

# anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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FIFTY PENCE

*"The power to command and the weakness to obey are the essence of government and the quintessence of slavery."*  
Charles T. Sprading

## '50 DAYS OF DYNAMIC INACTION'

When the Wilson government took over for Labour in 1964 after thirteen years of Tory misrule we were promised "one hundred days of dynamic action". *Freedom* published an editorial halfway through that 'dynamic' period, with the headline '50 Days of Dynamic Inaction'. History repeats itself. The Tory election victory on 9th April was followed by elation on the stock markets, shares rocketing to record levels, the £ sterling raised its head in triumph in the money markets, and we were assured that retail sales - apart from food which, being still more important to most people for survival, remains static - of videoscopes, home computers and package holidays in Bangkok would reflect 'confidence' in Britain's economic recovery. When the ministers bothered to mention unemployment they quoted some 'economic law' unknown to most of us, namely that there would be no corresponding recovery of employment, because of a time lag! In ordinary language which the wage

(and nowadays the salary) slaves understand the first victims in a capitalist 'recession' are the wage slaves. But what is 'terribly shocking' for all those millions of commuters who descend on the City of London, and all the big cities from Monday to Friday, and produce nothing but paper, is that they too are realising that whether you get a wage or a salary, or are paid weekly or monthly, you are all wage/salary slaves of the capitalist system!

The next thing you will be learning, if you haven't already, is that the government will do nothing to interfere with management's decisions 'in the interests of the company and the shareholders'. So far as capitalist economics are concerned, what matters about everything is profits and dividends. 'Loyal staff' and all that crap mean nothing. After all, even top management are being sent packing in the name of 'retrenchment', 'reorganisation' - however, more often than not with a golden handshake.

The media were part of the government's psychological warfare to persuade us all that the recession was over. Headlines such as 'CBI\* buoyant on recovery', 'CBI reports recovery in consumer spending' in mid-May proved to be a damp squib by the end of May when the balance of payments for April showed that imports exceeded exports by £1,361 million.

You will have noticed that the media is always right because they rely on  
*(continued on page 2)*

### Human Guinea Pigs: 2

Our piece on guinea pigs (*Freedom*, 30th May) was more than topical seeing the sick publicity given to the little girl needing bowel and kidney transplants. We shall wait to see how the media deal with the final outcome of this so-called 'human story'.

On the very day we went to press (23rd May) BBC Radio 4 put on a programme in the series 'The Cutting Edge' in which a Dr David Cook discussed a particular medical ethical dilemma with the people to whom it matters most: the doctor and the patient. The patient, a woman, had had a stroke and as a result could only be fed through the nose. Her husband visited her every day until he died, when his daughter took over. When her mother had a second stroke the doctor was opposed to prolonging her life, but her daughter insisted that she should be kept alive. The patient was completely paralysed, could not speak and the only movement was in one eye which the daughter said allowed them to communicate with each other, and she maintained that her mother was happy. The most ghastly aspect of this case is that the poor woman, if one can call her a woman, *has been in this state since 1984 - eight years*. When does compassion mean allowing someone to die peacefully and painlessly?

## The land is too precious NOT to be cultivated

It is surely ironical that, after years of wrangling, the Agricultural Ministers of the European Community have agreed on reduced cereal subsidies for which farmers will - if they are to take advantage of the compensation offered in return for lower intervention prices - have to set aside 15% of their arable acreage, just when not only Africa but Europe as well has been struck for the third year by serious shortages of rainfall. World Radio, for instance, reported that in South Africa the maize crop (normally of seven million tons) would be yielding a mere two million tons this year. The drought in France and

Spain will obviously affect the harvest and it could well also do so in Britain.

One thing that Man cannot predict is the kind of weather that will determine the quality and quantity of our crops. Surely we should aim to use the land to produce *as much food* as we can *without* abusing the soil on which it is grown and which is vital to human life.

All the surpluses now in intervention in Europe should be distributed to the starving millions in Africa, gratis, but direct to the starving, as a small contribution to a continent exploited long enough by the rapacious West.

# '50 DAYS OF DYNAMIC INACTION'

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short memories among their readers, and in any case can always blame governments for misleading them and the public!

So it was not surprising that after the announcement of the balance of trade deficit for April, the headlines became 'Trade Gap Hits Hopes of Upturn' (*The Guardian*, 27th May), 'Import Surge Increases Trade Deficit' (*The Independent*, 27th May). Needless to say, the economics correspondents of these two 'serious' newspapers interpreted the results in different ways. Not being economists, but anarchists, we can only apply common sense to the problem which is of capitalist finances and not of economics.

One has only to read of the 'problems' of the prosperous capitalist nations to realise that all talk of recovery is what we have described as 'psychological warfare'. Confirmation comes from an economist in *The Times* (1st June) no less, who names three authors as being "indispensable for a serious understanding of economics". Adam Smith and Maynard Keynes "everyone would presumably agree". As to the third:

"I would suggest a radical nomination - Hans Christian Andersen. In almost two decades of working on economics, I have found only one text as useful and illuminating as *The Wealth of Nations* and *The General Theory* - Anderson's masterly contribution *The Emperor's New Clothes*."

When a ludicrous notion is repeated ad infinitum by enough people in authority, society will start to believe it, even though everyone individually can see that it is false."

We hasten to add that Mr Anatole Kaletsky is no anarchist, but perhaps unwittingly he underlines the anarchist critique of the wishful thinking both of

government and most of the sycophantic 'economists'.

When commenting on the economy we always disclaim any pretensions to 'expertise'. We can only rely on our common sense and a reading of the financial columns of the press. Unlike the professional journalists who rely on political contacts and 'leaks' we have to rely on principles and 'hunches'.

In the issue of *Freedom* (18th April) that appeared just after the General Election we asked: "Does it matter who won?" and though recognising that Kinnock and his friends were frustrated at not getting power, we added:

"Actually, in our humble opinion... the younger politicians in the Labour hierarchy may come to welcome the fact that they are not having to take over a crisis of such proportions. All we can foresee so far as Mr Major's new government is concerned is complete inaction so far as the economy and unemployment are concerned. They will just go on prating about the market economy and blaming the world recession for all our woes, and unemployment will go on rising, the homeless will go on increasing and public services will go on being cut and/or privatised."

Some seven weeks later *The Guardian's* economic correspondent (1st June) in his always interesting column suggests *Tories could find victory a road to ruin*, confirming, we feel, *Freedom's* analysis:

"For it is becoming clear that, as so often, the conventional wisdom is seriously misplaced - in this case that this was an election to win. Rather, if ever there was an election to lose it was this one, with the government party condemned to be associated with leading Britain into a first class economic and social morass."

By this time next year it will have become obvious that the country faces twin deficits on

a gargantuan scale and with little to show for it by way of growth or prosperity. The public sector borrowing requirement will be approaching £40 billion; and the current account deficit exploding upwards towards £20 billion.

Unemployment will be only just short of three million; and the full consequences of deregulation on the financial system's operational viability no longer disguisable. Debt-burdened consumers and banks racked by colossal loan write-offs will not permit much of a recovery; and superintending an economy dead in the water will be a government of deeply modest talents frozen into immobility. Not a pretty sight."

We agree! But *Freedom* has been saying

this all the time when all the economists were saying, miming the politicians who were thinking of the elections and the votes of the punters, that recovery was round the corner.

Well, we have had the first 'fifty days of dynamic inaction' and are well on the way to the next fifty and another fifty thousand more unemployed among the Tory-voting respectable white collared salary staff executives - anything but workers, trades unionists - but in the final analysis, all wage slaves dependent on an employer who can hire or fire at will! That's capitalism!

\*The bosses trade union.

## Brazil: they must think we're nuts!

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the 'Earth Summit' currently taking place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, looks sure to be the non-event of the year. All the important decisions have already been taken. But even before the much-publicised sabotaging of the agenda by US President George Bush and his pet poodle John Major the 'achievements' of the conference were likely to be even more harmful than beneficial, both for the environment and for development. What the rich north is essentially saying to the poor south is: "Yes, we recognise that terrible ecological damage is being done to the planet and that your countries are suffering from chronic, and worsening, poverty - but we're not going to do anything about it."

This is not to say that the industrialised north is not implicated in the current situation. Indeed it is responsible for most of it. While the amount of waste from what an individual in a developing country consumes in a lifetime totals 150 times his or her body weight, the waste from a European's lifetime is 1,000 times their body weight, and a *North American's is equal to 4,000 times their body weight*. The demand on the world's resources by the average American is fifty times greater than the average Indian, and in terms of human population in the next decade, although the increase in the poor south will be over five times greater than that of the rich north, the latter's consumption of resources will far outstrip that of the former.

I could go on and on. But in the face of these statistics - and irrespective of who signs what in Rio - what is the rich north proposing to do for the people of the poor south? To put the squeeze on them even harder; to extort even more primary resources for even lower prices; to demand that they import even more unnecessary and/or harmful manufactured goods from the north than before (made from those same extorted raw materials); and to erect tariff barriers and other protectionist

measures against any goods they might try to export to the north.

The prospect for the environment is no brighter: the \$125 billion which developed countries are refusing to pay towards protecting biological diversity is less than one tenth of NATO's military budget, but reducing (for example) the rate of destruction of the rainforests would mean reducing - ever so slightly - the rate at which they plunder and pillage the planet, and hence their standard of living, and the Bush administration has made it quite clear that "the American lifestyle is not up for negotiation" (*The Observer*, 31st May). So now that John Major has been told the correct line he can be expected to come to heel quietly and not upset his masters - the world's financiers and industrialists - in a time of world recession.

It is blatantly obvious to all except those who will not see that global, as well as national, redistribution of wealth is long overdue. But all that those who control the world economic system are offering is that they should continue - and even increase - their current rates of consumption and destruction of the environment, and that the developing countries should reduce theirs. One appropriate maxim which the developed world's participants in Rio would do well to remember is 'it takes two to tango'.

Something else they should remember is to leave their children at home. Children hanging around in Rio tend to disappear, only to be found murdered later, thanks to the city's new combined poverty and over-population counter-measures, carried out by death squads widely believed to be policemen in plain clothes.

Meanwhile *The Times*, that reliable apologist for the state and the establishment, says (1st June) that since developing countries want money towards the cost of any anti-pollution and pro-environment measures,

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## We don't believe it!

According to the transport correspondent of *The Guardian* (1st June):

"Ministers are planning a national campaign to persuade people to switch to public transport in an effort to reduce congestion and carbon dioxide emissions."

There are no incentives for giving up the private car. According to the report:

"Drivers are being encouraged to share lifts, park and ride, walk to their nearest stations or bus stops and cycle to work."

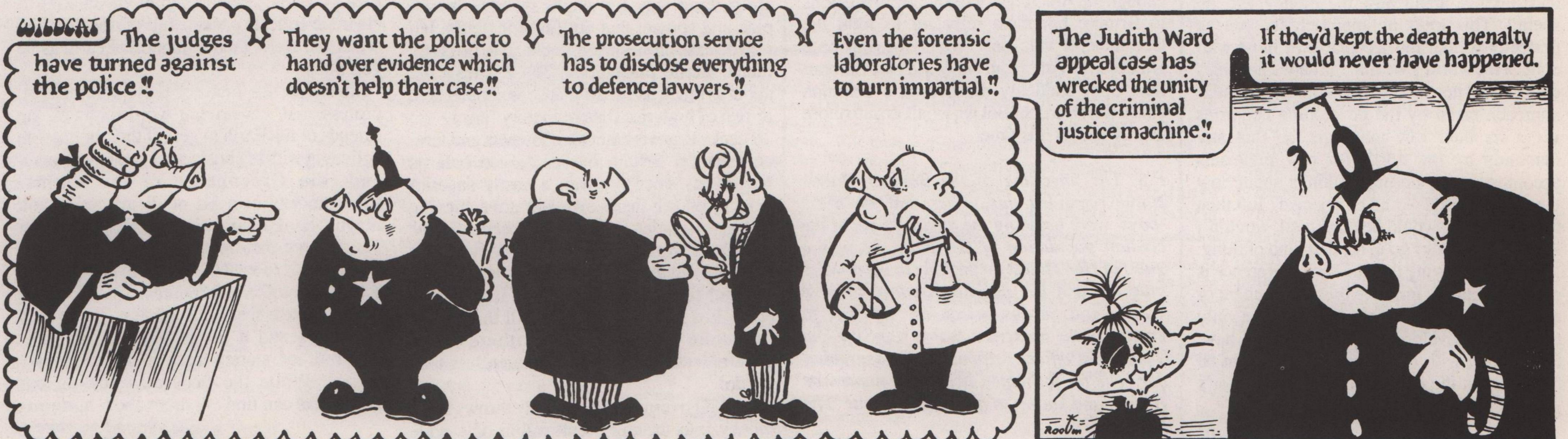
They won't get any response from 'encouragement'. In the consumerist society you have to offer punters a *bargain*. You have to convince them that only idiots use their cars to go to work or to go on their holidays.

Car ownership can only be made a luxury which most people cannot afford by providing cheap or even free public transport on journeys of less than, say, 25 miles and remove the road tax of £110 and increase the petrol tax by at least 25p a gallon.

Some years ago the Labour Party opposed the abolition of the road tax and an increase

on the tax on petrol on the grounds that in rural areas with poor public transport people who could least afford it would suffer. This is nonsense. The *car tax* is in fact another form of poll tax. People who drive 25,000 miles a year (as many salesmen and other do) and owners of Rolls Royces are paying the same road tax as this writer who only does 4,000 miles a year with a T registration vehicle almost entirely used because of a lack of public transport to get him to the nearest railway station. Think of all the snoopers trying to catch the non-payers of the road tax. Only this week the government has launched a campaign to catch them. They reckon that £100 million is lost in revenue. Scrap the road tax and put a massive tax on petrol, and at the same time boost public transport - rail and road - at purely nominal fares.

We shall see *real results* in a reduction of carbon dioxide compared with the Planet Earth jamboree in Rio de Janeiro, condemned before it even started!



You can't have a bath today, we can't afford the water, Isle of Wight residents are telling their visitors as they use buckets of yesterday's bathwater to flush the lavatory; and a pipe built to bring extra from the mainland stays unused. Not now needed, says the water company. Isle of Wight residents already have what the rest of us are promised: water meters. On the Birmingham Sandwell Estate meters have not yet arrived, but one in five have had their water cut off because they can't pay their bills. The price of water is increasing rapidly yet the water companies made £1.4 billion profit last year.

There is much talk of drought and, in a shortage, rationing by need may be acceptable, but we are threatened with rationing by price. Michael Carney of the Water Services Association says we should be able to use as much water as we want, wastefully or not, so long as we can pay for it. There are many parts of the world where there is a desperate shortage of water and they know what a drought is really like, but for this tiny island off the north west coast of Europe the idea is ludicrous. We hear about greatly reduced rainfalls (have they told the rain-soaked Glaswegians I wonder) but read the small print and you find that it is only in part of the UK, mainly the south and east, that more water is being taken out of the ground than is being returned naturally. For the country as a whole there is a surplus.

Perhaps you have thought of the solution. Why not transfer some of the surplus to where there is a shortage? Is it because that would be too difficult and expensive? Birmingham has been getting its water from Wales since the previous century, and Manchester has long been taking some of its water from the Cumbrian lakes. Or is it, in the interests of

## Why Water Shortages?

profit, that water companies prefer to take their water from the places it is cheapest and easiest to get and this is why in the south and east many rivers are drying up and the water table is dropping from over-extraction? The National Rivers Authority (NRA), supposedly responsible for the state of the rivers, can do little to stop this. Ironically, if they did the water companies would be entitled to claim massive compensation from them.

Have you heard about the Kielder reservoir in Northumberland, one of northern Europe's largest, built in the mid-1970s to supply water to north east England? It has never been needed and is just a very big boating lake. Although it has never been used as a source of potable water for, say, east Yorkshire, further south where there are some problems there are now plans to transfer millions of litres an hour by pipe and river to Lockerbie in south west Scotland. This water would not be for drinking – the people of Lockerbie have plenty – but would be used to cool a pair of 1400 megawatt pressurised water reactors British Nuclear Fuels want to build near there.

In a recently published report, the NRA have described how rivers and canals could be used to transfer water from the wet (sic) west and north to the drier south and east using a minimum of new pumping stations and pipe lines. But the water companies prefer to spend their profits on luxury hotels (Welsh Water); investment in Australia (North West Water); buying electricity shares (Welsh Water again); property development (South West Water); vehicle leasing and heating and

ventilating companies (Southern Water); car leasing again (Northumbrian Water); outrageous salaries for their chairmen (sic) and bigger dividends for their shareholders (all of them). And these are still early days.

Rivers, canals and estuaries are now more heavily polluted than five years ago, according to another NRA report, partly, they say, because permitted water standards were lowered to make water shares more attractive when the companies were privatised three years ago and partly due to reduced spending on sewage treatment by the water companies since. As an example of poor water quality, another report claims that of the Anglian water's 3.8 million customers, 570,000 are receiving water containing faecal coliform bacteria, for 722,000 the water contains excess nitrates, for 19,000 excess aluminium, and for 817,000 excess pesticides. Although last December the NRA published a five-year

plan to improve the quality of the rivers, canals and estuaries, it does not seem, so far, to have done much to protect the environment, but the little it has achieved has been too much for the government. It is to be broken up and its responsibilities transferred to other government bodies who are likely to do even less.

To finish, back to water metering, seen by the companies as a way to maximise profits – you just increase the price a bit more each year and the user is trapped into paying more for using less. In a recent survey two-thirds of those asked said they favoured water meters. Perhaps they should ask those who have already been compelled to have meters what they think. Like the poll tax, single people in larger houses will pay less, but most will pay more and those who can least afford to, larger families, will pay the most or suffer a drastic fall in their standards of health hygiene and comfort.

HS

## Trees – Governments – People

*"The tree is the non-mobile brother of man"*  
– J. Giraudoux

Corporate capitalism cannot survive without cheap food and fuel together with the right to exploit the environment unchecked. The changes in attitudes and lifestyles required of Western man to meet the dreams of the Earth Summit in Rio throw into question each of these pre-requisites.

Despite all the good intentions, the Rio summit needs to be seen as a meeting for mafia bosses to discuss the prevention of crime – crooks in search of a fix to keep the do-gooders happy. But some good will come of this jamboree. If 1973, the year of the oil crisis, marked the beginning of the end of business pretence at modifying their quest for profit with modest social concessions, then 1992 may just launch the beginning of the end of our illusions about government. Do we, now, at last begin to learn that politicians and government deliver only to the rich and powerful?

Anybody who read *The Observer* 'World Wide Fund for Nature' supplement on 17th May will know planting and nurturing trees now in forests and woods, parks and gardens, rail and road verges and on derelict land is as crucial to a future worth living on this planet as it is that we change the way we live.

As *The Observer* supplement made clear, the world's forests, woods and trees are safeguarding the health of the planet, protecting the soil, providing water, regulating the climate, cutting ozone destruction and air pollution. It also left no doubt as to who was destroying the rainforests and why.

Where new 'forests' are being planted on a massive scale, e.g. in Finland and Sweden, the old ecologically diverse forests are making way for single species, usually pine and spruce, that are fine for profits but also disease prone, unsympathetic to flora and fauna, sterile plantations. These forests are about as much use to the planet as another acre or two of high rise flats or factory farms.

Thanks to government landowners and farm contractors, Britain has destroyed half its woodlands since the war, a vastly superior demolition job than our mates are achieving in the Amazonian forests. Forty per cent of the remaining woodlands have been converted to conifer plantations. The woodlands that once covered eighty per cent of these islands now cover less than two per cent. All this proves that our non-mobile brothers need governments and landowners even less than we do.

Even if government eventually throws some money into the rapid cultivation of a wide

diversity of trees and woods it will be through funding their old mates, the landowners and contractors, to plant millions of trees, many of which will perish through lack of husbandry. Fewer and fewer owners work their land and they don't have the staff to do the job either. Trees, particularly those planted on pasture and arable land and away from existing woods, need considerable attention over the first three years including watering, mulching, cutting back weeds and wild grass and protection from rabbits.

On Botch-up Farm we plant our token 100-350 trees each year, mostly ash, cherry, oak, alder and willow, because these varieties do best round Polstead. If we give these embryonic trees a bit of love and attention up to 90% of them can survive the first few critical years. If we fail in our husbandry we are lucky to be left with a quarter.

What I am arguing is that neither government nor capital will provide the massive increase in vegetation these islands could do with. ONLY PEOPLE ACTING TOGETHER CAN DO IT.

*The Observer* supplement was pretty weak on solutions, but you'd expect that. Readers were encouraged to contribute to public opinion, write to MPs, join their campaign groups, avoid buying rainforest timber and even plant mixed native species in your gardens and at school, etc. Nothing was said about pursuing strategies commensurate with the problem like challenging government, landowners and even complacent conservationists through direct action – collectively planting and husbanding trees everywhere.

If you prefer to do your bit as an individualist, why not take your cue from Bill Mollison, the Australian permaculture guru and self-styled urban guerrilla who, when highly charged, instead of shuffling rosary beads, chewing gum or sucking a cigarette collects pockets full of tree nuts and seeds and stuffs them into mother earth as he gets about.

Otherwise, it's time for those comfortable, professional, car-driving wordsmiths of the Friends of the Earth to get off their butts, stop colluding with big businesses and government and join Greenpeace or the Animal Liberationists in a bit of direct action and maybe civil disobedience. Trees are not abstractions, they're alive.

The idea is to seek out the local activists and schoolkids with a bit of enthusiasm and to start collecting tree seeds this autumn. Those with backyards and a bit of ground can grow hundreds of starter trees in a few square metres. While the trees are growing our tree-freaks can find out more about nurturing

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## Celebrating a Nation's Shame

Can you imagine, as a journalist, including in your report of the unveiling of the statue of 'Bomber' Arthur Harris by the Queen Mother that she was "dressed in a powder blue hat and floral dress" (*The Times*, 1st June) knowing that the ceremony and service (the army chaplains were there in force) was to commemorate the memory of the butcher of Dresden, Hamburg and other German cities with civilian losses only estimated at 600,000 (for instance Dresden was full of refugees and it was never ascertained how many were killed) and the British conscript airmen – more than 55,000 – who lost their lives in this holocaust in the name of freedom?

Can you imagine that the old lady in the powder blue hat is in fact "the patron of the Bomber Command Association"? But

equally ...

Can you imagine people engaged willy-nilly – if conscripted and not refusing, which they could have done at a price – to be engaged in 1,000 bomber raids on cities such as Dresden with no military industries of value and with large refugee populations?

And there the survivors were old and be-medalled and, believe it or not, as the Queen Mother unveiled the monument to the monster they sang "For he's a jolly good fellow"! Fortunately there were those to protest at this obscenity and a number of arrests were made. We were also glad to see Trog's cartoon in *The Observer*: the statue of 'Bomber' Harris obliterated by the shit from the doves of peace.

We realise that for those well-meaning people who were convinced that the last war was a crusade against Nazism anything was justified to defeat the 'enemy'. After all, we could have been invaded and subjected to Nazi cruelty, etc... Curiously enough the Americans were happy to sell arms to Britain, but most reluctant to fight the Germans. It was only when the Japanese attacked the American Navy in Pearl Harbour that USA suddenly discovered a common cause with Europe! But we won't go into those murky waters this time.

P.S. The unveiling of the Bomber Harris statue reminded this writer that when his 'boys' were bombing the daylight out of the civilian population of Germany, he was a guest of Her Majesty – the lady in the powder blue hat and her husband George VI – in Wormwood Scrubs prison for refusing to engage in the holocaust that is WAR! We had a principal officer responsible for searching our cells for forbidden items. His name was Harris, and known to all and sundry as 'The Bomber'!

## BRAZIL!

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the rich countries should reject any such "demands for money accompanies by no undertakings about how the money will be spent". This kind of approach is seen as perfectly normal and acceptable by those who control the world's wealth. Perhaps *The Times* editorial writer would like to see a similar approach taken by the developing countries vis à vis their raw materials, so that any demands by the north for raw materials accompanied by no undertakings about how they will be used would be rejected? But then that, of course, would be blackmail, wouldn't it, and only crooks go in for that kind of thing.

Anyone believing that the Rio Conference is going to actually improve the environment or development must surely be nuts. The only reason any developing countries might have to go along with it is because they might be forced to, at the point of the debt-collector's gun.

KM

## Water Demands

### The Privatised Water Industry's Response

From its source high on Bleaklow Hill in the north of Derbyshire the river Derwent flows down to the Trent near Nottingham. In winter in full spate it is an impressive sight. The waters of the river fill three reservoirs in the upper Derwent Valley and are now filling a fourth, newly constructed by Severn Trent Water in an adjacent valley near Carsington, Derbyshire. Carsington reservoir will be the largest sheet of water in the country, and will augment existing supplies to the cities of Sheffield, Birmingham and Nottingham.

The reservoir is typical of the privatised water industry's response to increasing demands for water, both from industrial and domestic consumers, i.e. when more water is demanded, supplies are increased. An expanding productive economy will perforce increase its use of water just as it does other resources such as power and raw materials.<sup>1</sup> Domestic demand is also increasing due to lifestyle changes with widespread use of gadgets such as automated car washers, dishwashers and general increased bathing and showering; altogether demand is

increasing annually by around 3%.

Despite the efforts of the water companies it is increasingly apparent that the Western economy and lifestyle uses more water than can be safely taken from the environment. It is also heavily polluting the water in the process. Symptoms of shortage are seen in the annual imposition of hosepipe bans and phenomena such as dried out rivers, falling water tables, empty ponds and reservoirs. Pollution is all too apparent in many areas, such as the Lower Trent. Nitrate levels in water are above safe levels in rivers including the Trent, the Thames, rivers in Kent, Cheshire, Norfolk and Suffolk – indeed in most crop growing regions.<sup>2</sup> Public awareness of such problems is reflected in vastly increased sales of bottled water and of water filtration systems.

Unless you live in a remote rural dwelling with its own spring/well, water supply is a service to the community which is best carried out by planned and co-ordinated measures. Unfortunately, this has ensured that when sold off under Tory 'privatisation', 'monopolistic' conditions are created with massive opportunities for easy profits. The 'technical fix' solution to water shortage and reduced annual rainfall entails more pipelines such as the London ring-main, and more reservoirs such as Carsington, and also the introduction of water meters. The latter ensures that the rich can use as much as they wish, while the poor are rationed by price. These short-term measures will not solve the long-term problem. Given that the current shortages are largely caused by expanding demand and waste, the long-term solution must be to stop the expansion of demand for water. How? By encouraging conservation in both domestic and industrial use, by reducing leakage within the pipeline system, perhaps also by changing to a non-waterborne system of sewage disposal. If society does not act, then shortages will continue, quality will go on deteriorating, pollution of the environment will get worse, and wildlife, especially wetland species, will continue to die.

Jonathan Simcock

1. Industries which are big users of water include steel making, chemical producers such as ICI, brewing, food processing, agriculture and electricity generation.

2. See *Green Pages* page 38.

## News from Northern Ireland

The people held up at the junction of Northland Road and Clarendon Street to allow Neil Kinnock's cavalcade to pass had a personal experience of the insolent disregard politicians have for the people they purport to serve. This former leader of the revisionist Labour Party was in Derry to say thanks to the local MP and to eat a big feed with the Army. Five police land-rovers covered the junction at the top of Clarendon Street and an RUC man was out in the middle doing traffic control. Colleagues stood about, machine guns at the ready. Drivers coming up to the lights wondered what was going on ... a bomb scare? a shooting? a road accident even? None of these. Simply the need to give preferential treatment to a convoy of public representatives. Then along came the posse of large saloon cars, swooping through the red light, waved on by the cop, away to the next engagement. Instead of an impression of public servants or elected representatives passing by, I saw consuls, gods and dictators, refined beings we must all stop in our tracks for. Then the RUC men dashed back to their land-rovers and ordinary motorists went back to relying on the lights. I walked on to consider how this little incident illustrated the general point about politicians and their abuse of power and also how separated this class has become from ordinary people. Events at the Earth Summit and the debate around the Maastricht Treaty provide grander illustrations of the same process. Everyone wants the rich nations to do something at Rio. Only the politicians and the multi-national corporations seem intent on wrecking it or watering it down. All the politicians seem to want Maastricht. And lots of the people of Europe don't. The Danish vote has put the skids under the politicians down south who have mounted a single-minded campaign to terrorise the Irish people into voting 'yes' to Maastricht. This campaign is being challenged by a woman from County Monaghan who claims the government is spending £600,000 on partisan support. She is setting us all a fine example. As are the

family on the Culmore Road, one of Derry's most fashionable areas, who are up in arms because the Army has turned their house into a barrier for their heavily re-fortified checkpoint. It is a continuation of the human shield policy armies the world over use, but only castigate their enemies for. It will be interesting to see the response the Army and government give to the complaints of the family in this fashionable suburb.

The squashing of the conviction of Judith Ward raises serious questions not only of justice in Britain but also of the way in which society deals with people we characterise as having 'personality disorders'. Ms Ward's mental health became public property in a most terrifying way throughout the appeal, a further example of the way our society freedom can freely impinge on the personal freedom of anyone we define as 'sick' or 'abnormal'. A report has just been released on mental health services in the Republic in which a number of harrowing cases of mistreatment are cited, none more disgusting than those of men being tied into beds for long periods in the past nine years. Substandard physical conditions, inhuman treatment by staff, antiquated notions of what is appropriate for what we define as 'abnormal' people are all reported. I suggest that anyone interested in a more general look at the flaws of psychotherapy and psychiatry might check out *Against Therapy* by Jeffrey Masson. In this book, as in Judith Ward's case, it is the 'patient' who makes the breakthrough into freedom. Good luck Judith!

Locally discussion continues apace among anarchists with documents and meetings all a-buzz. The WSM has held a conference in Dublin in April, attended by anarchists from Dublin, Belfast and Cork. The Organise group in the north continues internal education and discussion work. Busy days!

Dave Duggan

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### Trees – Governments – People

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them and devise a strategy for planting. My preference would be to approach the nearest big landowner with a bit of 'set aside' and indicate that you'd like to grow the trees on 'his' land and that you'd look after the trees for three years. I fancy it would be difficult for the landowner to refuse even if he'd like to. Get your best diplomats on this job, people who won't take no or ifs and buts for an answer. Who knows, this could be the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

If the landowner turns down all your approaches and suggestions then you need to plan the next stage carefully, but you don't give up. Start by notifying the local paper and television people so that if the landowner or more likely his henchmen or the police turn up to evict you and your trees the event is recorded. If this sort of thing happens up and down the country it will encourage the nurturing of trees everywhere. It will also raise a bit of discussion over the ownership of land. Remember, the land belongs to everybody but particularly to those who work and relate to it. Over time all manner of beautiful things can happen around your trees – picnics, games, music, feasts. In my view saving the planet depends on three things, not two – people power, trees and fun.

Denis Pym

## Tony Gibson

I am old enough to have a faint memory of the air raids over Essex in the 1914-18 war. Some years later, my father told me that when these began, and a number of civilians had been killed in their homes, some German airmen who had parachuted to earth were apprehended by the police. There was an outcry against them and some debate as to what to do with them. There was a strong opinion in favour of having them charged with murder, and then tried in the civil courts, and if found guilty, hanged. Historically in Europe the tradition was that while soldiers would naturally kill enemy soldiers, the killing of peaceful and unarmed civilians was murder, and the perpetrators should be punished accordingly. The fact that this was flouted repeatedly is neither here nor there; it was an accepted law.

It is interesting to speculate what the development of public feeling in Europe would have been if these German airmen had been tried and hanged for murder; would it have affected the attitudes towards aerial warfare? In fact, people in high places stepped

## Honouring a War Criminal

in and had the airmen rescued from the civil authorities, and treated as honourable 'prisoners of war'. The clear intention was that British airmen were to be required to kill German civilians, and it would be catastrophic for their morale if they were to be considered as murderers.

In the 1920s there was a revulsion against the slaughter of the late war, and an attempt to re-introduce civilised standards in relations between nation-states. Britain signed the Washington Agreement in 1922, and Article 28 of it read:

"Aerial bombardment for the purpose of terrorising the civilian population, of destroying or damaging civilian property not of a military character, or of injuring non-combatants, is prohibited."

This was merely a re-statement of what had long been accepted by civilised nations, although it had been frequently flouted by the military. Air Vice-Marshal Sir John Steel declared in 1928:

"Every objective I have given my bombers is a point of military importance. Otherwise the pilots, if captured, would be liable to be treated as criminals."

How far Sir John's tongue was in his cheek at

the time is another matter. Lip-service to this policy was paid in 1939 by the then Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain (an egregious hypocrite):

"Whatever the lengths others may go to, His Majesty's Government will never resort to deliberate attack on women and children and other civilians for the purpose of mere terrorism."

Now let us consider what actually happened during the 1939-45 war. About 600,000 German civilians were killed by aerial bombing, the great majority of them being women and children – about 100,000 of them were children under 14 – for the simple reason that most German men and older adolescents had been conscripted out of the areas of 'carpet bombing' into the comparative safety of the fighting units. By comparison, less than a tenth of that number (in fact 51,509) of British civilians were killed in air raids during the war. Why the difference? Because the policy of the Germans was to pour massive resources into the land forces of the military, rather than to build up a huge fleet of bomber aircraft, or to

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# Murray Bookchin in London ...

Murray Bookchin, now in his early seventies, was born into a tradition of iconoclasm. His parents had emigrated to New York after the 1905 revolution in Russia; a grandmother had been a member of the (anti-Bolshevik) Social Revolutionary Party; he had been raised in a tradition of opposition to authority oriented to the notion of class oppression.

After 1917 those who, like his family, had suffered under the Tsars were swept into the Bolshevik movement; and Bookchin joined the Communist Children's Movement in 1930 at the age of nine. The executions of the Bolshevik leaders by Stalin led to a brief flirtation with Trotskyism; he was much influenced in his teens by the events of the Spanish Civil War, but he was not at that time aware of anarchism. Now, said Bookchin, he called himself an anarchist and had done so since the 1950s although he believed he had been one much earlier. How had the change come about?

Bookchin recalled that in his young days working people were class conscious; they saw 'the bosses' as their opponents; battles were fought to gain union recognition. Political activists had to use rough language, to be loud and forceful in debate; the atmosphere was one of conflict. But by 1948 he became aware that the workers were becoming assimilated by the capitalist system. The new idea was that what was good for General Motors was good for America. In the aftermath of the Second World War everyone had been led to expect a cornucopia. Nuclear energy was going to bring free power, free energy, free everything. It was going to be a marvellous world, and it could have been.

Bookchin noted the increasing penetration of the capitalist market into everyday life: the shopping malls in New York; the chemicalisation of food; the disappearance of the green areas he used to know, the brooks and fields of his childhood, under ticky-tacky houses; and the workers increasingly exploited but being bought off by the perks of free holidays and social security.

He drifted away from the labour movement and became increasingly concerned with larger issues of social change. From 1952, writing as Lewis Herber, he tried to formulate a theory of the domination of nature as stemming from a capitalist economy which he identified with anarchism. The notion of domination, Bookchin came to realise, was based on hierarchical human relationships which existed before the emergence of class systems and was to be found in early organic societies. He noted that whereas a limitation of primitive societies was parochialism the modern city, for all its disadvantages, had broken down barriers and had produced a kind

of melting pot inconceivable thousands of years ago.

Bookchin concluded that the Marxism on which he had been brought up had not gone deeply enough. The Marxists had taught that hierarchical relationships were necessary even as they attacked class society. Marx had attacked Bakunin. Seeing things in industrial terms, the Marxists asked how a steel mill could be run without hierarchical relationships. Bookchin came to see that such relationships were not simply economic but were based on status, that they involved for instance the domination of women by men, of people of colour by whites. Anarchism is concerned to oppose the one basic concept of authority as such.

The idea of the domination of nature, said Bookchin, is a projection of human domination onto the natural world, and the ecological crisis has its origins in a social crisis. To resolve the ecological problems we have to look within our own society.

In calling himself an 'eco-anarchist' he was aware that he was being disputatious - he was disliked by a lot of the more spiritualistic environmentalists, and he had no use for their sort of loose pantheism. His point was that before we can eliminate antagonisms between human societies and the natural world we must first eliminate antagonisms between human beings. Human inequality is at the root of the biospheric degradation of today.

#### The social nature of the ecological crisis

The market society, said Bookchin, identifies progress with competition, with rivalry, with the spirit of dog-eat-dog. He had come to the conclusion that some of his earlier warnings were underestimates: the market system has telescoped into decades environmental damage he thought would take centuries.

The rivalry was between the big business firms in the United States and between the EEC, America and Japan. At the Earth Summit big business would dictate terms to the world's government. The individuals who manage these firms are not people with bad intentions, but are locked into a system, and the system has to be changed. What, then, can we do?

My suggestion, said Bookchin, is that we form a counter-power to the State, a counter-power to the great corporations and a counter-power to the market. By that he did not mean communes or food co-operatives which could not challenge the giant corporations. What was needed is the re-creation of a public sphere in which people can feel they are members, not mere taxpayers; be citizens not constituents, go beyond merely paying taxes and obeying the rules. He had used the term participatory democracy, but he did not mean what John Major meant when he talked about 'empowering the citizens of Britain'. Nor did he mean that we should fill huge meeting places, or that we should make decisions by referendum: Shall we invade Nicaragua? Press red button for yes, green button for no.

He advocated neighbourhood centres, delegation of representatives under mandate as opposed to going to our MP or Congressman; advice centres on how to deal with the system. He warned against the dangers of parochialism of the small community, and urged the adoption of those forms of community that have been tried by history and seen to have worked. Bookchin's term for the form of politics he advocates is Confederalism.

Bookchin concluded by warning against the 'spiritual aspects of ecology'. He was not, he said, against spirituality but against



spiritualism, a distinction many of his critics do not draw. People have to live, and only when they are fed can they talk about the environment. Unless this point is appreciated, only 'the most exotic people, who do not shape the world' will discuss such matters.

Break down the cities into neighbourhoods, said Bookchin; it can be more easily done today than at the time of the French Revolution. Think of the German Green Party, and understand that all power corrupts; form a new non-hierarchical politics.

The real question must be, first, what kind of a society are we going to have, and then, what is our relationship with the natural world.

Charles Crute

## ... and in Cambridge

The public lecture is not the most flourishing of today's entertainment mediums, but Murray Bookchin grew up in a school that trained its speakers in the street and in halls without amplification. Age may have led him to feel he needs a microphone (he didn't) but the method is a conversational adaptation of the old street corner style. A subdued slightly chaotic opening as the various strands of anecdote, history and biography swirled around, gradually coalescing into his central themes and building up an increasing head of steam, rather like an old George Lewis performance or the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Having hit his stride he maintained that momentum during the dreaded discussion period that followed, managing to develop some interesting points out of questions and comments that left several people, in my section of the audience at least, in some bewilderment. Looking a bit like Stalin in a Bob Dylan cap, he gave the impression of having that sort of overall grasp of history, literature and culture in general that we tend to see as characteristic of nineteenth century polymaths. Some people were visibly moved, most were enthused at least for the time being, and the rest enjoyed that grim satisfaction that we all get from hearing a cheerful prophet of doom articulating our own worst forebodings.

He was, he stated happily, well aware that he was heading toward the last go round as far as his own life cycle was concerned. His concern was now for the fate of those he was to leave behind facing the problems of the increasing use of chemicals in food, the growing use of nuclear power, the reappearance of diseases like tuberculosis, now becoming pandemic, and the changes that were resulting in young people getting the degenerative diseases of age. Some of his statements must have been

startling to the ecological novice, like the one about cancer becoming a major killer of girls between twelve and fourteen, or that heart attacks were now a major hazard for the young.

There wasn't anything new about this analysis and these predictions. He had made them in *The Synthetic Environment* as early as 1962. What he had not anticipated, what was really frightening, was the enormous scale of the changes taking place. It wasn't any longer the problem of eight or nine hundred chemicals being ejected into the environment every year, it was now tens of thousands, perhaps as high as thirty thousand. And in case anybody felt he was being unduly pessimistic he went on to point out that his prediction of the Greenhouse Effect was made for 150 to 200 years ahead! And of course the ozone layer was a collision course he hadn't anticipated.

The destruction of the environment was increasing exponentially and that was an inevitable result of the constant expansion inherent in the nature of capitalism. If we cut the population by one half the system would require everybody purchase twice as much, and if they didn't the military would. Iraq showed what a human and environmental catastrophe that would create. How had we arrived at this impossible situation?

Murray was thundering along with great energy and effect by this time and the audience settled visibly to his somewhat cavalier sweep through history, and developments like patriarchy and the growth of gerontocracies. No doubt historians and anthropologists could fault him on detail, but this was a lecture not a printed treatise. This sort of overview of the historical process, a legacy of a period when people thought that laws of development could be discerned, is

not academically respectable today. It survives mainly in television history and, like television history, is hugely enjoyable even if some of us get twinges at the sweeping nature of the generalisations. (Tony Gibson shuffled restlessly at some favourable mentions of Marx, but he managed to restrain himself.)

However the entertainment value and the good humoured delivery did not obscure the underlying message. A society which identifies progress, not with co-operation and community but with competition, is bound to end up destroying the planet. A commonplace idea to *Freedom* readers perhaps, but chilling and effective delivered in Murray Bookchin's hoarse shout. Even more chilling when the applause dies down and we realise he is not just talking about the destruction of a system but the destruction of us all.

With the Rio conference only a few days ahead as I write, the Sunday papers are full of 'ecologically relevant' material. Michael Ignatieff produced interesting copy and facts but places his faith in government action because he sees individual action as too soft centred, too liable to wither when it affects personal interests. Yet even if we avert our eyes from the staggering environmental catastrophe that constitutes the former Soviet Union - hardly an advertisement for the green credentials of government - there is still the West's refusal to tackle the oil companies and their interests in keeping non-polluting electric cars off the road. Nor does he mention the curious role of British government in relation to the nuclear lobby. The falsifying of reports by the Department of Energy and others over the viability of Professor Salter's 'Duck', the strange behaviour over the potential of wind power, the doctoring of

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### MURRAY BOOKCHIN

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# MARY DALY AND HER CRITICS

In a study of feminism and post-structuralist theory Chris Weedon suggests that no feminist would subscribe to an essentialist theory that would explain social relations in terms of the 'natural' and thus deny history and the possibility of future change (1987, page 4). By this criterion Mary Daly is not a feminist! Daly is a radical feminist and theologian whose study *Gyn/Ecology* had an extraordinary impact when it first appeared a decade ago. She seems nowadays, apart from some critiques, to be ignored by many feminists. But although her theoretical ideas lack coherence and substance, Daly's study is an impassioned and important critique of patriarchy, both of its ideology and the devastating effects it has had on the well-being of women. Her indictment of the brutalities involved in such historical phenomena as suttee (widow burning among Hindus), Chinese foot-binding, clitoridectomy among many African cultures, the witch craze in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and modern gynaecological practices are not seen in their historical context so much as exemplifications of the universal institution of patriarchy. And patriarchy is seen by Daly in an undifferentiated way as "the religion of the entire planet". It covers not only all the world religions – Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam – but the writings of all (seemingly without exception) male scholars – including Marx, Freud and Jung. She postulates a universal and fundamental male need (to protect themselves from anomie and from their own weakness, passivity and lack of creativity) and a universal fear (of women). Men, she argues, are simply filled with misogyny, lust (as a fixation on the genitals), envy, violence and necrophilic tendencies. The origin of these universal male attributes is never explained; they are simply seen as entering into all human societies and into all male actions and beliefs. Whereas the medieval Christian theologians in their misogyny associated woman with the devil and evil, Daly seems to take a thoroughly misanthropic view seeing men as the 'enemy' and as incapable of any humane or positive thoughts or actions. That men have equally been subject to male violence seems to be beyond Daly's comprehension, for her perspective is essentially theological and Manichean. But Daly views patriarchy not only in terms of the physical brutality that women have had to contend with; she also examines with cogency its ideological functions. She shows how religious beliefs and cultural ideas about women have had a mystifying

effect and have served to 'dismember' a woman's self, to 'bind' the mind or spirit of women, to present them as docile, domesticated, submissive, feminine, and enslaved. Patriarchy, Daly writes, appears everywhere and is even internalised by women "festering inside women's heads". This leads Daly, in rather elitist fashion, to be extremely disparaging about women generally, who are described as "moronised", "robotised", "lobotomised" and as the "puppets of Papa". In Daly, as with some other feminists, the stress on the monolithic brutality and psychological pressure of male power has reduced women almost to a state of 'non-persons', as so 'brainwashed' that they are scarcely human (Grimshaw, 1988, pages 92-93).

In contrast to the essential nature of men, who are seen as inherently brutalising, violent and necrophilic, women are seen by Daly, as my own mother with irony would express it, as "all goodness and light". But though still following an essentialist perspective – which seems to conflate biology with a spiritual orientation – Daly makes a clear distinction between the victimised female self whose desires and actions, under the influence of patriarchy are not truly her own, and the authentic or true self. It is this self that radical feminism seeks to rediscover, and Daly is quite lyrical about both its attributes and the journey to the recreation of this "gynocentric being". The Female Self is the "divine spark of being". It is the Hag, the Spinster or Witch that exists in every living woman. It is something that is "deep inside" a woman, the "self, in every woman". It is "female energy" and is essentially biophilic (life loving). It is expressed in the bond between mothers and daughters, and in the 'sisterhood' of radical feminists. It is the "original intuition of integrity" and is creative, loving, bonding, life-enhancing, dynamic. This authentic self which is equated with both a "divine spark" and "life energy" is, it has to be noted, thoroughly female, and Daly expresses nothing but antipathy towards the notion of androgyny (1979, page 68). Such radical feminism implies a lesbian lifestyle and separatism, and in Daly's vision of the future one finds it difficult to find a place for either men or children. Her later study, *Pure Lust* (1984), which is subtitled an 'elemental feminist philosophy', carries essentially the same message: men are inherently sadists driven by an insatiable desire to degrade and humiliate women; women, or at least the "race of lusty women", are concerned to rekindle their biophilic energies, the elemental force or being that

they alone possess. Daly thus seems to endorse the idea of the natural superiority of women. But as Alison Jaggar (1983, page 95) and other feminists have suggested, Daly nowhere provides a systematic account of just what are women's special powers, other than their capacity to give birth (which Daly sees as inessential to the development of self), nor of the relation of these powers to female biology.

Although in its critique of patriarchy and in its questioning and re-evaluation of the meanings of words (like hag, crone) *Gyn/Ecology* is an important text – Daly herself described it as an "extremist book" – it is nonetheless essentially a religious tract. Daly throughout has a prophetic style, and a woman's discovery of her real self – the Female Self – is seen as a kind of spiritual rebirth. But, as Jean Grimshaw has perceptively written, what comes through strongly in Daly's book is the kind of elitist philosophy of "self-affirmation" that has its origins in the writings of Nietzsche, and the humanistic psychology of Rogers and Maslow. A central aspect of the theory of self-realisation and self-actualisation that both the latter theorists espouse, was the need for autonomy and for independence, and for not 'needing' other people. Although Daly stresses the importance of 'community' (or rather sisterhood) her general orientation is to suggest that 'need' or dependence on other people is something to be avoided, as essentially 'polluting' a relationship. Like de Beauvoir, and several other feminists, Daly's image of feminism implies, Grimshaw suggests, both emotional self-sufficiency and a willingness to ditch obligations and commitments to others without guilt or emotional ambivalence. Daly's ego-ideal seems to be someone – a woman – filled with wanderlust, a lusty woman raging and roaming through the world in search of her authentic self. Spinsters, like the tortoise with its moving shell, "learn to be at home on the road. Our ability to make our spirits our moving shelters, the various homes that house the domesticated, the sick, the 'mentally ill', the destitute" (1979, page 395). As Grimshaw writes, all this is reminiscent of the male 'beat' style described in Kerouac's *On the Road* (1958). The difference is that whereas Kerouac assumed that women would be looking after the children, it is not at all clear whom Daly thinks will do this task. Many feminists have remarked that relationships with children rarely figure in Daly's study. In *Pure Lust* they do not seem

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figures over the price and viability of nuclear energy, none of these suggest that the role of government is going to be anything but caring for vested interests like the nuclear and oil lobbies.

Murray Bookchin, on the other hand, is saying that now we have the technical means for utopia – 'the only reality that makes any sense' – we must recreate a new public sphere based on ideas of co-operation and community rather than the ideas of competition, authority and dominance inherent in capitalism and the nation state. We do have to find ways of institutionalising decentralisation in a way that will be credible for those increasing numbers leading lives of quiet desperation. In the United States, he says, we are now faced with a situation where the less you know about politics the easier it is to be elected. That should tell us, he thinks, that people are seeking re-empowerment at the level of their communities. The real sphere of ordinary people is the neighbourhood, and confederation is the answer to nimbysism and the sort of localism that we saw acquitting the Los Angeles police recently. Confederation, a commune of communes, an alternative politics – at times it did sound like the sort of thing the Diggers had in mind. A long shot perhaps, but any option is now a long shot, including life itself. That is the degree of crisis we are facing. Bookchin didn't draw the parallel himself but it is worth pausing to reflect that we are not talking about potential crises like nuclear war. We are talking about what is happening here and now, in the rain forests, in the ozone layer above our heads, and in the increasing droughts of Africa.

He feels that we do have to discuss the type of institutions we want to create. To give form and structure to the type of society we want to

see in a way that will appeal to the people we have so far failed to reach. The old anarchist cop-out of not imposing a blueprint on the future is no longer good enough given the immensity of the crisis facing us. Given that terrifying scale there is a tendency to despair. To ask whether the sort of municipalisation of the economy favoured by Bookchin is too late for our part of the world and too little for the world as a whole?

Well, as Alex Comfort said years ago, no branch of human endeavour carries any certainty of success. We can but try. We can find plenty of illustrations in history of humanity's potential for co-operation without Authority. Russia in 1917 and the Eastern Bloc in 1989 provides startling illustrations of how a structure can be on the point of implosion without the weakness of being apparent to the onlooker. Perhaps the first thing to do is to get rid of the idea of a fixed human nature. The bogey of possessive individualism being basic human nature was raised more than once by individuals in the audience, most of whom had only known Thatcher's Britain and the dominance of Basildon Man, or Woman. Yet much of history, and the whole of anthropology and sociology tell us differently. Because human nature is a social creation, because we are not basically self-seeking in the manner that Hobbes and some of Bookchin's listeners seemed to believe, the possibility of success is there. Given time. Time we probably don't have.

I suspect that some of Murray Bookchin's models have their origin in intellectual nostalgia. He certainly romanticises the pre World War Two street life of the émigré community in New York, in much the same way that Kropotkin romanticised the medieval guilds, or Wilmott and Young

family life in East London. But he and they were right as well. Much has been lost. Now we have a bleak set of options. Either we acquiesce in processes, probably irreversible, that will result in the destruction of the planet during the lifetime of our children, or we fight a series of delaying battles that in the end we'll lose because vested interests are too strong. But that is a mature reflection following a

lifetime of disillusion. My immediate reaction at Cambridge was much more positive, because Murray Bookchin is an inspirational speaker. At least he was on this occasion. For myself, I think the curtain is coming down, but if we have to fight a losing war it is marginally more acceptable to do it in such erudite, invigorating and totally engaging company.

John Pilgrim

## Honouring a War Criminal

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provide enough fighter planes to protect their cities.

I myself was in the London Ambulance Service through the periods of the aerial attack on London and so I saw the effects of the bombing at close quarters. It was not so very impressive. A lot of the dockland area was destroyed, and some parts of the East End and the City of London. But most of the destruction was by fire rather than by high explosive. This is hardly surprising as the general attitude of the civilian rescue services was: 'Bugger the buildings – let them burn. We'll concentrate on rescuing the injured'. It is notable that while many, many churches were left to burn, pubs were generally saved. I remember a screaming headline in some Fleet Street rag: 'Hitler's War on Churches!'

By contrast, as a result of British bombing, 40,000 people in Hamburg were killed in one night. It may seem that with the Nazis murdering Jews by the millions in their death camps, the number of civilians in both countries who were killed by bombing was quite insignificant. But these two exercises in mass murder have this in common: they were quite pointless in terms of any military

objective. The Jews who died had no military significance at all; they were merely a sacrifice to the Nazi religion, much as the Aztec priests' religion demanded massive human sacrifice. The women and children who were murdered at the command of Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris had no military significance either. Their slaughter probably prolonged the war somewhat, as the understandable outrage of the German populace resulted in stiffened resistance to the invading allies, and prolonged their adherence to their abominable leaders.

If the Nuremberg trials had been conducted by an impartial body, Sir Arthur Harris would have been hanged along with the Nazi war criminals. Instead, a statue has now been raised in his honour in London. Are the majority of people in Britain so supine, so hypocritical, so outright bloody contemptible, that they are prepared to tolerate this disgusting insult in their capital city? How would we feel if the Germans were now to raise a statue in Berlin in honour of Hitler? I suggest that this statue should be regularly and lavishly daubed with excrement, day by day, until it is removed.

Tony Gibson

# IS THERE A PLACE FOR SCIENCE IN AN ANARCHIST SOCIETY?

Is there a consensus of opinion among anarchists regarding science? This question was prompted by a recent article in *Freedom*<sup>1</sup> which expressed a (common) complaint about science, namely that a great deal of time, expense and effort is spent on seemingly pointless, theoretical research when all of these limited resources could be better directed at dealing with pressing, practical problems. (The article describing recent announcements by mathematicians that they had found the largest prime number yet known, and by astronomers that they had found features in space left over from the big bang; it was then remarked that all this scientific effort could have been better employed finding a cure for cancer.)

When there are terrible problems, like cancer, afflicting the world it may seem scandalous that scientific effort is directed elsewhere. But this seems to accept a very utilitarian, instrumentalist view of science: the sole purpose of science is to provide knowledge with which humans can control the world (including other humans) for their own benefit. This is rather a strange view to be found expressed in the anarchist press. If science is solely concerned with the control and manipulation of its subjects of study, this would seem to make any social or human science complete anathema to anarchism. Natural science fares little better, for its practice would then seem to be necessarily linked to the exploitative domination of nature

by humans, or rather by those few humans who direct the course of science: politicians and the bosses of large national and multi-national companies.

Given this view of science, the *Freedom* article writer finds him/herself in some very strange company, including none other than our glorious ex-leader. Thatcher did her best during the 1980s to force academic science to 'reflect more closely the needs of the real world', but this basically meant becoming slaves to capitalist industry. And, unfortunately, there is little doubt that this is the fate destined for all of science if scientists are forced to abandon pure research to apply their skills exclusively to serious, real problems: a cure for cancer may be forthcoming but, with the structure of society as it is, this cure will be the property of a multi-national drug company who will have a golden product guaranteed to make it even fatter profits.

It is no wonder, then, that some (many?) anarchists see science as a great evil. An edition of *Green Anarchist* last year was emblazoned with a picture of a decrepit vulture-like bird labelled "Scientificus: a vile bird that lays rotten eggs" – the eggs being exploitation, dependence and technocracy. The inside article by P.N. Rogers<sup>2</sup> continued the presentation of a dismal picture of science – the source of the world's major environmental problems, and an elitist enterprise supportive of the authoritarian establishment. The article ended with a call for a rejection of science, a call which is echoed by many different groups, especially those who agree with the assessment of science as the main enemy of the environment.

This is a very depressing, and unfortunately accurate, image of science-in-practice. However, a distinction must be made between what science *is* in our present society, and what it *could be* given more favourable circumstances. The instrumentalist view of science expressed above does not have to be accepted. There is a realist view which denies that science is merely an instrument for manipulating the world – a tool of capitalism and authoritarian politicians – and sees it, rather, as simply a (very successful) means of satiating the human passion for discovering how things work or why they exist. This view is well supported by the fact that some scientists are preoccupied with finding the largest prime number, or investigating the origins of the universe. Fundamentally science is a search for (some of) the truths of nature, and this encompasses pure

mathematical puzzles, a search for our origins, and many other 'impractical' goals, as well as cures for cancer, improvement of agriculture and other areas which yield direct benefits.

In answer to the original question, there is clearly a great tension in the appreciation of science among anarchists: on one hand science is acclaimed as an excellent, purely practical means of alleviating suffering and drudgery (even Rogers wants to retain some sort of science on "the level of practical and responsible problem solving"); but on the other hand, it is seen as a tool of the bosses, with which they control and exploit, and by use of which they have ruined the environment in their boundless search for material wealth. This tension disappears in accepting science as an objective search for knowledge; how that knowledge is used is a non-scientific, moral problem whose solution depends on the type of society science is practised in.

As the old adage states, 'knowledge is power', and it is because science experiences extraordinary success in achieving knowledge

of the world that it has been appropriated by the bosses and used (or rather *abused*) for their own ends. This usage has tainted science, but this is not a good enough reason for it to be abandoned. The rejection of science would be an act of terrible obscurantism, made even more unforgivable by the fact that science does indeed provide the means of solution of many pressing problems confronting the world. Science, however, could flourish in an anarchist society – providing cures for cancer, preventing famine, eliminating drudgery – but it can do this in a libertarian fashion only if it is accepted as a value-free, objective search for the truth about reality – and this must be allowed to include (resources and moral considerations permitting, of course) the calculations of prime numbers, the study of cosmology, and other phenomena which provoke human inquisitiveness.

George Hill

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1. 'Have scientists nothing better to do' in *Freedom*, volume 53, number 9, 2nd May 1992.
2. 'The follies of science' by P.N. Rogers in *Green Anarchist* number 26, Spring 1991.

29th April - 4th May 1992

## The Revolt in Los Angeles

The uprising in Los Angeles was effervescent and brawling. It was a jangle of sedition. It was a bacchanalian hubbub! It disclosed how tenacious and untiring is the worldwide desire for freedom. People revolted against the authorities and immediately pervaded the very air itself with an uncontrollable fury for justice, creative dynamism, the elements that make dreams a reality. Suddenly, the economic and human crisis grows deeper and deeper. The struggle for new-found freedom is a certainty. The insurrection in Los Angeles, the largest urban insurrection in the US since 1877, revealed the profound structural changes in capitalism today.

The breakdown and collapse of Russian 'communism' has gathered distinctive attention to the global reality of the economic crisis. We cannot escape from the percolating effects of this crisis. There is an onslaught to restructure all economic monopolies in the world; it devours the lives of millions of people. Confrontation in this age of 're-structuring' is unavoidable. Reactively, the new slavemasters in America are grasping

for a social dictatorship to surpass the economic dictatorship. The revolt in Los Angeles established in force and in reality the anti-authoritarian task of the total uprooting of the old and creation of the new. Sadly, however, most of the Left refuses to meet this movement from praxis, the spontaneous movement from below, with meaningful philosophy of liberation.

Every day the social and economic struggle deepens. But there is also a struggle of the intellect that seizes us. Revolution cannot be seen as mere stagnant tactics, sluggish designs, empty of philosophy, devoid of thought. Ignoble materialism is also an ignoble and coarse idealism! It is a continuing talisman or fetish of the Marxist-Leninist organisations. It is gross and repugnant. In contrast, the insurrection in Los Angeles, all jagged and bristly, an insurrection by communities invisible to the lunatic stare of President Bush, an insurrection compelled by the spirit of revolt, awakens the possibilities for mass opposition and meaningful opposition to capitalism.

(continued on page 8)

### THE RAVEN

17

#### On Use of Land

is a 112-page issue of our quarterly.

The editorial deals with the day-to-day problems including 'set aside' but also puts forward the anarchist view against the private ownership of land.

There are many other contributions on alternatives, such as the Whiteway Colony in Gloucestershire and a Swiss venture between town and country. The Spanish collectives of 1936-39 are also dealt with in detail. And Colin Ward contributes a piece, 'Utopian Ventures', in this country, while Stephen Cullen provides a piece on 'The Highland Land War', along with many other interesting articles in

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112 pages £2.50 (50p postage)

## Mary Daly and her critics

(continued from page 6)

to feature at all – thus contrasting significantly with that of many other feminists (Grimshaw, 1986, pages 143-144).

Implicitly, therefore, Daly is seen by Grimshaw as steeped in the liberal individualist tradition that was propagated by Maslow, who was himself a great admirer of Nietzsche. This tradition stresses self-interest and personal autonomy at the expense of recognising the social origins of the self, and the necessary inter-dependence of all human beings. It assumes that individuals have only to discover their 'real' or authentic selves, and that there is a sort of pre-established harmony between the needs and interest of people – although Daly specifically refers only to women, men being forever lost in their patriarchal maraudings.

Grimshaw feels that this harmony is akin to the supposed beneficent and unseen hand of the market, but Daly's vision of sisterhood is essentially a spiritual one. Grimshaw further

emphasises the profoundly Nietzschean aspects of Daly's work – the contempt for the morality of Kant and the Judaeo-Christian tradition which Nietzsche felt was hostile to everything that was life-affirming; his biologism and his stress on the "will-to-power", the intrinsic urge or desire for self-affirmation; and finally the need for the transvaluation of values, of going beyond what Daly herself describes as the phallogocratic categories of 'good' and 'evil'. Grimshaw stresses that Daly's views on a quasi-instinctual energy, and on the recovering of authentic being and life-affirmation, is all very much like that of Nietzsche. She questions whether Daly shared the elitist vision of Nietzsche and Maslow – which she cogently outlines – but one has to say that whereas Nietzsche put forward the idea of a superman, Daly with her "A-mazing Amazons" and "race of lusty women" seems close to suggesting the notion of an elite group of 'superwomen'. Needless to say the title of her book

*Gyn/Ecology* is a misnomer: Daly's vision is entirely gynocentric, and she has little to say on wider ecological issues, and nothing on the natural world and the creatures that inhabit it.

Brian Morris

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## Strange Contradictions

Dear editors,  
We all know that the system we live under is full of contradictions, but sometimes these contradictions reveal themselves in a most odd and unexpected way. Take the apparently unconnected matters of video camera surveillance on demonstrations and the growing hole in the ozone layer. It seems that the system has created quite a paradox for itself.

Rulers and tyrants, being the paranoid bunch that they are, have always feared that their subjects might be getting up to behind their backs when they weren't looking in case they might be conspiring against them and getting ready to overthrow their position of power and privilege. They have always dreamt of being able to spy on their subjects at all times, wherever they happened to be, and to see what subversive activities they may be engaging in.

To accumulate the power to see and control the whole population and keep their position safe they had to encourage the development of modern high technology and today's high tech capitalist economy that goes with it. Unfortunately one of the side effects of this has been massive pollution, poisoning the air, causing global warming, creating a hole in the ozone layer and allowing harmful levels of ultra violet light to reach the earth's surface. Another side effect of the development of high tech capitalism, particularly unfortunate for the ruling class, has been the development of a skilled, highly productive, but temperamental workforce whose health and safety has to be looked after to keep them producing efficiently. In the old days the rulers could periodically trample all over the serfs and peasants without worrying too much about it, but now the ruling class

has to keep the majority of its workers well fed and in a fit and healthy state so production can continue without interruption.

So just when the ruling class thought they were in a position to watch us all and see our faces with surveillance cameras whenever we walk down the road, and just as they thought they could ban the covering of faces at any public gathering, they now find they have tripped themselves up. They now have to give their backing to health and safety campaigns telling us all to wear dark glasses outdoors to protect our eyes from ultra violet light, to wear a hat to protect us from heatstroke in the sun and, if we are riding a bike or walking round town, to wear a face mask to protect our lungs from poisonous fumes and dust!

Their paranoid desire to see every face in the crowd has led to the paradox, through the contradictions in their system, that they end up seeing none! Whether we are demonstrators, insurrectionaries or just grumpy shoppers, we all now have a legitimate state-promoted excuse for hiding our faces from the state. What the long-term social effects may be of humans having to increasingly cover their faces whenever they are outdoors is another story.

Paul Petard

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

## Resistance to Trident is Stepping Up

Since the beginning of the year, Faslane Peace Camp has been stepping up its campaign of resistance to Trident. The number of non-violent actions have increased to greater effect and the camp has been successful in getting good coverage.

At the beginning of March, peace-campers managed to successfully ambush a nuclear warhead convoy carrying Polaris warheads to the Royal Naval armaments depot at Coulport. The windscreens of one of the warhead carriers was painted after it had been stopped on the road and it took ten minutes to be cleaned off. Five people were arrested.

Seven people were arrested trying to repeat the action when the warhead convoy started its return journey to Burghfield/Aldermaston atomic weapons establishments. A massive police presence stopped the warhead carriers from being halted, but peace-campers still managed to delay the convoy's support vehicles as they came along a few minutes behind the rest of the convoy.

On 4th March, the first Trident submarine was launched in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. Five people – four from the peace camps – were arrested after several separate incidents including someone trying to swim to the submarine and the painting of a mock Trident missile used to test the submarine's missile hatches.

The following Monday, fifteen women were arrested blockading traffic entering the Faslane submarine base after celebrating International Women's Day on 8th March.

A few weeks later the peace camp managed to stop the 'biggest ship in the Royal Navy' – a massive floating covered jetty – from being towed into position at the Trident missile depot at Coulport. The peace camp managed to put someone in the water only thirty feet in front of the lead tug towing the 88,000 tonne floating jetty. Three people were arrested and their small, fast, inflatable boat worth £3,500 was confiscated.

Another warhead convoy arrived in April and was stopped on its return journey right outside the peace camp at Faslane. This time paint on the

windscreen took the soldiers escorting the convoy twenty minutes to clean off and the road had to be closed while they did this. Five more folk were arrested.

The convoy was then followed to one of its overnight stops at Albermarle near Newcastle. Its departure from there was delayed by three hours whilst the cops tried to work out what the six of us planned to do. They even used a police helicopter to try and locate us.

At 12.30 the convoy left Albermarle on its way south and was again stopped by peace-campers, but this time, anxious to avoid publicity, the cops didn't arrest anybody.

On 30th April Princess Di(e) officially named the first Trident submarine in Barrow. Ten people were arrested, including five from Faslane. One camper – Ped – managed to get past all the security and get up to her car door to shout "Stop Trident – no more nuclear weapons!"

Others were arrested blockading her limo from entering the Vickers dockyard in Barrow. When police tried to remove one person from the front of the limo they pulled the bumper off with him!

More actions are planned. There's going to be another women's celebration

of International Women's Day on 24th May and there's going to be a party with bands, etc., to celebrate the Peace Camp's tenth birthday on Saturday 13th June.

The first Trident submarine is due to arrive on the Clyde from September onwards, and the first Trident nuclear warhead convoys are due to arrive around the same time.

Faslane Peace Campers are calling for more direct action to stop the convoys and are planning waterborne harassment of the Trident sub whilst it is undergoing its two years of sea trials.

If you can get involved contact Faslane Peace Camp for more details.

A phone-tree and an anti-Trident action network are being set up to pass on information and to organise actions. Send Faslane Peace Camp your details at: Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland. Tel: 0436 820901. We're always here and visitors are always welcome at any time.

Faslane Peace Camp

### DONATIONS

18th May - 4th June 1992

#### Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund

Beckenham DP £10, Montpellier RC £6, Wolverhampton JL £2, Morecambe AD £10, New York FT £20.

Total = £48.00  
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1992 total to date = £404.00

### Battered Husbands?

Dear Editors,  
The hatchet job *I Claudia: Feminism Unveiled* continues to receive more coverage than it deserves. One passage in particular: "Women are people, and whether people behave in dominating or egalitarian ways depends less on their sex than on their ideology", amounts to a schoolboy howler because "their ideology" is in fact male ideology – instilled into them from birth.

When Claudia can show me a refuge for battered men, I will give her theory more serious attention.

Ernie Crosswell

Note: *I Claudia: Feminism Unveiled* is in fact out of print, but Claudia has just produced a new pamphlet, *The Rebel's New Clothes*, available from Freedom Press at £2.25 (post free inland) which we hope to review soon – Editors.

## Christianity and Anarchism

Dear Editors,  
I would like to reply to Donald Room's letter concerning my article on 'Christianity and Anarchism' (*Freedom*, 16th and 30th May).

There can be no possibility of Donald being wrong in any way (I thought Christians were supposed to be dogmatic) but I would like to make some observations as I am not sure if he read the article.

Firstly, I did not say that pre-Constantine Christianity was libertarian. Christianity along with Vedantism, Buddhism and the other major religions is based on compassion, service, self-sacrifice and community, as anarchist communism must be. I tried to point out that libertarianism and anarchist communism are, to my mind, quite different. Donald quoted Paul, I prefer Isaiah: "learn to do good, seek justice, correct oppression, defend the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isaiah, chapter 1, verse 17). Bishops in the Middle Ages may have done some similar things as the present day Latin American liberationists, but I chose a contemporary example.

Concerning Leonardo Boff and the Bishop/Priest/People trinity, Donald inserts his own full stop to cut the sentence in half. The second half was "... and not eventually needing a bishop or priest". In other words removing all authority except that of the people themselves.

The main purpose of my article was actually a call for unity. The world is now at a crucial, if not the most crucial, point in its history. It is clearly slipping into chaos with existing systems breaking down. If we learn from the past then this is where iron authoritarianism of left or right takes over. I was saying that we should be starting now to unite Christian, Hindu, atheist or whatever if we share a common goal.

I would be pleased if Donald would

re-read and answer the questions in my article. Are we prepared and where are our alternatives?

Looking through the anarchist and socialist press is not very inspiring. How much of it is anti everything, condemning, criticising and complaining? How much is positive and constructive? I just thought that the Latin American liberation theologians and the base communities could give us a few tips. That is if we want to learn – I think we need to.

Mike Quentin-Hicks

Dear Editors,  
So what's 'Christianity and Anarchism' (16th May) doing in an anarchist paper? But I reckon such is the spirit of anarchism – to print even anti-anarchist views.

And Christianity is anti-anarchist, as are all religions or supernatural beliefs (church or non-church). How come? Because of one little word: 'God'. If 'anarchy' means 'no masters' or 'no rulers', and if God is a master or ruler, well...

Mike Quentin-Hicks goes into a whole in-praise-of-Jesus, whom he calls Yeshu. But Mike, there's no evidence for the existence of this Yeshu, for sure no contemporary evidence, what with the four Gospels written much after Yeshu was supposed to have died.

Not that I could prove Yeshu ever lived. But I needn't, since one cannot prove a negative (any more than one could prove a god doesn't exist).

In general, however, religion is still the opiate of the masses. Voltaire, yes, had said the masses need some such belief. Hence "if god did not exist we would have to create him". To which Bakunin had the perfect answer: "If god did exist, we'd have to kill him."

S. Colman

### Anarchist Forum

We are now booking speakers or topics for the 1992-93 season. The first term dates are from 25th September to 11th December. The terms have not yet been published but we expect the normal pattern. A number of potential speakers have indicated an interest although no specific dates have yet been set. If anyone would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, please make contact giving names, proposed subjects and a few alternative dates. These can either be speaker-led meetings or general discussions. Friday is the only night available for the meetings as the centre is booked up for classes on other nights.

Anyone interested should contact Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW (Tel: 081-847 0203). The Mary Ward Centre is an adult education centre which lets us have a meeting place, not an accommodation address or contact point.

The London Anarchist Forum is not a membership group with a formal structure nor membership fees and a collection is made to give a donation to the centre. Will those leaving early please note this. We are not affiliated to other groups nor have the means to subscribe to these. We are a meeting point, a discussion group, not an action group. Many of us are active elsewhere. The Forum is our common ground. We aim to cover a wide spectrum of views.

We ask participants to allow others a chance to air their views without rude interruption or attempting to dominate the meeting. We would like the Forum to be a place where newcomers, especially those without public speaking skills, would feel welcome. Anarchism accepts the uniqueness of the individual and although what one might say might be subjected to critical evaluation by

## The Revolt in Los Angeles

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The struggle in the mind is transformative. We must not allow the stats to escape from their responsibility. They seek to block humanity from the very endeavour to create a philosophy of liberation as the vigour of magnetism sustaining all the rebellion in the world today.

The anarchist method is grounded in a philosophy of 'total insurgency' – the momentum that will caress and change all human relationships, that is anti-statist, decentralist, a permanent insurgency. Freedom becomes a reality through ceaseless protest. Freedom and a totally new humanism are found through an active struggle for multi-dimensional revolution which is constructive and persistent.

Because the connectedness between modern capital and labour is

a human connectedness, even though debased and eroded into connections as between objects, what finally displaces it can only be a new and higher type of human connectedness. New freedom is not the mere negatives of the liberals and conservatives. In the words of Kropotkin, freedom is "the ability to initiate creative activity".

The revolt in Los Angeles exposed the importance of the ever-widening separation between the races and classes in the US. There is profound and continuing defiance to the conditions of life and work that are being forced fervidly on millions of people. Class struggle is now uncovered and unreserved; it is openly acknowledged as a phenomenon in America! I am convinced that it is transformative. What gives life to anarchist thought today is the desire for freedom by millions of people and the philosophic reconstruction of the anarchist legacy of freedom for the age of 're-structuring'. The anarchist vision of the future includes a rupture not only from capitalism but from all foregoing types of revolution or social advancement.

Seamas Cain

others we all have a right to the expression of our views on anarchism so long as we allow others the same right. In this we would like more women participants and comrades from ethnic minorities.

The Forum is now also generating off-centre discussion groups on more specific themes elsewhere on other evenings. Details by invitation from Forum participants at the meetings.



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Course fee: £16 Course Code: 964 SS

Enrolment Times: Enrol in person (in advance if possible) 12.30 to 2pm and 5pm to 8pm Monday to Friday. Information available at the Centre from 10am to 8.30pm, or by telephone from 10am to 10pm Monday to Friday.

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## MEETINGS

### Anarchist Forum

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

#### 1992 SEASON OF MEETINGS

12th June - 'The End of the Soviet Union' (speaker Dave Dane)  
19th June - 'Distributionism' (speaker Michael Murray)  
26th June - 'The Left and Architecture' (speaker Andrew Lainton)  
3rd July - 'Anarchism as a Positive Idea' (speaker Donald Room)  
10th July - The 1992-93 Programme: a formative 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 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?

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