

anarchist fortnightly

# Freedom

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“Lying is an action  
inseparable from politics  
and the pursuit of power”  
Malcolm Muggeridge  
(in ‘Dinner Party’, ITV)

## JOHN THE EVANGELIST – NORMAN THE SCAPEGOAT

A part from wildlife programmes on television which no safari or birdwatching can match, the other outstanding television contribution is to provide the public with live programmes on Parliament in action and, in these last three weeks, the Political Party Conferences.

The boredom of the platform obliged to clap, but which they do as performing seals slap their flippers, and the shots of the ‘delegates’ at the Labour Party Conference and the ‘representatives’ at the Tory jamboree are so revealing.

But the climax for the Tories in Brighton was last Friday when our Prime Minister, John Major, faced his activists and in a 59-minute

address, which was accompanied by at least 59 enthusiastic outbursts (apart from the standing ovation both before and after and which Mr and Mrs rounded off with a walkabout with handshakes and one or two kisses for the old ladies), Mr Major presented himself as being more British than the British (at one stage in his speech he was warning us about the dangers of the Franco-German mafia). And just as Michael Heseltine was assuring all the small and big businessmen in the audience that he would defend them “before breakfast, before lunch ...” etc., John Major declared that the government was always “behind” and never would stand “in the way of business”.

Great applause and waving of Union Jacks from the assembly. But he never told them what government *could* or *would* for them, simply because they can’t do anything unless they discard the Tory’s basic philosophy of the free market, the free  
*(continued on page 2)*

**THIS SATURDAY!**

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### *After the Conference Euphoria* **Back to the Capitalist Reality**

The major political parties have had their fun and games at Blackpool and Brighton and the faithful return to their constituencies with renewed assurances that the opposition will ‘hound the government’ and that the government has all the answers to the present financial problems.

But the opposition hasn’t the power, assuming it has the solutions, and the government has the power but no solutions.

Freedom will go on repeating that *capitalism is bankrupt* not just out of bravado but because all the indications are in that direction.

We distinguish between the economic and the financial. Economically the G7 countries are abundantly rich – so much so that they don’t know what to do with their industrial, technological and agricultural production! It’s the money system that is out of control. We are told that less than half the currency that is ‘marketed’ can be backed by the banks. And also, as we pointed out in *Freedom* (3rd October),

95% of money being *traded* in the markets “is not linked to transactions in goods at all”.

So what can the Major-Lamont circus (since Heseltine *et alia* gave their unequivocal support at Brighton) offer to end a capitalist recession which is destroying all the Thatcherite dreams of a “property-owning democracy” (more and more repossessions); of “small businesses” (at the Tory Conference a spokesman for them revealed that in the nine months in 1991, 33,500 went to the wall – but in the same period this year 46,500 have given up); and of the elderly leaving their properties to their children (more and more, according to *The Guardian*, are having to sell their homes to pay for the ever-increasing costs of accommodation for the old).

We sympathise with the victims who rested their hopes on capitalism and government. The anarchists have been telling people for years that *it won’t work*.

Capitalism is for the rich and for the ruthless.

Not only did Heseltine say clearly that the Tory government “won’t support the weak against the strong”, he also said that “the only convincing reason” for this country to be part of Europe was “our national self-interest”.

What kind of European Community if all twelve members declare that they participate only to further *their national self-interest*?

But this is the approach. After all, all the twelve governments involved are capitalist and they are in it for what they can get out of it. We must have no illusions about the intentions of the capitalists. To quote our French comrades, the European market is “*L’Europe des Riches*”. As we have said before, the only redeeming feature is if they don’t fight each other. Those of us who have lived through 1914-18 and 1939-45 probably would consider this as ‘progress’!

# JOHN THE EVANGELIST - NORMAN THE SCAPEGOAT

(continued from page 1)  
exchange monetary policy.

In every issue of *Freedom* we are at pains to point out that we are hoping that the capitalist system will destroy itself. Far from wanting to rescue it from its terminal crisis - which it could well be - we lament that there is not a strong Left, anti-capitalist, movement to provide the necessary non-capitalist alternatives.

John Major got the applause for presenting himself as the good 'Britain über alles' Prime Minister. And the more he said we were in Europe to feather our own nests, the more the Tory morons cheered and clapped and waved their flags. It was not only on Europe that our John spoke for the applause. Everything: education, crime, "between right and wrong and mine and yours". Neither did he miss out on a direct swipe at the 'new age travellers' whose rejection of materialism "means not respecting that of others". That brought almost a standing ovation from the property-owning Tory ladies and gentlemen. And last but not least, he launched a rocket at the "last bastion of the closed shop: the National Union of Students, maintained [he said] at the taxpayers expense" whose days were numbered. That really went down well with the rentiers of Britain.

But apart from these revolutionary decisions by our Prime Minister, he is also going to break down the bureaucracy in Whitehall; he is going to ensure that all

our children will be literate; he is, in a word, going to do everything for industry, for small businesses, for the unemployed, for mortgagees in trouble - you name it. It's the beginning of Utopia Ltd Managing Director: John Major, Esq.

It was difficult to concentrate on 59 minutes of banter (much applauded) and lies and rubbish because we go on maintaining that the government has no solution to the economic and financial crisis which is in our opinion a worldwide terminal crisis of capitalism, and which will not be solved until an alternative economic, financial, system is proposed and accepted which will deal with a world of 5,000 million humans, probably less than 1,000 million of whom enjoy a reasonable standard of living in spite of the fact that we have the technology to produce for all the needs of the 5,000 million people on our planet, and this includes all the land to feed them.

It is not only Somalia that is starving, as we write. Sudan is going the same way and African countries, not engaged in civil wars but facing the ravages of drought, are also in the same situation.

And although the industrialised G7 capitalist, industrialised, rich nations of the world are all in deep crisis, they can afford to keep millions of unemployed off the starvation line; they can afford to 'set aside' (that is, not cultivate) millions of acres of productive land while other millions of our fellow creatures in the third world starve. They can afford to spend billions of pounds on 'defence' and now that the invented enemy - the Bolshies - are out of the way they invent a nameless enemy in order to keep the war industry going - jobs and all that, ignoring that hundreds of thousands of building workers are out of a job and hundreds of thousands of people in this country are homeless!

We can tell any reader with illusions that all Evangelist Major's solutions to capitalism's crisis will fail because he hasn't even suggested the most obvious measures that should be taken by a capitalist society at such a time - because he and his Chancellor Lamont dare not take them, so far as his party of the rich is concerned.

The crisis of capitalism, in a word, is the

uneven distribution of wealth (which in capitalist terms means money, or property, shares, etc.) Everybody knows that whether there is a Labour government or Tory, the rich are always getting richer and the rest getting poorer. The poor have to spend everything they possess to survive and more if they can borrow. *The rich just can't spend it all.* It's all invested and the speculators play with it in the paper money markets. And they get rich and they can't spend it all!

Dear reader, can you not see that we live in a mad world which only benefits a small minority at the expense of the toiling, anxious majority? If you think things will change for the better, if you agree with *The Independent* (9th October): 'Cabinet knives out for Lamont' and he is replaced by McGregor, you have not yet understood what capitalism is all about!

Any government that tells you, as Lamont and Major were telling the faithful last week, that they are cutting down on public services expenditure (welcomed by the over-fed representatives, with hoots of approval) means freezing the salaries of hospital workers and other employees in the nationalised industries and services, as well as reducing in real terms benefits and pensions, not to mention subsidies for the infrastructure.

Not one of the ministers suggested that at a time of, to quote Mr Major, "a terrible recession" it's the turn of the rich to make

a contribution to the commonweal. Perish the thought! Apart from contributing to the Tory Party funds, there was no question of spoiling the happy throng with such 'socialist' heresies. On the contrary, all the talk was for lowering taxes (enthusiastic applause!) So what did Major or Lamont propose for getting BRITAIN (flag waving) out of the crisis? *Nothing but words and lots of nationalistic claptrap.* They all used it: Heseltine, Lamont and Major more than any of them. He wanted the applause (and got it, not surprising from such a bunch of smug humanity) but he could offer nothing but HOPE to the party "that has survived three hundred years", etc., etc.

Lamont may be sacrificed in a few months time when the finance/economy will get worse. But don't blame him - he's the scapegoat. Blame capitalism! And those on the Left should be working to get rid of it, and not to save it. But to do so we must agree on an alternative economic system and a new society, which none of the parties have in their programmes.

Today only the anarchists can think in terms of an alternative society.

MORE ANARCHIST  
COMMENTS ON  
PAGE 3

## Lies, Damned Lies and Politics

The men in power write our history when we let them and change it when it suits them and how they treat our forests is no exception. Six days before this year's April election, John Major gave an unequivocal assurance that the government had no intention of privatising the state forests. Just in case we were not convinced, the Scottish Minister told the House of Commons in May: "We have made it clear on a number of occasions that we have no intention of privatising the Forestry Commission. That remains the position. We have given a firm commitment not to privatise the Forestry Commission", as if repetition made it true. They were talking about a lot of land, about three million acres, more than twice the amount controlled by the Ministry of Defence.

The immediate concern of most ramblers is not who owns the land, State or Duke, but who can walk on it and in practice the Forestry Commission is reasonably friendly towards those who wish to enjoy the woods and forests. Access is not obstructed, it is even encouraged by the provision of picnic sites with their ubiquitous rustic tables and benches, car parks and nature trails. True the government has had a 'forest disposals' policy, with 400 thousand acres sold since 1981, and on the sold off land the keep off signs have gone up, the forest walks closed and the picnic sites and car parks locked away. But surely the rest is safe. Hasn't the Prime Minister said so? No, because what he meant to say last April and what he actually did say, now that this little bit of history has been rewritten, was: "The government has no plans at present to privatise the Forestry Commission". Now, just a few months later, it has decided to do just that. The Forestry Commission is going to be abolished and the land, valued at two billion pounds, sold off at a suitable discount to friends and relations no doubt. We already know what a politician's promise is worth, but rewriting history is something else.

HS

## The Amsterdam Disaster

### THEY NEED NOT HAVE DIED

The air disaster in Amsterdam has received maximum coverage by the media, but there is no positive reaction against the aeroplane as the most dangerous, the most uneconomic and environmentally polluting form of transport. We live in an age which could provide all with the necessities of a comfortable life and leisure. So what is the point of speed as provided by the aeroplane? And when it's a question of a transport plane - carrying 120 tons of cargo. What cargo?

Apparently the El-Al transporter was carrying perfume, among other cargo!

Apart from the fact that the airlines are all in financial crisis (and we are delighted) and all kinds of take-overs are in the offing (which confirms the anarchists' view that capitalism is monopolistic and only 'competitive' when business is bad and competitors must be eliminated or taken over), what role has the aeroplane in providing us with a richer life?

The aeroplane could easily be abolished if we did not look upon travel as getting from A-B or A-Z in double-quick time (many such time savers, we are told, spend more time in the airports waiting for their flights than in the actual flight). Leisure travel could be part of the holiday and now there is no reason why the holiday should be a fortnight or three weeks.

There are in our capitalist society those who work fifty weeks of the year, and three million who have no work for fifty two weeks of the year. This ridiculous situation only makes sense in the crazy capitalist world we live in.

And perhaps one day we shall value our lives sufficiently to shun the aeroplane as being the most dangerous, craziest way of travelling. Dangerous too for the innocent who live in their path.

## NO FUTURE FOR COAL?

We go to press before the government confirms or otherwise the leaked news that it is proposing to close down immediately twenty coal mines with the loss of 20,000 jobs in the mines and probably a similar number of jobs related to the mining industry. At the Tories' conference Mr Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, would neither confirm nor deny the actual figures but he said that harsh decisions had to be taken since the coal industry was not competitive enough and that they were producing coal that was not required. So one can assume that the leaked information is sound.

We also go to press before the National Union of Mineworkers meet to discuss what action they should take. Just as in 1984-85, the government is getting tough because they know that there is a whole year's supply of coal above ground and that if the miners strike once more they will have to face a long, bitter struggle. More so if once again the road hauliers are prepared to move the coal to the power stations, and if the breakaway Union of Democratic Miners go on working. So far as the latter are concerned, they might as well join a strike this time, having discovered that in spite of their strike-breaking and arse-crawling to the government last time, they have been just as clobbered by the recent

pit closures as the NUM. And the honeymoon with their president Roy Lynk seems to be over. Apparently 'brother' Lynk has been working behind the members' backs (he's closely associated with the privatised bid for British Coal - according to *The Guardian* - and not telling his members very much), and there is growing opposition to him.

However, we doubt whether as things are today the miners will be able to mount a strike that can halt the pit closures and hold out for even longer than last time. Understandably lifetime-serving miners will not want to jeopardise their redundancy payments.

The only real resistance to the pit closures should come from the people, from us. The coal reserves are an invaluable asset in a world where the natural resources are being consumed at an ever-increasing rate. Once a pit is abandoned it will never be re-opened. Now our rulers are playing fast and loose with oil and gas. Do we know how long that will last, or the cheap coal imports?

Now that electricity has been privatised the new bosses are looking to make a quick buck. At the moment they think it's gas and imported cheap coal that will provide it. And when that runs out?

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## Anarchists and the Referendum

The opinion polls – for what they are worth – are now saying that 70% of the people in this country are opposed to the Maastricht Treaty and, needless to say, the government's back-bench Tory sceptics led by the enobled and the Labour Party's dissidents Benn, Short, Gould and Skinner are all calling for a referendum to decide the issue. Obviously they are hoping that it would confirm the opinion polls and thereby oblige the government to back-pedal on Maastricht.

Just as in Denmark, Ireland and France, their governments held a referendum assuming that the outcome would be 'yes', likewise the Tory and Labour 'sceptics' are calling for a referendum because they hope that the result would be 'no'.

Before we discuss the anarchist approach to referenda one should remind these politicians who are so keen on a referendum that our parliamentary system based on first-past-the-post has elected a Tory government for the past thirteen years on a minority vote (about 30% of the electorate). Needless to say, the only objectors are the minority parties who think they would benefit if *proportional representation* were adopted – which in effect is the equivalent of the referendum since in Western Europe it would invariably mean coalition governments.

The French referendum was in fact meaningless. The government won by 51% to 49%. But only 70% of those entitled to vote voted. Thus a third of the electorate voted 'yes', a third said by their absence that it didn't matter one way or the other to them (with the honourable exception of the small anarchist and socialist comrades who said "*ni oui, ni non*" to "*l'Europe des Riches*") and the other third voted 'no'. The French government had no hesitation in assuming that their policy had been approved by the electorate.

At the recent general elections the political parties each presented some kind of programme which they would seek to implement if elected. Apart from those who automatically vote Tory or Labour or

whatever the politicians offer in their manifestos, the majority who vote are voting for *what they imagine to be their self-interest*. The Labour Party lost the last elections because they included in their manifestos a too-modest tax rise, in our opinion, for the rich (those earning more than £400 a week). The millionaire tabloid media seized on this to warn their readers that a Labour government would clobber not only the rich but everybody. So in spite of the recession, unemployment escalating, small businesses going by the board, the voters, the suckers, voted Tory because they said they would *reduce taxes!*

In this connection the American presidential jamboree confirms the foregoing reflections. The Washington correspondent of *The Independent* (5th October) writes:

"At the Clinton campaign headquarters in Little Rock, Arkansas, a simple slogan is taped to the wall for staff members to ponder. In large letters it reads: 'The Economy, Stupid'. That is what will win their man the election. All else is mere distraction.

In poll after poll, interview after interview, the message is confirmed. A recent *New York Times* survey showed 77% of voters disapproving of George Bush's handling of the economy, with only 17% giving him the benefit of the doubt. And every poll shows that issues such as Bill Clinton's avoidance of the Vietnam draft or the Republican emphasis on family values *matter little to voters besides their purses.*" (our italics)

So what in a capitalist society, that is a society based on confrontation and not cooperation, can a referendum express other than the material and vested interests of those who cast a vote? And invariably the only answer will be that of the French referendum: one third of the electorate consider that *their interest* lies with Europe, one third who think they will be better off outside Europe, and one third who think that their situation will be neither worse nor better (with the exception of the anarchists who reject "*l'Europe des Riches*").

In an anarchist society one could imagine the referendum being a valuable method of taking important decisions, locally,

regionally, nationally. But it can only be valuable in a society where there is not a wealthy privileged minority, where there are no employers and employees, no landed proprietors and landless and homeless. Where money, if it is considered to serve a useful function, could never be used to exploit the labour of others.

The referendum in an anarchist society would be the means of establishing *the best solution for a community, a region or even a nation* because the response would not only express the individual's personal interest but would above all reflect his or her responsibility as an active, caring member of the community. *This is a concept alien to the capitalist world we live in.*

At the Tories recent Brighton jamboree Michael Heseltine, in a typical rabble-rousing speech which brought the over-fed, elderly, self-satisfied representatives (but without

power) to their feet, assured them: "*We won't support the weak against the strong*".

In the first world – of the G7 capitalist countries – the people have no say. We are ruled by the banks, the multinationals, the insurance companies and the pension funds. And all governments are their puppets. The rule of law is the rule of the rich and powerful backed by the threat of force – the police, the military and imprisonment.

Referenda in such societies will change nothing. Things will only change when "workers of the world unite" not by the annual sing-song at the Labour Party's conference but in the streets of Europe. The Italian and French workers are showing some signs of impatience. We have three million unemployed and if Mr Lilley has his way even the dole will be cut in the next few months. Are they going to wait passively for this to happen?

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le monde  
**libertaire**

MAASTRICHT NI « OUI » NI « NON »

**Abstention active**

10 AU 16 SEPTEMBRE 1992

**Maas... triche**  
**l'Europe des riches**

**MAASTRICHT ABSTENTION**

**EDITORIAL**  
Abolir les prisons  
Grèves de matons, violences, morts, évactions... les prisons s'effondrent. C'est l'heure des révoltes.

**EDITORIAL**  
Vote aveugle  
Le bulletin à la main, le regard fixé sur la ligne bleue des Voies, l'électeur français attend au rythme.

ÉTÉ 1992  
N° 878

Le fameux traité, que le gouvernement nous...

contres, les actions européennes de futur a

The ideas expressed by Ernie Crosswell and Stephen Cullen on pacifism in *Freedom* (30th May and 27th June respectively) deal with an important issue, one, which as they say, should be discussed. I would like to reply to Ernie's article first because, although I believe each of us has the right to deny to harm others for our own reasons, I do not believe these reasons can be applied as a universal standard. I accept that no-one has the right to force others to engage in actions against their wishes and that conscription, the worst form of forced participation in violence, is clearly immoral. We cannot demand that others believe as we do or that they must accept others' rationale for fighting. The usual rhetoric of the state is that the 'national good' is also that of the individual and that when the controlled decide it is time for war we must accept their judgement and motivation as being in our name and therefore, they say, we are obliged to fight. Each person, however, must decide for themselves when they will fight, if at all, and not allow the state to make such decisions.

However, in his article 'Pacifism is Realism' (a title that to me suggests practical rather than moral reasons for pacifism) Ernie made several claims as to why we ought not to fight. One was that no-one could surely join premeditated actions which 'inevitably involve the killing of women and children' and I find it inconsistent that these two categories of humans are automatically less justifiable as victims than men. If premeditated killing is wrong then how can it only be so of these people and not of another group. Is an unarmed man standing in a food queue less of a victim when a mortar round blows him apart than the woman at his side who is also killed? Such an argument does nothing to convince me of pacifism for it stresses the value of some life over others and implicitly suggests men are not an issue in deciding the

immorality of killing.

I do not know if Ernie's reasoning is based upon the idea that women and children do not engage in war and are therefore only ever civilians trapped in conflicts, but it is worth confronting this false perception briefly with several examples that show otherwise. In World War Two the USSR had over one million women in *combat* roles as tank crews, fighter pilots, machine gunners, and so on. In the history of Latin America there were female leaders of resistance to the colonial invasion. And in the current savage war in Peru perhaps half the guerrillas are estimated to be women, as are the most brutal and feared commanders. The Salvadorean guerrillas also have women combatants, as did the Vietnamese NLF in the war with the USA. So one cannot accept gender equates with a set role in any conflict and one must be wary of generalised views as to whether someone is participating in or supporting a conflict.

The most inconsistent element in Ernie's argument is to accept humans are 'programmed' to react violently to attacks upon themselves and loved ones. As this is biologically determined he says we have little control over this 'instinctual behaviour', but this leads me to ask how can anyone therefore be a pacifist if we are so programmed! If it is innate that we react violently when attacked then this is to admit violence is inevitable, that we cannot control it and that it controls us. This is a very deterministic view of humans which fortunately has been proven wrong for the mind can overcome such behaviour (whether it be learnt or innate) as Gandhi and his followers showed. When they lined up to be beaten to the ground by police

## PACIFISM?

and troops they did not react with violence. They made a conscious decision not to resist as this would be true non-violence and despite brutal beatings, including the police ramming batons up their rectums whilst they lay injured in one case, they offered no resistance. Therefore the claim that we must react to attacks upon us is not true.

Ernie's next point was to qualify the reactive violence mentioned above by saying that it would not be precluded "provided that it was unpremeditated" and "unarmed". But violence is still violence whether with our fists (which can kill) or a gun. And what if a long term solution was all that could save your family from harm? Some danger presents itself in the long term and therefore any violent action you take to stop it is premeditated. Many Salvadoreans and Kurds probably never wanted to fight but they knew conflict was coming and that without preparation and guns they would die.

The next problem with his argument is when he states "the side with the heavier weaponry wins the battle". This clearly is not so as history shows, for example (regardless of what we may think of the ideologies of the actual struggles) the Sandinista victory over the US-backed forces of Somoza who had many more troops and far more military hardware. Then there are the East Timorese guerrillas who for seventeen years have fought the massive armed forces of Indonesia, for most of that time with all of about 2,000 guerrillas against up to 20,000 occupying troops. They obviously cannot defeat the Indonesians but equally they have shown they can maintain the war and thus not let Indonesia win. The FMLN guerrillas in El Salvador used

home-made bombs, stolen and captured weapons, and managed not only to survive but to be able to attack the massively US-backed and trained right wing army of greater size. The NLF in Vietnam were attacked by the greatest death machine in the history of warfare and yet survived in order to win. And if one delves into ancient history there are similar examples whether it be the Greeks in Persia or Alexander 'The Great', etc. The practicality of taking on superior forces ought not to be the issue or else no-one would resist the oppressive, and we would have to accept 'might equals right'. The issue is surely justice and not whether we can foresee success based on an equation of forces, weaponry and the like.

It does not seem to me that Ernie presented any universal reason for not engaging in violence when we feel we must for our own reasons. I agree in part that we must only fight back in reaction to attacks but would say that this will involve preparation and arms if it is to succeed. As I stated at the beginning, no-one has the right to force others to participate in a war or conflict, we must respect the right and moral commitment of those who say they will not fight. Even if a war benefits them, safeguards their existence, no-one can demand they contribute if they, the pacifists, feel such actions are immoral for such benefits are a consequence of actions they do not feel they can take. They are not demanding others fight for them whilst they remain safe as the elites and powerful do and most true pacifists, I'm sure, would accept their fate if the like of the Nazis, who they had refused to fight, had invaded Britain and decided to kill them. Just because some would choose to fight does not mean others must do the same. It does not seem to me, though, that Ernie presented any convincing argument for non-violence.

# ECONOMICS

Norman Lamont's admission that he is not an expert on economics should surprise nobody. He could go down in history as the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But, of course, he was not talking about economics as every housewife understands the term. The term economics derives from economy, which is to do with careful household management, and it has very little to do with the political 'economics' or the political 'economists' for whom Norman Lamont is the temporary spokesman.

In contrast to household economics, which is based on co-operation within the family, political economics is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the wealth and power of small groups of people, to the disadvantage of the general population.

Even when the country is in recession, the practice of governments and the wealthy groups which control governments is to increase the salaries of top people on the grounds of efficiency, while cutting back on the benefits and wages of the unemployed and lower-paid employed respectively.

Defending an increase of over 100% recently, one top executive explained: "It isn't a case of what one needs; it is a case of what is right and correct". Imagine a housewife saying that she puts an apron over her evening gown to serve up half rations of scrambled egg to the family before going off to dine at a five star hotel. There would be a riot!

There are not, and cannot be, any experts on political 'economics', because it is to do with speculation, competition and power. The following utterances on the present financial crisis, which threatens to see Major and Lamont scapegoated into more congenial and higher-paid appointments, is evidence enough:

Loyalist Tory MPs blame speculators' profiteering from the French referendum.

John Major said it was caused by "irrational market movement".

John Watts MP, chairman of the Treasury Select Committee, said it was "a game of

poker" played between Lamont and the money markets.

Meanwhile, all of the politicians, left, right and centre, gabble away vaguely about 'getting the economy moving'. Well, they certainly achieved that, excepting that it is the markets that have been moving - to the advantage of the wealthy and the speculators.

In the world of spurious economics, the prosperity of one country is necessarily dependent upon the relative poverty of another, with which it is in competition. Likewise, the personal prosperity of people within each country is dependent upon the relative poverty of their own compatriots. A logical extension of this process is that the poor in western countries are relatively rich in comparison with the poor in third world countries.

This dangerous situation persists because market forces, ultimately, are controlled by the power of the gun - as evidenced by Desert Storm, which was put into operation to keep the Persian Gulf oil wells under the control of the west.

The one single, most vital, commodity to the superpowers in general, and the US in particular, is oil. In 1980, the US government proclaimed: "Any attempt by an outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf will be regarded as an assault on the vital strategic interests of the United States of America and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force". Anyone who is inclined to believe that political 'economics' bears any resemblance to genuine economics would do well to remember that warning, which is known as the Carter Doctrine. Oil is the lifeblood of the most powerful military force in the world. Oil is at the root of the American way of life. Oil equals 'economics'.

Those who own the wealth, land and property control propaganda via the educational system, the government and the media, and they fool the general public into

believing that political 'economics' is an extension of genuine economics. So the gullible are led to believe that they do not understand it, leaving it to the 'experts' to do what they will on their behalf. In reality, political 'economics' has about as much to do with genuine economics as copulation has to

do with love. Just as the gratification of sexual desire is commonly referred to as 'sexual love', the gratification of greed is called 'political economics'. The three inadvertent admissions by Tory spokesmen, listed above, are confirmation of that fact.

EFC

## Fact Stranger than Fiction

Surely sometimes fact is stranger than fiction. It also makes one aware of the magnitude of

the task facing those of us who are trying to change the way people 'think' or think that they think!

# Clergyman claims poll tax rebels aid work of anarchists

PEOPLE who fail to pay the poll tax are doing the work of anarchists, a clergyman claimed yesterday.

The Rev Stanley Montgomery said he urged obedience to the law. If people felt a rule was unjust, they should pray to God.

Mr Montgomery spoke about the tax at All Saints Church, Stanton, on Sunday during a sermon on authority and how it was the duty of all Christians to obey the law.

He said yesterday: "We must remember those in authority have that authority only by the grace of God.

"We are not likely to rise against our Queen and Government but look at those who refuse to pay the poll tax. They are doing the work of anarchists."

He said non-payers and those who paid their charge late meant extra money had to be spent on reminders.

Mr Montgomery said: "If the law is unjust, then pray to God because we have elected Parliament and our local authority and we can do no more, and if they turn out not as we would wish, then pray to God.

"I always push where I can for the complete obedience of the law because it is my Christian duty. It isn't really a political point, it is my Christian duty."

But his views were challenged by Don Pollard, of the Poll Tax Legal Group, who said the charge had made poverty a crime.

"The vast majority of people I have assisted have been pensioners who find they cannot pay the basic poll tax, much less the full poll tax.

"It is all very well to talk about praying but these people are faced with the problem of being brought before the courts without the money to pay this bill."

From East Anglian Daily Times, 25th September 1992

## Feminists Against Censorship

Think all women support stronger censorship of pornography? Think all feminists do? Think again.

The feminist movement has always criticised the media - all of it - but that doesn't mean a feminist has to support censorship of any genre.

Feminists know that giving the state power to decide what we can create and what we can see does not empower women. Feminists know that pornography is not the source of sexism in society. Feminists know that violence against women is the responsibility of those who commit the violence, and not of writers, film-makers or publishers.

Next time you want to present a 'balanced view' on this issue, don't make the mistake of

assuming that the only women who support freedom of expression must work in the porn industry. Women from all walks of life oppose censorship - even feminists.

And not without good reason. We know that, no matter who the arguments come from and no matter how they are phrased, censorship always hurts women. Criticism and open debate are the only useful ways to deal with prejudice, confusion and lies.

Call Feminists Against Censorship when you want to know the real story on women and censorship. We're ready to talk to you.

Nettie Pollard

Feminists Against Censorship, BM Box 207, London WC1N 3XX. Tel: 081-552 4405.

## Would You Believe It!

In a series of broadcast programmes, Ludovic Kennedy the atheist interviewed a number of practising Christians. One of his subjects was the MP for Suffolk and Minister of Agriculture John Gummer. We reproduce verbatim a part of the incredible exchange:

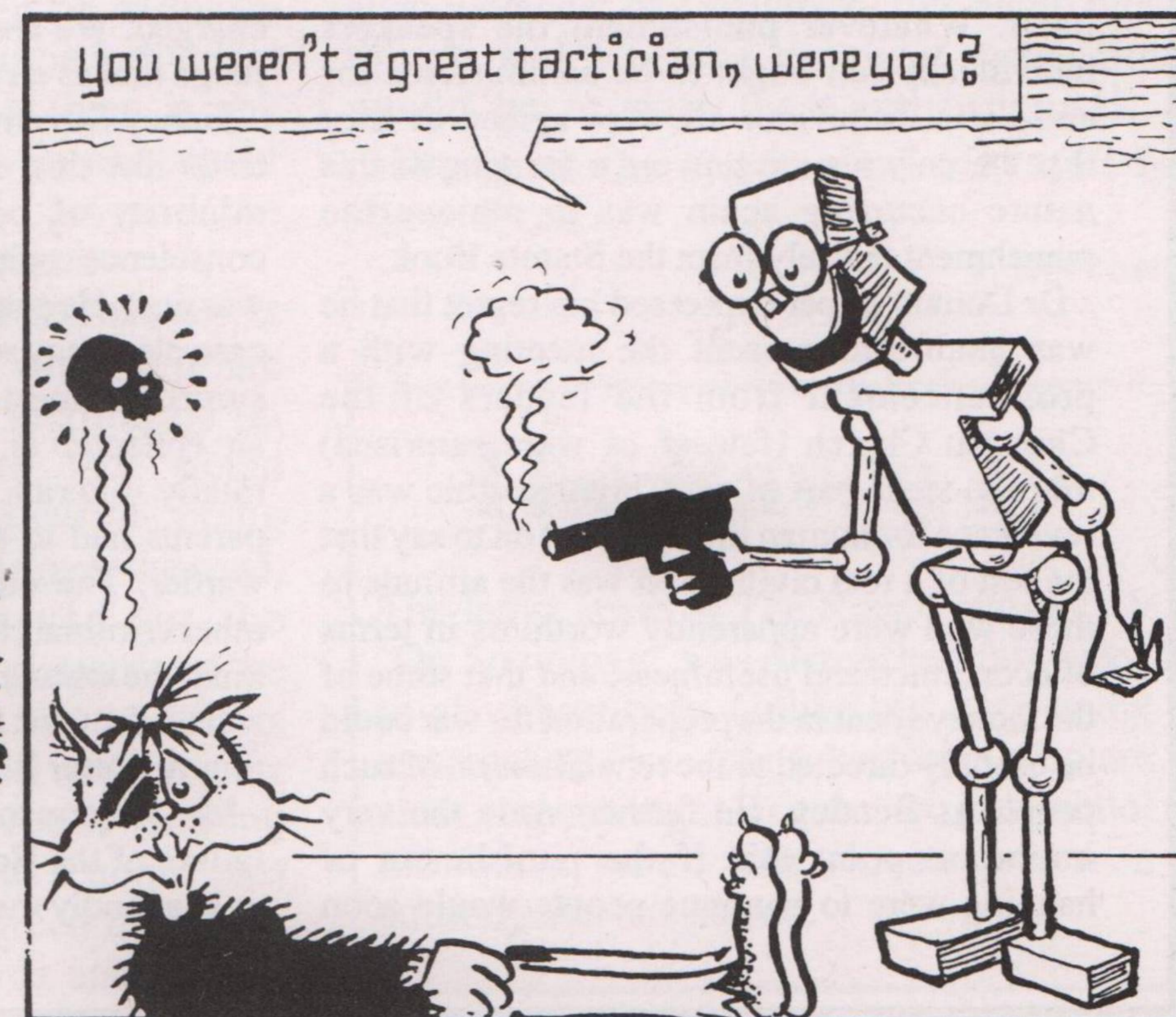
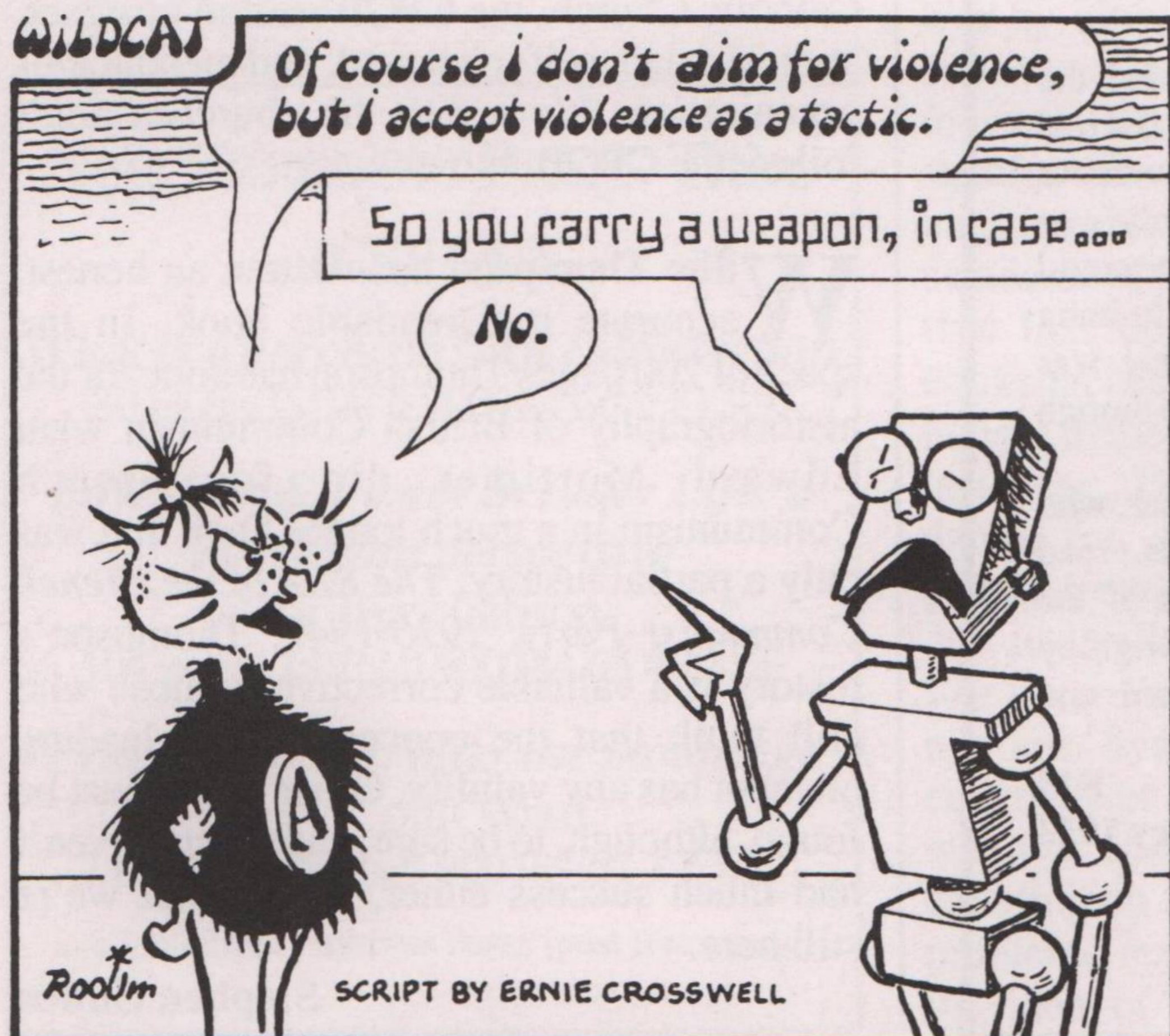
Ludovic Kennedy: Isn't the truth of the matter, Mr Gummer, that times have changed and you haven't caught up with them. I mean there was a time when Christians believed in Satan, witches and angels and all that kind of thing.

John Gummer: Well, I believe in both angels and Satan and witches. Of course I believe in

Satan. So don't say 'there was a time'. With great respect, most Christians do believe in angels and Satan.

Ludovic Kennedy: What do you mean 'believe'. You surely haven't seen one?

John Gummer: There was an angel who appeared unto Mary and said to her: 'Hail Mary full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women' and as I say that as part of a prayer every day of my life I don't think I'd say it if I thought there was no angel to have said it in the first place.



## The 'Good Old Cause'

The Good Old Cause: British Communism 1920-1991

by Willie Thompson

Pluto Press, 1992, £12.95 (paperback), £35 (hardback), 258 pages

Willie Thompson's excellent book will, for a long time, remain the note on the British dustbin of history. He has put together a flowing narrative of events and personalities, an acute critical analysis of the party's failings, and, one feels, a personal justification of his long association with British communism. It is a difficult story to tell, and often a painful one of the betrayal of successive generations of committed activists who were to find that, in the end, they were on the wrong side of history.

Communism in Britain got off to a shaky start in 1920, when it took a concerted effort, and the provision of "very considerable funds", by the Comintern to bring together the various minor groups that formed the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). These organisations "were agreed only on their commitment to revolutionary action as a requisite for attaining socialism; they were profoundly and bitterly divided upon virtually every other political principle as well as being affected with considerable personal suspicions and rivalries" (page 29). This contrasted badly with other communist parties that had the advantage of splitting off the revolutionary elements of existing social

democratic movements. However, as Thompson points out, this didn't save these parties in the end, and the flaw in communist organisation largely post-dates the various parties' foundings.

Despite its inauspicious birth, the CPGB made a decent start in the 1920s, with advances in the industrial sphere, which would always remain important for the party. However, it was also the period when the virus of bolshevism was injected into the party. Frustrated at the slow growth of the CPGB, the Comintern ordered a review of the party's organisation. The result was the adoption of democratic centralism in 1922. Thompson comments that the adoption of democratic centralism "gave the CP a quasi-military aspect to complement the quasi-religious one it had already acquired from its messianic expectations" (page 36). An unfortunate combination.

The rigid organisation of the party combined with its absolute subservience to the decrees of the Comintern meant that in 1928 the party made the first of a long series of major tactical errors. Disturbed by the failure of western capitalism to collapse as planned, the communist international instituted the policy of 'class against class'. The CPGB dutifully retreated into a sectarian

position, cutting itself off from all other elements in the labour movement; although there were doubtless many in the party whose experience of sectarian politics pre-dated the CPGB. The party's umbilical link with the communist international was, for almost its entire life, its greatest weakness, and only occasionally, as in the period 1941-1946, a strength. Thompson argues that the party had no choice in this matter, that commitment to communism meant commitment to its internationalism in the form of the world communist movement. The problem is that this simply meant the aims and policies of the Soviet state. There were other alternatives, but the CPGB would have lost the associated prestige and the vital financial support of the Soviet Union. For these, the CPGB found itself hamstrung by the inappropriate tactics of class against class until 1935; defending the Stalinist purges from 1936-38; coping with the Nazi-Soviet pact and the policy of 'imperialist war' from 1939-1941; and being condemned to follow the 'two camps' line that included supporting Soviet policy towards Yugoslavia, West Berlin, China, more show trials, anti-semitism at the end of the Stalinist period, Hungary, and all the other twists of super-power politics. The link with the Soviet state was only of value when its activities coincided with wider left-wing perceptions in

Britain, such as the questions of nuclear disarmament or Vietnam. And such coincidences were rare.

Not only was the party hamstrung by its commitment to Soviet foreign policy, but its own strategy was similarly crippled. Even after the ostensible end of direct Soviet interference in the party's affairs, the Soviet hangover remained in the shape of *The British Road to Socialism* (BRS). Adopted as the party's programme in 1951, and supposedly the specific British approach to the achievement of communism, much of it was, in fact, written by Stalin. Perhaps as befitted such origins, BRS was treated as if it were carved in letter of stone, and the party almost destroyed itself attempting to follow the BRS strategy of electoral success. Thompson's exasperated comment is: "Throughout the 1970s the leadership had argued with growing desperation in the face of the inexorable decline that a political party could not hope to be recognised as such unless it contested elections, so that they must continue regardless of the morale-sapping outcomes ..." (page 197). Yet, given that the party had also sold out in the industrial sphere to trade union bureaucrats by this time, it is hard to see what else it could have done.

The late 1970s were marked by the party's continuing inability to read the real nature of economic and political developments, despite a remarkable warning of times to come, 'The Great Moving Right Show', written by Stuart Hall in 1978, which appeared in *Marxism Today* in January 1979. And, as a further sign of the times, the CPGB embarked, in the early 1980s, upon a long period of in-fighting that initially centred on control of *The Morning Star*. The great changes of the last few years that, for most of us, emerged unexpectedly from the 'Second Cold War' of the early 1980s, once again caught the party off guard, and the end for a now bemused and disordered party was not far off. Thompson takes the story right up to the end, but, teasingly, doesn't tell us whether he is now in the Democratic Left.

The historical narrative of the book is good, but it is Thompson's insights into the experience of Communist Party membership that I found really fascinating. In this respect Thompson is only rivalled by the much older *culpa mea* of Douglas Hyde, *I Believed* (1951). Thompson appears to be trying to salvage something from the wreck of the CPGB in his portrayal of the dedication of thousands of British communists. This is a perfectly legitimate thing to do, and I sincerely hope that it is of some comfort to him, and the thousands of others who struggled for something that rarely looked likely at the time and, in retrospect, was never really possible. What is striking is that, time and again, Thompson returns to comparisons between communist and religious commitment, especially that of the Catholic Church. For example, "like the Catholic Church the party thought in centuries without losing sight of the significance of the here-and-now" (page 211). And, like the Catholic Church, the CPGB was an arrogant, authoritarian, self-obsessed, and mendacious organisation. It's a pity the churches don't follow the CPGB into oblivion.

Willie Thompson has written an honest, accurate and readable book. In the space of 200 pages Thompson has done for the historiography of British Communism what Edward Mortimer did for French Communism in a much longer book that was only a partial history: *The Rise of the French Communist Party, 1920-1947*. Thompson's history is a valuable corrective to those who still think that the concept of the leading element has any validity. Other ways must be found, although, to be sure, anarchists haven't had much success either, except that we're still here.

Stephen Cullen

The case of Derek Bentley who was hanged for the murder of a policeman (it will be forty years ago next year), though he was in police custody for fifteen minutes before the fatal shot was fired by Craig, will not lie down - certainly so long as his devoted sister is alive. She has not stopped seeking a pardon, she has in the course of these years addressed some 150,000 letters to enlist support, and in her work she has been represented by the firm of solicitors headed by Benedict Birnberg.

The Bentley-Craig case is once again in the news, and this time there were high expectations that the new Home Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, was prepared to grant a pardon. But in the event, in spite of saying that with hindsight had he been Home Secretary Bentley would not have hanged, he could not recommend a pardon since, apparently, no evidence justifying his taking such a step had been produced. In a long detailed letter to The

Guardian (8th October) Mr Birnberg said "as Iris Bentley's solicitor, we challenge this".

The struggle goes on. For the new generation of Freedom readers we thought they would be pleased and interested to know that at the time, in 1953, the London anarchists organised a protest meeting at St Pancras Town Hall and the following is a reprint of the report published in Freedom, 28th February 1953.

## Bentley Execution Protest Meeting

At the Freedom Press protest meeting held in March of last year against the shooting of nine anarchists in Spain, Dr Bronowski said: "I do not believe that what I say will move the Spanish government; it is to me that it matters, it is to you that it matters". If in fact we want to keep our self-respect and our respect for others we must individually protest against tyranny and injustice wherever they occur.

At the St Pancras Town Hall last week, a meeting was held to protest against the hanging of Derek Bentley for what the chairman described as technical murder. It may be that since this incident occurred nearer home and there is a general feeling of injustice in this case that this effort will not have been in vain.

The speakers, including a Christian, an anarchist, a pacifist, a politician and a free thinker, expressed from their various standpoints their horror not only at this particular hanging but at capital punishment itself. Whatever punishment the speakers individually felt ought to be administered for anti-social behaviour all were agreed at least that the only way to prevent a hanging of this nature occurring again was to remove the punishment entirely from the Statute Book.

Dr Donald Soper expressed his regret that he was unable to present the meeting with a pronouncement from the leaders of the Christian Church (few of us were surprised) more so since part of the Christian ethic was a reverence for human life. He went on to say that the test of a real civilisation was the attitude to those who were apparently worthless in terms of economics and usefulness, and that some of the money spent in the preparation for war could be usefully directed to the rehabilitation of such people as Bentley. He further made the very important point that if the punishment of hanging were to continue people would soon

become accustomed to such brutalities and would cease to raise their voices in protest. His hope that the meeting would generate "more light than heat" was amply fulfilled as the night proceeded.

C.H. Norman followed and gave us some astounding facts about the judicial system. One example was that a hearing before a civil court of appeal averaged three hours for each case, but that it was not unknown in the criminal appeal court to have as many as 57 cases in one day averaging about four and a quarter minutes per person. The distinction is obvious. Civil courts usually deal with property and monetary matters, but in the case of one's liberty or even life four and a quarter minutes is devoted to the consideration of justice. Another revealing insight on criminal cases taken to the High Court is that the judge has in his possession before the case even starts the evidence for the prosecution plus the full record of the person charged. We are then asked to believe that the judge makes an impartial decision.

Sidney Silverman, who, when it comes to an issue like this, strikes us as being among the minority of politicians willing to follow conscience rather than political expediency, was next. He enumerated the reasons why in this case clemency was the obvious course. It was a surprise to most of us to learn that Bentley was an epileptic as well as being backward and totally illiterate, and that his later letter to his parents had to be written for him by a prison warden. The other reasons were: his age, no other criminal charges, no act of violence of any kind, the attitude of the jury, and even the judge, and the fact that the policeman was killed fifteen minutes after Bentley had been arrested.

Mr Silverman was of the opinion that the failure of the Home Secretary (who he assured us is a kindly man) to advise the Queen to grant

the prerogative of mercy was an indication that pressure had been brought to bear from an unknown source.

F.A. Ridley was the next speaker. His opening quotation expressed what many of us felt, that "society prepares the crime, and society should go with the criminal into the witness box". He rightly pointed out that if we continue to glorify and sanctify murder during war and make heroes out of soldiers we must be prepared to take the responsibility of the Bentleys who are but products of this society.

Sybil Morrison, who made a plea for our continuous support for the abolition of capital punishment rather than getting indignant about one particular case, was followed by Frank Dawtry whose figures must convince even the most conservative that capital punishment has no connection with the number of murders committed, in fact in the countries where hanging has been abolished there has been a decrease in violent crimes.

Our comrade Philip Sansom concluded the meeting, and left us in little doubt as to the real causes of 'crimes' violent and otherwise in our society. In his opinion, there was only one source from which pressure of this nature could have come - the police. Someone had to hang for killing a policeman and since Craig was beyond the law it had to be Bentley, even though he did not fire a shot.

Kitty Lamb, the chairman and organiser, who is to be congratulated on her efforts, read messages of sympathy with the aims of the meeting from Christopher Fry, Kingsley Martin, Charles Duff, H.N. Brailsford and William Douglas Home.

RM

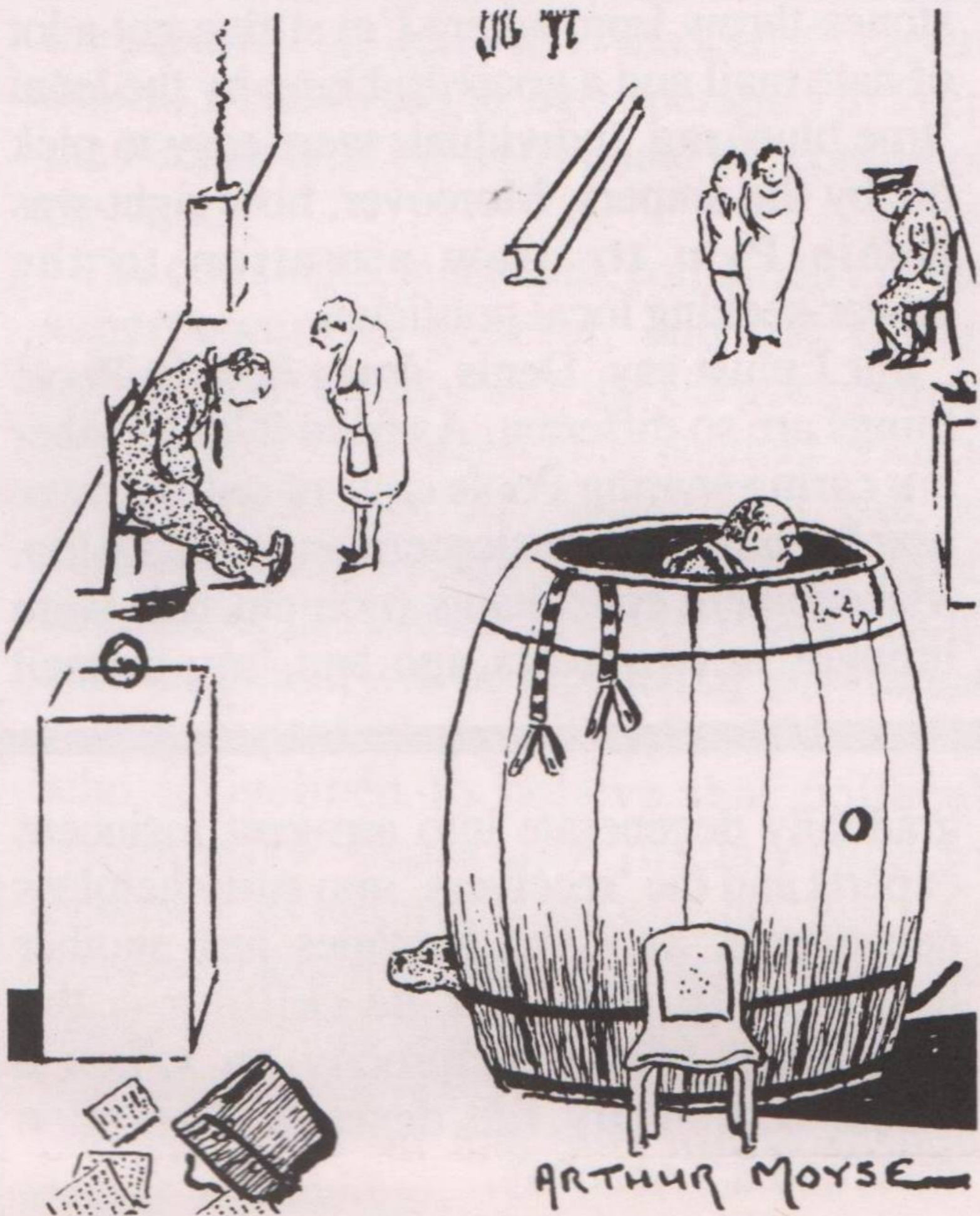
28th February 1953

# The Pleasures of Porn

The act of walking on bended knees down Bond Street to pay justifiable homage to the Anthony d'Offay Art Gallery does tend to evoke comment from the suffering rich plotting their next meal, but, as I said to the Pope, in private audience, 'Tony's a good old boy and if one can continue to put the frighteners into the Establishment in 1992 then he deserves the finger to the forehead'. The d'Offay's current exhibition does and must raise the ol' banana of 'is it art', ready-made disposable, porn, or is it important. There is many a book-bound activist who will spew up their half pint of real ale at anything whose date stamp goes beyond 1901. Good hearted fundamentalists whose dedication and practice begins and ends with the final dead and sterile word of their particular version of authorised Holy Script, but for all that the d'Offay exhibition should evoke some slight philosophical interest in their closed minds for this exhibition taken out of context of an art gallery and placed in happytown Soho would have the law murmuring 'back-handers or not lads, you can't get away with that'. In the beginning, which for the infirm is the ground floor gallery, is the old rhubarb Conceptual Art which is a 'real' plastic table, chairs, ketchup and all the remains and rubbish of a finished meal. 'Let's Eat Out Today' by Damien Hirst, and one rightly gives the old superior smile for it is so old hat. But the joy of the day is up the stairs to the upstairs gallery. On the closed door is a notice stating that if one is easily offended then keep the mind pure by tippy-toeing down the steps to fairyland and the collective writings, but for myself I happily enjoy a mind that ranges from the crystal pure to that of an open sewer so it is door open SAS-style and art for the thinking proletariat. In front of one is a huge wooden wine barrel over five foot tall and part of an old man's head is peeping over the top. One walks around the huge barrel and there is the

realistic figure of an old man, modelled human size and in natural colour. He is clothed but his trousers are around his knees and by electrical, mechanical internal operation he is going through the realistic movements of fucking the wine barrel. I bent low, like the old Sweet Chariot, to check on authentic realism, and it was there for the old man's penis was going in and out of the bung hole of the barrel and all life size and in glorious natural colour.

On the wall are life-size coloured photographs of a man and woman copulating and the camera is focused on the penis entering the woman's vagina. Around the wall are various aspects of the human comedy and, hand on heart, I hold that Anthony d'Offay is to be congratulated on giving us the opportunity to view this new, for Britain, art wave from America. I welcome it and enjoyed it, but art it ain't for taken out of the context



"Mr Hepplebender, are you sure this is art?"

of the mystique of an art gallery it is no more than good ol' red light hard porn. Jeff Koons and Cindy Sherman are the front-runners for this New York wave that has already become a major political and legal issue in America in the ideological battle between those who argue for taking it out of the burlesque and into the art galleries and Mum's all-American apple pie and the Old Glory bible belt commandos. Unlike Lawrence's Lady Chat, one would have difficulty in arguing, even before a sympathetic jury, that the Spitting Image style of a life-size old man fucking a hole in a huge wine cask was no more than a continuation of Greek sculpture at its highest point, for all that is left is to argue that in these matters the door is closed and the windows of the gallery painted over and one should be, and is, a free agent in entering. There it is and I would advise any who so wish to view this worthwhile and important exhibition if they wish to be shocked, if they like a dirty giggle, if they are concerned at the erosions not only of our environment but our individual diminishing freedoms.

Again Anthony d'Offay is to be congratulated for giving us this opportunity to view this American Old Wave that is now New Wave in Britain. I went for one last look at the old man having perpetual in-out-in-out inner tube with the bung hole of the huge wine barrel and, as a social conscious emotional bleeding heart, I must warn those heavy breathers with sweaty palms among us not to practice what the d'Offay old man is doing for informed medical advice is of the opinion that one can go blind doing it and, if using an old wine cask, get splinters in one's tinkle.

The long-awaited backlash by the passive timid males is, it is claimed, now on its way here from the States as a panic revolt against the horrors of the various women's movements and the d'Offay old man with his wine cask could be the first flowering of that revolt in Britain as the male answer to the

female vibrator. Pornography, at its most enjoyable, was always a matter of guilt in that it was the crumpled ancient postcard of unsmiling women and men with their socks on and it had to be viewed in the sacristy of the factory lavatory or pool of light of the unremembered street gas lamps, but come international media commercialisation then hard porn in relation to sex no longer exists for it is no more than media entertainment. The satellite television stations from Europe are now beaming in to the British home beautiful Hollywood-produced full range permutations of sexual fun and games covering lesbian, oral, buggery, group, piggy or doggy, and as Chief Superintendent Michael Hames of the Yard's naughty squad cries that there is nothing that his lads and lasses can do. With Red Hot Dutch beaming its hard porn to Britain at a rental of £47.25 a quarter, it now comes under the heading of art or entertainment. With satellite decoders selling at a thousand a week the dear old dead days of the street gas lamp and the lavatory giggles are a thing of myth and memory for we the Old Guard.

I would hold that pornography is no more than an uncontrollable obsession to pander to an unnecessary human appetite. The gourmet who is no more than a gourmandiser, the alcoholic, the female who sees everything as the result of male sexual persecutions, the male whose life is dominated by the political jargon of the hour, all this and other is pornography that demands satisfaction and usually to the hurt of others. It is good that Red Hot Dutch and the lads should flood the satellite airwaves to the rage of the State with their sexual soaps for in the end, as with all other forms of entertainment, it will destroy itself by sheer lack of wit, intellectual story-line and boredom. Sex and chemically manufactured huge cream cakes are for the young for they have the newly-awakened appetites for these things, but with the adult's need for these things there is a sadness about it. Like the old man in Tony's d'Offay gallery that I applaud.

Arthur Moyses

Once again the media are expressing concern and outrage over the deaths resulting from joy riding; condemnation that is hyper-critical when one views the massive problems and sufferings facing this society. This example illustrates how we are expected to be concerned about problems which challenge or disregard the norm and its values of greed, selfishness, authority and subservience, but pay no informal attention to those resulting from these very values. So when failings occur due to the nature of society, failings which are structural and inherent, they are down-played, ignored or trivialised and never put into context. It would be dangerous for capitalism to allow itself to be seen as systematically creating problems as this would surely give rise to resentment and desire for change. Thus such failings are noted as exceptions, aberrations, the errors of individuals, etc., but certainly not as a result of the dominant value system and the consequent way we live.

## Acceptable and Unacceptable Suffering

Attention then is focused more on 'deviants' and those who 'rock the boat', giving undue weight to their crimes and portraying them as the real menace. Hence a resident in Malvern could say 'we were in fear of our lives' when some travellers and a lot of ravers grouped in the countryside for a short time. The hysteria directed at the travellers (not the ravers for the most part) was totally unrealistic and without foundation in fact. The travellers do not beat people up, murder them or lay waste to the country or whatever else it is the narrow-minded residents and journalists feared. Much is made of the 'dirty' lifestyle and 'scruffy' appearance of these people who live by alternative values, as if that, if true anyway, is a reason for such hate. Compare the way they and the gypsies live to the squalor of many British houses. Britain has a major problem with inadequate and appalling standards of housing. Many have been evicted this last decade, others are infested by cockroaches (in 1990-91 the number of houses treated was 43,000, a rise of 87% from last year: *The Guardian*, 14th September), damp, rot, cold, many are fire-traps (150 people die each year in rented accommodation due to landlords poor fire safety standards: *The Guardian*, 14th September). Yet we do not see hysterical, angry and persistent coverage of each eviction, repossession or when a child is found with cockroaches crawling on their clothes and face. These are problems resulting from the structure, from the idea of profit from need, maintaining

people in squalid houses in order to save money. But it will be rare to see coverage that questions the very concept of this profit oriented ideology. The finger will instead be pointed at the recession, the interest rates, the government's inability to create more profit and the like. We won't see challenge to the norm, that expresses doubt about evictions and homelessness and squalor at any time not just when they reach noticeable highs.

This blindness to the tragic consequences of the dominant value system that is imposed on this society is well illustrated by the focus on joy riders. Yet each year thousands of people are killed or seriously hurt on British roads with focus on individual mistakes or machine faults (if there is any criticism at all) but not on the very concept of mass private ownership of cars and the inherent problems of such a system

This 'legitimate' greed and selfishness is seen as freedom and so those who die or are injured each year are the victims of an 'accepted' aspect of our lives. Few would doubt the tragedy of a pedestrian being smashed by a car and sent flying over the road, but condemnation is reserved for the individual, perhaps even the pedestrian ('he didn't look, just stepped out'). But the fault is structural, like so many we face, and we must question the very idea of roads running through shopping areas, next to schools, past our homes, and question the greed that is the car. As it is we find billboards and adverts

trying to convince us car thieves are animals and that the car is sacred. Rape, it seems, does not warrant such a campaign, such are the twisted values of the profit motive and ownership of needless (destructive) luxuries.

So the narrow agenda lets the spotlight fall on individual failings and 'deviants' who don't obey the rule for whatever reason. Thus joy riding deaths are emphasised not because deaths alone occurred but because they stole the vehicle they then drove recklessly. If bad and lethal driving was the real issue there would be headlines every day, but as most happen at the hands of people who own their cars this is not thus such an evil crime. And if deaths alone were really the concern then where is the attention when someone dies due to legal drug addiction, when an old person dies of the cold, when a car hits a child, when a needed operation is not available? But these are failings of the system, like housing, like state violence, like pollution, like many other things, and focusing on them every time would be to note they are structural, a challenge to the system, and that can't be allowed, can it?

I. Borrows

### New FREEDOM PRESS Titles - JUST OUT -

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- Freedom to Go: after the motor age*  
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available from FREEDOM PRESS (post free inland)

### The Raven 19

The latest issue of *The Raven* number 19 'On Sociology' was dispatched last week to all subscribers. Unlike our easy-going approach to *Freedom* subscribers who are slow in renewing their subs, we just cannot afford to send *The Raven* when a subscription has lapsed.

## Deception Rules OK?

This information society we're supposed to be living in is just a euphemism for the de-skilled society. When 'knowing' is everything and doing not worth a fart, the essential purpose of language is not to inform but deceive. Employment in declining, devalued Britain is dominated by the office, the symbols industries and the religion of business. Here 'doing' is reduced to holding the telephone to mouth and ear, pressing keyboards and gazing into television screens, with the most 'popular' pathology being RSI - repetitive strain injury to the uninitiated.

Over the past couple of weeks the educational system for this make-believe world has had some of its pupils celebrating the Harvest Festival as an extra to the curriculum. The event occurs typically in country schools led by the chaplain and head, with teachers and kids in attendance, parading and pontificating around a couple of straw bales and a few barrows of tinned food purchased from 'your friendly supermarket'. Well, you'd reckon, in a school with acres of playing fields surrounded by open countryside, a few of the adults involved would be embarrassed by this nonsense. Not a bit of it. There is an air of self-satisfaction about the proceedings. The offerings are to go to the starving in Somalia and you can't send them a sample of dad's allotment vegetables or a few pounds of berries or mushrooms picked from hedgerow and field. Anyway, organising this bit is messy and involves effort.

The harvest festival as an authentic ritual celebrates the bounties of nature together with the collective efforts of people in providing food. Not long ago most people still engaged in the essentials for life - providing food, warmth, shelter and community conviviality. Now, even in the country, only a precious few do so. We are less and less involved in that

most essential and sacred of things - the provision of food. CONVENIENCE is the word most often used to conceal our lack of skill in finding, growing, preparing, eating and tasting food. The food processors, acting for us and exploiting our laziness, put excesses of salt, sugar, additives, etc., in our food, all wrapped in seductive advertising, to encourage over-consumption, over-weight and ill health. The modern harvest festival is just a celebration of self-destruction.

The difficulties we have in fashioning and sustaining relationships is another illustration of the de-skilled society. In the life cycle through birth, schooling, employment, retirement and death, those who support us and help to make sense of life matter less and less. The experience of personal stress, isolation and loneliness go with a society which depicts the citizen as a detached, hyperactive atom.

Reciprocity, a central notion in relationships and the basis of all social organisation, is not something you teach in school. Kids pick it up through play and example when these are part of their experience. Those who we admire privately, the fixers, know that the pleasure of giving are vastly richer than those of receiving. 'Successful' youngsters have no understanding of reciprocity. I know because countless young people pass through Botch-Up Farm, see its residents and associates toil and play, tell us how privileged we are and then opt for the gravy train until Paule tells them they too must sing for their supper. The suggestion surprises and even appalls them. Saddled with the welfarist perspective they were sure it was all for the taking without contributing anything.

Underlying this myopia is the manner in which schooling and employment fix us into either giving or receiving roles. The 'givers'

## Dorset Diary

There must, I feel, be some temptation amongst anarchists to look upon local government a little more kindly than its national counterpart. Whilst not exactly grass-root, it does lie a couple of branches down from the tree-tops and sometimes seems more concerned with our daily concerns than the United Nations. But we must be careful. Apart from anything else, 'opting out' is all the rage down here in Dorset and is one example of how, if we stray too far from the straight and narrow - so-called loony left councils - we will quickly be reminded of where the line is drawn over which we shall not tread. And then of course there was the poll tax.

Down here we can claim the dubious title of the lowest percentage of non payers in the national league table. No sooner had bills hit the mat than the direct debits were signed. One local chap who refused and who lives a stones-throw from where I'm sitting got a lot of hate mail and a good drubbing by the local 'true blue' rag. Individuals were easy to pick off by the snipers. Moreover, how right was Denis Pym to draw attention to the power-seeking local politician.

But I must say, Denis, down here in Poole things are so different. As from 27th October our caring sharing Poole council will be more user friendly to its customers, and cheaper too. Management consultants (non-elected) were brought in two years ago and, say council

gradually degenerate into arrogant insincere experts and the 'receivers' into surly helpless dependents. So CARE becomes just another legitimising label for de-skilling - the destruction of the reciprocity on which a viable community life depends. Deception rules and it's not okay.

Denis Pym

officers (non-elected), should have more say in council affairs. Big departments will be cut up into smaller 'business units', £240,000 will be saved. Committees will be streamlined and membership of these will be cut from twenty bobs to a mere fourteen. Re-vo-lu-tion! Aren't you jealous?

But we're not satisfied with these radical moves. Oh no, we've had a *real* revolution. In a breathtaking move of revolutionary audacity at the last local elections the burghers of Poole overthrew their Tory oppressors and ushered in a new era of ... liberal democracy.

Yes, comrades, a new age of abundant public transport (tell that to those in the rural areas), environmentalism (20mph speed limit to be introduced on some back streets hardly anyone uses has been introduced unanimously), and clean beaches (we're civilised, we throw our crap in the sea rather than leave it our where the tourists will see it). I await with bated breath what mind boggling proposals they will come up with next. More, more, more!

But then we discover some killjoy is trying to spoil the party by pointing out that our revolutionary traffic calmers got us to foot the £1,000 bill to take three of them separately to a national conference. Well, I for one think the mayor *needs* his six-seater limousine. Where's he to put his feet up surrounded by all that pressing paperwork? And it was cheaper this year: £955 compared with the extravagance of £987 and £983 in previous years, and who was responsible then? As councillor Ballam is quick to point out: "It's customary if the mayor is a delegate to take the mayoral car - the place was full of them ... when the Conservatives were in they did the same thing". Thank you councillor Ballam, you put it so nicely. Plus ça change ...

Neil Birrell

## OBITUARY Marion Harris

Our condolences and sympathy go to our old comrade in California, David Koven, for the loss of his companion of the last fourteen years.

Marion Harris was a strong woman who came to anarchist ideas late in life, but immediately saw their relevance and supported David in his anti-militarist stand against - most recently - the Gulf War.

She was a councillor in a large school in the San Francisco area, but took early retirement after the appointment of an over-zealous headmistress who demanded a morning assembly in which saluting the flag was obligatory.

Marion was also a very skilled needlewoman. She made for me a tablecloth which I thought was much too good to be subjected to the spilling of wine or coffee, and is now a banner which graces the Freedom Press book stall at our annual Bookfair.

Her deadly illness was, mercifully, relatively short, but she competently put her affairs in order and died peacefully under the care of comrade Koven - to whom, again, we send our condolences.

Philip Sansom

## Gunning for Ernie

Dear Editors, I said no more, but seeing as I have drawn so much of the 'fire' on this one and as I consider it the second most important question the movement faces, I hope the editors will allow me to indulge once again.

Stephen Cullen has certainly moved the argument along, but not I suspect in the way he thinks. His three points are easily dealt with and I shall do so in a moment, but I thank him for making it unambiguously clear that he is not a pacifist and accepts the principle of self-defence (I'll come back to Ernie). With this acceptance a landslide follows (as Ernie realises) and vain attempts to hide behind a concept of 'premeditation' won't wash.

Stephen will defend himself with his Browning. How long has he had it? Two hours? There's some premeditation. But as he points out, training is required for him to be effective. More premeditation there. But now it's not a Browning, it's a tank and we've got to acquire and use an anti-tank gun. Now it's an aircraft, we need surface-to-air heat-seeking missiles and a launcher. We're not going to pull these out of our pocket so we need a safe house and we ourselves are going to need false papers to help us avoid the surveillance operations mounted by the state. Now it's a crack group of SAS officers, now it's a torturer with attendant electrodes, now it's an American sea blockade. As Ernie suggests, if we rely on instincts we are dead. Who will we defend? Just ourselves? Our spouses/partners? Our family and friends? Our colleagues? The revolution? Wherever we draw the line it becomes arbitrary. I hear the response quite clearly: we *cannot* protect ourselves, the state 'holds all the cards'.

Well we can take a defeatist attitude, I accept that, but we can't write the future today. Here we come to Stephen's three points.

Number one is pure conjecture. If I'd said two years ago: 'The East German regime will be replaced in a couple of weeks time by a capitalist state in a 48-hour virtually bloodless revolution', the reply would probably have been: 'Prague? Hungary? Remember? Have another beer and shut up'. How many examples do you want of how the future turns out to be unpredictable and the strange occurs? We can use words like 'unlikely', but 'never' is too strong and unless we are rejecting violence on moral grounds, as Ernie does, there is no need to rule out any possible scenario for reasons of principle, so why do it? I don't know what the future holds and neither does Stephen.

Some 24,000 refutations of Stephen's second point turned up at the funeral of Andreas Baader. As I've said, a sizeable current of thought in the movement. I have personally known such people. They came to anarchism via the RAF. It seems to me that you might get there through *The Daily Telegraph* or the RAF, but if you're there you're there. Funny old world, isn't it?

Number three is a non sequitur. If you create a 'bigger, better, etc.' you create a 'bigger, better, etc.' Full stop. As it stands, the argument goes no further.

I've tried to highlight during this discussion the fact that I feel Stephen and I have much in common. I still do and think the matter is largely one of emphasis. Not so with Ernie's stance.

Ernie suggests we should 'suffer and die' with the innocent. Well, that's the first strategic theory I've come across which advocates suicide as a means.

Instead of letting a couple of thousand be slaughtered the pacifist position seems to feel this is not enough and wants more. And this, we're told, is realism! Stuff that for a game of soldiers. Non-aggressive I may be but a willing suicide just so we can have a few more deaths, no ta. "Is not the gun a means of wielding absolute power, absolutely corrupting those who use one?" The rhetoric falls flat on its face because the answer is 'No'. But I thought anarchism was about opposing authority not offering bloodstained doormats to it.

Neil Birrell

## Perplexed Steve

Dear Freedom,

I'm not quite sure what Ernie Crosswell means when he mentions me and my gun (letters, 3rd October 1992), but he seems to be implying that I'm one of the 'tactical violence' people. Of course I am not part of that group, as my letters and articles have shown. The Browning pistol remark, Ernie, was a bit of light-hearted banter between myself and Neil Birrell in the debate on violence. And no, I don't own a pistol!

Steve Cullen

## Anarchist Summer School 1993

Our old comrade Bobby Lynn writes to us from Glasgow to tell us about the meeting held there on 27th August to discuss the possibility of holding an Anarchist Summer School at Glasgow in 1993. Support has come from AK Distribution, the Free University Network, the local Class War, and

Counter Information, and the discussion has covered speakers, venue, accommodation and fund raising and further meetings are planned.

Bobby Lynn recalls the Anarchist Summer Schools held in the 1940s and 1950s, and writes that "to my knowledge there has never been a Summer School held in this area. Although I have attended several Summer Schools in the past the local groups always organised it. Therefore I don't have any experience in organising a school. Therefore I'm sure you will appreciate I'll need all the help I can get."

Bobby would like to hear from anyone interested, but especially from anyone who remembers the old Summer Schools. He recalls that "at one time Glasgow Anarchist Group was one of the biggest and most vociferous groups in the country; and a fair percent was Stirner-oriented but did not classify themselves as individualists."

"I may speak myself on the 'Philosophy of Egoism' (let me hasten to say in parenthesis). I can fuse egoism with syndicalism (note I did not say 'reconcile' as I believe they are complementary). I know Kropotkin criticised Stirner in his *Modern Science and Anarchism*. However, to me mutual aid and egoism are not hostile for those who practice mutual aid to the widest extent practicable are in fact the best or, if you like, the most astute egoists."

Anyone interested should write to: Robert Lynn, 151 Gallowgate, Glasgow G1 5AX.

Please keep  
sending in your  
letters and  
donations

# ALL ABOUT SOCIOLOGY

## 1.

Dear Editors,  
How curious that you should choose as a reviewer for *The Raven* number 18 a man whose hostility to the social sciences is common knowledge among readers of your paper. Bamford's sneers at Colin Ward will probably be treated by that worthy gentleman with contemptuous silence, but the attempt to smear the whole discipline of anthropology with a fascist tag, based on the all too likely development of a new fascism in Europe, will really not do. After all, at least one of your regular contributors is a known supporter of a psychologist with a fervent belief in 'racial' differences in intelligence, but this is not held to invalidate the whole of psychology, or indeed the whole of anarchism as a political theory.

In the years that I have been picking up and reading *Freedom* in London I have noticed a growing tendency to 'know nothingism' among some of your contributors, and Brian Bamford seems to be a prime example. Presumably he would wish us to drop all attempts, flawed or not, at unbiased investigation and return to the sort of adrenalin fuelled certainty of truth we currently see in the Balkans, or that has caused so much misery here since Margaret Thatcher decided that conviction was more important than any attempt to establish facts.

It is depressing to see your paper giving space to this sort of knee-jerk

mindlessness. The value of Brian Bamford's review can be accurately gauged by his dismissal of Angus Calder's survey of governmental corruption as "a kind of travelogue". Good grief, could you not ensure that your reviewers learn to read!

Eric Bridgewood

## 2. The Reviewer Replies

Dear *Freedom*,  
Eric Bridgewood is quite right to tell us that convictions are a curse when applied to discovering facts, or indeed science. That was the point I was trying to make in my *Raven* 18 review. The pursuit of truth, when it is wholehearted, ought to be disinterested. Alas, in the social sciences this is rarely the case. Consequently an anthropologist or a sociologist who sets out to find anarchistic tendencies, or racism, or sexism, or discrimination in society, will undoubtedly find it. But this is surely not what Mr Bridgewood would call "unbiased investigation", it is hardly scientific. Such investigations are biased from the outset and no amount of scientific jargon can disguise this. The approach is not only 'flawed' but in fundamental error.

Mr Bridgewood calls me "a man whose hostility to the social sciences is common knowledge among readers". He could hardly give me a greater compliment! Indeed, I am deeply sceptical of the

claims of many social scientists, who are often rather thinly disguised campaigners for one cause or another, merely cobbling together suitable evidence to fit their own pet views and prejudices. My review was designed to show that there are disputes within the social sciences about these issues.

It's not just, however, the establishment of facts which is important to social science as Mr Bridgewood seems to imply. After all, astrology in a sense is based on facts insofar as it is rooted in identifying the actual position of the stars in relation to each other. But most of us would not regard the claims of astrologers as being relevant to these facts. The claims of many sociologists, anthropologists and other social scientists are often, I suspect, equally irrelevant to the facts with which they juggle. Interpretation, explanation and recognition of the significance of the facts, using sceptical scientific methods, is clearly vital to our understanding.

What seems to fundamentally distinguish me from Eric Bridgewood is that whereas I am anxious about the entrenched conviction politics of the social scientists themselves, he is contemptuous of the human race in general. To the superior social scientist human behaviour is irrational or just plain daft; Mr Bridgewood invites us to look at the Balkans. Nothing could be more absurd than the "adrenalin fuelled certainty of truth" of many men of science, who research the human race as if they were so many cultural idiots.

To counter these 'know-it-all's' of conviction social science we need to question their methods, as is happening, inspired no doubt by Paul Feyerabend, the 'anarchist epistemologist', and the ethnomethodologists.

Brian Bamford

## 3. The Editor Replies

Dear Editors,  
Perhaps as the editor responsible I might be permitted to comment on Brian Bamford's predictably hostile reaction to the recent anthropological issue of *The Raven* (*Freedom*, 8th August 1992). This is the sort of acidulous disparagement one normally expects from Norman Stone but which I am surprised to find in

an anarchist newspaper about a journal from the same stable. However, a man who feels, as I noted in January this year, that society is an irrelevance in sociology, who habitually discounts the effects of social structures on individual behaviour, and who supports the inegalitarian property owning ideology of people like Nozick, could not be expected to view Colin Ward, Harold Barclay or a traditional sociologist and communist anarchist like myself with much enthusiasm.

We could, however, have expected him to read the material he is reviewing and pay some attention to its content. Angus Calder's journey for example. As Bamford says, it was financed as a poetry study. What we printed in *The Raven* number 18, though, was primarily about the corrupting effects of power, and the manner in which Africans were resisting or avoiding, succumbing to or exploiting, centralised power in the post-colonial world. Something rather more than, to use Bamford's dismissive phrase, "a kind of travelogue". I am forced to wonder whether he read the piece at all.

The sarcasm at the expense of Colin Ward is equally misplaced. We have only two choices. Either we look to the libertarian and anarchist elements in our society and seek to develop them which gives us a little, if distant, hope. Or we take refuge in the old nineteenth century fantasy of the *levee en masse*, unlikely in itself and even more unlikely to result in the sort of society anarchists want to see. At least the sort of anarchists I know. I can't speak for Mr Bamford's friends. If the result is then what Bamford chooses to deride as 'respectable anarchism' that is somewhat preferable to futile revolutionary gestures. I'm not sure though that his adjective is justifiable. The past files of *Anarchy* and Colin Ward's own books demonstrate clearly that such an approach can be profoundly subversive and certainly does more to create real change than waiting for Essex Man and Woman to institute the free society. The appalling world in which we now live is nevertheless a fraction better because Colin Ward has lived and written as he has. I doubt that Bamford's snide disdain will do much to help any of us.

Much the same sort of bile is directed at Harold Barclay who is sniffily criticised because anthropology as a discipline does not have all the answers to the problems of the human condition and because of obvious associations with

colonial governments and multinational companies. For this apparently he would dismiss the entire discipline. Of course any knowledge is available for abuse as well as use. Should Galileo have eschewed Copernicus and returned to the Aristotelian bosom of Mother Church because his work would ultimately lead to the nuclear bomb? If it comes to that, should Evans-Pritchard's study of the Nuer be kept out of print because anarchists read it to see how stateless societies really worked? Did the dubious motives of funding agencies always distort findings? Did the studies always benefit the powers that be? Surely this has to be determined in each individual case, not assumed at the outset as an incontrovertible fact? And if he really thinks that anthropologists do not attempt to study "how natives use their own conceptions and seek to study the social rules and how people apply themselves to these rules" then I'm sure that either Harold Barclay, Ruth Finnegan, or myself if it comes to that, would be happy to send him a reading list. If he wishes to play with the grown-ups then he ought to do his homework first. Certainly Mr Bamford seems strangely unwilling (particularly curious in view of his espousal of ethnomethodology) to allow any autonomy to the anthropologist actually doing the work.

Quoting Edward Said, Jerome Mintz and (God help us) Malcolm Muggeridge out of context may show up some weaknesses in some work but no more invalidates a whole discipline than the abuse of nitrates by East Anglian farmers invalidates the practice of farming. Bamford's whole 'review feature' comes pretty close to condemning the pursuit of any kind of knowledge because subjective judgement enters at some point and because it is not financed by the researcher concerned from his own smallholding. This may be a politically correct post-modernist position but is not going to do much to improve the human condition, or in fact give *Freedom* readers a true indication of whether *The Raven* number 18 is worth their attention.

John Pilgrim

JOIN THE DEBATE  
KEEP SENDING  
YOUR LETTERS!

## The Middle Class

Dear Editors,  
Peter Neville's review of *The Rebel's New Clothes* by Claudia (*Freedom*, 25th July) misses the point of what she is saying. Claudia is not "talking about her rejection of her bourgeois middle class origins". Nor is she "after" something only "she does not seem to know what it is". It is not true that she "has not yet found herself or a cause to identify with". On the contrary, *The Rebel's New Clothes* is (partly) about the fact that Claudia found two causes, firstly Marxism and then anarchism, and has rejected them both.

Rather than confront what Claudia said Neville focuses on the red herring of Claudia's supposed bourgeois origins. It can hardly be held against someone that they passed a scholarship at the age of ten or eleven and therefore went to an expensive school. Nor is early academic success an excuse for ignoring what someone says and instead attacking who they (supposedly) are. Anyone who wants to read what Claudia has to say about the middle class presence in the

Marxist and anarchist movements should read her booklet.

At the heart of Neville's misunderstanding is his incorrect view of the middle class. What he calls the middle class is really only the upper middle class and this results in his denying the existence of the rest of the middle class, soft cops like teachers, doctors, social workers and so on. Neville claims that "teachers, social workers and the like ... are merely an educated semi-professionalised part of the working class" but these people have power over others by the jobs they do and therefore are not working class.

The significance of Neville's denial of the existence of the middle class is greater than may initially appear. If Marx had been right in dividing society into bourgeois and proletariat then the vast numerical superiority of the working class would long ago have led to the overthrow of capitalism (despite the fact that Marx's "immiseration of the proletariat" is also a myth). The existence of the middle class totally changes the balance of forces, a vital point to those of us interested in social change. We should be analysing the significance of the middle class in society and the anarchist movement, not denying their existence. In the meantime the truth about the existence of the middle class is popping out all over the place. Not just in Claudia's *The Rebel's New Clothes* but also in Andy and Mark Anderson's *Why the Revolutionaries Have Failed* and Class War's *Unfinished Business*, both presumably available from the Freedom Press Bookshop.

I have to add something about Neville's attitude to women. Anarchism, which is anti-power, should have a double appeal to women, yet the anarchist movement is male dominated. Rather than instruct women to join the main anarchist movement (that is, the male dominated one), as Neville does, we should try and find out why women don't come along to our meetings, write for our papers and so on.

Mo  
London N1

## Greening the 'Greens'

Dear *Freedom*  
Your editorial on the 'Party Conference Silly Season' accepts without question the media's attempts to destroy the Green Party by ridicule. What has in fact happened is far more encouraging.

For years, there have been successive attempts by the 'hierarchists' (a minority among the activists) to take over control of the Party from the libertarian and anarchist activists who have had the major influence on its policy development, constitution and organisation. (Conference is the ultimate power in the national-level party, and local parties are autonomous.)

These internal conflicts have inevitably harmed the Party and absorbed a lot of energy and effort, but a major effort last year by the authoritarians, misusing a provision in the constitution for proxy voting designed to spread democracy as far as possible out to the 'grassroots' members, forced through a motion for constitutional reform effectively putting power into the hands of a small executive, which then proceeded to upset most of the activists.

However, since then all the holes in their thinking on the constitution have been shown up, and it has proved to be so disastrous that the principal protagonists have given up, and at this latest conference motions were passed

with substantial majorities to rectify some of the worst faults. The libertarians are much encouraged.

As to membership: the 15% vote in the 1989 Euro elections encouraged a growth of membership from people who approved the Green Party's emphasis on the environment, but had not followed its reasoning that the economy, society and environment were intimately inter-dependent, and that to save the environment we need to bring about drastic changes toward equitable distribution of the world's resources, social justice and devolution of power.

This message was, of course, too strong for most of the new members (though of course not strong enough to satisfy most anarchists!), who therefore dropped away again, leaving the Party now about as strong as shortly before the Euro elections (and the year of environmental disasters!)

Capitalism is on its last legs - but the Green Party is developing and offering a workable alternative which, while not fully anarchist, is at least libertarian and if adopted could sow the ground for an evolution toward the anarchist society. Of course, there are still very powerful vested capitalist interests ranged against it; but as the social and environmental crises increase, their position becomes

weaker and, hopefully, the support for the Green Party will grow - as the situation deteriorates, the alternative to a transition such as is offered by the Green Party hardly bears contemplating.

Brian Leslie  
Tunbridge Wells

## DONATIONS

18th September - 8th October

### Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund

Cambridge JPH £5, Slough EFC £10, Fareham JB £3, London DR £3.50, Wolverhampton JL £2, Beckenham DP £10, Dublin JCI £1.50.

Total = £35.00  
1992 total to date = £1,257.60

### Freedom Press Overheads Fund

DW £2.50, Manchester PE £1, London DR £5, Wolverhampton JL £2, Beckenham DP £10, Bristol EL £1.50, Liverpool RE £1.50, Belper JS £1.15.

Total = £24.65  
1992 total to date = £1,366.55

### Raven Deficit Fund

Westbury JSD £1.10, London HS £50.

Total = £51.10  
1992 total to date = £773.60

## On Freedom of Speech

Dear Editors,  
The September 19th issue of *Freedom* was, I thought, exceptionally good. The Johnny Yen article on anti-fascism and freedom of speech (*Freedom*, 22nd August) didn't go down very well with me and some of our readers here, so the reply by Stephen Cullen ('Liberal Bourgeois Freedoms', 19th September) was welcomed in no uncertain terms. One of my mates from afar wrote a similar 'line' to me and then again last week, declaring that SC was "one of us". And he's no stranger to anti-fascist demonstrations either, having been carted off a few times by the police in the '60s and '70s, but has always had reservations about banning.

JL  
Wolverhampton



# MEETINGS

## Anarchist Forum

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

### 1992/1993 MEETINGS

- 16th October - General discussion
- 23rd October - 'Women in Society' (speaker: Mary Quintana)
- 30th October - General discussion
- 6th November - 'Work' (speaker George Walford)
- 13th November - General discussion
- 20th November - 'A Retiring Person' (speaker Peter Neville)
- 27th November - 'Prison in an Anarchist Society' (speaker Peter Lumsden)
- 4th December - General discussion
- 11th December - 'Exploiting the State' (speaker Andrew Lainton)
- 8th January - 'An Anarchist Daily' (speaker John Rety)
- 15th January - General discussion
- 22nd January - 'Whiteway And On' (speaker Michael Murray)
- 29th January - General discussion
- 5th February - 'Anarchism and Feminism' (speaker Lisa Bendall)

Meeting slots still available until 26th March 1993 and from 23rd April to 9th July 1993

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.

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## History Workshop 26

History Workshop 26 will be held on 6th, 7th and 8th November 1992 at the University of Northumbria (formerly Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic). As usual there will be a workshop on anarchism. This year's programme is as follows:

- *Heiner Becker* - *Johann Most and Emma Goldman*
- *Phil Ruff* - *'Peter the Painter' and the Latvian Anarchist Movement in Exile, 1906-1914*
- *Jeremy Jennings* - *Libertarians and the Fight Against Bolshevism in France, 1920-1940*
- *Les Prince* - *Isocracy: Organising Without Leaders*
- *Zeb Korycinska* - *Freedom to Learn with Home Education*
- *Gideon Kossoff* - *The American Green Movement*

Registration fees: Waged (with institutional support) £25, Waged £15, Unwaged £5.

All registrations (cheques payable to TYNESIDE HISTORY WORKSHOP) should be sent and inquiries made to:

**History Workshop 26**  
4 Cloth Market, Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 1EA

## REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISM: THE WAY FORWARD

Thursday 22nd October  
at 7.30pm

**Marchmont Centre**  
Marchmont Street, London WC1  
(nearest tube Russell Square)

Convened by the Anarchist Communist Federation (London). For further info from ACF write c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

## The London Greenpeace Fayre

Saturday 31st October  
11am to 9pm

### Conway Hall

Red Lion Square, London WC1  
(nearest tube Holborn)

For the fifth great year London Greenpeace presents a day for a world without industrial exploitation or pollution, without money, borders, governments or armies, without oppression of people or animals, without the destruction of nature. For freedom and sharing.

Stalls, videos, music & cabaret,  
vegan food, crèche, discussions

## Mass Gathering at Twyford Down

3rd and 4th November  
Music - Speakers - Tours of Downs  
- Workshops -

## Red Rambles

A programme of free walks in the White Peak for Greens, Socialists, Libertarians and Anarchists.

- **Sunday 10th January** - Wirksworth to Alport Heights. Meet at Wirksworth Market Place at 1pm. Length 4 miles.
- **Sunday 7th February** - Hidden Valley Walk. Meet at 1pm at Dale End (half a mile west of Elton). Length 4 miles.
- **Sunday 7th March** - Derbyshire 'Edges'. Meet at 11am at the National Trust Car Park (next to Robin Hood pub on A619 Baslow to Chesterfield road). Length 8 miles.

Telephone for further details:  
**0773-827513**

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.....Postcode.....

## FREEDOM CONTACTS

### Sectional Editors

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

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

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