

# anarchist fortnightly Freedom

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FIFTY PENCE

**FREEDOM'S  
NON-VOTING  
MANIFESTO**  
on pages 5 and 6

## For the people all 9th April can offer is 'HOBSON'S CHOICE'

For the past couple of months we the public have been assaulted from all sides by politicians seeking to sell their promises, panaceas and prejudices with the assurance that their particular brand is best for you.

In the process they have been hurling insults at each other with accusations of 'cheating', 'lying' and hiding the facts from the people. Only the Liberals make out that they are above such cheap propaganda while at the same time they tell us not to believe a word from either of the two major contestants - which comes to the same thing, surely!

The three parties are all offering the same menu: *capitalism*. The price varies and some of the courses may vary in size and optional extras. For starters the Labour lot offer more child benefits, they all offer more or less the same basic soup where

education is concerned except that the Tory lot offer an optional turtle-soup-private-education, at a price. For the fish course - the lower paid - the Labour lot have added a few chips to the fish and chips. For the middle range the Tories offer a few extra Young's (ex-frozen) scampi. By the time we get to the meat course the Labour lot are offering the £400 a week voters, who the Tories tell us are far from being rich, that once a week they must content themselves with bangers-and-mash, while the Tories considering them to be our potential 'wealth producers' think they should be able to afford a steak per day. For afters (or should we at this level refer to this course as *desserts*) the Labour lot can only offer crumbs to the poor but have left the rich able to wallow in every delicacy, in every liqueur and

exotic fruits and sweetmeats that money can buy.

It would be too complicated to have included the Liberal menu here. Obviously wanting to win votes from Labour and Tory they will vary the menu accordingly.

In *Freedom* we have always been pointing out that all the Labour Party has been offering, not just now but for the last forty years, is to run the capitalist system better than the Tory Party. And the 're-born' Liberals say the same thing. What the Labour Party means by this is that they are aiming at a 'fairer society', meaning that everybody should have the same chances in life 'to get on', 'to climb the ladder of success', and we have always replied that capitalist society by definition is an *unfair* society and therefore any attempt to make it 'fairer' is doomed to failure. Alright, some will make it *but it is always at the expense of the majority who remain at the bottom of the ladder (or the pile)*.

## A little girl's earache produces A MEDIA PAIN ... IN THE ARSE

The Labour Party's television political broadcast was a telling piece of propaganda. It made the point that under the existing National Health Service (NHS) if you are prepared to pay for your medical treatment, whatever it may be, you can get immediate attention. If you cannot then you must join the ever-growing queue. The broadcast was based on real cases, using child actors.

Everybody who cannot afford private treatment knows this only too well. It was the Tory media, undoubtedly primed by the Tory Central Office, who sought to destroy the message of the broadcast by introducing the name of the actual child on whom the programme was based in order to suggest that it was irresponsible and even not true. Then in the hands of the media, how the name was leaked became more important than the *message*. And

they exploited this, with the full collaboration of Tory Tebbit's successor, Patten, from Central Office who at the morning press conferences lied his head off daily. The 'gentle', 'decent' John Major has followed suit with the added impertinence of declaring that the broadcast makes it quite clear that Kinnock is not fit to be Prime Minister. Meaning that Major is! And at the other end of this display of ignorance, there is old sharp-nosed Paddy Ashdown pontificating about the 'disgusting' display by the other two would-be leaders and it was time to stop torturing the poor little girl for cheap party profit. Sob! Sob! The biggest hypocrite of the three is undoubtedly Paddy Ashdown, ably assisted by the smiling word-spinner Des Wilson who speaks so fast that one cannot note down all the lies he presents as accepted truths.

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How do the Tories' aims differ from Labour's for a 'fairer' society? On 'Newsnight' (24th March) Jeremy Paxman conducted a spirited interview with Mr Major himself and pressed him to explain what he meant by his classless Britain and whether he had in fact dropped the idea. Not at all, replied the well-groomed, smiling Prime Minister. What did he mean then by a classless Britain when the Budget, for instance, benefited the better-off and well-off? By 'classless' he meant *that everybody should have an opportunity to get to the top!* The old, old story all over again. So what difference is there between Tory and Labour so far as the underprivileged are concerned? What chance have they other than remaining at the bottom of the pile?

The Tories accuse those of us who maintain that the injustices of our society will never be ended so long as

(continued on page 2)

# 'HOBSON'S CHOICE'

(continued from page 1)

a minority own and control the wealth and the nation (and as internationalists we would apply this to the world at large) of the 'politics of envy'. This is utter rubbish. Perish the thought of wanting to rub shoulders with the stinking rich and their lifestyle - starting with the Royal family and their *entourage* and hangers-on!

What anarchists argue is that at the end of the twentieth century with all the advances in science and technology, there is no reason why there should be a single person in the world dying of hunger, or homeless, or illiterate, or deprived of medical attention when needed.

But the fact is that millions of children are dying of starvation and disease in the third world - while in the capitalist West both in Europe and the United States, the granaries of the world, land is being 'set aside' not to produce bread and farmers are being paid, and *accept to be paid*, not to produce.

Within our own island there are three million unemployed\* kept quiet with a

pittance. There are thousands of young people living by begging or prostitution and who sleep on the streets. There are some 600,000 empty properties in the country, some needing repairs, yet nothing is done to dispossess the owners who can afford to keep them empty. There are more thousands of second homes empty for most of the year.

In the London area 17% of office space is empty with no prospects. The Canary Wharf office extravaganza in Docklands which has cost billions of dollars (it's a Canadian brainstorm which we imagine will be hitting the headlines very soon) is still 40% empty. And the light railway to connect it to the centre of commerce is to cost £400 million.

Envy? What we are attacking is *madness*, is *greed*.

But as anarchists we are also attacking our fellow citizens who by their apathy are allowing themselves to be crushed by this wasteful system that is capitalism.

How true even today is that slogan of the past: "Workers of the world unite / You have only your chains to lose".

If you vote on 9th April, however good your intentions may be to get rid of the present incumbents, all you are doing is, as somebody once put it, to transfer the chains from your ankles to your wrists!

\*Perhaps more if the government didn't regularly 'cook' the statistics. The official 2.6 million are those who are actually in receipt of the dole.

## 'Tag the lot' says councillor

The *East Anglian Daily Times* quotes a professed Independent councillor, Mr Jim Mitchell, as proposing to a meeting of Suffolk County Council's 'education performance and review sub-committee' (what next?) that problem school pupils should be electronically tagged in order to stamp out truancy. It was no joke. After the meeting he was asked if he was serious and he confirmed that he was.

"How would pupils be selected for the prison-style tagging?" he was asked. No problem for Mr Mitchell: "All pupils in schools where a major truancy problem has been identified" would be tagged!

The sub-committee chairman said: "I want to stress it is not educational policy" and the deputy leader was "absolutely amazed".

The right person to tag, surely, is Mr Mitchell on the grounds that he is crazy and at large!

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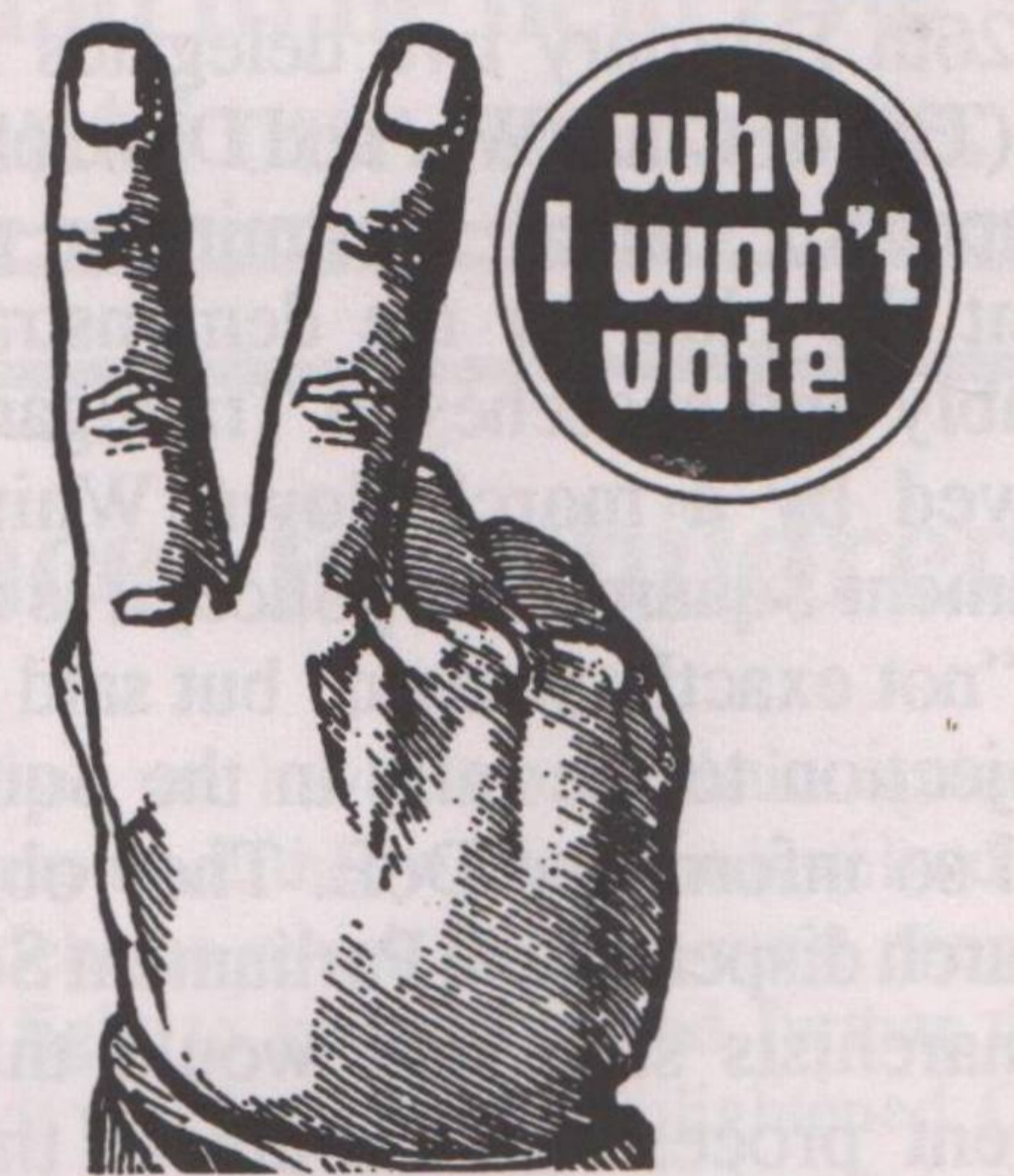
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## On Voting



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## THE MEDIA & A LITTLE GIRL'S EARACHE

(continued from page 1)

About the Health Service: it is no wonder that it should be the topic people consider to be the most important in these elections. Our society is a sick society. Stress is the major 'disease' of all the affluent countries. The most important industry today is probably the illegal international drug mafia. And the pharmaceutical mafia are also doing very nicely. No recession there.

The Tory lot accuse the Labour lot of offering a mere £1,000 million for the Health Service when everybody is agreed that a lot more is needed to make it into a truly National Health Service where little girls with earache won't have to wait eleven months as was the actual case of

this girl. Face up to it!

It is a simple problem. Since the Tories won't tax the rich, the Liberals will only add a penny to the tax rate in order to provide everybody with a better education and the Labour Party only nibble at the stinking rich. Then who has the courage to save a few £ billion on the obscene 'defence budget' - including future £ billions on Trident - to invest in a real Health Service?

For this reason, dear reader, don't vote for any of them, not even Lord Sutch. But find the time to protest with your neighbours and your friends and comrades to oblige our rulers to listen to us - or else! There is no alternative if we want to live in a happier, healthier, stress-free world.

## South Africa

The herrenvoek see the red light at last!

President de Klerk has won his referendum vote for the white man's survival in South Africa, but where this will all lead depends on how militant the ANC (African National Congress) remains and how radical are their demands. At present the black Africans are 70% of the population and have been allocated 14% of the land and needless to say the whites occupy the best lands. Mandela is obviously in a compromising mood - going so far as to invite the white right-wing Nazis to join in the creation of the new South Africa. Mandela has paid an enormous price for his struggle for the overthrow of the white herrenvoek (27 years a prisoner of the white racists) and we can understand that he will feel that his sacrifice has been worthwhile if he can

be instrumental in ending apartheid and white domination of South Africa.

The victory at the all-white referendum will bring no change in South Africa if the black majority relax their militancy. Apart from those exceptional whites who have paid dearly over the years for their opposition to white rule and apartheid, the de Klerk white vote is a vote of fear and we can well imagine that in the months and years ahead there will be a steady emigration - to Australia perhaps - as was the case in the former British African colonies and protectorates.

Unfortunately the blacks will realise after they have won it that the vote is not enough.

## Use your loaf before it's too late!

According to *The Observer's* correspondent (21st March) American scientists are attempting to patent the genes that control the human brain - even before they have been discovered!

This has "infuriated" researchers throughout the world and as a result it:

"... has triggered a tit-for-tat patent war on both sides of the Atlantic that could set back cures for certain psychiatric illnesses by many years.

British scientists at the Royal Society and the Medical Research Council are among those angered by the action of scientists at the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, near Washington. They fear the Americans are trying to monopolise brain genes. 'This is an attempt to use patent law as a method of extortion,' said Dr Dai Rees, head of the Medical Research Council. 'It is parasitic activity, based on very doubtful ethics.' However, Britain now had no alternative but to patent gene fragments discovered in UK laboratories to retain competitive commercial advantage if the American patent claims were successful.

'We dislike this whole business,' said Science Minister Alan Howarth. 'We are being forced into taking this action because we must, at the end of the day, protect the interest of the British taxpayer.'

Some readers may think anarchists have an obsession about capitalism. Sure, the discoveries may result in "cures for certain psychiatric illnesses". How many psychiatric

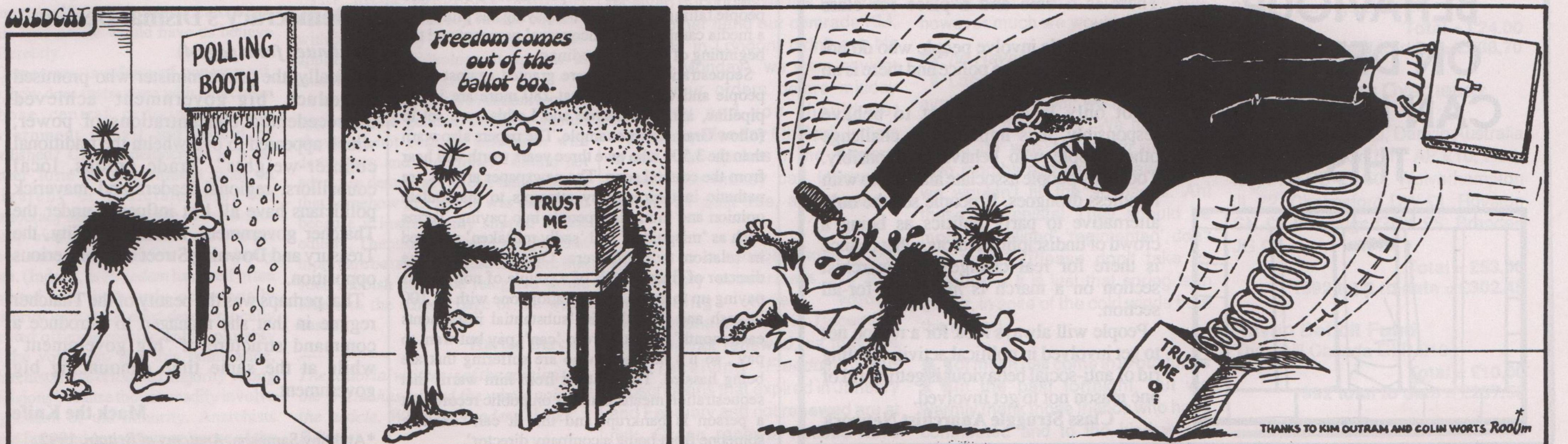
illnesses are produced by the kind of world we live in?

But above all study the language of the piece reproduced above: "They fear that the Americans are trying to monopolise brain genes", Britain has to follow suit "to retain competitive commercial advantage". You see, dear reader, there is no end to it. After all, most of us sell our labour power to a firm or a boss who is employing us only because he hopes to make money out of employing us. Otherwise he wouldn't. That's why there are more than three million unemployed at the moment, and more to come.

Most of the people are brainwashed already by the media, the church, the politicians, the schools. Can you imagine what the possibilities could be if they (the scientists, financed by the multinationals) managed to sort out the brain gene business and succeeded in discovering which are the ones that make us into rebels and the ones that make us into docile slave labour?

We are not scientists or experts. All we can advise you to do is to use your loaf and STRIP THE EXPERTS!\*

\*Strip the Experts by Brian Martin, Freedom Press, 70 pages, £1.95 post-free inland.



THANKS TO KIM OUTRAM AND COLIN WORTS Roodim

# Anti-election demo banned by DoE

## Police agree Trafalgar Square rally for 4th April, but are overruled by Department of the Environment

Anarchists have come together in the Anti-Election Alliance (AEA) to make joint propaganda against the election. It has long been accepted, after some notable fights between police and demonstrators in the 1870s and 1927, that any group may hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square provided they give notice and there is only one meeting at a time. The AEA wrote to the Department of the Environment on 5th February 'booking' Trafalgar Square for a rally on Saturday 4th April.

On 26th February two delegates from the AEA (Tim of Class War and Dave of London Greenpeace) visited Westminster police to present the plan for the demonstration, an assembly and speeches in Trafalgar Square, followed by a march down Whitehall to Parliament Square. The police, it is reported, were "not exactly pleased" but said they had no objection to the rally in the Square, and would so inform the DoE. They objected to the march dispersing in Parliament Square, so the anarchists said they would think of a different processional route at their next meeting, and offer it for police approval.

On 10th March Tim and Dave reported to a delighted meeting, and a new route for the march was agreed for submission to the police. Anarchist groups around the country booked coaches to bring them to London on the day.

Then the bombshell. A letter from the DoE dated 13th March:

"Dear Mr Scargill, Thank you for your letter of 5th February to Miss Garrahan with your request to assemble at Hyde Park Corner and march to Trafalgar Square for a rally on 4th April. We have considered your request very carefully but do not consider that what you propose would be an appropriate use of Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square. I regret therefore that permission cannot be granted - G.A. Wheeldon, Royal Parks Division."

On 17th March, the AEA delegates in

Conway Hall "pledged unanimously to go ahead with the rally, in defiance of the ban, and circulated a call to people whether anti-election or pro-election to join the demo in defence of free speech and freedom to demonstrate.

At their next meeting with AEA delegates, the attitude of the police was ambiguous. They offered to find a site for the rally which was not under DoE jurisdiction, and when this was declined they said that Trafalgar Square was a public place on which anyone could walk, providing they did not hold a rally there. As to the procession (to Parliament Square and back by a different route), they had no objection and would supervise it in the normal way of agreed processions.

The AEA will now try to conduct the rally as planned, but at the same time to avoid fights with the police. Certain demonstrators (can anyone think of an alternative name for stewards?) will undertake to keep everyone informed of what is happening, with the intention of keeping everything peaceful. Legal aid has also been arranged, in case it is needed.

The police, it seems, are also hoping for a trouble-free day. But presumably they will have extra reinforcements and riot equipment discreetly at hand in case of difficulty preventing an event which left to themselves they would have permitted.

### A Heseltine scheme?

It is not impossible that the police are the ones who really want the rally banned and that they recommended the DoE to ban it while pretending to be neutral and co-operative. This, however, does not seem likely.

The police in this country prefer an image of helpfulness to one of aggression and would surely not seek a riot in Trafalgar Square, especially not on a Saturday afternoon when they have football crowds to deal with.

If they had wanted to stop the demo, as

distinct from fighting it, they could have done so easily and uncontroversially by arranging for someone else to book the square on the day. They had two weeks notice of the visit from Tim and Dave, and the names and addresses of organisations who would be willing to take the Square at short notice. 'Sorry, gentlemen, the Square's booked by various charities until the end of April,' and whatever the anarchists might suspect, they would not be able to argue.

More likely than a police plot is a bureaucratic blunder at the DoE. There are jacks-in-office who get confused between decision and action. Perhaps one of those prohibited the AEA rally under the delusion that prohibition is the same as prevention. A twit promoted beyond intellectual capacity might easily have been given the job of deciding who shall meet in Trafalgar Square, which amounts in practice to simply rubber-stamping the recommendations of Westminster Police. Or did, until the idiot decided to show authority.

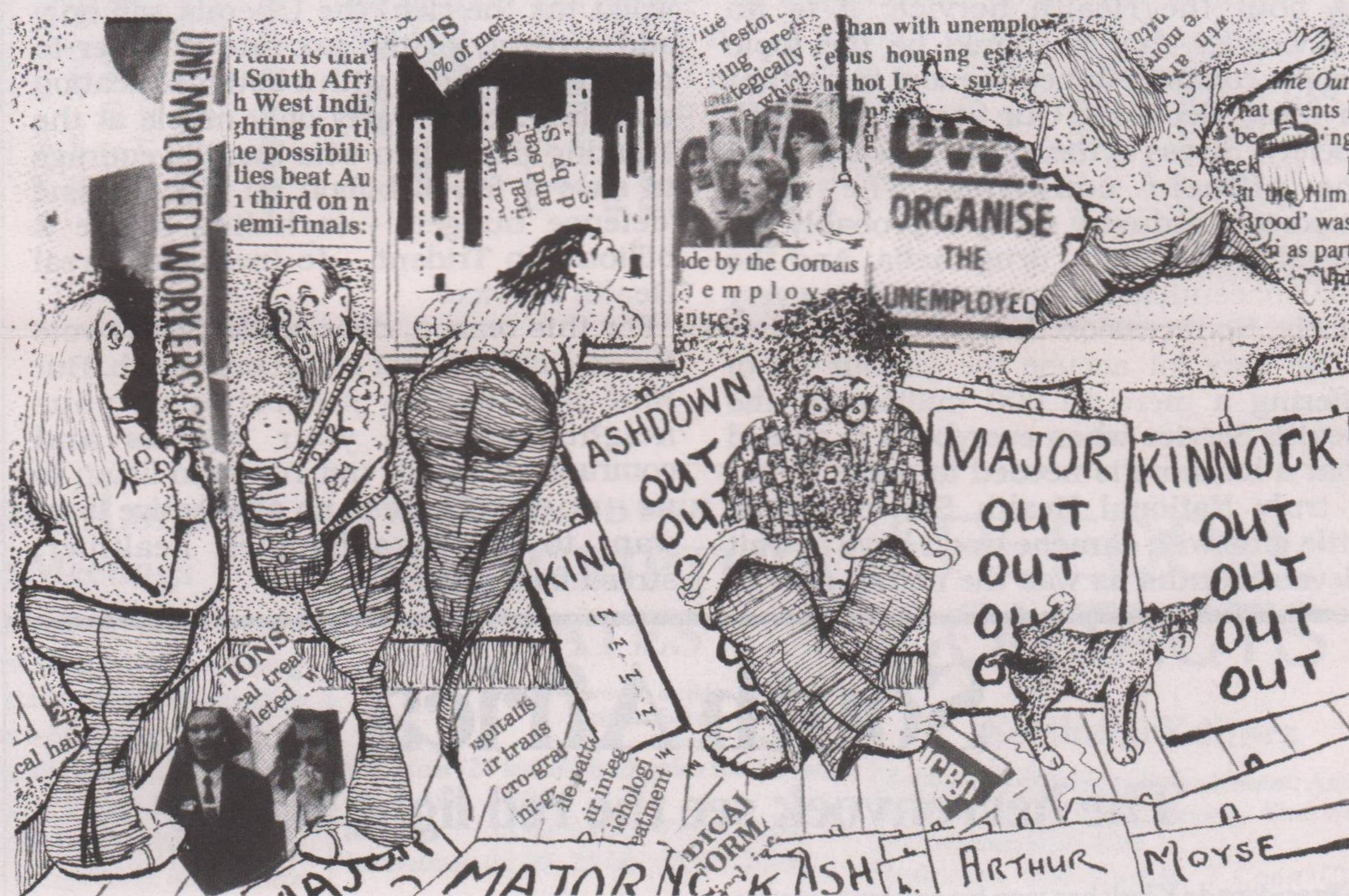
Those who prefer the conspiracy theory to the cock-up theory might suspect a subtle plot by Michael Heseltine, or alternatively by MI5, to help the Tories in the election.

Heseltine is a devious, ruthless Tory politician who, as Minister of the Environment, can decide what happens in the DoE while keeping his own name out of it. MI5 are said to fear a Labour victory because their (illegal) files on Labour politicians might be exposed, and have been accused (*Private Eye*, 27th March) of leaking the story of the Duchess of York's marriage with the object of keeping economic news, which damages Tory election prospects, out of the newspapers.

A peaceful demo would attract little media attention. On the other hand a fight between demonstrators and police, which a ban might provoke, would drive economic news off the front pages of the Sunday papers on the Sunday before polling day.

It would also bring the anti-voting message to people who might otherwise never have thought of it, and let's face it, Labour and Liberal voters are more likely to take note of anarchist arguments than Tory voters. A slight trend to abstention could make a real difference to the result of this tight election.

The conspiracy and cock-up theories are both bizarre, but there must be a bizarre explanation for this remarkable and perhaps unprecedented event, the DoE banning a demo to which the police have no objection.



"I wish to Christ the election was over so that we could organise the demonstration"

## Mindless drongoes not wanted

With the literature from the Anti-Election Alliance comes a leaflet from the Class Struggle Anarchist Network which is worth quoting at length for the light it throws on what the AEA organisers intended in the banned demonstration.

The title is 'Daft behaviour on demo's can lead to this' (and a picture of a face behind bars). It says:

Stupid irresponsible behaviour (throwing

### DAFT BEHAVIOUR ON DEMO'S CAN LEAD TO THIS:



things at coppers when nothing is happening, being smart or abusive when shutting up or being polite would be more effective) can result in people getting arrested and ending up in prison. It can put people in dangerous situations that they shouldn't have to be in. It can result in injuries to people on our side who get caught up in the police reaction, or hit by the stuff badly thrown from too far away. It can end up with people arrested for no reason. If you are really sick of coppers, look for real ways of taking them on, collective action, not individual idiocy. There is a time and a place for class violence.

Most demo's involve people who do not want to fight with the police and there is no reason why they should.

Not only is it important to behave responsibly, it is important to challenge other people who behave irresponsibly. Too many people associate anarchism with mindless drongoes. If people see the only alternative to party politics as being a crowd of undisciplined idiots, what chance is there for real change? An anarchist section on a march is *not* a free-for-all section.

People will always look for a reason not to get involved in political activity, getting rid of anti-social behaviour is getting rid of one reason not to get involved.

Class Struggle Anarchist Network

## Poll Tax News from Scotland

The pressure is being increased on the non-payers of Grampian due to the increasing trend of non-payment. The region is down by £35.6 million, due to unpaid poll tax, for the three years it has now been in existence in Scotland, and most worrying for the regional council is that more than half of it is owed for the period 1991-92. More people falling behind and not paying has prompted a media campaign to 'encourage' payment and the beginning of legal proceedings.

Sequestration orders were granted against three people and we are told that 280 more are in the pipeline, and Strathclyde and Lothian are set to follow Grampian's example. The papers also warn that the 3,500 who owe three years worth will hear from the council soon. The newspaper articles are pathetic in their clumsy attempts to manipulate opinion and intimidate people into paying. Terms such as 'misguided' and 'sadly mistaken' are used in relation to non-payers. One story from the director of finance tells of a couple of non-payers paying up to avoid sequestration, one with £1,100 in cash and the other in 'substantial instalments each month' - for this read 'can't pay but want to pay', so it's not those who are suffering that are being hassled. The best bit from him warns that sequestration means that it is on public record that a person is bankrupt and that it can 'exclude someone from being a company director'.

Well, I don't know about you but I'm going to mend my evil ways, and fast, before I lose that directorship of ICI!

Flett

### Democracy's Dismal Decline

(continued from page 4)

Ironically, the prime minister who promised to reduce 'big government' achieved unprecedented concentrations of power, which appeared to overwhelm the traditional counter-weights. Trade unions, local councillors, regional leaders and maverick politicians have all lost influence under the Thatcher government, leaving the City, the Treasury and Downing Street without serious opposition.

That perhaps was the beauty of the Thatcher regime in that she managed to introduce a command structure of 'big government', while at the same time denouncing big government.

Mack the Knife

\*Anthony Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain*, 1992.

*The factory and beyond*

## Democracy's Dismal Decline

It's nice to see Margaret Thatcher on the election campaign trail! Now there's a politician for you – a politician who at least appeared to believe in something. Most of today's party hacks can't produce two ideas to knock together.

That is not to say the skilled politician should come to believe in what he tells us, anymore than an actor should lose himself in the script of a play. But at least they should have the imagination and talent to invent apparent differences of policy. Now the distinction between the parties is minimalist – this is the age of minimalism!

Of course, it could be argued that Mrs Thatcher in the end allowed herself to become too attached to her dream of a capitalist utopia. A streak of vanity, probably encouraged by her own arse-licking followers, led to undue delay in her recognising the danger stemming from the poll tax and adapting to the new situation.

Rhetoric is, of course, essential to the successful use of power, but the politician who lets it run away with him or her is lost.

### Parliamentary democracy

Nothing now seems capable, even Mrs Thatcher, of geeing-up this election. Yet the staleness of this election and our democratic leaders is echoed all round the advanced countries of the world. Only in backward or newly-emerging democracies is it possible to find men who are anything like decent – perhaps Havel or Yeltsin may strike us as having some kind of moral fibre and decency.

The main political parties in this election have performed like stonewalling batsmen at the crease, blocking every issue which may damage them. As Anthony Sampson\* has said: "The 1992 election campaign has shown how the two main parties can avoid any subject that embarrasses them". Mr Sampson hopes things will improve, speculating "... it

is possible that this election, by showing the narrowness and evasions of arguments at the centre, may give the final push towards creating a broader and more representative system".

This is a kind of wishful thinking for which I can see no obvious evidence to support. The problem with democracy from an anarchist point of view is that it has come to be identified directly with parliamentary government. Parliament will still equal democracy even after Parliament has destroyed democracy: in the same way that Bolshevik was still identified with the Soviets even after the Bolsheviks had done away with the Soviets.

### Democratic totalitarianism

It is arguable that what we have got in this country is a kind of 'democratic totalitarianism' or what the now Lord Hailsham called "elective dictatorship". Under Thatcher the rhetoric was democratic, but Mr Sampson says today: "... voters know their lives are influenced by forces far beyond the manifestos".

The manifestos of the two main parties as we know say very little – there is no big idea, as Paddy Ashdown has said. They have nothing to say! The spinning out of the case of the five-year-old girl in Labour's party political broadcast demonstrated the hollowness of party politics today.

But if Mr Sampson is right that the electors have rumbled the party politicians, and recognised the "limitations in the election campaign", then perhaps no amount of oratory, or rhetoric, or false promises may have helped to rescue the soul of parliamentary democracy.

The reason for this may be as Anthony Sampson suggests in his account of Britain in 1992: "The most pervasive change, I believe, has been the centralisation of power.

(continued on page 3)

## News from Northern Ireland

The question of advising people not to vote over here is a tricky one. Turning out the disaffected youth vote is particularly important in nationalist areas where a Sinn Fein candidate is running. And in unionist areas the DUP has to make sure it makes the necessary hard-core noises to differentiate itself from the Official Unionists it usually runs with. In a limited way the split in the votes within each community is on class lines. Most Sinn Fein votes are from the Catholic working class, most DUP votes from the protestant working class. The middle classes in the main stick with the SDLP and the Official Unionists. Then the Alliance Party, the Workers Party and the Greens pick up the scraps. The situation is tight on the ground, particularly in areas like West Belfast where a massive effort is being made to unseat Gerry Adams. And this time out we have the added ingredient of the local Conservatives campaigning on an anti-Anglo-Irish Agreement platform and calling for full integration within the UK, even as their own minister, Peter Brooke, champions the connection between the two governments.

And the real possibility of a hung parliament adds further spice to this election with the combined Unionists anxious to assure the Conservatives that they will be ready to do a deal if John Major finds himself with a minority government situation after 9th April.

But all of this is not why advising people not to vote is tricky over here. It's just that you can get a kicking, or worse, as a friend of mine found out after a few of us put up anti-voting posters in Derry a few years ago. It doesn't look like we'll do it this time

out. We'll continue to work in other ways, one of which is an internal discussion sheet circulating among half a dozen of us, supporting a public newsletter due out soon, while maintaining contacts with various groups outside of the Six Counties (*Freedom*, WSM and others). Election fever makes for a tricky time for anarchists!

The big issue for politicians over here now is who will have what seats after the election in order that power at the Talks Table can be sorted out. Hence the big push to oust Gerry Adams or at least lessen his majority. And the SDLP stand to lose Eddie McGready's seat in Down to a Unionist. However, a front page story in a recent *Ulster Newsletter* confirms what anarchists know only too well: that no matter what way things go here, it is the Big Boys in London who will call the shots. David Gilliland, former head of information services at Stormont, is reported to have made the comments on a radio programme that the thinking in Westminster and Whitehall is for presenting local politicians with the ultimatum that a devolved administration must be put in place here in, say, two years. He also reported serious distrust between civil servants in London and ones in Belfast prior to the arrival of direct rule. His remarks throw an interesting light on the experience of Northern Ireland as a neo-colonial situation, and they also highlight the reality that regardless of who gets into power, the mandarins in Whitehall will still be calling the shots.

Dave Duggan

# Church, State and Freedom

(continued from last issue)\*

### Work

Because it is in work that people expend most of their conscious time and energy, and because, for most people, their styles of life and their status in society depends on their work, it is here that we see most clearly the changes that have come about in the last two hundred years. Two hundred years ago nine-tenths of the population lived and worked on the land, so work was patterned by the seasons and the climate. Work was also seen to arise directly out of the needs of those who worked and could be directly affected by their energy and intelligence.

In consequence, since children partook of that work, discipline – the rational direction of thought and energy according to the task in hand – was acquired quite naturally in the course of work with experienced adults. Theory and practice went hand-in-hand: most work relied on the physical energy of men, women and animals so they worked in groups and relieved the tedium of repetitive work by songs, conversation and discussion about their own lives or by explanations to the younger members. Intelligence, knowledge and practical skill grew together as a matter of course.

The small towns and villages in which they lived were self-sufficient: they provided their own food, made their own cloth, built their own houses and imported only luxuries or special needs like iron and steel. Children could therefore see a coherent pattern in the life of their own community. Their parents, and they themselves as they took more part in that life, played necessary parts in that life and were valued. Their familiarity with all stages of work, from sowing the seed to eating the bread and from tending lambs to wearing the clothes woven from wool, meant that they developed habits

of foresight, rationality, responsibility and frugality because they were aware of the relationships between different types of work and the consequences for others of their own actions.

Today work has quite a different character. It takes place in factories, offices and institutions where specialisation effectively isolates the individual or small group from general knowledge of the work as if they were physically separated from their fellow workers. Most workers, with the exception of some artists or craftsmen, rarely take part in any other stage of production than their own. The man who casts engine blocks has nothing to do with engine assembly or testing; the bricklayer will rarely have seen a kiln; the milk roundsman almost certainly has never milked a cow. Very often the workman does not even know what his product will do. More and more the response of the worker in stopping a machine by pressing a button is in response to a red light rather than to his having observed a broken thread in a loom or a liquid appearing where it should not. The novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* describes how a machine operator has to rely on his own, largely erotic, fantasy world to pass the time while he goes through the mindless motions dictated by the machine. A go-slow or a strike can, for many, provide a welcome break in seemingly endless monotony.

The organisation of work is done by others; the financing of the work and the disposal of the products is done by those who are never seen by the workers – they may live abroad and be part of an international corporation. Further, because such workers own neither the tools they use nor the objects they produce, they cannot feel emotionally concerned in the work which, for them, is simply a way of earning the money they need to live or to do more interesting things in their leisure. They often have no contact with their fellow workers outside the workplace, so talk in the teabreak can only be about work, complaints, football or television. The coherence of life in which work, leisure, personal relationships, values and rationality flow together is not evident. Workers are

alienated, detached from work, detached from fellow workers and, in the end, detached from themselves, so that more and more have to take drugs or see an 'alienist' or, as we now call him, a psychotherapist.

Work, therefore, reinforces the disintegration of the psyche and makes possible the treatment of people as mere units to be manipulated like machines. People have become 'cogs in a machine' moved by forces beyond their control. Modern religions, using external authority – God – can now manipulate people in ways that were inconceivable before the era of radio and television. The Moonies and the mass suicide and multiple murders 'inspired' by God are not abnormal events totally set apart from general religious beliefs and practices: they are the logical, if extreme, result of the systems responsible for mass production man.

In Russia the church has been nominally abolished. In fact the church has been taken over by the state – the loving father and the provident mother. Instead of icons depicting the Holy Family, huge posters depict Lenin, the father of Soviet Russia, and the current Secretary of the Community Party. Techniques similar to those used in schools in Britain are used to impress on children the wisdom, power and goodness (especially the power) of the all-providing state. Pressures to conform are exerted not by physical punishment but on the parents through the trade unions to which they have to belong. Shame and guilt are used to discipline the child. Honours are conferred on those who conform. Membership of various organisations which provide camps, holidays, expeditions, are possible only for those who have demonstrated their 'goodness' in terms of acceptance of official doctrine.

Michael Duane

(to be concluded)

[Our apologies to Michael Duane and readers for not publishing the concluding section of his study, but the double-page spread on non-voting upset our plans – Editors]

\*Back issues of *Freedom* with the first two instalments of this study are available for £1 post-free.

## FREEDOM'S NON-VOTING 'MANIFESTO'

**Freedom has never fallen for the government's repeated assurances that there was no recession, a mere hiccup in the economy with prosperity just around the corner. On these two pages we reproduce headlines and short extracts from Freedom editorials in 1991, which might convince doubters that perhaps the anarchist analysis has proved to be more realistic than that of the 'well-informed' and primed media.**

### BUYING VOTES WITH EMPTY PROMISES

Though the actual elections are a year away the media have decided that the campaign for votes has started and the government are responding with Green and White Papers, mutual insults on the box and above all promising that the '90s will be a capitalist utopia for all, with public services leaving nothing to be desired. It's going to be a privatised 'from the womb to the tomb'.

Considering that the Tories have been continuously in office for the past twelve years it must seem extraordinary to simple folk that they have taken so long to realise that our public services are bad, not because they were nationalised\* but because they have been starved of funds and as a result services have had to be run down.

The Major government's discovery that we have a railway network that

could take thousands of long-haul lorries off the roads, far from deserving the applause by the sycophants in the media should have been received with derision. Apart from the influence at government level during the past decade of Thatcher, who boasted that she never travelled by train, the road lobby was and still is powerful in involving the oil barons, the motor car manufacturers, the road transport moguls, as well as the civil engineering industry. Therefore we are convinced that Mr Rifkind's 'bombshell' is only an electoral 'squib' which incidentally has already been seen as such by some on his own side.

15th June 1991

[Note that in June 1991 Freedom did not fall in with the media view that the elections would take place in June. Nor in November. We maintained that the government would go on as long as possible - which is the case.]

### 'Inflation below 6% in April'

... 'Business to get better'  
WE SHALL SEE

Who in their senses can take the opinion polls seriously? Every poll is of a different sample of people. If one were really to judge public opinion as it reacted to the antics of the government and the opposition parties, the sample should always be of the same group of people. But it isn't, and so in the same week *The Mail on Sunday* declared that the Tories were leading by one point while *The Observer* put Labour six points ahead. So what can you conclude from that?

By the end of March *The Sunday Times* had them both at 40% and gave its piece a three-line headline "Poll Brings Spring Tonic for Tories". We were also told that:

"Public confidence in the economic outlook is growing rapidly and ministers are now talking privately of inflation falling to below 6% in April. According to a poll carried out for *The Sunday Times* by Market & Opinion Research International (MORI), economic optimism has shown its biggest surge in a decade."

Had the date of the issue been 1st April and not 31st March we could have imagined that it was an April fool. But not at all. They quote a 'senior minister' as saying:

"The message that inflation is about to fall like a stone and the interest rates will fall with it is clearly registering. People realise that better times are ahead."

*The Guardian* (23rd March) has an eight-column headline "6% inflation expected by April", in spite of the fact that the figures released that day for February showed a decrease in the inflation rate from 9% to 8.9%. The optimism for the dramatic fall in March and April is "cheaper mortgages and the £4 billion budget subsidy to this year's poll tax bills" — no mention of 2½% increase in VAT and all the customs duties on petrol, beer, wine and spirits. And as some analysts point out, in February the inflation rate excluding home loans actually rose from 8.5% to 8.6%.

20th April 1991

### Forget about Thatcher and Heath THINK ABOUT UNEMPLOYMENT

The silly season has started with a vengeance, with the slanging match between the two ex-Prime Ministers with overweight egos, and with nothing to lose and only too happy to bask in the headlines favourable or otherwise for a brief half hour. For influence they have none. After all, both are ex-Prime Ministers, and both suffer from feelings of grandeur, which are encouraged by some sections of the media.

One report has it that Mrs Thatcher would turn down the job of Secretary General to the United Nations when the post comes vacant as not being 'important enough' for the lady. Another report assesses at £5 million the possible advance on her memoirs, and so on. And Heath is credited with the recent release of a British spy by Saddam Hussein.

All good political gossip to distract attention from the seriousness of the economic situation in this country, and what makes it worse is that the 'advanced' industrial countries are all feeling, more or less, the effects of the recession. So all talk of more investment in manufacturing, encouraged by a reduction in interest rates; more productivity and lower wage increases (except for top management); and a successful 'war' against inflation, is just wishful thinking. As anarchists have been repeating *ad nauseam* productive capacity in advanced capitalist countries far exceeds demand. So it is pointless to seek to increase efficiency, productivity — and thereby production — unless production is reduced by the 'inefficient' producers going to the wall. And this means more unemployed, and more unemployed means less purchasing power for them and their families which results in more shops, office workers, salesman, joining the unemployed and the process is repeated once again.

29th June 1991

### There are three kinds of lies: LIES, DAMNED LIES AND STATISTICS

In the past months we have been bombarded by the Government with all three in good measure. The official opposition has responded in kind. But on balance, however, the Government won hands down — to prove that the bigger the lies, the more phoney the statistics, if repeated often enough could become the 'truths' of the day. Unfortunately for the Government, some of the statistics can be checked by people's daily experience.

It was to be expected that the Monmouth debacle for the Tories would produce the "ferocious Tory attack in wake of by-election defeat" (*The Independent*, 18th May), "Major accuses Labour of lying" and the battle of words by the media depending on their own prejudices goes on. What is so obvious from observing the Parliamentarians at work is that they don't debate but simply make statements, rattle off statistics, and needless to say, we are always being told by the Government how much better the Health Service is compared with when Labour was in office — that is twelve years ago! Who can check on what they say? For instance, they say that more money in real terms is poured into the service now but without knowing how many people were treated then and now, and one would also need to know how many had major operations and how many were old folk, mental patients, or how many just went in to have a wisdom tooth extracted! What does matter is that about one million people are waiting to have hospital treatment, some are having to wait a year or more. So clearly not enough money is being invested in what is in fact the National Sickness Service (who will come up with a project investing in health?)

1st June 1991

### YOU'RE NOT RICH ON £400 A WEEK and that's OFFICIAL ... Chancellor Lamont

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Norman Lamont, during a recent business visit to Washington confidently declared at a press conference that recovery from the recession is "around the corner" (his actual words, not ours) and will come sooner than the CBI and other business lobbies have predicted. He also "gave a broad hint", according to *The Independent's* Washington correspondent, that another cut in interest rates could be in the offing and actually said that "as and when inflation falls there may be flexibility on interest rates". All this was pure electoral propaganda — with the local elections of 2nd May in view — for not a day passes but that some large enterprise announces redundancies, and the sackings and bankruptcies among the small fry are obviously considered of no public interest. The unemployment figures for April are not available as we write, but one need not be an 'expert' to prophesy that yet another 100,000 people will join the queue of the unemployed. But then of course the 'experts' will point out that the increase in unemployment will 'inevitably' continue even when the economy has 'bottomed out', implying that it cannot get worse — though they never explain why this should be so.

Nor, for instance, Lamont's contention that only a few weeks had passed since the cuts in interest rates and the 'big impact' on consumer spending had yet to be felt.

18th May 1991

### Prosperity is always round the corner. Meanwhile 2,000,000 UNEMPLOYED

If one bothered to look up the newspaper files for the last four years or so one would read all kinds of predictions by experts in commerce and industry and by the economists, no less than by the government, that we were going through a difficult period but that all would be well 'next year' (*Mañana* as the Spaniards would say). Interest rates would come down, inflation too and the balance of trade would improve.

The only thing the government had succeeded in doing was to reduce unemployment from the high levels it had created in the early '80s in reducing the inflation rate from 15% at one point to a mere 5%. Then in the mid-eighties the problem was to reduce unemployment which it succeeded in doing partly by fiddling the books (all kinds of schemes to take people off the register) but also by encouraging the banks, the building societies — the money lenders — to lash out and encourage a spending spree which was fun while it lasted but resulted in inflation going up again to nearly 11% while interest rates also shot up to 14%.

The spending spree also had its effect on the Balance of Payments. In 1989 Britain imported more than it exported to the tune of £20 billion in a year. More significantly and as a direct result of the spending spree, for the first time in its history this country imports more manufactured goods than it exports.

23rd March 1991

### AND WHO 'RUNS' THE TORIES?

In the same week as the Tory chairman Chris Patten and that permanently sneering Minister of Employment, Michael Havard, were unveiling for the press the first of their anti-Labour Party nationwide poster campaign 'Who Runs the Labour Party', *The Sunday Times* (15th September) splashed across its front page "Greek tycoon gives secret £2 million to Tory Party". A week later the press reported another secret donation for the Tories, this time about £100,000 from a Hong Kong multi millionaire.

This has not been good propaganda for the Tories for a number of reasons. Both the Greek and the Chinese are stinking rich and are very much involved with the 'top people'. For instance, in August the Greek loaned his 400-foot yacht to Prince Charles and Di. His political association with the Colonels in Greece doesn't go down too well among some Tories. As to the Hong Kong man, he obviously has an interest in big business in the UK. His acquisitions include no less than the very successful Felixtowe Docks. Perhaps with an eye to the future (with Hong Kong going to China in 1997) our Tory Hong Kong man is talking of settling in this country. He obviously has done very well in the colony, which has only just allowed the natives to have a vote — and in a Parliament of 60 seats, 20 are by the vote, 20 are appointees by the business tycoons, and 20 by the Governor. Long live British democracy!

Obviously anarchists have been pointing out for a long time that politics is corrupt, and the more established it is, the more corruption goes from top to bottom.

5th October 1991

### Scrap the armed forces we don't need, BUILD THE HOUSES WE DO!

With 'detente' between East and West being official, some recognition of the new *status quo* had to be shown by even a token reduction in the arms racket. Fortunately for the hard-liners the Middle East crusade by the West for gallant little Kuwait has added justification for proceeding with caution on a wholesale disarmament programme. After all, you never know when the Iraqi dictator might want to invade Britain. We must be prepared for all such eventualities!

There has been a lot of talk about reducing the armed forces by some 40,000, but more time is being spent arguing about whether historic regiments can be scrapped or should they be pruned. The media have even dragged the Queen into this burning topic. She appears to be a Hussar (or some such regiment) fan and would like to see them retained. Surely the war business should be made of sterner stuff!

Meanwhile, for political reasons we suspect, the War Ministry awarded a £400 million contract for tanks to Vickers, thereby saving some jobs. Will these Mark 2 tanks simply get worn out playing war games against an imaginary enemy like their Mark 1 predecessors?

The Labour Party, were it to be more concerned with making good use of taxpayers' money than with appearing to defend jobs in the shipyards and armament factories, would propose a drastic cut in so-called defence and use the money saved to launch a massive house building programme for the public sector — not for sale but to rent. They should also use their powers to take over unoccupied houses (about 600,000 privately-owned properties are estimated to be empty), houses in disrepair and available land for housing at existing use values. As well as providing housing for the homeless it would also have a salutary effect on house prices and rents in the private sector in the future.

12th July 1991

### 60,000 MORE ON THE DOLE ... but prosperity is round the corner

Government ministers aided and abetted by the capitalist media go on suggesting that the recession is 'bottoming out'. All the evidence is to the contrary.

The fall in the interest rate will benefit tycoons like Maxwell and Murdoch who owe the money lenders more than £1,000 million each. For them ½ of 1% puts £500,000 in their respective pockets, but for the mortgage payers it does very little.

What it does not do, which is the government's theory about reduction in interest rate, is to release more spending power. Ask any mortgage payer (other than the stinking rich who have mortgages because they then save on income tax) and they will tell you that any savings will be used to reduce their repayments and not to lash out on 'spending'.

The media parroting government statements about retail spending going up by a percentage point in August are suggesting that this indicates an upturn in the economy. In the same breath we are told that another 60,000 have lost their jobs, that pay increases have gone down, which to our simple minds means that an awful lot of people have less money to spend. So how come that the statisticians tell us that retail spending has gone up?

21 September 1991

### ELECTION FEVER WHERE?

We are being told daily that the country is 'gripped' by the 'election fever'. That is by the media. We ordinary citizens are bored stiff by speculations that have been going on for most of the year as to when the Prime Minister would 'go to the country'. All the hack journalists were giving 'well-informed' reasons, first why the elections would take place in June, then as June came uncomfortably close, some said October, and now it's November, while others are hedging their bets and saying it won't be until next April or May!

In *Freedom* we stuck our necks out a long time ago suggesting 1992, and we have no reason to change our view, which is not based on any inside information direct from the man who will decide, or from any of his minions.

First of all we are of the opinion that politicians are much less concerned with the well-being of their countrymen than with the feeling of power that comes with office. And apparently we are not alone in holding such views. Peter Hennessey, writing in *The Independent* (23rd September) on 'talented response to the business of good government' opens quoting a friend, "a leading British psychologist", who

"subscribes to a thesis, as depressing as it is alarming, that there is something psychologically wrong with people who have a strong compulsion to wield power over others. It is a scientific version of the view attributed to a former Home Secretary, the late Gwilym Lloyd George, that: 'Politicians are like monkeys. The higher they climb up the tree, the more revolting are the parts they expose'."

5th October 1991

### LYING: THE ART OF GOVERNMENT

Of course the Government would privatise the Health Service if it felt that it could get away with it — electorally. Tories of conviction — not just *anybody* who votes Tory because they think that they will be better off under Tory rule — *really believe that the yardstick for efficiency is profit* and that private enterprise is invariably more efficient (that is, more profitable) than public. And so by that definition of efficiency they are always right, for no private enterprise would operate if there were no profit to be made at the end of the year.

The Tories have privatised all the profitable public services. They are all making more and more profits and the top men are paying themselves ever larger salaries. There are still a number, not so profitable, which they have made clear will be up for sale if they are returned at the next elections: the railways, the coal mines, more main post offices, just to mention three in the news. The maintenance of the Royal Parks is also due for some scheme of privatisation. Perhaps even the Royal Family will be privatised. They would certainly be more profitable than they are at present to the taxpayer.

Our argument is that if the Government maintains that private enterprise is invariably more efficient — both as far as service and costs are concerned — *then why have they not privatised the Health Service and education?*

Surely the answer is that all the soundings of public opinion show that the vast majority want a free service in health and education, and the Government is not sure that they could rely on British apathy to get away with out-and-out privatisation. Nevertheless, they have been introducing privatisation by stealth.

16th November 1991

### ELECTORAL CIRCUS BACK IN TOWN

Politicians, no less than the media, rely on people having short political memories. Weeks ago the political commentators 'in the know', with their ears to the ground, were assuring us that it would be a June general election. They thought the poll tax was out of the way (which it isn't) and the recession was bottoming out and unemployment didn't matter (we shall see) and that the local elections wouldn't be too bad for the government, especially with the support of the millionaire media. Well, let's jog those short memories.

16th May 1991

*"Governments create nothing and have nothing to give except what they have first taken away."*

Winston Churchill  
(Birmingham, 11th November 1903)

### The political jugglers, magicians and clowns have come and gone WHY TRUST THE POLITICIANS?

Television allows the idle rich, the unemployed, mothers and their infants, as well as the retired citizens of this country, to observe the antics of the politicians as they hold their annual circuses; where the trapeze artists, the magicians, the jugglers and the clowns perform to the delight of the applauding 'delegates' (the Tories have no delegates, only representatives and they don't count).

This writer has observed and listened to them with varying degrees of disgust. Obviously by definition anarchists haven't all that much time for politicians. But what makes the whole spectacle more disgusting is that *neither have the politicians!* Liberal, Labour, Tory shadow ministers and real ministers devoted

part of their speeches to denouncing their opposite numbers as *liars*, as *power seekers*, as *incompetents*, as *inefficient*, as *second rate*. There was no limit to the insults that they hurled at each other. It should be stressed, however, that the Tory Ministers, especially the Employment Secretary Michael Howard and the Chancellor Norman Lamont, went far beyond anything hurled at them by way of insults by the opposition parties. And the grinning John Major clapped and led the standing ovation for both.

Perhaps in an anarchist paper there is no need to point out that these politicians are all actors repeating their lines prepared for them by the speech writers for the occasion. But there is no question that both the quality of speeches from the platform of the two major parties, as well as the interviews in the lobbies, do reveal the Tories as being the biggest liars without a doubt. Michael Howard, interviewed after his speech, lied with gusto and his interviewer either hadn't the arguments or the courage to call this smarmy, wealthy lawyer-turned-politician a liar of the first order.

What anarchists cannot understand is that something like 70% of adults entitled to vote actually do so for people who denounce each other as liars and as being quite incapable of running the country's affairs!

Why don't we all start to think about how to run our own lives without the politicians?

19th October 1991

### The government's autumn statement BUYING VOTES

To nobody's surprise the Chancellor, in his autumn statement, has produced a few billion pounds to prop up the NHS, to add a lick of paint to the public transport system as well as a generous hand-out for law and order, and of course more funds — not to increase 'benefits' for the unemployed but for 'benefits' for the *ever-growing number* of unemployed. He appears to have fooled nobody — not even the media, the most gullible consumers of government prosperity hand-outs.

Where is the money coming from? Well, there's £3 billion from the government's piggy-bank — reserves for just such a situation, said the Chancellor. And there's £8 billion from anticipated sales of the family silver (sales of 25% of British Telecom shares held by the government) plus a bit more borrowing, which by the end of this year will amount to £10 billion. This is nothing compared with the 'experts' estimates of £20 billion for 1992.

Yet the government still maintains that it is intending to cut taxes "when the moment is right" — and everybody is betting that the right moment will be the March Budget as a sweetener for the forthcoming elections.

It's obvious that the government believes in repeating the same lies day after day hoping that, like mass advertising, people's reflexes will be conditioned favourably when the time comes for us to put our crosses so that others can run our lives for us.

Political memories are short. We anarchists must never stop reminding people of the duplicity and cynicism of all politicians.

16th November 1991

### THATCHER'S WEALTH PRODUCERS

As we go to press the October trade figures have been published showing that imports exceeded exports by £800 million. It would appear that the adjusted deficit for the three months to October is some £2,000 million, larger than forecast thanks to a bit of fiddling of the books in August and September which made the situation for those months seem brighter (or not as bad) than it really was.

At the same time the pound sterling has hit an all time low against the Deutsche mark which some city 'experts' believe might lead to the government having to increase interest rates. Meanwhile the Bank of England is intervening by mopping up some of the surplus sterling in the market with some of their reserves of Deutsche marks and pesetas. One of the causes of the currency 'crisis' is that when sterling was riding high, speculators were buying Deutsche marks and pesetas because they were low. In clearing the surplus marks and pesetas — just like in any capitalist market — there were more pounds sterling available and less of the other two, sterling became cheaper and the other two increased in value. And the speculators went into reverse and bought back more sterling with the same amount of foreign currency than they had started with!

These are Thatcher's wealth producers. When she was passionately defending our 'sovereignty' in the recent two day debate in the Commons, her main attack was on the idea of a single currency for Europe. And it was only on this issue that she called for a referendum.

The majority of people in Europe couldn't care less whether we had the ecu or sterling or francs or Deutsche marks as our currency. But imagine how the speculators in currency would feel about it. The London money market is the largest in the world. Something like \$69,000 million a day are shuffled around the world from London. And there are a lot of dealers, speculators, not to mention governments, who do very well most times, and especially when there are 'crises'.

30th November 1991

# Class Struggles

Divided Societies: class struggle in contemporary capitalism

by Ralph Miliband

Oxford University Press, 1989 (paperback 1991), £7.99

When I was a student at the LSE in the 1970s, Ralph Miliband was a great drawing card, and to hear his lectures you generally had to go early to find a seat. He was always impressive. Not until a few months ago did I see him again, when he appeared on television to discuss the demise of the Soviet Union. He then surprised the interviewer by suggesting that to equate the Soviet system with socialism was a bit like identifying the inquisition with Jesus – and he reaffirmed his Marxism. His latest book, now in paperback, is reminiscent of the book he published over two decades ago, *The State in Capitalist Society* (1969), though in this new book he not only provides a useful analysis of contemporary capitalism but also offers suggestions for the creation of a socialist 'alternative'.

Miliband's study is essentially a reaffirmation of the importance of class analysis, given the understanding that what characterises the contemporary world is an economic system, euphemistically called the 'market' – but better described as capitalism – which is intrinsically exploitative, based as it is on a class hierarchy and on the appropriation of surplus value from the direct producers – working people. Class struggles are thus inherent in the system, and various forms of domination and coercion are also intrinsic to it. The notion that in advanced capitalism the working class has disappeared, or that we have become a 'classless' society, or that class has become a redundant concept, are ideas that Miliband fervently challenges – and what he has to say has a good deal more substance, as well as being more easily understood, than the musings of those post-modernist gurus Baudrillard and Lyotard.

The book has four essential themes. The first is that although contemporary class structure is indeed complex, a dominant class can be discerned, a corporate elite that has substantial control over the economy and over systems of communication. Following Wright Mills he argues that this corporate power forms a

partnership with state power, and although capital and the state can be seen as relatively autonomous, ultimately the state is the protector of the capitalism-dominated social order.

A second theme is that because capitalism is a class structure, class struggles have always been an intrinsic part of capitalism, and Miliband examines the two agencies of working people that have expressed the class struggle 'from below' – trade unions and political parties. Noting that both these agencies of the working class have an 'ambiguous' nature, Miliband discusses the great 'splits' in the working class movement that have occurred this century, focusing particularly on Russia and Germany. He thus discusses the division between the 'reformist' tendencies that sought improvements within the existing system, mainly through electoral and parliamentary struggle (the social democrats) and the revolutionary tendencies that focus around some vanguard party, and suggest the need for a radical transformation through extra-parliamentary struggle (the communists). Like many Marxists, Miliband thus completely ignores those class struggles – by anarchists, syndicalists and non-Marxist socialists – that eschew both these alternatives.

A third theme is to link working class struggles to the new social movements that have emerged during the last decades, the most notable, from a radical perspective, being feminism, anti-racism, ecology and peace movements, and movements for sexual liberation. Miliband stresses the importance of these movements, and argues that they must form a part of any emancipatory project worthy of the name. Nevertheless, he also argues that the working class has a certain 'primacy' in that any fundamental challenge to the existing order must incorporate a class dimension. In discussing issues of race, gender and ecology, Miliband suggests that three tendencies often seem to emerge within these radical social movements – a *reformist* tendency which advocates reforms within the existing structures of capitalism, a *radical* tendency which advocates a separatist strategy, and a *socialist* tendency which suggests that issues relating to race, gender and ecology must be combined with class struggles. And it is this third strategy that Miliband himself advocates.

The fourth theme Miliband discusses is the class struggle 'from above'. He has some illuminating things to say on the cold war, suggesting that the fundamental source of conflict since the Second World War has not been the international rivalry between the USSR and the United States, but rather the way that US imperialism has relentlessly waged against all the forces of national independence, reform and revolution throughout the world. The nuclear arms race was, in essence, a counter-revolutionary crusade. He details the multivarious ways in which capitalist hegemony has been sustained – through agencies like the IMF and the World Bank; through US intervention in many parts of the world (Italy, Greece, Guatemala, Chile, etc.); through propaganda and the creation of an 'enterprise' culture with an emphasis on such 'virtues' as competition, efficiency, individualism and the 'cult of nationalism'; and through political repression and attacks on left radicals and trade unions, who are either silenced, marginalised, or integrated into the system as the junior allies of capital in a 'corporate' state. We are now subject, he feels, to a "gigantic enterprise in indoctrination" as corporate power reaches into every aspect of our lives. Any dissent from the official ideology, particularly any attacks on the

capitalist system or the state structures that support it, is now seen as either eccentric, perverse or subversive. Alarming, to many people, even socialists and radicals, capitalism has come to be conceived as the only possible reality.

But Miliband argues that the ideologies of capitalism are by no means total, and that there is no need at all to abandon conceptual notions – like that of class – that the socialist movement has developed and nurtured over the last hundred years in order, as it were, to come to terms with the "new realities" of contemporary capitalism – for we are still faced with the same old capitalist system. Moreover, he suggests, we have to understand that radical alternatives to capitalism are not simply the idle dreams of a few alienated intellectuals, but are rather generated by the capitalist system itself. Class struggles will therefore inevitably continue to erupt in the coming decades, whatever the apologists and supporters of capitalism may envisage or hope for. The question is, how to harness these struggles from below in order to engender a radical transformation of society. Miliband rejects both the social democratic and the Marxist-Leninist approach (still sustained by organisations like the SWP), and appears to accept the classical Marxist approach to state socialism – which he describes as socialist democracy. Thus, he writes, a radical transformation will not come until "the mass

parties of the left are able and willing to speak and act as parties committed to the advancement of 'reformist' practices and struggles within the perspective of a fundamental transformation of the social order." (page 223)

This will involve three essential features: First, the dissolution of private property and all concentrations of economic power, so that all productive capital comes under some form of social ownership. Secondly, and linked with this, the eradication of all disparities in wealth and income, and of all forms of discrimination. And finally, the creation of a partnership between state power and popular power. Like a true Marxist, though eschewing the Leninist strategy of a vanguard party, Miliband nevertheless envisages the continued existence of the state – whose future role and function is never clearly specified, other than to "constitute a check on the power of popular institutions and agencies"! On whose behalf we may well ask? Thus, although providing us with an extremely useful analysis of capitalism, Miliband's vision of the future is essentially a restatement of the Marxist project of state socialism. As there is now afoot in academia, especially among with-it economists, arguments and proposals for a new benign form of capitalism – one that doesn't involve the exploitation of people and the degradation of the environment – so Miliband would appear to be suggesting a benign form of 'state power', which serves no interests but the common good. The problem of this Rousseauesque conception of the state, whether seen as the embodiment of the 'general will' or as the dictatorship of the proletariat, was long ago broached by Bakunin in his disputes with Marx. But such problems are lost on Miliband.

Brian Morris

## Anarchists in the media

On a recent press release related to the Anti-Election Alliance's activities leading up to this election 'farce', it stated their intention to participate within the discussion as regards non-voting on 'Def II's Reportage' programme. I have it that 'World in Action' were also interested in covering the anarchist viewpoints of non-voting.

On both programmes the anarchist view was entirely non-existent. One would have hoped, considering the anarchists' wish to receive such media attention, that there would have been a little more enthusiasm from the anarchist movement. As it was, there existed only a minute anarchist presence on 'Reportage' (18th March), apparent only by Class War T-shirts worn by two members of the audience who, it seemed, did not participate at all in what was screened.

'World in Action' (23rd March) meanwhile was entirely devoid of anarchist perspectives on non-voting. Although the programme covered non-voting as a result of people not registering for the poll tax and finished with an unknown song containing the lyric: "Whoever you vote for the government always gets in", neither anarchist perspectives nor anarchists spoke directly on this programme.

It is quite likely, in respect of recent media interest in anarchist views on non-voting (precipitated by their telephoning *Freedom* – Susan O'Keefe, 'World in Action' researcher – and others in order to talk to anarchists) that non-participation is the reason behind anarchists not being represented.

Obviously, by the very nature of the way in which the media (especially television and radio) works it is intimidating and one needs to be both articulate and concise in putting across various points of view. However, considering the increasing size of the anarchist movement, such individuals must surely exist.

To disseminate anarchist views only in anarchist publications is surely preaching to the converted.

Rob

## Food for Thought ... and Action

Recent additions to Freedom Bookshop stock

*Lib Ed\** number 19, summer '92, a magazine for the liberation of learning. This issue contains a four-page pullout on 'Greening Your School', 'Illich and Anarchy' (deschooling theory meets anarcho-communism), 'Curriculum Cop' (a satirical piece on a day in the life of Education Secretary Kenneth Clarke), articles on bullying and child abuse in schools, and one on racial and sexual prejudice in polytechnics, plus six pages of book reviews. Recommended. A4 magazine, 24 pages, £1.00.

*The ABC of Anarchism\** by Alexander Berkman, Freedom Press Anarchist Classics series. First the bad news: this title has gone out of print. Now the good news: it has just been reprinted! Even as the last dozen copies were being sold the new copies arrived from the binders. Unchanged except for the sexy new pale blue cover, this is the eleventh printing of the Freedom Press edition first issued in 1942 – it was first published in the USA in 1929. The continuing demand for this "minor classic" (George Woodcock) flies in the face of criticism by some that it is dull and stuffy and by other that it is out of date. The reason for the continual reprinting is quite simply that it remains one of the best, and cheapest, introductions to the ideas of anarchist-communism in English. 86 pages and still at the ridiculous price of £2.00.

*What is Communist Anarchism?\** by Alexander Berkman, Phoenix Press. Effectively part one of what was published in the USA – along with *The ABC of Anarchism* – as *Now and Then: the ABC of communist anarchism*. It makes for good complementary reading with the Freedom Press title. 117 pages, £3.00.

*The Mass Psychology of Fascism* by Wilhelm Reich, Souvenir Press. The previous British edition of this, one of Reich's most important works, was dated 1972, so this is a good time to see a reprint, with the apparent resurgence of fascist 'ideas' in both western and eastern Europe. A chapter on the origins and meaning of the swastika is also included. 400 pages, £7.99.

More good news. Freedom Press Distributors now have a distribution agreement with ASP Publishers, which means that we can now offer all their titles post-free inland and 10% cheaper than previously overseas (see below). This includes:

*Anarchy in the USSR\** (Philip Ruff, £3.00)  
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*Cuba: the anarchists and liberty\** (Frank Fernandez, 75p)  
*Revolutionary Unionism in Latin America: the FORA in Argentina\** (Yerril and Rosser, £1.50)  
*The Tragedy of Spain\** (Rocker, now £2.00)  
*The Methods of Anarcho-syndicalism\** (Rocker, 50p)  
*Libertarian Communism\** (Puente, 75p)  
*The IWA Today\** (Longmore, 50p)  
*Marxism and a Free Society\** (Graham, 50p).

*Workers' Solidarity* number 34, spring '92 (WSM). News, views and analysis from across the Irish Sea including a section on world anarchist news and statistics on the numbers of people killed by the various terrorist groups last year (including 'security' forces). 20 pages, 75p.

*Bird of Prey\** by Steve Tasane and Carly Dreyfuss, Clubman Books. Described as a novel about sexual abuse, this book has an introduction by Michael Moorcock who writes: "It is a genuinely realistic novel which speaks brilliantly for itself. It addresses one of the crucial issues of our time ... This book offers hope. To many it could well offer a signpost to freedom". Cheaply though presentably produced, this book was apparently turned down by ten leading UK publishers. Highly contentious material. 194 pages, £2.00.

*The Dispossessed* by Ursula Le Guin has gone up in price to £3.99.

KM

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# ON VOTING ...

Dear Editors,  
Freedom has been brilliant at drawing attention to the evils of the capitalist system, represented by the Conservative party in this country. Now I receive your pamphlet urging me not to vote and send for further copies to persuade others to do the same. Surely some inconsistency somewhere?

I know Labour, as represented by its present leadership, is not going to get rid of capitalism but at least they will make life better for the poor and dispossessed. We have an undemocratic electoral system, but that will only be changed by getting rid of this government and *present* that can only be done by voting. Not voting achieves nothing.

So vote for the party most likely to eject the Conservatives, i.e. vote tactically for whichever party is most likely to defeat their candidate in your constituency.

To say, as your pamphlet does, that "to vote is to surrender" and means we have consented to government decisions which are wrong, e.g. spending on nuclear weapons, is of dubious logic. You say "act instead of voting". I say act by voting.

P.A.T. Clarke

Dear Freedom,  
It is naive to think that a large number of voters will not vote in the coming election. By urging people not to vote you are electing the Labour or Tory parties who have a loyal and blind support. Surely it would be more sensible to vote for the party which will move towards devolution of power and proportional representation. In England it would be the Liberal Democrats, in Scotland probably the SNP.

We know government and the state is a disaster, but we will never persuade enough people in a nation of fifty million to see it that way. It is a waste of valuable time, money and effort to try.

If we want an anarchic society it's time to act out our desires and ideas on a local basis and hope that others follow our example when they see it working. This means land reform and a return to 'peasant agriculture' as advocated by John Seymour in the *Ultimate Heresy*.

Power over one's life surely means a large degree of self-sufficiency and less reliance on specialists and experts to provide everyday needs like food and clothing. Anarchy and cities would seem to be mutually exclusive, because of the total dependence of city dwellers on subsistence provided by others both in Britain and abroad. Enter the multinationals who are almost as

powerful and even more insidious and destructive as government.

Isn't it about time to lay down the pen and pick up the spade, to stop debating and start acting.

John Rogerson

Dear Editors,  
I have to protest! If you keep publishing letters like Melville Thompson's you shall soon be only deserving social democrats! Again the same doubts? The views expressed show faulty doctrine, same in spirit of resistance and political analysis. Must we contest it all from the

start? Are we to embark on state politics and not keep abstention as a deterrent? What about public opinion, criticism, autonomous organising? There is a world begging for answers which will be denied if we lack principles to set out from.

Struggling against the very system we live in does bring weariness and perils of yielding to outer sophistry. Which is not separable from neglecting certain issues. With this in mind let us try and keep *Freedom* a bastion of anarchy.

Albert Passos  
Portugal

## ... and the editors' reply

Our correspondent Melville Thomson (7th March 1992), although claiming to be an anarchist, advocated tactical voting (for the Labour Party) and justified his position by claiming firstly that he did not accept that one should not vote "on principle" and, secondly, that a Labour government would be more likely than a Conservative government to follow 'the principles' of socialism.

Now we have received two further letters advocating tactical voting, the one from P.A.T. Clarke who urges us to vote Labour on the grounds that a Labour government will (so he informs us) "make life better for the poor and dispossessed", and the other from John Rogerson who urges us to vote, if we live in England, for the Liberal Democrats and if we live in Scotland - and although writing from an address in Scotland he isn't too sure about it - for the Scottish Nationalist Party, on the grounds that these parties will "move towards the devolution of power".

So, 'you pays your money and you takes your choice', depending on whether your propensity is for bigger welfare cheques or greater liberty for the individual, and on the extent to which you swallow the promises made in the election manifestos, which is after all what parliamentary politics is all about.

We do not doubt Thomson's sincerity but we have to point out that it is not voting as such that anarchists object as a matter of principle, but to voting for one or another of the candidates in parliamentary elections. If it were a case of a body of people deciding on some

joint action, an anarchist in a trade union meeting for example might well vote in favour of going on strike: the situation being one in which a precondition of action is that all agree to abide by a majority decision, but in that case the matter would be one of tactics not of principle.

If anarchism is a matter of *principle* then the principle must be that it is beneath the dignity of free men to submit to rulers. If that is so, then it is absurd to vote for rulers, regardless of the rival claims those would-be rulers make for our allegiance.

Clarke praises *Freedom's* "brilliance" in depicting the evils of capitalism "represented by the Conservative Party" but his reading seems to have been selective: we have been at pains to point out that *socialism cannot be introduced by parliamentary means*. No inconsistency!

Rogerson supposes us to be naive in thinking that our 'Don't Vote' campaign will be supported by a large number of people. We have indeed argued that anarchism will not be possible unless a

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

## Sack the editorial writer?

Dear Freedom,  
I am really puzzled by the front page article in *Freedom*, 22nd February, entitled 'Democracy Begins at Home'. I always thought *Freedom* was an anarchist paper and that anarchism was something different from democracy. This lead article would have us believe differently.

Democracy is a form of government. So, how does that square with anarchism whose central principle is that government is evil and should be abolished? Clearly democracy is a far better form of government than an oligarchy or a dictatorship, but democracy still entails rule of one select group over all, the use of force compel obedience, and decision by majority vote. (Indeed, as *Freedom* has itself often pointed out, it is only occasionally majority vote since most democratically elected officials receive only a plurality of the vote cast. But this point aside, anarchists have criticised majority voting decisions because they so readily involve repression of the minority. Anarchists have favoured consensus or 'sense of the

meeting' especially on matters of basic policy.)

Your article states that there can only be democracy where there is equality. Does this mean that the aim of anarchism is an egalitarian democratic government? Ridiculous!

The article goes on to state that "government today exists to protect an unequal society". When did any other kind of government ever exist? I thought that was a first lesson in anarchism.

The piece concludes with the statement: "Democracy means equality with individuality". If this vague slogan applies to any ideology it applies to anarchism not democracy.

I am concerned that if *Freedom* aims to appeal to the general public it should above all not confuse anarchism with democracy and it definitely should not advocate democracy. I can only assume that somehow this article was published because it inadvertently slipped by the editors. Therefore, I would suggest that more care be taken in future to ensure that such rubbish either be relegated to the letters to the editors page or the waste basket.

Harold Barclay

The editorial writers is of the opinion that our friend has missed the whole point of the article. What do readers think? - Editors

larger number of people are imbued with the spirit of liberty, but to say "a larger number" does not imply a majority of the population. For as we have written elsewhere: "the power of the state lies in the acquiescence of the overwhelming majority of the population. Privilege for the few will remain as long as the majority accept it as the normal state of affairs, inequality will remain as long as too few people believe in equality, power will remain in few hands as long as the people continue to believe they are powerless".

Now, if a large enough minority are prepared to opt for freedom they will surely be followed by a sufficient number of the apathetic majority, once enough of that majority see the possibilities of liberty.

Many argue that anarchism is possible only in peasant communities; that it is inapplicable to the conditions of a modern industrial society. We would argue that such a society, which holds the potential of abundance for all, were it freed from a political system built on

privilege for a minority, makes anarchism more relevant than ever.

The choice is not, as Rogerson seems to believe, between urbanisation and "the simple life", for power and privilege can exist as well in small as in large communities - hence devolution and proportional representation have no appeal to anarchists - but between using such technical knowledge as we have for the good of all, or for the benefit of a privileged minority. Rogerson advocates our laying down our pen and picking up our spades. While he might well take his own advice, may we point out that it is possible to do both - to think as well as to act.

A number of contributions have had to be held over until our next issue.

## Different circumstances for children

Dear Editors,  
Amorey Gethin (*Freedom*, 7th March 1992) reiterates his lack of faith in teacher training courses and the education system in general. In his own area, TEFL, there may be vast areas of uncertainty, but the evidence that exists strongly suggests that teachers benefit from teacher training and that language learners benefit from teaching. This seems contrary to what he supposes and I will gladly refer him to reviews if he doubts it - here is perhaps not the place.

The current political debate in Britain certainly does not have anything to do with any ideas Amorey might have. On-the-job training is designed to shield teachers from the progressive elements of a pedagogic tradition. It is a poorly conceived cost-cutting exercise, which appeals to popular prejudices (media inspired) against the teaching profession and a return to a more authoritarian style of teaching. The National Curriculum is a move to place epistemological concerns more in the hands of the state - and away from the locality, the teachers and children concerned. My own other area of interest is music education, and there some of its most ludicrous results have recently emerged in the shape of proposals for a music curriculum.

I feel we have two realistic options open to us. Either we become involved in the debates which concern most people and fight to keep alive and further the trends which seem most enlightened. Or, if we cannot bear to sully our hands in the system as it exists, then get out and start something new. But calls to abolish the education system are as good as sounding our own death knell. Insistence on anarchists dreamland will ultimately entail losing our voice and with that our dignity.

Tim Francis

## Anti-voters poll share drops

Dear Editors,  
Two issues of *Freedom* ago, the proportion of poll respondents who say they do not intend to vote had never (since records began) fallen below 7%, and had risen to 9% in a recent poll. In an ICM poll carried out on 24th March (*The Guardian*, 25th March), it fell to its lowest ever 4%. Random fluctuation I hope.

DR

## News from Angel Alley

been sent out for all subscriptions which expired in January, February or March. We shall be cutting off subscriptions that expired in January - refer to your address label, 5301 or 5302 - with this issue. February subscriptions will be the next (5303 or 5304). We don't want to lose you but we can't afford to subsidise you, however much we would like to!

The *Raven* number 17 'On Use of Land' due for March will not be available until April, we hope for the middle of the month. We have now ended up with *too much* material. Two months ago we despaired that we wouldn't fill the 96 pages. Ah! these anarchists! They should be more 'disciplined', 'regimented', don't you think? (Please don't take us seriously - it is just that spring is in the air, in spite of the cold winds from the north.)

Not much has come in to our funds in the past fortnight, but we warmly thank those friends who have contributed and to the kind words

from those who think we are not doing too bad a job at *Freedom* Press for anarchist ideas.

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# MEETINGS

## Anarchist Forum

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

### 1992 SEASON OF MEETINGS

**3rd April** - General discussion

**1st May** - 'Anarchism: Ancestor Worship or Blueprint' (speaker Peter Neville) [transferred from January]

**4th May** - May Day Picnic, 2pm in grounds of Alexandra Palace, everybody welcome (Wood Green tube)

**8th May** - General discussion

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).

## FREEDOM fortnightly

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## 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.

- **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.

## Anarchists Against the Bomb

**Saturday 16th May 10am to 6pm**

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Send for a programme and map

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