hobble along and enjoy another ritualistic barbecue of an acquaintance begin to outnumber the invitations to take part in Spanish Timeshare schemes, but one arranges to meet 'the girls' and it is back to the bum-warmed pew in the crematorium. We must be honest in these matters for I look back with pleasure on two cremations that I was privileged to play audience to, and one was watching my aunt being deep fried.

I have prowled the Victoria and Albert Museum for almost seventy years and so vast is it that I always retain the image that the empty crowded halls are forever devoid of humans and one feels that, despite the attendants, the late Boris Karloff will come wandering through trailing make-up room rotting flesh and mouldering corpse linen, but perchance I wrong someone. The V&A High Command, ever eager to prove me right, have resurrected its planned 'The Art of Death' wherein objects from the English death ritual covering the years between 1500 to 1800 are on mass display for the delightful horror of the black-garbed Town and his head-hanging frau, yet for all that it is an enjoyable little exhibition. We few, we happy few, of the Fourth Estate, did our stately saraband among the graveyard ephemera asking of each other why the white wine was being served in champagne glasses and whether the white wine and the charnel house relics might not be too strong or too weak for the sensitivity of Brian Sewell, but to his credit the boy came through, slightly pale but tight-lipped with the glowing phrases for outer London. The world, of its wisdom and its readership of *The Evening Standard*, must now be aware that this exhibition was cancelled at the time of the Gulf Brawl for reasons of good taste, but it was unnecessary for all that was needed was a change of title and laughter would have been the order of the day. That the English are

Half in Love ...

philistines in the matter of the disposal of their dead was surely demonstrated when a London Council flogged off the local cemetery for five pence, complete with cadavers, while I among the V&A wine and mementomori searched for the living in the prints of Rowlandson and Hogarth. The exhibition is of little worth but as it is free entrance who's complaining? What I found of small interest was John Souch's painting of Sir John Aston at the deathbed of his wife in that the last time I saw that huge 1635 well-painted daub was when it was on display within a National Gallery exhibition under another exhibition title, and on a second examination I became aware of the erotica slyly slipped in by Johnny the painter. The large grey-white pillow upon which the dead woman's head rests, to me, forms a huge grey breast complete with nipple, while the covered breasts of the small female figure on the right have been over-emphasised with so much highlighting of white paint. Damn me, Johnny Souch, you're a randy old dog sir.

All good things must come to an end, as I said to the Queen Mother, and I asked of the Town and his weeping wife if we would meet to clink glasses at the Royal Academy, queueing at all gates, major exhibition of the month of the works, dreams and rhubarb of the painter Andrea Mantegna, and the Town, wiping his weeping frau's nose, gazed ceiling-ward and declared: 'Not another effing Italian genius'. Crude but effective in describing this huge exhibition, but *The Times* and *The Guardian* readership will be there, beards and Savile Row suits at the ready, to man the intellectual barricade in defence of rubber-stamped state culture. One knew on mounting the marble stairs of the Royal Academy that here was glory personified in paint, for there among the throng of simple people come to worship was ol' Brian of *The Evening Standard* standing shoulder-level amid a small group of adoring women while he expounded on the wonder around them.

But for myself, I hold that Andrea Mantegna, for all the PR hype and the £5 entrance, is a good, solid, academic painter well schooled in his craft. Influenced by the fashions of the day, he played around with perspective and various Roman motifs and within his workshop they produced the well-painted subject matter that he was hired for.

I looked at the etchings and felt how crude they were when measured against Dürer, both men of the fifteenth century, and so much of the work that had to fill the wall space I felt



You people will have to wait, I'm breaking my neck to go for a piss.

Arthur Moysé

was of little worth. Here I am pleased that Brian, of the *Standard*, had chosen the one painting that pleased me, yet he did Mantegna a disservice in that he had Mantegna's 'Man of Sorrows with Two Angels' reproduced without giving its measurements. It is roughly A3 in size but it was reproduced as appearing almost life-size. Ah! There in one of the great halls of the Academy is displayed Mantegna's 'Triumphs of Caesar' on eight or nine canvases, and facing these large canvases is football-ground-style seating for people to sit and gaze and gaze. Let the PRs and the experts and the devotees of Roger Fry write what they wish, I felt there was so much bad painting hidden in these large canvases. Examine the small children on the far right so badly painted, the horses so crudely painted, and the man carrying the huge jug of wine. Compare that to Stalinist Social Realism sweat and muscle and strain, and here is a centre figure carrying a huge great clay jar filled with wine as though it was an empty supermarket take-away. Is it important? No. But let us not cry genius and masterpiece to the fifth rate when we claim to know it in long political manifestos, for this is no more than what Mantegna's 'Triumphs of Caesar' that was knocked off for the late Marquis Francesco Gonzaga in 1484 onwards for having won various small wars and paid for out of the loot. But like a wounded bird seeking its nest, I will always and ever wend my way skyward to the warmth and motherly sympathy of the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery. There in that maze of small rooms one can hide from the cruel world and *The Evening Standard*. There, womb-locked within their tiny civilised exhibitions, one can sip the wine and listen to the young girls singing at the press table. It is the collection of nineteenth century rhubarb on display upon the walls of the small National Gallery rooms 41, 42 and 43, and it is just and fitting that the press handout description of the rooms should be deemed more important than the paintings for that is the correct order. But there facing us in all its glory is Paul Delaroche's 'Execution of Lady Jane Grey'. Weep and the world ... etc., man and accept that it is pure Madame Tussaud tableau, but hand on panting heart, comrade, aren't we all a tiny bit in love ... with easeful death?

A SHORT GUIDE TO THE FUTURE

First the internal English empire will go. The internal English empire (not to be confused with subsequent British Empires) was built from the twelfth century and consists of Ireland, Wales and Scotland, acquired in that order by a mixture of dynastic marriage and straight armed force.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will detach themselves by becoming autonomous regions of the European Community, which means that foreign policy and defence will be delegated to Brussels, while for the rest they will remain sovereign communities in the EC. In the case of Northern Ireland this will enable British troops to withdraw by consent all round; in the very unlikely event of there still being a security problem, that would be handled by EC troops. It is unlikely because the arrangement will not be taken in the first place without the majority support of both Loyalist and Nationalist communities.

Wales is a different matter. Ireland and Scotland were never crushed and anglicised by the English - Wales was. Edward I did it in the thirteenth century and Henry VIII did it again in the sixteenth. The Welsh language was all but wiped out in much of the country and most Welsh names disappeared - the Hughes, Roberts, Jones/Johns, Davids, etc., are all English Christian names imposed on the Welsh with an 's' added. My name, Cadogan, is one of the few to survive and after a thousand years the English can neither spell it or pronounce it correctly!

You will find that for many statistical purposes England and Wales are taken together and it is just possible that it may stay that way. This is because English statecraft has done its homework and given the Secretary of State for Wales an ambitious office

in Cardiff with two thousand Welsh civil servants and lots of lovely money. So much so that Plaid Cymru (yes, Plaid Cymru) thinks the battle has been won. All they now need is an assembly with devolved powers and they are home and dry ... This gets us into the imponderable and there is no guide to that. We shall just have to wait and see.

English 'regionalism'

The decentralisation of England will follow the disposal of the internal empire. We shall not follow the European (especially the German, Italian and Swiss) model. The Tudors put an end to English regionalism a long time ago. We have no Saxons and Bavarias, no Tuscans and Venetias. They departed with Lancaster and York a long time ago. As Neal Ascherson has put it in *The Independent*: 'No regional governments please - we're British!'

John Banks, author of *Federal Britain?* (1971) has come up with a different answer: that of single-tier (i.e. no county-district dualities) city/town regions. he has counted them up, for England, and they come to 83. But this leaves out the special cases of London and the six metropolitan counties that used to be, i.e. West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Tyne-and-Wear and the two Yorkshires. These are far too big to be single-tier authorities and he subdivides them into 68 districts. That makes a total of 151 city/town regions. And that, given variations, is how it will be. That plus some strategic authorities to handle things like transport.

Plural sovereignty

The nation-state is passing, but it will not pass into oblivion, it will pass into plurality. There will be

any number of different interlocking sovereignties. The smallest is the most important. If that goes wrong everything goes wrong because the roots are dead.

a) the personal, the small, the local, the face-to-face, the non-political in the old sense (it does not depend upon the raising or spending of taxes and it has no coercive power); single-issue groups, single-figure groups, cultural, philosophical, social.

b) the larger group modelled on the recreation of the parish as it used to be centuries ago, the focal point of the local community. Based today on the shopping centre, the library, the swimming pool, the local college and schools, local media. Plus any number of special interest groups that cross all boundaries.

c) the city/town region itself with its rural hinterland, the essential political basis of the whole system, i.e. where all the essential decisions are taken about the raising and spending of taxes.

d) the national level, its principal function being the maintenance and development of the Common Law and such other functions as the city-regions authorise and pay for. A vast range of other national functions in industry, trade, the professions, transport and communications (self-sustaining and therefore non-political) will continue as before. The city regions will create a confederal body answerable to them and paid by them to decide what public functions need subsidies on social grounds at the national level.

e) the European Community, a Europe of the regions, will prosper and grow, and within it a loosely defined Britannic Convention of the British Isles as a whole. International war in Europe will be relegated to the history books. The Army, the

Navy and the RAF will be disbanded. The EC will maintain a small force for hypothetical emergencies until the world has proceeded enough in the same direction to dissolve all armed forces. f) the United Nations will grow in strength and confidence to meet every challenge.

Between now and then?

But nothing will be given to us on a plate. It will have to be taken, won, the hard way. Between now and then (as above) will be the trial and the trauma, breakdown and breakthrough.

The financial-political crunch will start in the USA where the budget deficit and the trade imbalance compounded by unemployment, health service breakdown, house repossession, black and hispanic ethnic crises, AIDS, crime and total political disillusionment with Washington will lead to an unprecedented collapse of the system. The fifty States of the Union will have to assert their authority to make it possible for life to go on. This will have a disastrous effect on Britain; but there will be no comparable crisis in the EC, from which we can expect major back-up. But if this coincides with climactic crises in Northern Ireland and Scotland (as is likely) then there will be no way in which the present system can be reformed to cope with it. Prime ministerial government will have to depart, single prime ministerial government that is, in favour of 151 prime ministers for England alone who, having reduced government to a human scale, will make it feasible again.

It will hardly be possible to face what is come without appreciating what it means at the deeper (continued on page 7)

The Atheists

Terrifying cracks split the Heavens as ground-shattering peals of thunder rolled across the Great Plain. Allah, God, Jehovah, the Supreme Being – call Him or Her what you will – was summoning all the Peoples of the Earth to appear for The Last Judgement.

As the mind-deadening clamour died away they were all assembled, shuffling uneasily in the various garbs that served them – Christians, Jews, Muslims and the rest – to indicate the claim of each to be The Elect.

God scowled at the rainbow multitude. The eye fell on the Muslims: "Your speciality, I see, is the Jihad or Holy War" said the Thunderer, "and you have the audacity to think that war, the wholesale destruction of a being I regard as one of my best pieces of work – bringing together animal and angel – can be linked with the word 'Holy', the primary attribute you have given to me, your Creator?"

I must have made some curious error when I fashioned you. Even when you pray – an action that should represent an attempt to reveal more of the angelic nature with which I endowed you – you go down in all fours like beasts and point your bums at the Heavens, at me! Is *that* how you regard me?

Some of you are tempted by the most ancient sin. Your 'spiritual leader' – that self-appointed miscreant in exile – spat in my face in seeking to take to himself power over life and death by pronouncing a fatwah on a writer who was doing only what I gave him the power to do – to use his imagination, a piece of my Divine Power. Do you think that any mere creature of Mine can hurt or even offend me, the Alpha and the Omega? If his words could kill then I might have to think again; but they do not; the Ayatollah knows that they do not, and you know that they do not!

I thought I had made it clear to your leader and his impudent followers who is the real Master of the Universe by taking him to my bosom to show that hubris is always a terminal disease, but it appears that the message has not yet got through; his successor has recently invited a like fate by confirming that impertinent fatwah."

The Father and Mother of all turned to the Jews: "Ah, my dear, dear friends, my

soi-disant 'Chosen People'! Shalom! But why should you all suddenly look so apprehensive? Are you wondering whether I might do to you what you have done to others and especially to your own blood brothers, the Palestinians. An eye for an eye is your sacred law, isn't it? Why have you forgotten that all justice is mere vengeance if not tempered by mercy?"

Of course, my dears, throughout history you have been badly treated on your way to what *you* said was to be your Promised Land. But did you not plunder and butcher in the name of God – in my name? What is your history, your sacred Bible, but a catalogue of murder, intrigue, genocide and lust unfit for the ears of decent people and certainly not for children? Did those who hated you have *no* reasons for complaint? Did you not re-write the laws of nature, which are the laws of love, and make them into Tablets of Stone? How does it convince the world that you love your neighbour when you make a terrorist your leader – remember the King David Hotel?

Not a day passes without every man among you thanking *me*, would you believe it, for not having made him a *woman*! Has it not entered your thick skulls that it was *after* I had made Adam and found so many faults in his design – his aggression, his egotism, his insufferable machismo, his self-centred blindness when it comes to other people's rights – that I made Eve. In her I toned all that down. I realised that if this new race was going to have to survive, *someone* would have to see that the care of infants was not beneath their dignity; *someone* would have to put first things first, like food, work, love and peace, and not behave like a spoiled brat to draw attention to himself.

Look at those other idiots at this moment concocting an Armageddon in The Gulf. I have a good mind to make an arena, and put all the megalomaniacs – Saddam Hussein, Bush, Major and his political mother the Banshee of Finchley, together with the rest of the clockwork puppets and their arms manufacturing puppeteers into it so that they can try their hideous inventions out on one

another. Around the arena would sit the refugees from war, the hungry, the maimed, the homeless, and especially the young men of all nations now torn from their wives and children whom those 'leaders' are prepared to send to destruction in a Hell they have no power to control. There they could watch those knaves destroy themselves. Then we could incinerate their remains and let the whole world turn its ingenuity, its own powers of creation, into transforming this now-dying Earth back into the Paradise I intended it to be."

The Supreme Being paused: "The one thing even I find hard to forgive is the murder of my only boy, a lad who could not hurt a fly. I had to make him a man. How could he have set an example if he had been a god? That is why ordinary people loved him. They came to hear him from miles around. They fed him. His message was so simple that even a child could get it. 'People are so frail that if we do not love one another we shall *all* die'. And for *that* you murdered the lad?"

At the last words the eye fell on the Christians: "And how different are you? You even call yourselves by his name. You say 'blessed are the poor in spirit' and you plunder the world for gold to adorn your bodies while you live in palaces. You say 'blessed are the meek' yet you shower with gold coins those who lie, betray and murder, whether presidents, dictators, kings or popes. You bless the very weapons of destruction – even the most obscene: poison gas and nuclear bombs. You bless them when they sell for profit the arms that kill your young people. Even my age-old friend and colleague, Lucifer, turns pale when you call your crimes 'a just war'."

What a day that would be if Pope John the Umpteenth sold his triple crown and gave the proceeds to the poor of Rome! One of his predecessors began to think he might do that very thing and was promptly murdered by P2 and the Banco Italiano!"

He fell silent to let his words sink in, and then

noticed in the corner a small group not especially marked out by their dress and looking, if anything, bewildered and even indignant. God burst out laughing: "Well, well, well, my dear little Atheists! What a shock this must have been for you! Perhaps it was really my own fault for leaving something out in your make-up – a bit of compassion for the less gifted, perhaps, or even a bit of intelligence in yourselves that might have caused you to understand the function of myth? Haven't you yet understood why it has been so hard to get rid of the idea of me?"

But don't worry too much. After all, you haven't badgered me with piddling requests to annihilate your enemies, or greedy little prayers to give you something for nothing. You have not beaten your hypocritical breasts daily to ask to be forgiven for your shabby peccadillos while carrying on with your sordid little habits. Indeed, you have often been maligned, imprisoned, tortured and even killed for your convictions. On the whole there is quite a lot to be said for you. Along with your fellow-spirits, the Buddhists, and that tiny group the Humanists, who at least have the nous to concentrate on what they think are their own affairs and leave me to get on with mine, you have done little harm in the world, so I think I might find a place for you in my Kingdom – if you can bring yourselves to accept my offer?

But what, in Heaven's name, shall we do with the rest of them? If I were to behave as they have all done at some time or other I would simply put them all to fire and the sword. But as I am the all merciful, I must find another way – perhaps to create a new model based on you and the Buddhists?"

The thunder rolled away across the Great Plain. The finger of God – a sunbeam from behind the black cloud that had covered the Heavens – swung gently across the assembled alphabet of religious hordes against the tall trees of the surrounding forest. Slowly they lay down and sank into a deep sleep, then imperceptibly merged into the soil. Presently there began to sprout a fresh crop of rich meadow grass through which the Atheists and the humanists wandered, arguing fiercely about whether all this had been simply a curious psychological trick induced by childhood conditioning, while the Buddhists walked gently behind them smiling placidly.

Michael Duane

A short guide to the future

(continued from page 6)

level. Our present troubles began at the beginning when Luther, from Wittenberg, preached 'the priesthood of all believers' and Calvin from Geneva 'pre-destination' of the few. The Reformation so reinforced the individualism of the Renaissance. The idea of selfhood was born. After the choking restrictiveness of the decayed Middle Ages it was an incredibly creative release. It led to all kinds of revolutions, scientific and technological, industrial and political. It also promoted the wholesale destruction of the idea of community in the name of money, the market and the entrepreneur. The USA is its ultimate result and the dollar its deity.

The trouble, for the US, is that *homo sapiens* is essentially a social, a communal, animal. This arises out of the very nature of music and language, all forms of communication. The crocodile, the ultimate loner, has no cerebrum, no fore-brain. But we are not crocodiles. We cannot live that way, even if the dollar bids us so. The attempt to do so can only result in total political breakdown – and exactly that is going to happen. Happily we have some vintage traditions which, in the nature of the case, the USA lacks. So although we are massively corrupted by money values we still have a dim awareness that there is something else. We still sing 'Jerusalem' with gusto even if we don't quite know why. What 'Jerusalem' is *not* about is selfhood. It is about creativity, it is about the poetic genius, it is about England as a community.

It is probably true that the highest concentration of the brightest brains in the world is in the USA, so they will find their way through in their own way, but the suffering in the process is likely to be immense. What will reduce the suffering, here as well as there, is forethought. And forethought means taking ideas, theory, seriously. This is difficult for us, having lived 350 years in a culture steeped in an empiricism that has largely ignored

social questions because they are not amenable to the scientific method. The only way out is to take history seriously and restore philosophy to its long-lost place as the means of putting all knowledge together in a way that makes sense.

What will hold it all together?

It is no use talking about socialism and capitalism any more. That will stop. The original terms of the argument had some meaning but people forgot them. The Owenites invented a word (in England) in 1829. To them 'socialism' was a name for co-operative and community exercises as contrasted with the competitive individualism of the then current industrial revolution. That meaning, which has always made sense, was soon destroyed by Marx's totally irresponsible dogma about 'the historic role of the working class' and Webb's equally absurd notion of gas and water municipalisation and the role of experts in a welfare state. Both Marx and Webb accepted the state and sought power in it. They also accepted the market. Both are lethal to freedom and justice.

What 'socialists' of all kinds have failed to grasp is that the market and the power of money were born on the backs of sheep in the twelfth century. The creation of a huge new surplus soon killed off the service relationships (military, religious and labour) which were what feudalism was all about. Now, after some 800 years, the market is getting towards the end of its life cycle. Its first law is scarcity. Today it is threatened by surplus. We knew it first as beef and butter mountains, wine and milk lakes. Today General Motors and Chryslers and Fords are facing 10-20% falls in demand and don't know where to put themselves. The British motor industry is little better off.

Labour costs are the biggest charge on production. Employers, faced with severe competition, are into robots and cutting staff in the name of lower unit costs. Under the present system

the situation can only get worse and worse. There is no way out of the recession so long as we hang on to the rules. The rules have to be changed. But to what? To social accounting. But what is social accounting? Answer: nobody knows. We have to invent it. We have to discover/invent the law of surplus. It will mean the slow phasing out of the market – the end of the 800 year cycle. Somehow we have to find a way to put figures to the gift economy that will replace the market. Hunter-gatherers lived in the gift economy for millions of years. We shall do it at an entirely different level of production and sophistication. We have to do it because surplus is about to destroy the system on which we have always depended. But 'always' is a mere 800 years, nothing is the biological scale of time.

The challenge before us is therefore twofold. Firstly to cope with an endless series of practical next-steps so that we can keep body, soul and sanity together, and secondly to take the vision of a different kind of society on board. We have already put international war in Europe behind us. Do we fully appreciate what an extraordinary achievement that is? we have the means at hand to end scarcity for all time, for ourselves and all people everywhere. What is holding us up is what is between our own ears: the leader and led mentality; lack of imagination; historical ignorance; dogmas like those of Bentham and Marx; absurd assumptions about the permanence of central government, Westminster and Whitehall; lack of plain speaking; fear of controversy; dependence on leaders; absence of alternative methods and structures; arrogance and insularity; Little Englandism; the mere possession of money, property and power an end in themselves – the list is endless.

The answers have to start with individuals and proceed through groups. The starting point is the creation of new complex groups that will work on ideas like these and turn them into practice without end, in every direction. The goal is the structuring of people-power.

Peter Cadogan

WHAT THE CITY CROOKS GET AWAY WITH

As we go to press the judge in the second Guinness frauds trial has halted proceedings on the grounds that one of the two defendants (who had been carrying out his own defence) was in a suicidal state and it was dangerous to continue with the trial. We obviously don't know what the outcome will be as we go to press, but we cannot but express surprise at the way the top-level City crooks seem to be getting away with it compared with their more humble brethren.

Clowes, who has cost the taxpayers £150 million, gets a mere ten years – and he will probably spend it in an open prison and will enjoy all the extras that money can provide.

STOP PRESS: *The Director of Public Prosecutions has decided to drop the case against both the suicidal defendant and his partner Lord Spens.*

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Romanticism

Dear Editors,
In answer to Ernie Crosswell's letter, *Freedom* 11th January 1992. "Procreation and nurturing is necessary for the continuation of the species", yes, but it's a long jump from that to woman's prime purpose, aim or instinctual purpose. Is Ernie saying that woman must follow this instinctual purpose from puberty to menopause, or she is acting against her 'prime instinctual purpose' and therefore is in some way wrong? Or is she allowed to have some choice as to when and how often to follow it, or perhaps not to follow it at all? So once again we are back to the individual's choice.

As far as I can see, of all the problems threatening the human species with extinction, I don't think the lack of procreation is one of them. Perhaps at a later date this might be a problem, in which case the individual members of that future generation will have to decide how they wish to face up to that particular problem and hopefully they will not be restricted by purposes, instinctual or otherwise, laid down by the Ernies and Johns of a distant past generation.

Human disregard for this 'truth', and "animals instinctual following of it has made them more successful". Are animals more successful than humans? Every month or so we hear of species becoming extinct, or being saved from extinction. The reason for this problem seems to be the human's success at covering the entire planet with its own kind. This looking to the lower animals (your title) as some kind of role model for humans seems again to indicate one's own choice. Which species? The cuckoo perhaps. And how about that tendency of some animals to dump the weak of the litter in favour of the strong.

To say the male, on failing to play his part in the nurturing process, is responsible for our ills. How does the male play his part in the nurturing process? Surely that depends on the society we find ourselves in. I consider

my father played his part in the nurturing process of his family by working eight or more hours down a coal mine, allowing my mother to do other parts of the nurturing process. The role each parent plays in the nurturing process has changed over the years, governed by economic environment, experience and an ever-changing group of choices. You seem to imply that there is somewhere, written in stone, a right way for humans to interact with one another and that it's right for all times, or somehow if we look back at the 'lower animals' we will re-find the role model for humans to adopt. Again that would be a matter of choice since among the vast range of species there is a vast array of social structures. How far back do we look? Which species do we select? The macho lion who does not do too much, not even in the hunt, his main concern seeming to be to keep as many females as possible to himself and keep as many young lions at bay as he can. Perhaps the wild dogs, where the male pack leader selects one bitch and that bitch is the only one to have a litter. Woe betide any other bitch that has a litter, as she will be savaged and separated from her litter even if this means the death of the litter. I believe either of these systems would create havoc in the human species.

The 'lower animals' are, you say, encumbered with romantic ideas. This may be so, but it's this lack that makes them victims of an ever-changing environment. Humans, with their romantic ideas, are aware of the changing environment and have the ability to change it to their advantage. As we wrestle with this problem we cannot restrict the possible answers by laying down purposes, prime, instinctual, or any other kind. Each group, each generation, must solve its problems from where it stands, and perhaps with the help of romantic ideas seek a better environment for all life on this planet.

John Couzin

'Upper Class Leftists'

Dear Freedom,
George Walford in his thought-provoking article 'Upper Class Leftists?' says that anarchism is unattractive to the broad mass of people. Perhaps this is true, but it might only be the way one looks at libertarianism. If it is regarded as an ideology, dogma or a narrowly conceived belief system, then yes, it will most likely stay as the viewpoint of a small minority (and maybe it should!). But as a *practice*, or as an *attitude*, the situation may well be different. (Consider the possibility that libertarian attitudes may exist which are not expressed in formal, ideological terms.) As we *Freedom* readers know, some of the most important aspects of anarchism are:

- a) mutual aid
- b) voluntarism
- c) decentralisation
- d) self-management
- e) opposition to the state and authoritarianism.

Now I won't speak for Britain, since I lack the necessary information, but here in Canada there is evidence for a level of acceptance for these concepts. The surveys, polls and reports show:

- a) 43% of the population belong to a co-operative society
- b) a majority do some kind of volunteer work
- c) most are unhappy with the centralised state, want it down-sized, desire decentralisation
- d) most want more say in the workplace and dislike hierarchical management practices
- e) most distrust and dislike governments, bureaucrats, politicians and the media.

On other issues which anarchists support, such as opposition to nuclear power, environmental issues, freedom of choice, native land claims, etc., there is a majority in favour. At least a third of the population wish to decriminalise drugs, a third are solid trade union supporters, 25% opposed Canadian participation in the Gulf War. Since this was a popular war against a brutal dictator, this shows a significant number of pacifists.

All this evidence shows, to me at least, that a goodly number of people take a libertarian attitude on most important issues. One might say that the average person can be seen in reference to anarchism the way most women reflect towards feminism ('Well, I'm no feminist but ... I think there should be equal pay for equal work, more daycare, sharing of housework, an end to conjugal violence, freedom of choice, etc.')

George's position of the unacceptability of anarchism ultimately leads to an elitist viewpoint, which I am sure is unintentional as elitism is antithetical to the development of the sort of society we both desire. Rather than blame *the people*, I think the problem lies more with ourselves, with our sectarianism, our air-heads and extremists and, as Pat Murtagh has been pointing out for years, our tendency to form exclusive, inward-looking counter-cultures.

Larry Gambone

The state promotes anarchism

Dear Editors,
Is George Walford, in his letter of 8th February, teasing us? He makes the case for the absence of anarchism in pre-governmental society but stops

Which Animal Rights?

Dear Comrades,
I enjoyed your article 'Which Animal Rights' (*Freedom*, 14th December 1991). I have met many animal rights advocates, and it is almost an invariable truism that such people have very little real experience with animals. Those with such experience may be sympathetic to this or that point raised by such activists, but are *highly* unlikely to accept the ideology of animal rights in toto. In my opinion this is because the reality of contact with real animals to the abstract fantasies concocted in the media or among subcultures is an admirable solvent of the 'image' in which such activists live.

I will not go into the ins and outs of where animals rights activists may be right in their criticisms, except to note that they have a blindingly narrow focus on minor points while failing to recognise much more major problems and their connection to other social phenomena. I will note bluntly, however, that the vegetarian rhetoric that animals are an 'inefficient' way of producing protein should have been laid to rest a long time ago amongst people who purport to care about 'ecology' and 'natural systems'. There are vast amounts of land in all agricultural countries which are presently farmed for cereal crops which would be far better turned back into grazing land. Crop farming of such marginal lands is deleterious to the soil and is a major contributor to over-simplification of the ecosystems involved. It also involves the individual farmer in a debt based enterprise that is far too susceptible to the vagaries of weather.

I do not argue for 'factory farming', but I do think that a sensible return of many presently cereal farmed areas to a more natural grazing management—producing animals that humans *eat*, yes *eat*—would be of benefit to all concerned. It would benefit the individual farmer if government subsidies to the present misuse of land were withdrawn and if taxation policies didn't prohibit the type of enterprise suggested. It would benefit many consumers who would be able to obtain a locally supplied 'low input' source of meat. It would benefit the animals who would live under more natural, less stressful conditions.

I could go on and on about how the ideology that animal rights activists gather from the media, from trendy superstitions, and from the closed urban circles of their peer groups, ignores much more important ecological and social issues. I will leave it for now, however, with the observation that an enforced vegetarianism is deleterious to the land. The land is more important than any individual animal.

Pat Murtagh

short of suggesting that it must have been males who must have been dominating force in those societies, just as they are in the governmental societies of today. Come on, George, say it — it's *men* isn't it? It's us!

Ernie Crosswell

Contact

Dear Freedom,
I wondered if you could put a little word in the next issue of *Freedom*.

I'm looking for people with a radically developed consciousness to work with me on a musical project providing the lyrics to my music. Making the contacts is the most difficult part, and I'd appreciate your help.

Robert Webb
RHBNC, Faculty of Music,
Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX

Crime and Punishment

Dear Editors,
It is hard to ignore the increasing signs of anti-social behaviour in society. Crimes of violence are reported on a regular basis in both the national and local press. Now whilst anarchists have always been rather good at pointing out why so many of these crimes take place (capitalism, power, etc.) ideas on how to confront and deal with anti-social elements are less forthcoming.

At base no doubt most anarchists dislike prisons, yet in a recent *Freedom* article (11th January 1992, 'Our trigger-happy police') it is stated "even in an anarchist society there will be disturbed individuals and if they were violent they would have to be restrained". This raises the question restrained by who? A citizen's militia, the populace, an anarchist police force?! Where would such individuals be restrained if there were no prisons? It does seem that there would need to be some system to deal with such a problem. A militia is an idea and prisons can take many forms ... certainly appropriate help

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

would need to be given to ensure that people are soon reintegrated into society. Those with long-term problems are a much more difficult question, in particular when many anarchists seem to detest social workers and psychologists.

Capital punishment is another thorny subject. All anarchists surely oppose capital punishment yet many left journals are perfectly happy to discuss how the rich, royalty, etc., will be or should be despatched come the great day of liberation!

This is not meant to be an out and out criticism of anarchism, but there is no doubt that the question of crime and punishment is one that needs looking at (why not an issue of *The Raven* on this?). The increasing emphasis on crime will soon allow the reactionaries to have their way ... serial killers, rapists, child abusers are all emotive subjects. There needs to be a responsible, coherent and logical libertarian response to this, not just as a blueprint for the future but as a strong contribution to the debate now. After all, with the increasing irrelevance of the Labour Party as the bastion of socialism, the chance for libertarian ideals to gain an audience increases daily. People should not be put off by vague ideas or woolly thinking, but be able to understand and hopefully agree the logic of these ideals. This is a topic which needs exploring ... anyone out there interested?

Stiofain Riordian

News from Angel Alley

The picture of economic gloom includes radical booksellers, according to *The Tribune's* diarist John Street (7th February). Central Books, in business for the past forty years, is closing down and at Housman's, also in business for the same number of years, a spokesman is quoted as saying: "We are carrying on, but with difficulty. You can't go on making losses, so I suppose closure is within the bounds of possibility". A spokesman for the Federation of Radical Booksellers also pointed out that another nine radical bookshops were on their way out. The seriousness of the situation was that in the past bookshops would close down but just as many would start up. This is no longer the case.

We can assure readers that the Freedom Press Bookshop is not joining in the gloom and bankruptcies. Though we were £2,000 down on takings in 1991 compared with 1990, we started 1992 with a record January. What is most encouraging is that though what we call the non-Freedom Press or Freedom Press Distributors titles, which are in any case on anarchism or sympathetic to anarchism but published by commercial publishers, the proportion of these sales has dropped whereas titles distributed by Freedom Press have increased. In January the ratio was two to one for Freedom Press Distributors titles.

Not only is the bookshop open six days a week but we also offer a mail service which is always being praised for our prompt service — and this is not an idle boast!

Now to the dreary routine about subscription renewals. With this issue we are sending out *three* kinds of reminders.

The *pink* reminders are going to about 100 subscribers who received

a reminder in December and have so far done nothing about renewing. We don't want to lose any readers and the pink form includes a special offer to those who have not replied because they just cannot afford even a claimant's sub. So if you are in the pink category: no reply — no *Freedom*!

A *green* renewal reminder is being sent to all subscribers whose sub expires or expired in January, February or March, and we hope they will save us the extra work of sending out further reminders by renewing promptly.

Another *green* circular letter is being included to those of you who are on the free list for *Freedom*. We do this once a year to keep our records up to date and in some cases in the hope that there may have been a change in your circumstances which makes it possible for you to pay for your *Freedom*.

And as usual our warm thanks to those who have contributed to our funds.

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MEETINGS

Greenpeace (London) Public Meetings

On the last Thursday of every month London Greenpeace has a public meeting where a speaker starts off the discussion and then everyone who wants to can have their say. These public meetings are at the Peace Pledge Union, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1 (near Euston tube). They start at 8pm and go on until just before 10pm. The first six meetings for 1992 are already planned and they are:

- **Thursday 27th February** – The forthcoming General Election. We're not voting and we hope you won't either. Towards a national anti-voting strategy. The vote changes nothing.
- **Thursday 26th March** – Defend (and extend) our green spaces (i.e. no new roads, factories, and so on), with John Beesley from Otdogs.
- **Thursday 30th April** – Women and Anarchism.
- **Thursday 28th May** – Saving the planet, a response from the Earth Summit.
- **Thursday 25th June** – The world is dominated (and it and its people are being ruined) by the rich governments represented by the IMF and G7. How do we resist them?

For further information contact London Greenpeace at 5 Caledonian Road, London N1, tel: 071-837 7557.

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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

- 21st February** - 'Co-editing *Freedom* in the 1960s' (speaker John Rety)
28th February - General discussion
7th March - 'Pragmatic Anarchism: Libertarian Practice in the Real World' (speaker Andrew Lainton)
14th March - General discussion
20th March - Discussion on the future of the Anarchist Forum
17th April - General discussion
24th April - 'Conversation: An Anarchist Metaphor' (speaker Tim Francis)
1st May - General discussion
4th May - May Day Picnic. Any suggestions for the venue?
8th May - 'Anarchism: Ancestor Worship or Blueprint' (speaker Peter Neville) [transferred from January]

We are still booking speakers or topics for 1992. The dates free are from 15th May 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).

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Anarchist Communist Federation Calendar 1992

Unless otherwise mentioned, all meetings will be held at the Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont Street, London WC1, beginning at 8.30pm.

- **20th February** - Discussion: 'Science and Anarchism'
- **5th March** - The last of the 'Thinking about Anarchism' series. Topic: 'Anarchist-Communist Production and Distribution: is a centralised authority unavoidable?'

If further details are required, please write to: ACF (London), c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

Anarchist Communist Federation Dayschool

on
Saturday 14th March 1992
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at
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Cost: £3.00 waged (£2.00 unwaged). Refreshments provided. Please try to book in advance and also send details of crèche facilities needed or any special requirements to: ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1. Disabled access.

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