

anarchist fortnightly

# Freedom

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*“If it’s humiliating to be ruled, how much more humiliating is choosing one’s masters.”*  
Chas Bufe

## WISHFUL THINKING AND THE RECESSION

The ‘prosperity-is-round-the-corner’ merchants are at work again, encouraged by the Tory election victory and freak unemployment figures of only 7,000 for March. However, this time they are less sanguine than in the past. ‘Round the corner’ is now *next year!*

We constantly remind readers that we cannot compete with the economists and business tycoons: neither with their six-figure salaries nor their ‘expertise’, but it seems so obvious to a thinking layman observing the capitalist free-for-all jungle that unless drastic steps are taken, that is, *controls* – compared with which, the Labour party’s proposals will seem almost modest – the situation must continue to

deteriorate. As anarchists we look forward to such a possibility in the hope that in such an eventuality the victims of the *capitalist* system will be as vocal and active as the victims of the so-called *communist* regimes proved to be when it came to the crunch.

After all, what are the capitalist solutions to slumps and recessions and massive unemployment? At one time war solved a lot of capitalism’s problems. No more. Cold Wars are much more profitable for industry, and so-called ‘defence’. Without ever firing a shot in anger, weapons soon become obsolete – and are sold off to third world countries to add to their

indebtedness to the affluent G7 tycoons. Meanwhile, some scientists think up even ghastlier weapons of destruction while other scientists work on the antidotes. And so on *ad infinitum*. But apart from running out of Cold War protagonists – which makes it difficult to find a convincing excuse for defence budgets\* – the fact is that somebody has to pay for the

*(continued on page 2)*

\*According to *The Guardian’s* political editor (13th April) the replacement for Tom King, former Defence Minister, by Malcolm Rifkind could mean that the government is proposing to ‘relieve’ threatened defence cuts, which is the stupid way of relieving some unemployment.

## The media’s responsibility for THE FEAR OF CHANGE

The country was without government during the holiday week or fortnight. All the ministers were somewhere abroad enjoying the sunshine. Only our great leader stayed at home (contenting himself with a visit to a county cricket match) and nobody noticed that the country had not come to a standstill!

The defeated Labour leaders (apart from Mr Kinnock, now freed to cultivate his own garden) could not afford the luxury of relaxing since the media were already determined to run the Labour Party’s leadership contest for them, just as for the past year or two they had been carrying out a public brain-washing on behalf of the Tories. To say, as the editor of that daily rag *The Sun* was maintaining in the correspondence columns of *The Guardian*, that the sustained campaign of vilification by the tabloid press against Kinnock and the completely fictitious claim that the Labour Party’s tax proposals

would cost everybody an extra £1,250 a year, had no effect on the ‘floating voters’ and the ‘don’t knows’, is too ludicrous for even a child to accept.

What none of the media hacks point out when they dismiss the effect of the anti-Labour, anti-Socialist propaganda during the election campaign weeks is that this propaganda has been going on not just for weeks but *for years and years*. A large section of the community as a result is conditioned against change. For them the Labour Party is *Red*, it’s somehow foreign – Marx, Lenin, Stalin and other ogres – and just waiting to gobble them up once they get power. The Labour Party for them is also anti-God. One woman interviewed on Radio 4 in the election week said she would not vote for Kinnock because he was “a self-confessed atheist”!

The other *bête noire* which has received concentrated attention by

the government and their sycophant media hacks during the thirteen Tory years (for which Thatcher rewarded the editors with knighthoods) are the trade unions. Anarchists have not much to say for their militancy nor for their leadership, but we have even less to say for the government’s legislation virtually aimed at destroying unions.

*(continued on page 2)*

**Readers in Cambridge, Bristol and Leeds please note that FREEDOM PRESS will be running a bookstall at the Murray Bookchin lectures on ‘Social Ecology’ (see back page for details). It is also an opportunity to meet a Freedom editor.**

## WISHFUL THINKING AND THE RECESSION

(continued from page 1)

war industry, and so there must be a balance between socially useless, and socially useful production if the latter has to finance the former!

But the real crisis of capitalism world-wide is over-production for at the same time, millions of people starve, more millions haven't adequate shelter, and more deprived millions can see (thanks to mass communications) how the other half live-it-up.

The Tories have no 'solution' since they see no 'problem' so long as the top 10% can hold on to 50% of the wealth-cake! For the Labour Party the solution is more investment in industry and a token 'redistribution' of wealth by additional taxation of those 'earning' more than £400 a week.

Apart from the fact that there is no point in further investment in industry unless you keep out imports from those countries which enjoy advantages of cheap raw materials and/or virtually slave labour, there is already adequate production of everything that we need if only it were equitably distributed world-wide, not to mention all the useless rubbish and criminal waste which mankind would be healthier and better off without.

No political party seeks to solve the problem of unemployment by introducing the shorter working week and/or job sharing. It must involve a lowering of living standards for the well off, but an improvement for those who are now on the dole. The sanctity of private property prevents all parties from doing

something about the hundreds of thousands of empty and derelict properties while the army of homeless and bed-and-breakfast 'repossessed' refugees increases every day. There is no sign that property prices will go up. Inflation is the only saviour and the government has clearly shown that it is determined to keep inflation down even if it means another million unemployed, and property 'values' stagnating.

Furthermore, as more properties come onto the market - in our 'property owning' society more inherited properties are now coming up for sale - the age-long capitalist principle of supply and demand can only further depress prices and add to the problems of those saddled with mortgages who have joined the army of the unemployed.

Repossessions are taking place by the thousand, there are millions of mortgage payers who are now more than a year in arrears. When will they realise that they are the victims of the capitalist system and not, as they were left to believe, a new property owning, share owning, business owning class that was seeing-out socialism, egalitarianism and all those 'romantic' 19th century ideas espoused by dreamers for a better world.

Anarchists are realists. The cynics declare that we get the government we deserve. We would say we deserve to get government if we have not the will or the energy, if we say we haven't the time, to run our own lives. Only when we have the will, the energy and make the time to run our own lives will governments take notice. We will then be in a position to dispense with those power maniacs!



With acknowledgements to Garland and the editors of *The Daily Telegraph*, 16th April 1992

## THE FEAR OF CHANGE

(continued from page 1)

As if they haven't done enough to emasculate them, Mr Major's new 'classless' government is proposing even more legislation to finally destroy them by financial strangulation: such as removing the obligation for employers to deduct union contributions from pay packets, which means that contributions will have to be collected direct from each member, and postal balloting for strikes - all of which are costly enterprises which, with falling membership (as unemployment increases) means less income, and of course the Tories expect that this will also mean less contributions to the Labour Party's funds.

Another *bête noire* which the media have repeated endlessly for decades is that the unions are the Labour Party's paymasters. So what? It means that the unions have a large say in the Labour Party's programme, just like the millionaires (native and foreign) who largely finance the Tory Party and have a large say so far as policy is concerned. There is surely no point in their denying this obvious reality. Why should millionaires and others give money to the Tories if they expect no return? Is it perhaps only a coincidence that the government is resisting a proposal by the

European Community to ban all tobacco advertising and during the election jamboree accepted the offer of 2,000 bill-posting sites belonging to Imperial Tobacco, to plug the Tory line?

Years of media propaganda maintaining that the Labour Party if not run by the ex-KGB was certainly controlled by the trade union barons, always overlooked the fact that the Labour Party was created long ago by the unions in order to have a 'voice' in that so-called 'mother of parliaments' which until then had no representative of the 'working classes'! But what the non-political voters never seem to realise is that fundamentally the unions are, by their very function, reformist and conservative in outlook.

Under Kinnock's leadership of the Labour Party over the past eight years, every effort has been made to exorcise the trade unions bogey, and his support for unilateralism - which in a sense misfired in view of the collapse of Cold War politics, but which did not prevent the media from accusing him of being an opportunist (as if the Tories who stabbed Thatcher in the back and brought in the trapeze artist Major to do a few u-turns were any more moral). That there is no shortage of candidates for the leadership surely indicates that it is not on its last legs. But what is clear is that apart from the Ken Livingstone / Bernie Grant challenge from the 'left', which may not get even the necessary number of sponsors' votes from Labour MPs, the party's (and the union's) choice will be John Smith who is even more to the right of the party than was Kinnock.

The problem for anarchist propaganda in capitalist society is the fear of change, the fear of freedom, the fear of ideas. We have said this more than once: people seem to have no fear of risking their lives in an airplane just to go to the Costa del Sol on the grounds that the fares are cheaper, or they think it will take less time, than going by boat and train, in spite of the fact that trains are safer on all counts. Yet suggest that unorthodox ideas, some that have been 'available' for goodness knows how long, may be worth looking into, and they are scared stiff!

Elsewhere in this issue we illustrate some of the points we have tried to make with extracts from the writings, of Errico Malatesta, not only to confirm our approach but to indicate that the fear of change, the fear of freedom are the real problems facing anarchists and socialists in a world dominated by the state, church, military, media and, last but not least, entrenched privilege. A change of government will never rid mankind of these parasites.

## Mr Major's Classless Society?

The Midland Bank, either about to be taken over by the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank or to do a deal with one of the big five, Lloyds, recently gave a generous handshake to its former chairman, Sir Kit MacMahon, to the tune of £550,000. At the same time a former director of Lex Service went one better and received a pay-off of £637,000.

Meanwhile, according to the group's annual report, Sir Michael Angus, chairman of Unilever, got a pay increase of £100,000 to add to his modest £589,000 a year. The news coincides with the April increase for old age pensioners of £2.15 a week, compared with Sir Michael's salary increase of just under £2,000 a week.

More modestly, Sir David Alliance, chairman of the clothing and textile group Coates Viyella, received an £18,000 a year rise in his £180,000 p.a. salary. These certainly are Thatcher's 'wealth producers' - if only for themselves.

Have you noticed that all three of these capitalist worthies are 'sirs' - Thatcher rewarded entrepreneurs perhaps?

As obscene was the purchase of a Canaletto painting of 'The Old Horse Guards' by Andrew Lloyd Webber - described by *The Evening Standard* not for whatever he does to make so much money, but as "one of a tiny handful of Englishmen capable of writing a cheque for £10 million in the expectation that it will be honoured"! Actually Mr Webber is a composer of musicals so popular that he has (according to *The Daily Telegraph*, 16th April):

"Built up one of the country's finest collections of the Pre-Raphaelites, which is split between his 10,000-acre country estate in Berkshire and his house in Eaton Square. In 1990 he set a world record, buying Frederick Lord Leighton's 'Dante in Exile' at £3.1 million at Sotheby's."

Why 'obscene'? Because Mr Lloyd Webber

is so concerned to secure the painting for Britain which, though by an Italian, is "a quintessentially British painting". And much of the food he eats is also 'quintessentially British' but the workers who produce it are paid £3.40 an hour, or £7,000 a year, or £280,000 in a working life of forty years. So he can afford to pay for one painting what 37 farm workers will earn altogether in a working life of forty years, and look upon himself as some kind of 'good guy'. He even said that:

"I might have to write another musical before I can think of doing this again. I might also have to fly back to France economy class."

What sacrifices these saintly millionaires are prepared to make for 'humanity' and their silly egos!

See Malatesta on THE FEAR OF FREEDOM page 5

## Divide and Rule The Teachers Chicken Out

In spite of the fact that the government's plan for the appraisal of teachers' performance was generally opposed by the members of the NUT (National Union of Teachers), when it came to the vote a proposal to boycott it was rejected, much to the relief of the national executive who maintained that a positive vote would have "isolated the NUT from the other teaching unions".

Once again a perfect example of the impotence of the unions generally when, for instance, the teaching profession is organised in at least three unions with 'class', or if you prefer 'professional', interests.

Think also of the railway unions. Only the NUR (National Union of Railwaymen) is open to all railway workers. ASLEF is only open to drivers and the now non-existent firemen. And then the other union for the office staff. Strikes by one union were

sabotaged by blacklegs in the other time and again. No wonder that the Thatcher regime 1979-1991 succeeded in introducing legislation to neutralise the unions. Last week the government succeeded in forcing through a 4.5% wage increase for all 96,000 staff. Drivers will now earn a basic wage of £207 a week, station staff £143 a week. A far cry from the £400+ a week that Ken Livingstone says so many potential Labour voters earn in the South East and didn't vote because of tax increases on those earning £400 or more per week!

Differentials divide workers. Solidarity unites them and gives them strength which no government can ignore.

More editorial comments on page 3

## Cruel but not unusual

Robert Alton Harris, executed at San Quentin prison on 22nd April, was a ruthless murderer but evidently a humane one. The evidence is that he joked and laughed with his victims, put them at their ease, and killed them unexpectedly while their attention was directed elsewhere. Distress was experienced by grieving relatives and terrified neighbours,

but the actual victims never knew what hit them.

Contrast this with the death of Harris himself on behalf of 'the people'. He was kept in prison, knowing he was going to be killed, for seventeen years. Then on the actual morning of his death he was taken from his cell to be killed four times at approximately two hour intervals.

The first two times, at just before 3am and just before 5am, he was marched out into the corridor then turned round and marched back.

The third time, at 6.48am, he was taken into the gas chamber and strapped to the chair. For ten minutes or so he put on a brave face, smiling reassuringly at his friends and relatives. Finally, he winked at the executioner, who nodded and pulled the lever. There was a loud clunk as the cyanide pellet was released into the acid bath ... the doors were suddenly opened and guards ran in to release his straps and take him back to the cell.

The fourth time, at 8.52am, he was pale and unable to raise a smile. The fight had gone out of him. Death must have been a release from hours of anguish and terror.

The death was recorded on video, for the information of Supreme Court judges who were to decide whether the gas chamber was a "cruel and unusual punishment", contrary to

## Another small victory for modern farming

Hardly a day goes by without some new insanity being served up by the state and its willing slaves in the name of reason. The Polstead shop is a co-operative venture that works, or I thought it did. Among other things, it sells the surplus products of the villagers. Last week a written notice appeared instructing the shop's voluntary helpers not to take eggs from any producer who couldn't provide a certificate proving his or her hens had been inoculated against salmonella. We all know about the origins of this intervention, Curried egg and all that. The government is working in your interests again. Oh, yes.

In effect, this ruling excludes from the shop the eggs from free range and uncaged birds fed

a diet of locally milled grain and food chosen by the hens themselves. It gives a monopoly to the 'battery hen' producers and those who heavily confine their birds filled with antibiotics and fed exclusively on the poisonous diet provided by food processors. Does anybody think this makes sense. Not even in Polstead it doesn't, but it's the law and we don't break the law do we? You may as well stick to the state's supermarkets and get well and truly poisoned.

"The new idol, the state, lies in all languages of good and evil and whatever it says, it lies, and whatever it has, it has stolen. Everything about it is false. It bites with stolen teeth. Even its belly is false. The state was invented for the superfluous, those who acquire power, especially the lever of power, plenty of money, but where people still exist, they do not understand the state and hate it as the evil eye, a sin against custom and law. Yes, a death for many has been devised that glorifies itself as life, a heartfelt service to all preachers of death. I call it the state where everybody, good and bad, is a poison drinker; the state where everybody, good and bad, loses himself; the state where universal slow suicide is called - life." (Nietzsche in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* written in the 1880s)

DR

Denis Pym

the United States Constitution. Probably they will allow it, since death by hydrocyanide gas is no more painful than death by poisonous injection, as administered by judicial killers elsewhere.

The torture which Harris suffered was not physical but mental, as he was messed about for hours on the point of death. Apparently that is not a cruel and unusual punishment. It is plainly cruel, so the judges must think it not unusual.

## Anarchism and Democracy

### The editorial writer replies

the article was a factual attack on the capitalist western powers.

Nowhere did I suggest that anarchists would support a 'truly democratic government' any more than anarchists would ever support a 'revolutionary government'. Yet Harold Barclay denounced my editorial as rubbish on the grounds that he always thought that:

"Freedom was an anarchist paper and that anarchism was something different from democracy. This lead article would have us believe differently".

Donald Room joined the fray supporting Harold Barclay, and in my opinion putting himself out to be as offensive as he could be with his comment to my interpretation of the historical definition of democracy that "the people means all of us and that we should run our own lives".

"Oh very clever" says Donald Room, suggesting the argument is only fit for a "college debating society". He gives his personal interpretation of 'the people' and as to the historical definition of democracy that is a "poetic expression". He admits "this is the democratic ideal".

Okay, I agree for this was my whole point in exposing not only the politicians who use the term for everything other than democracy, but the ideal which will never be achieved in a capitalist world and is at the same time a contradiction in terms.

However, my critic Donald Room then presents:

"The anarchist ideal [which] is different, a society in which nobody has power over anybody, but each individual retains absolute sovereignty, and works with others only voluntarily".

This definition of anarchism is as idealistic as that of democracy - government of the people, by the people, for the people - except in the case of small societies. As I pointed out in the offending editorial, unless present society is organised from below, and not from above, we can have no say in how our community, or society, functions. The 'ideal' for historical democracy was for small communities with direct power from below. Donald Room's individualists' Utopia equally presupposes a world of isolated communities and not a few hermits! As an anarchist-communist, I try to face the fact that we live in a world of 5,000 million human beings, the majority desperately concerned with food, shelter and protection from the elements. Donald Room's Utopia of the Individual is as barren as Thatcher's denial that society exists.

I say don't be put off by the theories of the academic and the egoism of the individualist. We all make mistakes in our judgements but to sack your unpaid editorial writer for that article on the strength of the arguments advanced by my two critics would make me despair of the intelligence of Freedom's readers and I would resign immediately!

## OUR 'MAD THATCHER'

It is incredible what a bit of power can do to unhinge some people. Much publicity to, and comments on, the latest Thatcher outburst in the American weekly *Newsweek* has appeared in the English press.

However her craziest utterances were delivered when she opened an exhibition at the Imperial War Museum last month to mark the tenth anniversary of the Falklands adventure.

The *Evening Standard* (16th April) reporter writes that Thatcher "spoke emotionally of the pledge she gave to commit future prime ministers never to return the Falklands to Argentina". She recalled a conversation with a grieving mother who had lost her son in these terms:

"She suddenly turned to me and said, 'You will never give those islands back will you?' I said, 'No, never'.

Mrs Thatcher added: 'In saying that, I believed, and still believe, that I committed all future prime ministers of the UK, because it was a pledge given on behalf of our country, and on behalf of those who died, that the people of the Falklands might once again be free'."

How much crazier can you get? What is unfortunate is that some sections of the media still give her wide publicity. If they want to kill off Thatcher, there is no difficulty - just stop giving her publicity.

## Perfect Numbers and Big Bangs ...

### HAVE SCIENTISTS NOTHING BETTER TO DO?

Well, last month the scientists came up with two mind-shattering discoveries. In mathematics a team at the Atomic Energy Authority's Harwell laboratories have found "the largest known prime number and a new perfect number". We won't bother to tell readers what this means since the scientists themselves have conceded that it's of no practical use anyway. What a waste of time and equipment this involves can be appreciated when one is told that the new perfect number is 455,663 digits long and is reached by multiplying 2 by itself 756,839 times, then subtracting one from the total, then multiplying the result once again by 2 multiplied by itself 756,839 times. Needless to say for this useless game a Cray-2 supercomputer was engaged for goodness knows how long.

At the same time other scientists were playing at 'discovering' how the universe began. And now they are trying to tell us it all happened - that Big Bang - "fourteen thousand million years ago".

Why don't they spend a little more time trying to find a cure for the common cold?

That the editorial 'Democracy Begins at Home' (*Freedom*, 22nd February) and Harold Barclay's denunciation of it with the heading 'Sack the Editorial Writer?' and an invitation to readers for their views (heading an invitation suggested by me) should only have produced three contributions, which were printed in the last issue of *Freedom*, convinces me that most readers understood what the editorial was about.

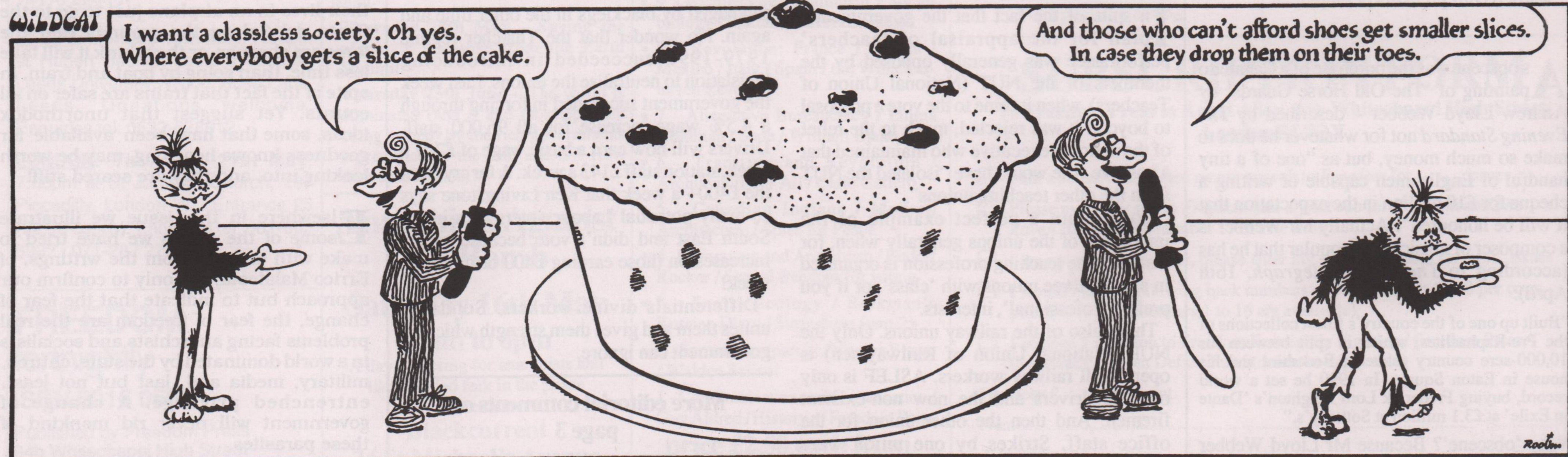
The whole point of it was to expose the hypocrisy of the G7 prosperous nations in proposing to send 'experts' to the republics of the former Soviet Union to teach them what democracy is all about. I contrasted their kind of 'democracy' consisting of:

"Relative prosperity for the majority, making it possible to confuse *laissez faire* with *freedom*, and a *parliament* with government and official opposition and elections every five years with democracy"

with the true definition of democracy as "government of the people, by the people, for the people" and added my comment my critics have conveniently overlooked:

"The people means all of us, and that we should run our own lives. This means that society should be run from below, otherwise how can the individual citizen participate in the decisions to be taken?"

I then elaborated on this problem at length, dealing with pressure groups, our unfree press, our 'wonderful police', etc., followed by conclusions which included: "there can only be democracy where there is equality", "A truly democratic government cannot exist in a capitalist society", adding for good measure that in fact government today exists to protect the unequal society. And the rest of



# Parliamentary Democracy a Parody of Government

When we commented on the last general election, nearly five years ago (July 1987), we remarked: "If parliamentary democracy is a parody of self-government, then a parliamentary election is a parody, and a general election is a parody raised to the level of a gigantic spectacle". The latest general election was the most gigantic spectacle of this kind ever seen in this country. After a campaign which had lasted in practice from the succession of John Major to Margaret Thatcher as Conservative leader back in November 1990, during the worst recession in the capitalist world since the Great Depression sixty years ago, with the highest recorded unemployment and homelessness, bankruptcies and repossessions, the actual election seemed to be an unreal battle which was fought almost entirely in the media that proved consistently superficial and prejudiced and was dominated almost entirely by public opinion surveys that proved consistently irrelevant and unreliable.

Most of the comments after the election have been as misguided as those before it. The first comment to make is how little in British politics has really changed during the past thirteen years. Consider the percentages of votes received at the last four general elections:

	1979	1983	1987	1992
Conservative	33	31	32	32
Labour	28	20	23	27
Liberal (Alliance/Democrat)	11	18	17	14
Others	4	4	3	5
Non-voters	24	27	25	22

The Conservatives are still the largest party, with much the same margin over Labour as when they took power from them in 1979. But the Conservatives under Major, as under Thatcher, still have the support of less than a third of the electorate; at the same time all the anti-Conservative parties combined against Major, as against Thatcher, still have the support of less than half the electorate. The third party, which rose after the secession of the Social Democrats from the Labour Party and their alliance with and then absorption by the Liberals, fell again. The Nationalists rose, but still have the support of less than 10% in the Celtic countries. The Green (who began as the People's Party in 1973, became the Ecology party in 1974 and the Green Party in 1985), who did badly in 1987 but won a remarkable protest vote of 15% in the European Parliament elections in 1989, did badly again; perhaps they will now reconsider their commitment to parliamentary politics. The Natural Law Party (a newly formed front for the Transcendental Meditation movement) did as badly as the so-called Humanist Party in 1987. The Marxist left, including the Communist Party (renamed the Democratic Left), virtually disappeared – along with all their various models around the world.

Neither did we do very well. The Anti-Election Campaign and the Abstention Party did what they could, but were able to make almost no impact on the public. The non-voters did more badly than for a very long time, presumably because many of them voted tactically to get rid of the Conservatives – with as little success as everyone else – so we are back below the Labour Party again. But even in the election-obsessed media, a few voices were able to put the positive case against voting (notably Colin Ward in an article in *The Independent* on election day, and Nicolas Walter in a letter to *The Times* a few days later).

The most important fact about British politics today, as confirmed again by the election, is that British society is more divided today than it has been since the Second World War – between the haves at one extreme and

the have-nots at the other extreme, and the insecure people in between. The hegemony of the rich and clever and strong is greater than it has been for half a century. The haves who dominate the country are still powerful and numerous enough to dominate the occasional elections in which the whole population is theoretically able but practically unable to change the system. Electoral politics suits the British ruling class – who invented it – better than their opponents, whether reformist or otherwise. And national elections suit conservatives or moderates – whatever they are called – better than progressives or radicals. In present circumstances the Conservatives nearly always win and their opponents – Liberal or Labour – nearly always lose. Anyone who expects the Liberal Party or Labour Party to do well should take account of the historical record – in the score of general elections during the 75 years since the First World War, the former has never won and the latter has won under only two leaders – Clement Attlee and Harold Wilson. Even if Labour had won under Gaitskill or Callaghan or Foot or Kinnock, or do win under Smith or Gould or some other future leader, they would lose, because a parliamentary government on its own can't beat the rest of the establishment – social, economic, political, military – even in the oldest parliamentary regime in the world. And even if the left did win, whether through election or revolution, it would lose because it would become the new establishment, with most of the faults of the old one and many new ones of its own.

The election was of course fought in terms of spectacular dishonesty. The Conservative Party said, in effect, 'we got you into this mess, and only we can get you out of it!' – which may well be true, in view of the attitude of the international capitalist system which dominates our economy. The Labour Party was forced by fear of disunity and

unpopularity to disguise or abandon all its distinctive policies (including the old commitment to the labour movement and the new commitment to unilateral disarmament), pretend that it is as safe as the Conservatives, and fight on the hopeless ground of taxation. Both main parties promised to cut taxes, despite the facts that taxation has actually risen under the Conservatives and would have to rise even more under Labour to pay for its minimal programme. Both parties also promised to increase freedom, despite the facts that Labour has invariably favoured centralisation since 1918 and that the Conservatives have increasingly fostered centralisation since 1979. The Liberal Democrats promised something different, but it was never clear what, other than holding a balance of power between the two main parties in a hung Parliament. (We might well favour a hung Parliament – either seriously, so that no particular group can force its views on the rest of the population, or frivolously so that all its members are strung up by an indignant populace!) This might have led to the institution of proportional representation, which would certainly make our electoral system fairer to minority parties, but would make little difference to the underlying structure – as may be seen in the many other countries which already have it. Anyway, in the end enough people voted for the same again to make sure that we get the same again for a few more years – and it really wouldn't have made much difference if another party or parties had won.

One of the best comments on the election was given by a cartoon in *The Independent* – an inhabitant of a cardboard box asks: "Who won?" A more important question is: Who lost? The answer is the inhabitants of cardboard boxes, literal or metaphorical – the growing number of have-nots in what is still a relatively rich country, those without decent

health or education, those without decent work or home, those without any chance of a good life, real liberty, and a fair pursuit of happiness. But they wouldn't have won, whoever won the election. And the same is true of the wider world, where there have recently been enormous changes, which were virtually ignored during the campaign and in which this country plays no useful part at all. Britain is still a vast consumer of what is produced in the third world – whether raw materials or cash crops – and a vast producer of what destroys the third world – especially useless luxuries and dangerous weapons. The Cold War between East and West has ended, but the Cold War between North and South is continuing. We won the former and we are still winning the latter, but one day we shall pay the price. The welfare state depends on economic growth, and the warfare state depends on economic exploitation; neither can go on forever, and the end will come in the end.

Meanwhile, as we stumble blindly from the last election towards the next one, the future of our system of party politics now rests on a so-called 'recovery' – an increase in production and distribution and consumption, which will make the rich richer and the poor poorer, the rich countries richer and the poor countries poorer, which will divide the world community even more deeply and damage the world ecology even more drastically. It is up to all those who know that electoral politics is no solution to do what we can to develop and publicise our own solution. If we are not part of the solution, after all, we are part of the problem. As we said when we commented on the last general election: "All over the world, ordinary people are struggling against the rich and powerful institutions which oppress and exploit them. In this little part of the world, the situation may not be so dramatic, but there is plenty of room here for libertarian politics". Let's be seeing it.

FC

## The structure of oppression

In the diagram, the left-hand rectangle represents the total population and the right-hand rectangle represents the total marketable wealth of Great Britain.

Each section on the right represents that part of total wealth held by the proportion of the population shown on the left.

All the figures are derived from those published by government departments and valid in 1988. They are printed and summarised in *The Election*, published by The Guardian and Fourth Estate, 1992.

Michael Duane

1% (600,000 people)		
9% (5.4 million people)	own	17% of wealth
40% (24 million people)	own	36% of wealth
50% (30 million people)	own	41% of wealth
	own	6% of wealth

## Use of Land

The Raven anarchist quarterly number 17 on Use of Land  
112 pages £2.50 (post free inland)

Did you know that no one knows how our land is actually owned or how many farmers there are in Britain? This is the case, but it is clear that a small minority owns or controls access to the land, and that abuses of what is our greatest asset are the inevitable result of private enterprise.

"Let those who really love the land work it for the benefit of all of us" writes the editor; this phrase might be the leitmotif of this issue of *The Raven*. He perhaps echoes Kropotkin a century ago, but other than the classic *Fields, Factories and Workshops* there is no modern anarchist book on the subject. However, as the editor says, much relevant factual literature abounds: the need is to produce a book which draws the anarchist conclusions; *The Raven* number 17 may be regarded as a preliminary to that end.

How could the land in practice be worked for the good of all? Again to repeat the editor's words, "the value of examples is that they show the way," and several contributions are relevant here: Marianne Enckell's 'The Garden of Cocagne' on the practical problems of a producers' and consumers' co-operative in Geneva; Bev Nichols on 'Nature Conservation and Land Use'; Colin Ward on 'Colonising the Land: Utopian Ventures'; and Tom Keell Wolfe's memories of Whiteway

(continued on page 8)

## The Way to Utopia, or an even more final solution

Imagine Britain with a population of about three million, America with ten million, China and Russia with ten million each and the other industrial countries with a like proportion. Imagine that the natural resources of oil, minerals and plant life are as at present and that productive capacity is as high as that of Japan today. Imagine that the techniques of population control and genetic engineering are those now being explored.

Imagine, further, that factories, farms, mines and power generators are run by mechanical robots controlled from a distance by a handful of technicians; that the abundance of food, manufactured goods and the impedimenta of a civilised life are freely available to all so that the use of money has been rendered unnecessary; that poverty and unemployment have vanished and that the time needed to engage in productive work has been reduced to the equivalent of an hour a day. Imagine that free stores of all possible goods are automatically replenished and that the computerised wishes of the consumers constantly modify the designs, functions and

the supply of goods as they are withdrawn by the ubiquitous identity/purchase card.

We already possess the means to make such wonders a matter of daily fact. The Western industrialised world has been purged of smallpox, malaria, tuberculosis and leprosy; its crop fertility has been quadrupled within this century; our urban poor rarely die of hunger. Outside our civilised world famine, disease and despair afflict tens of millions as births outstrip food and medicine.

Pressured to believe that we need more, bigger and faster cars, longer and more exotic holidays in distant places and infallible security against those we have been taught to regard as implacable enemies, and for the annihilation of whom we spend, every single day, billions of pounds and dollars on armaments that quickly become obsolete as

new horrors for mass destruction are dreamed up. Swept in the daily ebb and flow of millions surging to work and back again in self-generated smog that destroys our environment, we use four times more wood, steel, food and energy than the rest of the world put together.

Public spending to keep the unemployed housed, the aged warm, the crippled mobile, the sick from dying and the young literate is seen as a debilitating drain upon public wealth. Like a man with rising damp, a leaking roof and ill-fitting doors and windows, we spend more and more to keep warm and dry when we should be building a new house.

With a population one-twentieth its present size and with the silicon chip to replace the working classes, we could raise our living standards to unimagined heights. This we can

now do. Simply dig enough deep shelters to hold the really rich, together with our beloved leaders and enough scientists, technicians, administrators and policemen to keep our new world functioning in an orderly way. Prepare the shelters with enough food, drink and light entertainment to last for a year or so.

Meanwhile, just go on doing what we are doing now. Protect private property as you would The Holy Tabernacle; maintain the freedom of the press to foster fear and suspicion of other races and cultures; keep the education of the masses to the minimum so that they remain the gullible dupes of their rulers; keep those same masses so short of houses, money, work and freedom that pervasive anxiety will prevent them enquiring too closely into the competence and sanity of their leaders.

Prate constantly about democracy and equate it with querulous disagreements about split-hair difference in dogmatic propaganda; parade constantly before the people the disasters of the world to impress on them their

(continued on page 6)

## MALATESTA: On Anarchists and the Unions

It is true that the Unions, for pressing reasons, are often obliged to engage in negotiations and accept compromises. I do not criticise them for that, but it is for this very reason that I have to consider the Unions as essentially reformist.

The Unions perform a function of bringing together the proletarian masses and of eliminating conflicts which could otherwise arise between worker and worker. While the Unions must engage in the struggle to obtain immediate benefits, and after all it is just and only human that workers should demand better conditions, revolutionaries go beyond this. They struggle for the revolution which will expropriate capital and destroy the State, every State by whatever name it is called.

Since economic slavery is the product of political servitude, to eliminate one it is necessary to eliminate the other, even if Marx said otherwise.



Just because I am convinced that the Unions can and must play a most useful, and perhaps necessary, role in the transition from present society to the equalitarian society, I would wish them to be judged at their true worth and by never forgetting that they have a natural tendency to become closed corporations limited to making narrow, sectional demands, or worse still, for their members only; we will thus be in a better position to combat this tendency and prevent them from becoming conservative organisms. Just as, in fact, I recognise

the extreme usefulness that co-operatives, by accustoming workers to manage their own affairs, the organisation of their work and other activities, can have at the beginning of a revolution as experienced organisations capable of dealing with the distribution of goods and serving as nerve centres for the mass of the population, I combat the shopkeeper spirit which seems to develop naturally in their midst. I would wish that they were open to all, that they conferred no privileges on their members and, above all, that they did not transform themselves, as often happens, into real capitalistic Liability Companies, which employ and exploit wage earners as well as speculating on the needs of the public.

In my opinion, co-operatives and Trades Unions, under the capitalist regime, do not naturally, or by reason of their intrinsic value, lead to human emancipation (and this is the controversial point), but can be producers of good and evil, today organs of conservation or social transformation, tomorrow, serving the forces of reaction or revolution. All depends on whether they limit themselves to their real function as defenders of the immediate interests of their members or are animated and influenced by the anarchist spirit, which makes the ideals stronger than sectional interests. And by anarchist spirit I mean that deeply human sentiment, which aims at the good of all, freedom and justice for all, solidarity and love among the people; which is not an exclusive characteristic only of self-declared anarchists, but inspires all people who have a generous heart and an open mind. . . .

Capitalist society is so constituted that, generally speaking, the interests of each class, of each category, of each individual are in conflict with those of all other classes, categories and individuals. And in daily life one sees the most complicated alignments of harmony and clashes of interests between classes and between individuals who, from the point of view of social justice should always be friends or always enemies. And it often happens, in spite of the much vaunted solidarity of the proletariat, that the interests of one category of workers are antagonistic to those of others and favourable to those of a category of employers; as also happens, that in spite of the desired international brotherhood, the present interests of the workers of any one country ties them to their native capitalists and puts them in a position of hostility to foreign workers. As an example we would refer to the situation of the various workers' organisations to the question of Tariffs, and Customs barriers, and the voluntary role played by the working masses in wars between capitalist States.

The list is unending—antagonism between employed and unemployed, between men and women, between native workers and foreign workers in their midst, between workers who use a public service and those who work in that service, between those who have a trade and those who want to learn it. But I would here draw special attention to the interest that workers engaged in the luxury trades have in the prosperity of the wealthy classes and that of a whole number of categories of workers in different localities that "business" should come their way, even if at the expense of other localities and to the detriment of production which is useful to the community as a whole. And what should be said of those who work in industries harmful to society and to individuals, when they have no other way of earning a living? In normal times, when there is no faith in an imminent revolution, just go and try to persuade workers at the Arsenals who are threatened with unemployment not to demand that the government should build new battleships! And try, with Trade Union means, and doing justice to all, to solve the conflicts between dock labourers, who have no other way of ensuring the means of livelihood for themselves than by monopolising all the available work for those who have been working there a long time, and the new arrivals, the "casuals" who demand their right to work and life! All this, and much else that could be said, shows that the workers' movement, in itself, without the ferment of revolutionary imagination contrasting with the short term interests of the workers, without the criticism and the impulse of the revolutionaries, far from leading to the transformation of society to the advantage of all, tends to encourage group egoism and to create a class of privileged workers living on the backs of the great mass of the "disinherited."

And this explains the general phenomenon that in all countries workers' organisations as they have grown and become strong, have become conservative and reactionary, and those who have served the workers' movement honestly and with dreams of a society based on well-being and justice for all, are condemned, like Sisyphus, to having to start all over again every so often.

## ON THE FEAR OF FREEDOM

Man, like all living beings, adapts and accustoms himself to the conditions under which he lives, and passes on acquired habits. Thus, having been born and bred in bondage, when the descendants of a long line of slaves started to think, they believed that slavery was an essential condition of life, and freedom seemed impossible to them. Similarly, workers who for centuries were obliged, and therefore accustomed, to depend for work, that is bread, on the good will of the master, and to see their lives always at the mercy of the owners of the land and of capital, ended by believing that it is the master who feeds them, and ingenuously ask one how would it be possible to live if there were no masters.

In the same way, someone whose legs had been bound from birth but who had managed nevertheless to walk as best he could, might attribute his ability to move to those very bonds which in fact serve only to weaken and paralyse the muscular energy of his legs.

If to the normal effects of habit is then added the kind of education offered by the master, the priest, the teacher, etc., who have a vested interest in preaching that the masters and the government are necessary; if one were to add the judge and the policeman who are at pains to reduce to silence those who might think differently and be tempted to propagate their ideas, then it will not be difficult to understand how the prejudiced view of the usefulness of, and the necessity for, the master and the government took root in the unsophisticated minds of the labouring masses.

Just imagine if the doctor were to expound to our fictional man with the bound legs a theory, cleverly illustrated with a thousand

invented cases to prove that if his legs were freed he would be unable to walk and would not live, then that man would ferociously defend his bonds and consider as his enemy anyone who tried to remove them.

So, since it was thought that government was necessary and that without government there could only be disorder and confusion, it was natural and logical that anarchy, which means absence of government, should sound like absence of order.

Nor is the phenomenon without parallel in the history of words. In times and in countries where the people believed in the need for government by one man (*monarchy*), the word republic, which is government by many, was in fact used in the sense of disorder and confusion—and this meaning is still to be found in the popular language of most countries.

Change opinion, convince the public that government is not only unnecessary but extremely harmful, and then the word anarchy, just because it means absence of government, will come to mean for everybody: natural order, unity of human needs and the interests of all, complete freedom within complete solidarity.

Those who say therefore that the anarchists have badly chosen their name because it is wrongly interpreted by the masses and lends itself to wrong interpretations, are mistaken. The error does not come from the word but from the thing; and the difficulties anarchists face in their propaganda do not depend on the name they have taken, but on the fact that their concept clashes with all the public's long-established prejudices on the function of government, or the state as it is also called.

from *Anarchy* by E. Malatesta  
Freedom Press, 52 pages, £1.50

Extracts from *Malatesta: Life and Ideas*,  
Freedom Press, 312 pages, £4.00

**Memoirs of a Wobbly**

by Henry E. McGuckin

Charles H. Kerr Publishers, 1987, £5.00.

The Freedom Press Bookshop has recently received new stock of the excellent little book *Memoirs of a Wobbly*. Over the last few weeks I had been battling my way through various academic histories of the Wobblies, texts like *Rebels of the Woods* and *Bread and Roses Too*, which despite their titles are far from good history. McGuckin's book, by contrast, provides a lively, inspiring and genuine insight into the struggles of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). This is the sort of people's history that, even today, finds its way all too rarely into print. Books

**Memoirs of a Wobbly**

like this should be required reading for all students of social history, and should find an honoured place next to academic texts.

McGuckin took to the life of a migratory worker as a youngster after a broken schooling, which included various forms of physical abuse at a Catholic school. At first he fell in with a hobo who taught him some of the tricks of that life. This hobo is one of a parade of characters who pass through the book, but he endeared himself to me because of his view of work: "He found if you worked a week or two once in a while, you found out how awful

it was and it would always make him renew his resolve to do as little of it as possible". Although the hobo only occupies a few pages of the narrative, it was enough to make me realise, yet again, that recorded history is by and large the record of the least worthy men and women. The really interesting characters, the decent men and women that have made the world, are lost to us except for fleeting glimpses of them in the pages of books like *Memoirs of a Wobbly*. Another is 'Big Professor Jack Graves', a Wobbly pedagogue that McGuckin listened to around camp fires in Vancouver. Jack Graves was a graduate of Oxford and Princeton, and an agitator for the Socialist Party of Canada as well as the IWW.

McGuckin's first involvement with Wobbly activity was during the free speech fight in Aberdeen, Washington. From there he progressed to selling Wobbly literature in the lumber camps of British Columbia, then to helping organise striking dye-workers in

Pennsylvania, and from there to being part of the IWW 'Flying Squadron', before helping to unionise agricultural workers in Kansas. McGuckin was on Wobbly work in Minnesota when the authorities began their round up of Wobbly activists and the crushing of the union (the culmination of a long campaign against the IWW, as Daniel Fusfeld explains in another Kerr publication, *The Rise and Repression of Radical Labour*) but managed to avoid capture. He enlisted in the army but, as an epilogue by his son informs us, on demob he once more became active in radical politics.

This is an important and fascinating book. It tells an heroic tale in an honest and riveting fashion. In the epilogue, McGuckin's son explains how his father was reluctant to put his story down on paper, protesting that he didn't have the necessary skill. McGuckin junior advised his father to write as he spoke. He did, and *Memoirs of a Wobbly* has the authentic ring, in a direct, high-impact style that many a professional writer would envy. Read this book!

Stephen Cullen

**GBH**

There is always a sense of irredeemable failure in being the second man to pay for a round of drinks, number two for the firing squad or the second man to step onto the moon.

Public memory is short and fickle regarding 'number two' son in relation to today's hero and the ghosted autobiography is automatically pulped as it dribbles off the press. One need do no more than quote Wellington and his boot, or Napoleon and his Josephine to accept the futility of the public hosanna for Jesus, sitting on the right hand of God, must wonder if the road to Gethsemane was worth the sweat and blood as he listens to and watches the Christmas cash registers giving out, cashwise, man's exploitation of his fellow man, peacewise. The National Portrait Gallery, tucked into the armpit of the National Gallery, is fortunate in that it is not trapped into displaying art beautiful, but the visual images of those who managed to get a toe-hole into the National Who's Who of the good, the bad and the faintly familiar.

Today's lucky bingo winner is the late and the grating George Bernard Shaw. For one whose self-proclaiming fame as the world's greatest thinker long ago joined the Conservative Party's industrial recession, GBS's enjoyable collage of photographs, paintings and drawings of 'his self' at the NPG must be viewed as a pious memento mori, and the raising of one's wine glass as an act of valediction to one to whom, in spite of his many faults, one owes an honest debt.

Shaw was a Fabian and a politician and that combination of foolishness and bureaucracy shaped his thinking, his public remarks and his plays. He belonged to those social academics who, given a pen and paper, in a few minutes could and would solve all the human problems and the human miseries therein contained with a glib phrase and a surfeit of commas, but always with the contemptuous rejection of the human heart, the complex personalities, the appetites for personal greed, and the self-serving martyrdom for the cause, my soul for the cause, be it any cause.

In the drear dead days between the wars one

indeed owed a debt to Shaw for in the prefaces to his plays and in his *Women's Guide to Socialism* he gave us answers to the problems and if one believed this is what one believed in. Shame he rejected human fallibility, for therein lies the salvation of mankind.

In his clowning with Stalin, Shaw displayed the shallowness of his thinking and one can think of little that is of any lasting value. Shaw's guide to the future belonged to the school of 'if only' and in the reading and re-reading of Shaw one saw a communist, conservative and embryonic fascist society taking shape on the Germanic/Japanese, managerial, capitalist, paternalistic from-the-cradle-to-the-grave lifestyle. Here was Shaw who loved to haunt women but only



in print, whose ideal was the towering Bertie Wooster full bosom Fabian woman whom Shaw desired but feared to grope, a Swinburne without the whip.

If you think I wrong the boyo then I can do no more than refer to Shaw's play that he claimed he knocked off in a visit to Scotland in 1904, *He Lied to her Husband*. Here are Shaw's three stereotypes: the Christian socialist cleric husband, the full bosom female Fabian wife and the poet, "a beautiful youth of eighteen". When I saw it staged, Shaw's idea of a poet was literally a junior version of Oscar Wilde, complete with velvet knee breeches and stockings, and the answer to the Noel Coward syndrome for 1904. Shaw was for the matriarchal female to reject the love of the poet that the world needs, and stay with the cleric, all Christian muscles, who needs her.

Shaw was a sterile romantic who believed that he had the gift of poesy, and as the rebel wrote his diatribes against the Establishment, that same Establishment cheered him on, feted him, published his books, staged his plays and filled the seats, applauded, and laughed and laughed. Shaw derided Shakespeare yet never had one fraction of the humanity or the poetry of the man. When Shaw decided to treat his mass audiences to poetic blank verse it was then that the toes curled inside the holed socks,

(continued on page 8)

**Food for Thought ... and Action**

Recent additions to the Freedom Press Bookshop stock.

*An Introduction to the Misery of Islam* by Al-Djouhall, Friends of Omar Khayyam Press, second edition. "The reason for this pamphlet is quite simple: to make sure that past and present struggles against bloody rulers in Islamic countries are not forgotten." This 10-page document illustrates the rarely-reported phenomenon of dissent in Islamic countries. A4, 10 pages, £1.00

*The Right to be Greedy: theses on the practical necessity of demanding everything,\** Loompanics Unlimited. First published in 1974 by For Ourselves, Council for Generalised Self-Management, this reprint has one additional preface by Bob Black which is very short and quite critical. Basically a Situationist thesis, it attempts to marry Marxism with Stirnerism. Reminiscent of *The Society of the Spectacle* in style and layout, it covers subjects such as morality, authority, pleasure, sexuality, individualism and collectivism, the dialectic of egoism, and more. "In the end, egoism is our only friend: in the last analysis, greed is the only thing we can trust. Any revolutionary who is to be counted on can only be in it for himself – unselfish people can always switch loyalty from one projection to another." Very trite, except that greed does not equal egoism. Pages not numbered, roughly 100, £2.50

*Class Struggle in a German Town: radicals intervene in a nuclear power plant construction in Phillipsburg,\** AK Press and Unpopular Books. Originally published as an article in a German magazine, *Wildcat*, this is a valuable document in the history of resistance to the nuclear industry, and is unusual in that, rather than concentrating on the ecological and military aspects of nuclear plants, it tackles the problem from the point of view of construction and maintenance workers on the sites, and of the working class generally. The authors concentrate on the importance of nuclear power plants to the ongoing German process of reconstituting – fragmenting and isolating – the working class through sub-contracting, part-time work, homeworking, etc., the better to control the workers. This is shown as being part of specific capitalist strategies that aim to diversify that class to such an extent that there will be no major class struggles for some time to come due to the lack of a common interest on the part of the workers. A5 pamphlet, 18 pages, £1.00

*Exporting Danger: a history of the Canadian nuclear energy export programme\** by Ron Finch, Black Rose Books. Canada has never produced a nuclear bomb of its own, but has

nevertheless played a major role in the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It has attempted to sell reactors and uranium to over 25 countries, many in 'politically unstable' parts of the world, with developing countries being the largest potential markets. In contrast to the above pamphlet, Finch tackles the subject from the point of view of the global danger of such technology, particularly of the notorious CANDU reactor, and details the entire history of the Canadian nuclear programme including the billions of dollars in state subsidies and bribes to potential buyers. 236 pages, £8.95

*1999\** by Mike Weller, ITMA. A cheaply produced (stapled photocopies) fanzine using well-drawn artwork supported by text on coloured paper which falls into the 'world events, prophecies' category. The author uses a sci-fi style to represent what he thinks will happen in 1999 on the world scene, and in the years leading up to it. Heavily weighted towards the music scene, it nonetheless contains a lot on politics and, surprisingly, get is quite a few predictions for 1992 correct, or nearly so, for example, forecasting a general election win for the Conservatives by nine seats (it was published in 1988). A4 size, 15 pages, 95p

*Anarchism: from theory to practice* by Daniel Guérin with introduction by Noam Chomsky, Monthly Review Press. Imagine our surprise here at Angel Alley when we came across a supplier who still had stocks of this title, which we thought had gone out of print some time ago. It is regarded by many as a classic of anarchist writing, issued in French in 1965 and in this English edition in 1970. Regular Freedom Press workers – and probably readers of the anarchist press – are aware of an increased interest in anarchist ideas throughout the 'Thatcher decade' so it is a nice coincidence to read in the first line of the preface: "There has recently been a renewal of interest in anarchism". With the current controversy in *Freedom* over the term 'democracy' it is interesting to note that even in this work there is disagreement: while Chomsky argues in his introduction for "a truly democratic revolution", Guérin quotes Proudhon's statement that "democracy is nothing but a constitutional tyrant". Just thought I'd stir it up a bit! 166 pages, £6.95

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**The Way to Utopia**

(continued from page 5)

lack of power to act and further stoke up their anxiety. Finally, fill their exhausted minds with 'Match of the Day' and the antics of their royal or presidential superstars.

Sooner or later – just be patient! – a terrorist, a bungling, panic-stricken politician or a simple malfunction will fire the first bomb. The four-minute warning will sound. You will descend into your shelter, keeping the hoi-polloi at bay with rifles, as they kept the third-class passengers below decks on The Titanic, and hey presto, when wind and rain have lessened the poisonous radiation and diffused the stench of death, utopia is on the way!

Michael Duane

## Letter from Chile

This winter I visited Chile for the first time. The following is a record of my own feelings and some of the discussions I had with Chileans.

Chile brings into question the whole notion of underdevelopment. These are a well educated, highly sophisticated *modern* people. The vital statistics and literacy rate are close to those of Canada or Europe, in spite of the obvious poverty. There is a large middle class, which would be even bigger were it not for the efforts of General Pinochet. Many social reforms were introduced in the forty years prior to the coup and ideologies such as liberalism, socialism and anarchism were influential in Chile very soon after they originated in Europe. How can the country of Gabriela Mistral, Pablo Neruda and Claudio Arrau be lumped in with the Dark Age barbarism of a country like Iran? But this is precisely what concepts such as 'underdevelopment' and 'Third World' do. Or as an engineering student I talked to put it, "most Americans think we are nothing but Indians living in grass huts".

We visited Villa Frei, a *poblacion* (working class neighbourhood) accompanied by a Chilean sociologist who said the suburb was named after the president who initiated the project and many of the residents were now reaching retirement age, selling their homes and moving into apartments by the ocean. From the third floor balcony where we stood, the small but adequate and neat houses seemed inundated by the apricot trees and bougainvillea that grew around them. In the background, more distant than they appeared, loomed the massive silent bulk of the Andes. Funny thing, Canadian leftists were inclined to consider Eduardo Frei, the Christian Democrat, to be a reactionary, yet this government built homes for workers, attempted to institute land reform, organised trade unions and co-operatives. Seems like we got taken in by Stalinist propaganda.

Subsequent research leads me to believe that the Christian Democrats under Frei were more like the British Labour Party than a party of the right and that Chile prior to the coup suffered from too much politics and ideology. Like Italy in the aftermath of World War One, the reform movement was divided into three or four mutually hostile groups, a situation which allowed the extreme right to take power. Chile makes a good example of why libertarians take an a-political and anti-ideological stance.

While I was in Santiago a group of terrorists were

\*The slogan of the Christian Democratic Party in the 1989 election was 'The Joy Will Return!' Chileans say that yes, the joy has returned, but only for the politicians!

killed by the cops in a shoot-out after a botched attempt to rob a gas station. They tied up and threatened the attendant, no doubt getting in a little practice for their would-be dictatorship over the proletariat. But the Chilean people are sick of killing and sick of politics. They don't want any more 'pie in the sky' promises of the ideologies. The government is a Christian Democrat – socialist coalition with tacit communist support, but the politicians' hands are tied by the globalisation of

and got it because copper is half the economy. The coal miners, who are still on strike, want \$200 a month and they will be lucky to get \$110 or \$120. No, really don't expect all that much from the new government."

Hopefully the trade unions will be able to rebuild, now that the dictatorship is gone and ideological divisions are not so important. No one is sorry to see the waning of the Stalinists, the people who did more to sow divisiveness and create ill-will than

## Will the joy return?\*

capital and old Pinochet lingering in the background. Now that it is too late for Keynesian reforms, they band together! A writer with whom I discussed these matters summarised his feelings on Chilean politics: "Aside from a few tiny groups of Sendero Luminoso types, the far left has ceased to exist. They get some support from young people in the poorest neighbourhoods. The Communist Party is melting away. People are no longer interested in politics, they just watch television, and everyone is very individualistic now. The new government hasn't done much and can't do that much – just a few reforms which won't help the poor that much. The Green Movement? Yes, it exists but is mainly middle class. You see, the real problems in Chile are the most basic ones – like keeping a roof over your head. But I have hope of a new beginning from movements like the Greens. By the way, have you read *Resacralizing Society* by Morris Berman? There are a lot of things in that book that I like."

I met a dentist who had much experience with popular movements and questioned him about the Chilean trade union movement: "The trade unions were once very strong in Chile, comparable to Western Europe. Now they are down to about 25% of the work force. This is the legacy of the dictatorship. Most of the union leaders are Christian Democrats since the others fled or were killed. A great disparity exists among the workers based upon their relative bargaining strength. The copper miners went on strike demanding \$1,000 a month,

any other group. The wages are appallingly low, especially for the unskilled or white collar workers, but everywhere I went I saw new construction and new industry. Chile is booming – the economy grew at 6% last year – however, not much has gotten down to the people who really need it. In spite of the poverty I saw hardly any beggars, in fact there are far more panhandlers in the streets of Montreal than Santiago. A Chilean friend pointed out that a lot of hidden begging exists in the form of street selling. And there are legions of people in the streets or on the buses selling fruit, candy bars, ice cream, drinks, you name it. Their clothes may be of cheap quality, but are clean and neat – obviously these mini-entrepreneurs still have their pride and dignity. *They are only poor financially.*

The proliferation of street sellers brings to mind the feeling I had of being in a society which was a strange mixture of heavy-handed authoritarianism and total anarchy, and that back home we don't experience much of either – just a kind of grey bureaucratisation. For example, in Canada street selling is illegal, a sop to the retail merchant monopoly. But that isn't the only difference. The bus system in Santiago is made up of thousands of driver-owned mini-buses, anybody who can afford a down payment on a bus can put one on the street, there is no city monopoly. The same goes for taxi cabs (whereas in Montreal a would-be cab owner has to pay a \$60,000 bribe to the government, called a 'licence'). I have never gotten around a city as fast

as I did in Santiago, never waiting more than two minutes for a bus, a treat to someone used to shivering or sweltering for half to three-quarters of an hour. Many poor Chileans live in tiny home-made dwellings. True, they are small and made of adobe or corrugated iron, but these buildings are *theirs* (and there are always pots of flowers growing out front, no matter how humble the house). In Canada there are a host of building restrictions and by-laws which make it impossible for the poor to build a little cottage (laws developed to protect the construction industry and squeeze more tax money from homeowners). Hopefully, as the Chilean economy grows, the state will keep its greedy paws out of these areas – wouldn't it be nice, just for once, to combine freedom with a high living standard?

Larry Gambone

(to be concluded)

## FREEDOM PRESS new titles

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- **Wildcat ABC of Bosses, cartoons** by Donald Room, 48 pages, £1.95

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On Monday 10th February 1992, two Moscow anarchists were sentenced to three years of imprisonment for resisting a brutal attack from the side of two KGB agents in civilian clothes. The same day, a spontaneous demonstration of anarchists took place in the centre of the city – protesters blocked the traffic on Gor'ky Street. Soon after that the special troops attacked the demo using batons and heavy boots and arrested nineteen people including two thirteen year old girls. Because of the support from the radical socialist deputies of the Moscow Soviet, they were released five hours later. But two of our comrades, Alexei Rodionov and Alexander Kuznetsov, are still imprisoned and we appeal for your help.

### Pre-history of the case

Alexei Rodionov and Alexander Kuznetsov, two Moscow anarchists of seventeen and eighteen years old respectively, were arrested on 12th March 1991 on the way to a demonstration held by the Democratic Union to commemorate the 74th anniversary of the February Revolution. Rodionov and Kuznetsov have been held in the KGB jail for the last seven and a half months, awaiting trial on charges of hooliganism and resisting arrest.

It's hard to say what the police version of the story is because they've changed it every time it has become evident that what they say is untrue. Basically they say that two punks were disturbing and accosting passers-by in the Dzerzhinskaya Square underpass, and that they attacked two KGB agents in civilian clothes. So these 'poor gentlemen' had to beat them to appeal to troops of the special militia to assist in their arrest. During this time the anarchists attacked and injured them with a knife and a razor.

Rodionov and Kuznetsov say that on the way to the demonstration they were attacked by two men who they had no reason to believe were police. They were punched and kicked to the ground and one of them was knocked unconscious. After this they were taken to a police bus, where they were beaten once more and had their hair forcibly cut.

## Yeltsin's first political prisoners need your help

Here they were searched and a knife and a razor were found on them.

Since then they have been held in the KGB prison in Lefortovo in a thirty-person cell which now actually holds seventy. They can only manage about three hours sleep a night, and during the first months they were not allowed to get legal help because their injuries were too bad. They were taken for questioning every morning at 4am and returned to the cell at 12pm. When it came time for the court appearance, Kuznetsov was so sick he could not be moved from the prison hospital.

That sounds like very drastic treatment for a couple of punks arrested almost by accident. But as far as the prison system is concerned, they are not even human beings. Their clothes and their ideas are an affront to the repressive system. Just as in the Brezhnev years, the police use the criminal code against political activists.

After we got no response from the media, Moscow anarchists from various groups organised a hunger strike outside the White House. Because they managed to attract some attention from a number of Moscow Soviet (city council) deputies and Russian parliamentarians, Rodionov and Kuznetsov were released pending the court appearance.

This kind of charge, hooliganism, is a routine procedure and is normally dealt with in a day. This time it took four months, as the court and the prosecution constantly sought to delay proceedings. Finally, when media interest in the case was low and after the prosecution had convinced every sane person that their mouths were full of lies, they were found guilty and sentenced to three years.

After the evidence presented by the defence it

became obvious that the investigation was conducted in a completely improper way. The 'injuries' of the police, it turned out, could not have been done by razors and knives. The police got caught in a contradiction between their need to boast and the needs of their story. On the one hand they told that they got the punks to the ground in a second, on the other they claimed they were badly injured by them. Also, even though all the witnesses were the witnesses for the prosecution, they could not manage to get them to confirm the police version of events.

We tried our best to attract public attention to the case, because it's the first political trial of the so-called 'democratic' regime. But there are great obstacles to us because it's clear that the media is controlled by the government and they will try to present both the imprisoned anarchists and their supporters as criminals. Their aim is to use this case to intimidate the whole opposition, and to demonstrate that the court system is firmly under their control.

Nevertheless, they are vulnerable to international pressure because the Yeltsin regime needs to maintain its human face so as not to jeopardise the flow of financial aid. On 29th February we are going to hold another demonstration aiming to attract public attention to the case and force the authorities to release our comrades and stop this political trial. So we ask you to demonstrate outside the Soviet consulates in your countries on 28th February and make that day the international day of support for Rodionov and Kuznetsov. As the experience shows, Soviet authorities pay attention to the actions in front of the Soviet consulates and at least inform Moscow about them. It's vital that not only anarchists should be active in these

campaigns because this trial opens the way to a new wave of dissident repression in Russia. If the state will manage to use the old machine of repression against two punks about whom nobody cares, it will soon extend its reach.

Beginning from 10th February 1992, there was a new massive campaign for the release of Rodionov and Kuznetsov. In Russia demonstrations were held in a number of cities and towns, imprisoned anarchists gained support from independent unions, civil rights activists, common people. Actions near Soviet consulates abroad were also numerous – various anarchist/socialist organisations and independent unions sent their protests to Russian officials. We are very grateful to everybody who supported our comrades.

Recently the advocates of Rodionov and Kuznetsov appealed to the court for the new trial. The descriptions of the violations done by the authorities during the investigation and the trial covered ten pages. The campaign of support for political prisoners is not over. It can't be stopped until they are released, so your support is still needed. If you haven't protested against the violations of human rights in Russia, it's not too late to do it now.

You can send information about your activities and can request more information from: Russia 109462, Moscow, Volzhsky Blvd., d.21, kv.62, Mikhail Tsovma.

This has been compiled by Mikhail Tsovma, international secretary of the confederation of anarcho-syndicalists (KAS) in Russia.

Mikhail Tsovma for KAS

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# Charter 88

Dear Editors,  
Charter 88, with a membership in excess of 22,000, admits that: "The inscription of laws does not guarantee their realisation", no doubt drawing upon the experience of that much vaunted 'democracy' the US of A where theoretically impeachable Presidents and their hit-men regularly invoke the (third?) amendment and live out their retirement in luxury. Another Charter 88 admission is that: "Only people themselves can ensure freedom". All vary well said.

Charter 88 puts forward ten demands, which read as follows:

1. Enshrine by means of a Bill or Rights, such civil liberties as the right to peaceful assembly, to freedom of association, to freedom from discrimination, to freedom from detention without trial, to trial by jury, to privacy and to freedom of expression.
2. Subject executive powers and prerogatives, by whomsoever exercised, to the rule of law.
3. Establish freedom of information and open government.
4. Create a fair electoral system of proportional representation.
5. Reform the upper house and establish a democratic, non-hereditary second chamber.
6. Place the executive under the power of a democratically renewed parliament and all agencies of the state under the rule of law.
7. Ensure the independence of a reformed judiciary.
8. Provide legal remedies for all abuses of power by the state and by officials of central and local government.
9. Guarantee an equitable distribution of power between the nations of the United Kingdom and between local, regional and central government.
10. Draw up a written constitution, anchored in the idea of universal citizenship, that incorporates these reforms.

What this Charter amounts to is a polite request to the establishment to scuttle itself. The authors of the Charter labour under the illusion that states, like leopards, can change the very attributes that make them recognisable as states, and leopards – their sovereignty, and spots.

Nevertheless, anarchists can welcome the existence of the

Charter, if only because 22,000 non-anarchists, including many very eminent people, are advertising the fact that democracy in Britain is non-existent. Never mind that Lord Scarman considers Britain to be a "true democracy", we should be grateful that the other half of his brain is in good working order.

We should wish Charter 88 well, and give it prominence in our campaigning – it is half way towards anarchy.

EC

## Demanding the Impossible

Dear Editors,

The 18th April issue of *Freedom* carried a review of Peter Marshall's book *Demanding the Impossible*.

'Review' is perhaps a generous description, in that the reader could gain little or no grasp of the book's contents. Instead we are treated to a restatement of a great many predictable comments from a wide range of the bourgeois press. Insult is added to injury when the author reminds us that the same approach to the same book was made by him/herself in the 22nd February *Freedom*. MH clearly sees non-anarchist reactions to this book as being of great importance, yet finds it of lesser importance to provide his/her own assessment. Indeed, one wonders if he/she has actually read the book, or merely wishes to impress us with the vast range of his/her reading matter. MH at least refrained from picking up briefly on one or two aspects of the book, and using them as a launching pad for voluminous accounts of his/her own ideas: a practice sometimes indulged in by other contributors.

Why was half a page of the larger type given over to such a worthless piece? Is it demanding the impossible to expect an informative view of Marshall's work to appear in the pages of *Freedom*?

John Griffin

*We thought MH's piece well worth publishing. It must surely interest anarchists to know how non-anarchist reviewers respond to a work of anarchist*

*scholarship. A long review of Marshall's book will appear in The Raven number 18 (unfortunately squeezed out of The Raven number 17 by more immediate matter).*

*It is difficult to write a review of such a comprehensive book which is both informative and short enough for Freedom. Let it suffice that it is a readable, thorough book of more than 700 large pages, hardback, priced at £25.00 (when ordering by post from Freedom Press Bookshop, please add £2.50 inland, £5.00 other countries, towards postage and packing).*

## Anti-Election Alliance

Dear Freedom,

Some inaccuracies in your reporting of the Anti-Election Alliance (AEA): Hackney Solidarity Group did not help organise the AEA, for the simple fact that it had already ceased to exist for several months. And why no mention of the Anarchist Communist Federation? We attended every meeting of the AEA, had a speaker at the rally, and our banner on the podium and at the demo.

And does it matter whether the police think we're rioting jobs or not? Firstly, this term seems filtered through several layers of ruling class lies about the anarchist movement, and secondly wouldn't it be better that they thought that of us than that we were good little girls and boys meekly obeying their orders?

Ron Allen  
for Anarchist Communist Federation (London)

## News from Angel Alley

**T**he *Raven* number 17 'On Use of Land' is out! Subscribers should be receiving their copies about now. There are a number of *Freedom* subscribers whose joint subscription has expired so far as *The Raven* is concerned. If the second batch of numbers on your address label is 16 or less, then you will not be receiving *The Raven* number 17 until we hear from you. We just cannot afford to go on sending *The Raven* when subs have not been renewed. As we have pointed out on more than one occasion, we lose £1,000 per issue, mainly subsidised by sales of *Freedom* Press titles. And with *The Raven* number 17 we add a bonus of an extra 16 pages at the usual price of £2.50 for a 96-page issue – which surely goes to show that we are not 'in business' to make money!

**F**reedom needs more writers, more letter writers as well as distributors. After the Tory victory at the elections a feature writer of *The Sunday Times* (12th April), Robert Harris, who was hoping for a Labour victory, lamented the fact that he was condemned to "contemplating my career as a political columnist: 1,200 words a week, week in and week out, stretching into the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th and maybe even – God preserve us – the 18th successive years of Conservative rule, all of them under the leadership of John Major. I ask you, what kind of a job is that?"

Journalists are not renowned for their fellow solidarity, and in fact 'Shoreditch' in *The New Statesman* referred to this *cris de coeur* and informed us that Roger Harris was being paid at the rate of £1 per word – that is £1,200 a week for his weekly column!

Every issue of *Freedom* consists of about 14,000 words. Nobody is paid and the editors, unlike Robert Harris,

look forward to the next five years. *BUT* there are too few anarchist readers contributing to the 14,000 words a fortnight. And are there not more readers who could help to boost our funds a bit. Our deficits on *The Raven* and *Freedom* are at present covered by our literature sales, but this is at the expense of more *Freedom* Press titles. Imagine what it would cost if we started paying contributors, not at £1 a word but just 10p a word! Any budding journalists – you have been warned!

**A**pologies to any callers at the bookshop over the Easter weekend. We had to close because our dodgy staircase to the first floor had to be replaced over the holiday weekend, at considerable expense. Another expense has been to keep out marauders. We had one more break-in recently. Unfortunately for all concerned they are not interested in anarchist propaganda and only looking for money and equipment that can be sold. Gradually the first floor is being converted into a fortress – also at considerable expense. Our Overheads Fund is doing its nut!

## DONATIONS

7th-23rd April 1992

**Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund**  
Lancaster JA £3.50, London SW2 DR £100, Hadleigh P&MD £3, Gravesend DP £5.

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# GBH

(continued from page 6)

as when Mrs Thorndike as St Joan rambled on in her flat voice: "You think that life is nothing but not being stone dead. It is not the bread and water I fear – I can live on bread – when have I asked for more? It is no hardship to drink water if the water is clean. Bread has no sorrow for me, and water no affliction. But to shut me from the light of the sky and the sight of the fields and flowers; to chain my feet so that I can never again ride with the soldiers nor climb the hills ..." and on and on. One must sympathise with Shaw's Inquisitor for, as he said to me in the lavatory of the White Hart pub: "Arthur mate, I don't know who was being tortured, me or St Joan". Most of Shaw's collected plays are not worth re-staging, for on examination they are trite and shallow. But the final indignity that makes Shaw a number two type of moon landing man is that Shaw survives because of the cannibalisation of his play *Pygmalion* into the successful and lasting film *My Fair Lady*, while the play drags on as repertory company stock. Here is Shaw with his answer for the problems of the labouring class, that if you talk proper therein lies salvation, classwise and bankwise. GBS knew how to talk proper, and he knew how to communicate to a fashionable audience, but with the years it has proved so shallow.

Yet still in the National Portrait Gallery one

raises one's wine glass to the old sod. With one election under our belt, the Tories jangling the keys of our jail and the Labour Party mafia throat-cutting for the party leadership, to lead we the great unwashed into another bout of oblivion, we are meat for the message. Never believe that the authoritative voices within the anarchist movement are Simon pure for with a cynical wave of the pinkie at the drop of a beer glass or a coffee cup, they will type or mouth instant salvation for us, the suffering mass, in the style of Shaw. They know in their minds, but not in their hearts, that their instant solutions will never be put into practice for these comrades, like Shaw, reject the individual for their blueprint of the sterile future. One indeed owes a debt to Shaw in that he marshalled our thinking until we were forced to cry halt and seek our own solutions to our own personal problems. One always assumes that Professor Henry Higgins in Shaw's *Pygmalion* was meant by Shaw to be the mirror of himself. The theatre critic Spencer in a rave review of the NT production of the play wrote: "Howard's performance also suggests that Higgins (Shaw?) is an emotional cripple. Whenever the subject of sex comes up ('that thing' as he puts it) he becomes painfully embarrassed, while in the presence of his mother he behaves like a gangling schoolboy."

When Shaw died and was cremated, I was among the motley London mob at the burning of the offering, and it was fitting, I felt, that the same Establishment that turned Shaw's life into their clown turned his death into farce.

## Use of Land

(continued from page 4)

Colony where he was brought up, while Maureen Boustred's 'Coming Back to Earth' shows some of the problems to be faced by those who want to practice land skills.

There are two articles of an academic nature: Graeme Nicholson's 'Property and Expropriation: the anarchist approach' covers Kropotkin's theory as expounded in *The Conquest of Bread*, together with Bolloten, Leval, Richards, etc., on the Spanish collectives; while Yacov Oved has contributed a long original paper on those Spanish collectives of the civil war period.

Other contributors include Keith Flett on 'The Land Question in Nineteenth Century Radical Politics', Graham Purchase on 'Green Politics or Party Politicking', Richard Harris on 'Green Anarchism' and Stephen Cullen gives an account of the Scottish land wars in the nineteenth century.

Harold Sculthorpe, whose 'Rambling Notes' were a popular feature of *Freedom* a year or so ago, makes a comeback in 'The Right to Roam', which is complemented by Jonathan

As we milled around, Lady Astor prowled among us shouting out: "wave your arms and smile and sing for that is what he would have wanted" and while Shaw's smoke went skyward we shouted and waved our arms and laughed and laughed.

Arthur Moyse

Simcock's view of the urban landscape of Nottingham through the window of a train – everything he sees reveals an aspect of the profit motive.

Those who have followed the controversial articles on socio-biology and its relevance to anarchism by Peter Gibson ('Anarchism and the Selfish Gene' in *The Raven* number 6, and 'Kropotkin, Mutual Aid and Selfish Genes' in *The Raven* number 16) may like to note that this issue contains a reply by Harold Barclay.

*The Raven* number 17 has an extra sixteen pages, and the contents have as much variety as the English landscape.

CC

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**BRISTOL:** Thursday 14th May, 7.30pm at Bristol University Students' Union Building, Queen's Road, Clifton, Bristol. Donations welcome. Enquiries tel: 0225-446394 / 0272-553321

**LEEDS:** Monday 18th May, 7.30pm at Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre, Leeds University, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds. Donations welcome. Enquiries tel: 0532-628812

**LONDON:** Thursday 21st May, 7.00pm at St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, London W1. Entrance £5 (£2.50 concs). Enquiries tel: 081-802 3932 / 071-287 2741

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## Anarchist Forum

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

### 1992 SEASON OF MEETINGS

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

## 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 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?

## Anarchists Against the Bomb

Saturday 16th May  
10am to 6pm

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

### Regional Correspondents

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

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

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

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