

anarchist fortnightly Freedom

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FIFTY PENCE

"We anarchists have not found the way to replace the *disciplines* imposed by authority with a *discipline* inspired by freedom"

Anon

The gloom that won't go away in 1993 without direct action by the victims

Only the government (understandably) and those who naively believe that you can 'talk up confidence' in the capitalist economy, believe that in 1993 the up-turn is round the corner. However, unlike previous years they are telling us that the corner in question is at the end of a long road which might take most of 1993 to get there!

In the meantime all the pundits are forecasting more unemployment. The last monthly increase was in the 40,000s and predictably (as we quoted the Minister on another such record monthly figure) she could only tell the House that the figures were "disappointing".

Even assuming that consumption and exports remain unchanged, the fact is that in seeking to maximise profits employers will replace people by machines wherever possible. It all

started in industry. The North suffered and the South prospered. The yuppies were coining it; Thatcher's entrepreneurs couldn't make it fast enough, and the banks falling over backwards to lend and the plastic card holders to spend, and property prices went up and up so much so that home owners were in fact becoming amateur property dealers: selling up and buying as fast as inflation escalated. Many of

Pawnbroking is one of Britain's few growth industries ... Most transactions involve jewellery ...

As the recession drags on, an increasing number of people are finding it impossible to redeem pledges

The Independent (December 1992)

Thatcher's little capitalist property-owning democrats have now come unstuck and are in trouble, and according to all reports are taking their medicine not as one would have expected from Thatcher's entrepreneurs. They are wingeing and cadging, some are committing suicide, and last but not least, they are pawning the family silver.

Perhaps at long last the so-called white-collar workers, the professionals and others in that category who thought they had a job for life; who looked upon the unemployed 'unskilled' (is a farm worker less skilled than a copy typist?) as lazy and, in Tebbit's words, should get on their bikes - they are now feeling the draught, and it has only just started. In 1993 it will increase at a pace that will be reflected throughout the capitalist economy. The banks, the insurance companies, estate agents, you name them: all paper-producing useless parasites on society - but which are at the heart of the capitalist system - are shedding jobs in thousands every week and the salary-slaves who thought these jobs were for life are wondering what has hit them. Answer? The capitalist system they so admired. For a system that is only geared to profits then to that end the lives of human beings, and families, are expendable.

When will all who now depend on someone else for their living realise that we are all in the same boat

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DO YOU WANT A RAILWAY SERVICE? Then Resist Privatisation!

With all its faults and shortcomings the rail network today is efficiency compared with what one could expect if the government's crazy plan to privatise it, as revealed in the recently issued White Paper, is carried through. we will not repeat what we wrote in *Freedom* a year ago.* Actually we don't have to since we have now been joined by top brass in industry, by top level among the railway hierarchy, and big names and back-benchers in the Tory ranks!

Starting with the most significant of this bunch it must surely be Sir Bob Reid, British Rail's Chairman, appointed only two years ago (from being Chairman of Shell - and one can therefore assume that he was the government's man for *privatisation*). He has now said that he has no confidence in the government's plan. He told the BBC that he saw the

likelihood of disruption and closures in the coming years but little benefit to passengers or the nation.

Whether Mr McGregor (the current Minister of Transport - he was something else last year!) will take heed is not clear. However, if he wants an excuse for a u-turn a letter writer in *The Guardian* tells him how:

"Michael Heseltine should not resign, we are told, because he was only following the advice given him by British Coal. This news that ministers follow the advice of nationalised industries is heart-warming. I look forward to the announcement that they propose to take the advice of Sir Bob Reid and abandon railway privatisation forthwith."

The Tory chorus against privatisation now includes Lord Whitelaw, the cuddly old waffling Tory guru, Lord Ridley who before being dispatched to the Lords was instrumental in privatising one of our public services, and the Conservative-dominated committee of back-benchers, the 'influential' Commons Transport

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* 'When will the government stop playing at trains' (*Freedom*, 25th January 1992). Copies still available at 80p post free.

Have you replied?

With all copies of the last issue of *Freedom* we included our Reader Survey 1992 form. We want to produce a more interesting and effective *Freedom*, so if you have not completed and returned the form please do so now. Your views could well help us to make improvements to our paper.

And if your subscription was due last month or in November and you haven't yet renewed, please do so now. Without your subscription *Freedom* could not be published.

As we write Israel's 412 Palestinian deportees have spent fourteen days in Lebanese no-man's land with neither the Lebanese nor the Israeli governments being willing to allow even the International Red Cross to bring food, water and fuel to them. World opinion has so far had very little influence on either government: the Lebanese because they don't want to let the Israelis off the hook, and the so-called Labour Israeli government feels it cannot lose face with the Israeli extremists.

But compared with the more than six years that Mordechai Vanunu has been held in solitary confinement in a 10ft x 7ft cell in an Israeli prison, their situation is almost a holiday. They are many to keep up their spirits; he is alone. They are out in the open, even though it's cold; he is in a 10ft x 7ft cell with only a small window. They keep up their morale because they are 400 committed people; he is completely isolated, only being allowed a half-hour visit every fortnight by members of his family.

Apart from editorials in *The Times* (28th November) and *Sunday Times* (27th December) very little publicity has been given to this outrageous treatment by the Israelis.

Mordechai's 'crime' for which he was given an eighteen-year prison sentence was for having told the world that Israel was operating a secret nuclear weapons plant in Dimona in the Negev, which he confirmed with photographs he took of the secret interior of Dimona, where he had been working for nine years. *The Sunday Times* published his eye-witness account of Dimona's military purpose, and estimated that having amassed "between 100 and 200 nuclear weapons of an extremely advanced design" Israel has become the "world's sixth biggest nuclear power".

Mordechai was lured to Rome from London and there abducted by the Israeli secret police,

The gloom that won't go away in 1993

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whether we are paid with a pay packet or a monthly cheque; whether it is called a wage, a salary or a fee? Somebody is employing us with the intention of making extra money from our services. Not surprising, therefore, that if there is a cheaper alternative (computer, robot, cheaper labour) our services may no longer be required.

Nothing in this capitalist society will change until these basic facts are understood and REJECTED! And once this happens then the four million and more people and their families in this country who are now dependent on state hand-outs will not accept to be deprived of the possibility of contributing to the country's prosperity and in return their entitlement to the basic human needs: food, shelter and clothing. There are millions of people in the prosperous, privileged countries of the capitalist world who are denied these basic needs and, in a civilised society, basic rights.

The political parties, even if they had the will to redress the balance, never have the power. For the poor and the under-privileged their power is in the streets. We may yet learn a few lessons from the emerging third world masses!

Middle class victims of the recession are turning to charities which give money for clothing and furniture, the biggest grant-making body says today. The 'new poor' are heaping fresh and impossible demands on charities ... The association last week gave £100 for a school uniform to a mother of three whose husband hanged himself after his small business went into liquidation. *The Guardian* (23rd November 1992) (Social Services Correspondent)

While protesting on behalf of Israel's 412 deportees Remember Israel's Forgotten Prisoner!

Mosad, and eventually charged with being "a traitor, a spy and purveyor of official secrets" in spite of the fact that no payment was asked nor received for his revelations, and he was a spy for no 'enemy power' but simply wanted the world to know. Actually he was perhaps a little naive to imagine that neither Britain nor Israel's paymaster, the USA, didn't know

what was going on. It is more than probable that in a few years time all will be revealed: that the USA provided the know-how and the funds for work to proceed at Dimona!

In the meantime Mordechai Vanunu could spend another twelve years (if he survives) in conditions to which no human being should be subjected in our day and age.

The Campaign to Free Vanunu (6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1, tel: 071-387 5096) can supply a petition form calling "upon the people of Israel and their government to release Mordechai Vanunu from prison" which we feel should be supported widely if only to shame the present Israeli government

which is a coalition of the Labour Party and the Far Left.

But we suggest that the campaign organisers should send photocopies of the petition to Israel's paymaster as well.

As we go to press the USA airforce has shot down an Iraqi plane flying over its own territory, which has however been put out of bounds by the USA, just as now for less humanitarian reasons than meet the eye they are lording it in Somalia and how soon will it be before they do the same in Yugoslavia? But in spite of the United Nations having ruled that Israeli occupation in the late '60s of the Gaza, the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the strip in the South of Lebanon was illegal, what has the USA done about it? Nothing. Compare this inactivity for the 'rule of law' over the past 25 years with the haste with which they threw in 100,000 military to 'free' Kuwait - a 'nation state' as artificial as is the state of Israel.



This FREEDOM PRESS title as well as dealing with the historical responsibilities of the British in the Middle East has a section on the first year of the New State of Israel and a postscript (1989) on the New Master Race in Palestine and the Intifada. Valuable source material for a better understanding of the present situation. 104 pages, £1.95 (post-free inland).

An Observation on Organisation

Despite the frequency that such observations are made, it is still uplifting when some aspect of life, be it social or economic, is reported that reflects or supports the 'anarchist' way of doing things. This is perhaps especially true when the case so reported involves non-anarchists.

One recent example which came to my attention was the organisation/administration of the local Folk Music / Song Club, which holds a weekly gathering and a monthly 'guest' evening in the upstairs room of a local public house. The club publishes a newsletter which includes a page giving details of how the club is run. I quote:

"There is no formal committee or any form of membership and there are no admission charges - except on guest nights. We have occasional planning meetings (arranged a few weeks ahead) and hope that all regular attenders will come and make their thoughts known. From these we decide on future guests and the future activities of the club."

The newsletter then goes on to list the names of people presently responsible for carrying out certain tasks such as publicity, distributing posters, 'MC'ing the evenings, etc. The

present group of people involved in this comprise individuals from varying backgrounds including one policeman, yet all act as far as the club is concerned in a co-operative, voluntaristic, social, non-bureaucratic, indeed 'anarchistic' fashion. However, none to my knowledge has the least familiarity with anarchist or anarchist ideas of doing things. It is just normal and natural for them to organise their club in this way.

Why is it that people can so organise this and similar aspects of their social and community lives, yet are content to be bossed, exploited, dominated, allowed no freedom, no power to make their own choices in their economic and political lives?

Perhaps part of the answer is that in such social areas of life there is little or none of power-relationships, of striving after money and livelihoods, thus enabling people to relax - and become for a while at least co-operative, sharing and caring in a way excluded from other areas of life.

JPS

DO YOU WANT A RAILWAY SERVICE? Then Resist Privatisation!

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Committee is, according to Christian Wolman of *The Independent*:

"taking the unusual step of issuing an interim report early in the New Year because the evidence it has been given over the past two months has been so overwhelmingly critical of the government proposals."

The Confederation of British Industry is obviously not opposed to privatisation but is of the opinion that the government's proposals lack clarity and detail. "Far from encouraging the private sector interest, there is a danger that privatisation will be a blueprint for bureaucracy."

We need hardly say that for anarchists such 'allies' fill us with as much suspicion as to their motives as do the government's spokesmen.

After all, none have said they are not in favour of privatisation. When they show concern that the government's proposals seem to them to be "a blueprint for bureaucracy" it is quite clear to us that they fear the privateers are not being offered a free hand to mangle further what is left of our railway network, and just to enjoy the profitable routes and the railway property which would be up for grabs (as it is, British Rail has been selling off these assets to keep going as the government cuts down on rail finance and increases that for roads).

What, in our opinion, makes the whole privatisation idea as more than sheer political dogma: it is lunacy that it

coincides with the eventual operation of the Channel Tunnel. In a non-capitalist economy it is surely obvious that all continental freight would automatically use the tunnel. All long distance freight whether within this country or the Continent would use rail transport. But already (even before the tunnel) rail freight charges are escalating and more and more goods and materials are being transferred to the already congested roads. Imagine, some 210,000 tons of cement on rail is now being transferred to road transport! But it would put at risk

all the 100 million tons of freight now handled by British Rail.

The railways are a public service and should not be expected to operate as a profitable service in money terms. For instance, Inter-City services have lost some £55 million due to London commuters losing their jobs and therefore not travelling. If a factory loses orders it will cut down its production, but how do you deal with those rail services which lose 10% to 20% of their travellers due to the recession? You still have to run the trains for the other 80%. That's what is called a public service! The least the supine Labour Opposition could do is declare that if re-elected next time they would re-nationalise the railways. But they haven't so far.

What this British Tycoon would do to British Rail

Bermuda-based shipping group Sea Containers has firm ideas on how it would run a large slice of Network SouthEast ...

The company hopes to take over all services between London and the South Coast towns of Weymouth, Portsmouth, Brighton and Eastbourne.

Company chief James Sherwood says news that the region is set to make a £55 million loss this year will not change his mind. "I hope the recession will be over by the time privatisation begins."

He says the company would invest about £100 million over the first three years if granted a 60-year franchise, terminable by the government at 10-year intervals.

The company wants to operate track and signals maintenance, which it believes

could save £50 million a year. It also plans to introduce double-decker trains and re-schedule drivers' hours, claiming that only two-sevenths of their time is spent on a train.

Ominously for rural passengers, Mr Sherwood says that without government subsidies "some unproductive services like the North Downs line could be cut. But 95% of the network would be left intact."

"Punctuality would be a high priority. I am certain we could make trains run on time." (*Sunday Express*, 13th December 1992)

There are many more threats to services in these proposals than the only one suggested by the *Sunday Express* reporter.

FREEDOM'S READERSHIP SURVEY – First Impressions

Even a *Freedom Readership Survey 1992* must allow for a proportion of readers who do not treat our enquiry seriously. We also must make allowances for some of our jaded comrades who say that *Freedom* is 'old hat', as well as others, well-known to us, who spend more time denouncing *Freedom* and Freedom Press in the name of 'anarchism' and direct action, and the class war, than getting on with making anarchist propaganda. Nevertheless, the response to our readership survey has been very encouraging and very useful. This obviously can only be a preliminary analysis of the replies received at the time of writing and is based on the first 100 received within a fortnight of the actual dispatch of the 12th December issue of *Freedom*.

First a few details as to the age group and sex of our readers who have replied:

table 1

age group	19-40	41-60	61-100	TOTAL
replies	42	30	28	100
employed*	26(e)	18(e) 6(s)	7(e) 3(p)	57
unemployed**	16(u)	5(u) 1(r)	2(u) 16(r)	43

* (e) = employed, (s) = self-employed, (p) = part-time

** (u) = unemployed, (r) = retired

It was disappointing, but perhaps not surprising, that of the 100 replies only five came from women readers. We are sure this falsifies the actual readership of *Freedom*. We imagine that a large proportion of the male respondents have a companion who is a reader of *Freedom*, and just happens not to be the one who completes the survey form. Nevertheless, there are readers who say that *Freedom* makes no effort to attract women readers. Anarchism is not sexist, whatever some anarchist men may be. Are there no women who are sexist?

As to the political preferences and interests of *Freedom's* readers, an overwhelming majority declared themselves to be anarchists.

table 2

age group	19-40	41-60	61-100	TOTAL
total*	42	30	28	100
anarchist	27	29	23	79
other	15	1	5	21
no label	11	–	6	17
Anarchist-communist	10	7	4	21
Green-anarchist	10	–	4	14
Anarchist-pacifist	3	–	4	7
Anarcho-syndicalist	3	7	2	12
Individualist	2	3	8	13

The 'independents' covered a wide range of definitions which they supplied, ranging from "romantic utopian" and "struggling socialist" to "confused idealist". There were also "civil libertarians" and one "pragmatic anarchist" who is also a "pacifist"! Obviously even anarchists can be 'mixed-up kids'!

And what does our readership sample do, employed or self-employed?

table 3

Trade or profession

age group	professional	manual	retired/UB40	TOTAL
20-40	19	7	16	42
41-60	19	5	6	30
61-70	7 2(p)	1(p)	18	28
TOTAL	47	13	40	100

The survey so far also shows that very few *Freedom* readers can be included in the category of manual workers, and of these there are gardeners, a carpenter, postal workers, and a cleaner and we also have a young reader in Denmark who is a shunter on the railways there, but otherwise no factory workers. Perhaps for anarchists working in a factory is wage slavery in tooth and claw?

The overwhelming response comes from 'professionals', mainly in teaching at all levels from schoolteacher to professor with many interesting jobs in between such as "art teacher", "language teacher", "tech college lecturer" and librarians galore, journalists, writers, an architect and a clinical psychologist as well as a sociologist, an osteopath and even a "bank inspector" (who is probably being kept very busy these days!).

We are not surprised by this apparent imbalance in our readership. Is it a fault of presentation in *Freedom* as suggested by some readers who would like to see a *Class War* type *Freedom* where the headlines, the illustrations and the extravagant language will sell the paper? We shall deal later with this important question, but obviously our critics must accept the fact that we are just another group producing anarchist propaganda as we see it and hope it will reach thinking people and may even help to influence their views about their own lives, and perhaps as a result their attitude to social problems.

In the survey we asked readers to tell us how many people read their copy of *Freedom*.

table 4

How many readers of your copy of Freedom?

age group	TOTAL	self	self & 1	self & 2	self & 3+	+ readers
20-40	42	26	5	5	6	35
41-60	30	15	6	5	4	30
61-100	28	13	7	–	8	33
TOTAL	100	54	18	10	18	98

Thanks to 46 of the first 100 readers who have replied, it might seem that there are two readers for every copy of *Freedom* sold – quite apart from the library subscriptions which are difficult to estimate.

We then asked reader two questions:

table 5

Have you introduced new readers to Freedom?

Age group	none	yes	tried/failed	TOTAL
20-40	20	19	3	42
41-60	14	12	4	30
61-100	10	16	2	28
TOTAL	44	47	9	100

Do you make anarchist propaganda?

Age group	no	yes	TOTAL
20-40	19	23	42
41-60	4	26	30
61-100	9	19	28
TOTAL	32	68	100

Thanks to the 'oldies' more than half our sample have, or have tried, to introduce *Freedom* to new readers. It is also encouraging to see that apart from the 20-30 age group the others overwhelmingly make anarchist propaganda by whatever means are available to them: talking, writing, joining local demonstrations. As one woman comrade puts it: "by talking of anarchism to anyone who will listen, declaring myself anarchist, passing anarchist papers to them". Some write letters to the local press. A number have mentioned "the way I live", in other words, by example, and in this writer's opinion 'anarchism by example' can be a very valuable form of propaganda. Obviously one can also be written off as an eccentric or crank in some quarters.

We are obviously most interested to know how effective our propaganda is for the cause of anarchism. The response was on the whole not encouraging: at the lower end ranging from "poor" (from a well-known contributor to *Freedom* in Slough who shall remain nameless!) to the "dreadful" from Chris, a 40-year old teacher who has hardly a good word to say for *Freedom* – articles are "predictable", "superficial" and "not worth reading". As for the headline story, "it's always an incredibly boring moan about capitalism". Obviously we shall be losing Chris as a subscriber. Too bad!

table 6

How successful do you think Freedom is for anarchist propaganda?

age group	not at all	not very	fairly good	good	no view	TOTAL
20-40	3	12	9	10	8	42
41-60	3	10	4	9	4	30
61-100	3	6	6	7	6	28
TOTAL	9	28	19	26	18	100

Some 10 declared anarchists out of the 42 in the 20-40 age group who expressed opinions on this question said that *Freedom* is "preaching to the converted". One non-anarchist reader agreed (except for himself), adding "it must start preaching something new". In this consumerist age it's not only fridges, cars, husbands and wives that have a limited 'shelf life' but for some, ideas, values and loyalties too! Surely among anarchists there is no disagreement about anarchist ideas and values. Obviously there are serious differences as to how best to successfully propagate our ideas. An anarchist paper cannot be other than one among many propagating anarchist ideas.

This writer reads *The Guardian* and a number of other capitalist papers which provide him with all the anarchist arguments he requires against capitalism! (Incidentally, one elderly "anarcho-communist student" of 29 tells us to "stop rehashing *Guardian* articles as 'editorials'!) *Freedom* is not after circulation at any price, as the Labour Party has been for votes at the expense of socialism for the past fifty years.

We know *Freedom* could be much more successful – that is sell more copies – if it looked and sounded more like *Class War*, but why have two *Class Wars*? Isn't one enough?

We don't believe in instant revolution. Those of us who are not anarchist-pacifists believe that thought must always precede action if any action is to be positive, in the direction of the anarchist social revolution.

Of course we are 100% in favour of making *Freedom* attractive, and varied in its contents. And needless to say we welcome all suggestions as to how circulation can be increased. In fact, many comrades who have replied to the question "How do you think *Freedom* could be more successful?" are echoing our own sentiments. But may we suggest that they are treating the very small group in Angel Alley as though we have unlimited time and financial resources to carry through their suggestions about advertising in 'left periodicals', developing the distribution in bookshops, etc. One optimistic reader writes: "Target/lobby a small number of major media 'institutions' to obtain regular reviews of your titles ... i.e. pester them! Free subs to certain radio/television programme producers?" Short of launching new *Freedom* Press titles with cocktail parties, you don't get in. Not even in the *New Statesman* or *Tribune*, in which we have advertised our publications. The half-page *Tribune* advertisement produced less than ten replies! The *New Statesman* produced a number of introductory subs which are now due for renewal (so we shall see what those new readers think of *Freedom*) and quite a few orders for literature. An advertisement in *The Guardian* to be of any use would cost £1,000. Any reader of *Freedom* with that money to spare?

[For reasons of space we have to carry over to the next issue some of our comments and impressions. Meanwhile we hope that this first instalment will encourage readers who have not yet responded to do so as soon as possible so that we can provide in due course a more comprehensive report – Eds]

From CAP to GATT

It's been a few years since negotiations in the so-called 'Uruguay round' started with the aim of readjusting commercial and customs regulations in the capitalist world. The diplomatic objective is to reach tariff agreements (GATT) promoting, as far as possible, a planet devoted to free trade.

The game (and for the negotiators that is what it is) consists of raising a customs barrier in one country in exchange for the raising of other barriers in other countries.

This type of negotiation, being slow and difficult, current events can strongly influence the attitudes of the envoys appointed by the heads of state. Today we can see the example of the USA where the outcome of the presidential election bodes ill for Bush. Bush hopes for an agreement in the USA's interest and uses great pressure to achieve this, resorting to blackmail where necessary.

Thus despite the reforms to the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) in a European Community which had agreed to be less protectionist with regard to farming, the USA is demanding further reductions in aid given to agricultural exports of cereals in particular.

The aim of this crude manoeuvre isn't even hidden: agricultural exports must be the preserve of the US where the importance of export subsidies allows for nutritional control of the third world in particular.

Noting EEC reticence, particularly that of France who doesn't want to disappoint its large-scale cereal growers, the US has deemed it wise to raise

subsidies for cereal exports and then oil seed in order to demonstrate to the EEC that if an agreement to reduce aid subsidies to European agriculture cannot be reached then total trade war will be declared.

Today CAP and GATT are therefore two acronyms with a tendency to oppose each other, although at the start of the year it was, amongst other things, thanks to the GATT negotiations that the CAP was reformed!

This reform had two aims. One the one hand, at the time of the setting up of the CAP (early 1960s) Europe was mainly in the red with regard to agricultural production. Production had to be supported in order to achieve nutritional self-sufficiency. However, this state of affairs was rapidly achieved and Europe was faced with the problem of surplus, mainly of cereal and dairy products. The setting up of milk quotas was one of the first responses, followed by stabilisers which reluctantly appeared in order to restrict the (costly) production of cereals and oil seed, then finally the CAP reform with the introduction of 'set aside' and support for extensification (products more closely linked to the soil and less to side products: manure, industrial produced cattle feed).

This reform therefore tried to undo thirty years of Common Agriculture Policy which aimed at

intensive development of food production.

On the other hand, to add to this economic headache for the EEC (reduction of costs linked to agricultural surplus) the GATT negotiations demanded a fall in financial support to Europe and North American farmers, both extensively subsidised.

But, because there is a but, not all were in favour of a reform to the CAP, in particular the large scale wheat producers, still influential in FNSEA and recently mobilised at the heart of the rural movement in France. The latter has focused the despair of small and medium scale farmers particularly in the South West and we have seen the coming together of people of divergent political opinions.

Mermaz, the Minister of Agriculture, for two years until this autumn focused his energies on the defence of the big cereal farmers who may one day vote 'Socialist', whilst at the same time liquidating the small and medium producers (who will never vote socialist, if indeed they ever have).

In this way Mermaz has followed in the footsteps of his predecessors Rocard and Nallet, who together deserve the title worst French Minister of Agriculture ever.

Mermaz, not being the only one in Europe to try

and defend capitalist type agriculture, the reform of CAP was reviewed and corrected so much so that today the CAP still favours intensive methods and the limiting of agricultural production is achieved on the one hand by the elimination of the small and medium scale producer and on the other the introduction of energy consuming agriculture (such as bio ester, ethane ...).

The productivist agricultural model will not fail: the political and economic weight of its supporters will maintain it.

Little by little, agricultural training is abandoning the idea of training farmers and comes up with training for 'open space management', 'rural tourism'. Even if the markets for these are still uncertain, the training programmes have already been set up and the 1992 new school year saw a rise in student intake.

Does this rise, linked to the growing welcome of young townies, herald a new back-to-the-land movement? The countryside can receive the townies, or so it is claimed by the President of the France-Plus Association along with a certain number of intellectuals.

However, we must not be fooled. Even if some townies can find self fulfilment in the countryside, most townies find it hard to adapt. They would do better to face the problems of inner city life. The seizure of the town by those who live in it is just as burning an issue as ever.

Marie Lenaye, *Le Monde Libertaire*, 5th November 1992

Dorset Diary

As the New Year arrives another term begins in our 'educational' establishments. Schoolkids down here are really spoiled for choice. In Christchurch the system is comprehensive, in Bournemouth there are grammar schools, bilateral schools, single sex and mixed schools, and in Poole we have middle schools as well. The only choice you don't get is whether you go there or not. Compulsory mis-education and the National Curriculum is of course the only diet available ... or is it?

Well, if you're 16 or under, of course it is. (Is it any wonder that one in eight schools were the victims of arson attacks last year?) Education in the industrial age is at best social programming and at worst babysitting (or is it the other way round?). No matter. Despite all the 'choice' my wife and I reaffirmed only the other day that if and when we have children we will educate them at home.

However, if you're over 16 there is something else - the Poole and Purbeck Adult Education Service has some 500 classes with over 5,000 students this year. They turn up in the wind and rain because they're interested, because they want to be there. They can choose from some of the following: Botanical Illustration, Car Maintenance, Chinese Cookery, Lip Reading, Sugarcraft, Women's Self-Defence to name but a few.

Not only can you learn, and choose what you learn, but adult education is a social activity which brings the community together. I've made many friends over the years in the classes I've taught and if I want a builder or a plumber I don't go to the yellow pages, I can deal with people I know.

Access to education and knowledge is vital

to a free society and something like adult education will play a role in it. It is of course anathema to those with power and so it is not surprising that it is under threat. Rumours are that it will have to be more 'cost effective' but, perhaps even more worrying, we may find that only courses leading to National Examinations will be run in the near future. GCSE, NVQ and BTEC perhaps, but Flower Arranging, Current Events and Working Together no thanks. A kind of National Curriculum looms on the horizon and threatens to smother the diversity and anarchy of the prospectuses as they now stand.

I don't want to be thought to be whitewashing adult education. Any education system reflects the society which spawned it. I find it interesting to note how the class base of society is still reflected in the adult education classroom. Although different students are happy to learn together they tend to choose their groupings on class lines, imposing society's apartheid on the learning group.

More subtly perhaps, it is the middle class student who small-talks about the car and the house and the working class student who tells you about the grandchildren or the neighbours.

But this is the way things are and not how they have to be. Anything that brings people together and allows them to think and develop cannot be wholly bad and would seem to be an improvement on the individuals spending the evenings in their boxes soothed by the mind numbing little screen in the corner.

Neil Birrell

Man's Inhumanity to Man: 'Doing Good'

Just when we seem to be escaping the insanities of Thatcherite economic rationalism, another old enemy reappears. It's not that sexism, racism, fascism and the rest had ever gone away. Each one of us knows this cauldron of prejudice and intolerance intimately. No, I refer to anxious wordsmiths who stir the cauldron, academics, hacks and trendies - the chattering classes - who must drop such labels on any conduct which disturbs them, presumably in the belief that by naming it they kill it.

"What's the use of such names", the Gnat said, 'if they won't answer to them?' 'No use to them' said Alice, 'but it's useful to the people that name them I suppose. If not, why do they have names at all.'" (Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*).

Labelling and name-dropping as a defence against anxiety derives from the way we think. It's a way which finds no place for our emotional selves. In this tradition the pursuit of knowledge, success, organisation and all those other goodies makes taboos of ignorance, failure and chaos. The categories are more than black and white. They're unconnected. Even in apparently liberated times we bury our emotional baggage, but when the going gets rough, as it most surely is about to, this lot reappears to haunt us.

My purpose here is not to defend emotionality but to implicate the way we think and organise our affairs in the horrors we associate with racism, violence and the rest. This 'educated' and public repression of our own prejudices and predispositions also confirms the deception as a primary function of language.

My concern for the rough treatment of emotionality has its origins in undergraduate days when I was bothered by fine teachers who directed our attention to the authoritarian personality and its

substantial part in the killing of millions of people. For me, prejudice and predispositions are dangerous, but I don't think we can live without them. I was then, and still am, full of them. It just seemed too easy to heap the responsibility for the holocaust on emotionality and prejudice.

These doubts smouldered until 1965 and a chance visit to Struttoff, a Nazi concentration camp in the Vosges. The camp, though crudely constructed, was well preserved. The horror and suffering of the place had long evaporated but the outlines of its organisation remained. The many activities in the movement and destruction of the victims were carefully defined and fitted together to minimise the personal responsibilities of the guards. Most of the duties seem to involve little more violence than one might expect in a modern welfare agency. The final task in this tidy chain of mundane activities had one person sweeping up the ashes in the ovens and depositing them on the commandant's rose garden. Sure there were one or two nasty jobs from which I might unsuccessfully try to dissociate myself by describing them as tasks for psychopaths. There must have been terror in the hearts of the victims too, but outwardly no chaos, no emotions run amok here, the whole job was a piece of logic.

In the same year Stanley Milgram published his work on the preparedness of Americans to subject victims to what they thought was nasty shock treatment for failing to answer simple puzzles correctly. I watched his film 'Obedience' about the research over and over again. The same organisation existed in his experiments as it did at Struttoff. I am not referring so much to the authority of science or education or even the manner in which

(continued on page 5)



Run Chicken Run

the family hound dog, and we are of a society that for the time has gone beyond legal or public condemnation, but I would protest on behalf of the children and the dog who must be unwilling or unknowing participants in the sexual activities of 'Eric, or Little by Little' for the wrong of rape, bestiality or child molestation is always that there is an unwilling or unknowing victim of someone's casual pleasure. There are those among us who spend a few years of their puzzled lives among the top shelves of the bookshop among the D, K, M or S sections seeking 'the message' that will turn them from decent law-obeying, whale-saving citizens into crime free-raging revolutionaries feared by the Queen Mum and the entire cast of the landed aristocracy, but they will never find it because there is no 'message' only an acceptance of the actions that daily are taking place instead

MORTUARY



"Enjoy yourself like the rest of the good ol' boys, minister. Don't worry about the expired sell by dates."

Sexual intercourse with the dead has always been regarded as more of a cult than a common pleasure for it has its obvious limitations in relation to time, place and the acquiring of the basic material, but in myth, fact and fiction it has always had its practitioners and in the scheme of letters its literati and its paperback pulp foot-soldiers. The Gothic Horror school and the Pre-Raphaelite painters made female bondage a nice little earner, and the female tied to the railway track must surely rank with Eisenstein's montage of the Odessa steps in his 'Battleship Potemkin' film in that both provided a sense of social moral outrage while pandering to one's sexual sadism, as with the person who has the authority's authority to order someone to stop smoking. Bestiality, paedophilia, incest or necrophilia has and are easy subjects for the writers in that the authorities, in the end, always prove unable to stem the great flood of the printed word, but for the visual artists and those 'making wit' the message cinema-wise, man, it has always been the slow burn and the subtle double-take. Of the cinema it has, with an indifferent authority, dipped its shy-making toes into the poisonous pools of social censorships and hinted at bestiality with King Kong, paedophilia with Lolita and necrophilia with the Bride of Frankenstein, wherein a male and female corpse are reassembled and rehumanised, whose rational and logical outcome can only be suitcases packed for a dirty weekend at Brighton. All these sexual permutations of what to do to the unfortunate female from toe-sucking to grave-opening can now make the front page of one's favourite tabloid if practised by a leading Government Minister of the Crown or that 'political' prisoner's social pariah, the 'common criminal' of "My Lord I witness this starving man steal a loaf of bread on a Clapham Common omnibus and for personal not for anarchical reasons". From the late Eric Gill's biography we now accept that the brilliant sculptor, whose limpid 'Stations of the Cross' enhances Westminster Cathedral, was a human ram who played the entire field, which included his entire family, yea, even to

of a need to react in some positive way according to one's ability.

There are those among us, give or take an 'A' Level, who will declaim that matters such as these are fit only for the readership of *The Sun* newspaper and are of no concern to those such as themselves who read their *Independent* newspaper to the music of Mozart and the crunch of chemically-free celery stalks, but comrades, they err. American law may be based on English Common Law but, as with culture, food, faiths and sexual relationships, the American courts have pursued the forensic logic of English Common Law to what it deems to be its absolute logical conclusions no matter what the cost to class or the state. In doing this, the liberties of the ear and the eye that the 'message seekers' assume as their basic rights to be, could be destroyed by the school of the 'would you allow your wife to read/listen/view filth like this' though these be freedoms of the mind and of expression won for us by small groups and courts three thousand miles away. In 1933 men and women lie rotting in British jails – a slight poetic exaggeration – for the sexual pleasure of torturing each other and, though both you and I agree that it is a gruesome way of getting the giggles, American courts in the end will decide if one has a legal right, subject to the state, to play doctors and nurses with ropes and hot wires. For myself, no way man, no way, but, to myself, I accept that if a pair of screamers agree to hurt each other for pleasure then I will only cry halt if one is in physical danger, yea, and that includes drugs and drink comrades.

We are of the year of 1992 who, because of ruling by the American courts, could climb the stairs of the fashionable d'Offay Gallery off Bond Street to witness, in a window-shrouded room, the life-size realistic figure of an old man fucking the bung-hole of a huge beer barrel. Once more the matter of how people worship is now being decided by the

American Supreme Court in the matter of the Hialeah local council sweating its way into history in down-town Miami. The matter was simple in that should the state sanction the ritual killing of animals on the altar. The Supreme Court has copped out by saying you can kill man's best friend in a social way but not for ritualistic reasons. With a major ethnic population, Miami has two growing cult religions given to the butchering of animals, the Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye and Voodoo rip-off Santeria. Drifting up from South America, Santeria can claim a 100,000 followers in Florida alone and money and the faithful roll in. Ernesto Pichardo, the minister of the Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye, is a 38 year old white Cuban and blends middle class technology with various real or tourist shop African figures and all the mystic crap that goes with those offering a new road to Paradise, pay and pray for the new God. Pichardo's justification for ritual slaughter must be contained in his saying "The difference between your [Christian] religion and mine is that we say our prayers before we kill the offering while you kill your Christmas turkey and then say prayers before you eat it," which all in all is pure horse-shit for a minister who wears a Harvard University sweatshirt should know that the slaughter of an animal or bird is basic to those types of knee-bendings while the taking of bread and wine is basic to the New Testament's Christian belief. What you do with the tough turkey is purely a matter of taste. It must follow that with an increasing ethnic population there must arise believers and bright boys who will find the Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye fertile ground, belief and money-wise, for those unfortunate seeking 'the message' and when it comes to the matter of ritual slaughtering demands will be made for it to be legalised and then, my top-shelf anarchist, you will have to decide on your moggy's life on the ritual altar or the visit to the Blue Cross People's Vet – and will you quote Old Glory?

Arthur Moyses

Man's Inhumanity to Man: 'Doing Good'

(continued from page 4)

the experiments were conducted, but to the immediate situation facing the administrators of the electric shocks as it must have been the warders at Strutoff. Picture the pain-inflictor confronted by a row of switches to be pressed in ascending order of shock severity, carefully denoted by occasional words and symbols. Like the elaborate division of labour at Strutoff, the large number of switches is reassuring, the early shocks don't hurt and the differences between adjacent switches is slight (i.e. in terms of the hurt inflicted may not matter). So beginning with the first switch he starts on a familiar, reassuring treadmill of events ordered in a linear sequence. This is just another expression of an old trusted friend learned at school, the rational process. What would have happened if the pain inflictors had been faced with just two switches – harmless and dangerous? We do not know. But the proliferation of switches is familiar, comforting and reassuring. He knows this game. He can trust it. But this comfortable, logical front is a deception, like the elaboration of concepts takes the academic swiftly from concept to deceive.

Not blind emotional prejudice but belief in organisation out there, the location of authority beyond ourselves, the *only* organisation according to industrial man, provides essential ingredients for the most calamitous villainies man can bestow on his fellows.

I've no doubt this failure to recognise the part played by the way we think about and organise experience is just as relevant to the latest collection of calamities – the racial conflicts in Germany, the destructive madness in Croatia and Bosnia, and the total disaster in Somalia. Our attitudes to and responses to these situations show we learn nothing from experience.

We are now getting daily warnings from the media about the revival of fascism in Germany, significantly East Germany. Kohl thinks

this way too. The people we conveniently describe as fascists and racists were only yesterday part of the pride of State Communism. Now they have lost the security of one regime and are discovering that the promises of the new order (capitalism) are not being delivered and may never be. Insecurity is suddenly a condition of their lives. They are bewildered and they are losing their jobs. On top of this they now have to cope with Germany's humanitarianism – or is it guilt? – to the tune of tens of thousands of immigrants or refugees from the East, coming into their existing confusion every month. They are faced with a situation in which their emotionality is decried and now a government, which must be bonkers, is surprised to find itself confronted by previously repressed emotions bubbling up everywhere. More state repression is its answer.

The Germans are good at organisation. They believe, or their government does, they can organise anything from finding homes and jobs for refugees to fashioning an 'economic miracle' or a reunification just like that. So they perceive problems wholly in terms of what they do well. They have not taken on board the emotional needs of their citizens because in a public sense, these simply don't exist. So as the trickle of refugees swells to a flood, the scene is set for a lot of nastiness. The revival of nazism is just a pimple on this vicious sore.

As in Germany so in Yugoslavia and Somalia 'doing good' is in vogue. Western governments and the UN neatly package the problem as one to be solved by humanitarian aid. There are it would seem no social, political, economic or military implications. So in effect in Bosnia and Croatia we implicitly collude with the Serbs and in Somalia with the warlords and their armed rabble. We deliver the humanitarian bit and they do the bombarding, killing and stealing of supplies bits. We are in effect just adding to and prolonging human suffering. Aid is just another form of AIDS.

Day after day the media advertise the impotence and government and yet we persist with a belief in the capacity of state governments to deliver. We do so in part because they adopt a way of thinking and acting which makes sense to us even though the evidence for their contributions to the madness is overwhelming.

I am not suggesting that the choice is between total intervention or disengagement, there are other strategies. The former obviously suits our style. Besides we have, through religious, political and economic exploitation, been interfering in the affairs of others for so long that they may be past helping themselves, as is probably the case in Somalia.

Our decisions on what to do should be based upon the Socratic principle, no man does wrong willingly. We must let people find their own salvation through facing chaos and prejudice in their own context. So people are 'forced' to help themselves and we keep out the experienceless experts and 'do gooders' (ourselves). We encourage people to stay where they are in order to give community reconstruction a chance and to limit the risk of transferring 'the problem' elsewhere. We let people fight if they must but we don't supply them with weapons which bring devastation and death without the protagonists having to engage each other.

First we have to realise that these disasters are all of a piece and our contribution to them is greater than we think. We have to recognise too the large-scale movement of people who are not in control of their actions creates problems we cannot easily handle. These are not circumstances just calling for national responses. May I, in conclusion, remind the reader that in the 1930s when Germany was in the early stages of 'solving' the Jewish question and repatriating Jews to Palestine, Eichmann was hailed as a friend of Zion. If we continue on our present tack the gas ovens will be back and mass death through destitution and starvation will become commonplace. The way to hell is still paved with good intentions. Paule and I will be planting trees at Botch-Up Farm this week.

Denis Pym

Dumbing

Dumbing Us Down: the hidden curriculum of compulsory schooling

by John Taylor Gatto

New Society Publishers

For 26 years John Gatto taught in New York City, graduating from "élite children from Manhattan's Upper West Side between Lincoln Center, where the opera is, and Columbia University, where the defense contract are" to "children from Harlem and Spanish Harlem, whose lives are shaped by the dangerous undercurrents of the industrial city in decay". At the end of this period he was nominated New York State Teacher of the Year, before retiring from the state system to continue his work and ideas with the Albany Free School.

The book consists of four essays preceded by a biographical note and an introductory essay called 'The Seven-Lesson Schoolteacher', his summary, under seven headings, of the functions of the teacher in state schools. This essay is the armature on which the rest of the book is shaped.

Gatto claims that school has nothing to do with teaching children to think for themselves, to develop curiosity or the power to sustain effort. School creates confusion and indifference in children by its system of breaking up the day into fixed periods and by interrupting whatever is going on by a bell; saying, in effect, that however interesting the lesson or the teacher, nothing matters except getting to another place, with another teacher, for another lesson, because that is what is required by administration. School creates emotional and intellectual dependence by giving to the teacher the arbitrary power to say 'right' or 'wrong', 'good' or 'bad' about behaviour and work, whereas free children

The Anthropology of Exchange
by John Davis
Open University Press, 1992, £8.99

The Anthropology of Exchange

Anarchism, as a social movement, essentially emerged in the early nineteenth century. Although as a concept anarchy simply means the negation of government or coercive authority, this movement was from the beginning not only anti-state but also anti-capitalist. The kind of libertarian philosophy espoused by Ayn Rand and her anarcho-capitalist acolytes cannot therefore, by any stretch of the imagination, be considered anarchist. Rand's egoism and elitism, her objectivist philosophy, her strident advocacy of laissez-faire capitalism as the 'unknown ideal', and her Hobbesian conception of the state, makes her kind of politics a 'perversion' of libertarian thought – as Lance Klafeta puts it (*Anarchy* issue 34). Though taking an anti-capitalist stance anarchists however have found it difficult to agree as to what exactly to put in its place. This is highlighted in Donald Rooum's little introduction *What is Anarchism?* And over the past year the pages of *Freedom* have indicated a diversity of suggestions as to what is to replace the present economic system. John Papworth (issue 13) writes that the problem that confronts us is not capitalism per se, but the "big capitalists" who in democratic terms are completely out of control. Thus he advocates Adam Smith's conception of the market economy with lots of small capitalists, lots of competition, and lots of consumer choice. This is the way, he feels, to prevent

abuse and exploitation: "abolishing capitalism" for Papworth is simply not an option. All this of course is reminiscent of Proudhon's mutualism – the advocacy of a market economy based on small-scale petty-commodity production with communal banks, but without capitalists and with an equitable exchange system. Jason (issue 16) – like Marx before him – suggested that John Papworth simply did not understand the nature of capitalism, with its inherent tendency towards monopoly. A couple of issues later (issue 19) an editorial on speculators noted that anarchists were not opposed to any money (market) system, as long as it was akin to barter – but were inexorably opposed to money as a means of exploiting the labour of others or being linked to private property. But as another correspondent pointed out: for Rooum, barter itself was antithetical to anarchy!

In the bookshops now is a little primer on 'exchange'. Written by an anthropologist, John Davis, the author of an interesting study of *Libyan Politics* (1987), the book is in the Open University series 'Concepts in the Social Sciences', designed for the general reader. (The one on *The State* authored by John Hall and John Ikenberry, is significant in

not mentioning any critiques of this institution!) Davis' little book on 'exchange' will not provide any answers to the issues discussed above, but it does indicate the diversity of exchanges that are to be found in all societies (including our own) and offers a useful critique of what he called the 'marketists', the advocates of laissez-faire capitalism. His argument in the book is on two fronts.

On the one hand, Davis is against a whole tradition in anthropology which makes a fundamental distinction between 'reciprocity' and market exchanges, and assumes that the former (but not the latter) are total prestations, involving moral, social, political and symbolic dimensions. Davis shows, in outlining the 'exchange' repertoires of both the Trobriand Islanders and the British, that each is exemplified by a diversity of different types of 'exchange' (marriage is missing from the British repertoire, but it includes robbery, corruption and bribery). Importantly, market exchanges, which tend to be seen to be intrinsically connected with welter of symbolic, moral and political concerns. But Davis is unsympathetic to those post-modernist anthropologists who concentrate on symbols and meanings and assume that these have the only reality.

On the other hand, he is highly critical of the neo-classical economists who by sleight of hand attempt to equate reason with profiteering, and who – as did Ayn Rand – try to make out that we are all Hobbesian creatures, intrinsically selfish, and that all exchanges – gifts, altruism, alms – are profit-oriented. Davis shows how such arguments are fallacious. He stresses too that neo-classical economics – the market system

– is a 'science fiction' and that economists have tended to conflate their model, as metaphor, with the empirical reality. The market principle, he writes, is not and never has been an autonomous reality, for when exchanges are really free people (he ought to have written capitalists) do their best to create monopolies, to initiate insider deals and trading, and to restrict competition. The rhetorical contrast made between the state and the market assumes an antagonism where in fact there is only 'mutual dependence': perfect competition occurs only where governments intervene to maintain it. Davis never really develops these ideas, but rather advocates a rather static 'classificatory model' of exchanges, suggesting that what underlies exchanges everywhere is a morally, legally and ritually sanctioned classification scheme. He thus does not explore the distinction made by the historian Fernand Braudel between market exchanges and capitalism.

For Braudel, not only is the distinction between merchant, industrial and finance capital untenable, for leading capitalists have always combined trade, production and finance, but the state has always been a constitutive element in the functioning of the capitalist system. Capitalism, according to Braudel, has never been a competitive free-market system. On the contrary, it has always consisted of monopolies, large and powerful corporations, that are supported and bolstered by the state. The beneficiaries of state intervention are always the monopolies, and capitalism for Braudel is in essence anti-market, in spite of the free market rhetoric. Witness contemporary debates about the 'common market' and the social effects of Thatcherism. Thatcher was a latter-day Ayn Rand. But such issues take us well beyond the exchange repertoires and the 'symbolism' of gifts, money and market exchanges which John Davis's useful little book is largely concerned.

Brian Morris

can find these things out for themselves through the consequences that follow. A child who makes a rabbit hutch that lets in the rain does not have to be told that the hutch does not work, but he is now more ready to listen to advice on how to make it properly.

School makes the self-esteem of the pupil dependent on behaving in ways that conform to the school's demands, and by exercising

Gatto calculates that, out of 112 waking hours children spend 55 in watching television, 30 in school, 8 in travelling to and from school, 10 in eating and doing homework (this is the USA). "We arrive at a net amount of private time for each child of 9 hours a week" a vivid reminder of the extent to which we condition children to accept any authority that chooses to call itself such. Thus we create, according to Erich Fromm and Wilhelm Reich, a population that, given the economic circumstances, could fall victim, as Germany did, to a political psychopath.

The core of Gatto's argument is that school, by occupying so much of the child's time, actually prevents it from becoming a real person, prevents families from being the real educators, in terms of human values, and, as a result, prevents families from forming real communities bound together by ties of friendship, affection and love; communities which by the work they do together and the mutual services they render one another, are the real educators of the young, by shaping their practical, intellectual and moral skills.

This theme is expressed in the essay 'The Green Monongahela'.

"In Monongahela by that river everyone was my teacher. Daily, it seemed to a boy, one of the mile-long trains would stop in town to take on water and coal or for some mysterious reason; the brakeman and engineer would step among the snot-nosed kids and spin railroad yarns, let us run in and out of boxcars, over and under flatcars, tankcars, coalcars ... Once a year, maybe, we got taken into the caboose that reeked of stale beer to be offered a bologna on white bread sandwich. The anonymous men lectured, advised and inspired the boys of Monongahela – it was as much their job as driving the trains."

To anarchist readers Gatto's condemnation of state institutions is familiar. What is refreshing is to see them expressed by an American teacher from his own experience and against a background of his own boyhood in a real community. As more and more people all over the world are born and live in huge towns and cities; as the state extends its tentacles everywhere, even into the very stuff of our thoughts, fewer and fewer of us can experience what it is to live in community, in a condition of direct mutual dependence and day-to-day practical love, that only a real community can provide.

Michael Duane

Us Down

constant surveillance even to the point of requiring reports from parents on behaviour and attitudes while out of school, re-erects itself into the all-seeing god of medieval superstition – the god from whom nothing, even our most private thoughts, can be hidden. Above all, it teaches children to 'know their place' – a doctrine recently discovered in an internal memorandum of our own DES.

When Gatto was presented with the award on 31st January 1990 by the New York State Senate he made a speech that forms the first essay, 'The Psychopathic School'. After accepting the award on behalf of:

"all those fine teachers I've known over the years who've struggled to make their transactions with children honourable ones, men and women who were never complacent, always questioning, always wrestling to define and redefine what the word 'education' should mean"

he went on to point out, within the following three paragraphs, that:

"our nation ranks at the bottom of nineteen industrial nations in reading, writing and arithmetic ... The world's narcotic economy is based upon our consumption of this commodity ... and schools are an important sales outlet ... Out teenage suicide rate is the highest in the world, and suicidal kids are rich kids for the most part ..."

"Using school as a sorting mechanism, we appear to be on the way to creating a caste system, complete with untouchables who wander through subway trains begging and who sleep upon the streets."

"The home-schooling movement has quietly grown to a size where one and a half million young people are being educated entirely by their own parents ... the education press reported ... that children schooled at home seem to five or even ten years ahead of their formally trained peers in their ability to think ... Schools are intended to produce ... human beings whose behaviour can be predicted and controlled."

Food for Thought ... and Action

Recent additions to the Freedom Press Bookshop stock.

Regulated to Death: anarchist arguments against government intervention in our lives by Jim Baker and Joe Peacott, BAD Press pamphlet number 4. Another in the series from the Boston Anarchist Drinking Brigade. After a brief introduction there are four short articles: 'Deregulating Health Care' and 'Fewer Laws, More Housing' by Joe Peacott, and 'Question Regulation' and 'The Regulatory Minds at Work: rabies and feline bureaucratisation' by Jim Baker. Illustrated, 28 pages, £2.

Life of an Anarchist: the Alexander Berkman reader* edited by Gene Fellner, Four Walls Eight Windows. The blurb on the back cover states that this anthology "... contains *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*, Berkman's account of his years in prison; *The Bolshevik Myth*, his eyewitness account of the early days of the Russian Revolution; and *ABC of Anarchism* ..." In fact, although it does contain the *ABC of Anarchism* it does not contain the whole of either of the other two books. Thus, from *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* Fellner has selected certain chapters – presumably those he considers the most interesting – from parts one, two and four, and from *The Bolshevik Myth* he omits a number of chapters and parts of others, and also the original preface and Nicolas Walter's introduction to the 1989 edition. Nevertheless, this is a valuable book even for those who already have the other Berkman titles since it contains the only English language edition (albeit abridged) of *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* still in print, and many of his articles from the newspaper *The Blast*, the text of both *The Russian Tragedy* and *The Kronstadt Rebellion*, and a number of letters between him and others – notably his comrade and lover Emma Goldman. Altogether a large and very worthwhile book. 352 pages, £10.95.

Some Recent Attacks: essays cultural and political by James Kelman, AK Press. Celebrated as a major European (Scottish) novelist, short story writer and playwright, in this collection of essays, polemics and talks Kelman directs his linguistic craftsmanship and scathing humour at targets ranging from "private profit and public loss" to the "endemic racism, class bias and general élitism at the English end of the Anglo-American literary tradition". Essays include 'Artists and Value', 'Art and Subsidy', 'Some Recent Attacks on the Rights of the People', 'A Brief Note on the War Being Waged by the State Against the Victims of Asbestos'. Well worth reading, 91 pages, £4.50.

Society of the Spectacle and Other Films* by Guy Debord, Rebel Press. This is the first English translation of all these works together, first published in French in 1978. It includes the full texts of Debord's first five films, with an introduction (by Richard Parry, author of *The Bonnot Gang*) explaining, amongst other things, why Debord is determined that the films should never again be shown. Oh, right, well that's that then. Hardly worth reading the scripts really. Still, it's probably not nearly so boring as watching the films, to judge by the script of 'Howlings in Favour of Sade' (sic) which indicates that both sound and vision are cut for various intervals – a total of 36 minutes during the film and 24 minutes after the last line has been spoken – whilst the audience sit in a dark and silent cinema. Fascinating. 136 pages, £5.50.

KM

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Ideologists of every kind must be disconcerted by the idea that there is a pendulum in political and economic ideas and that every time the swing goes beyond the middle ground a reaction follows. In the first half of the nineteenth century belief in the sanctity of the market economy produced the horrors of Victorian England, and generations of reformers, who were not all tainted by association with the radical left, had to spend their lives battling every inch of the way for sanitation, clean water, housing reform, access to education, control of industrial pollution and of working hours and against the exploitation of children.

In a different tradition, working class organisations started a network of self-help and mutual aid bodies, ranging from sick clubs and coffin clubs, friendly societies and building societies, up to the co-operative and trade union movements. And meanwhile, from 1870 onwards, a non-socialist, Joseph Chamberlain, was pioneering in Birmingham policies that became known as 'gas-and-water socialism'.

By the beginning of the present century, long before the rise of the Labour Party, one observer wrote that a citizen of Glasgow:

"may live in a municipal house; he may walk along the municipal street, or ride in the municipal tramcar and watch the municipal dustcart collecting the refuse which is used to fertilise the municipal farm. Then he may turn to the municipal market, buy a steak from an animal killed in the municipal slaughterhouse, and cook it by the municipal gas stove. For his recreation he can choose amongst municipal libraries, municipal art galleries and municipal music in municipal parks. Should he fall ill, he can ring up his doctor on the municipal telephone, or he may be taken to the municipal hospital in the municipal ambulance by a municipal policeman. Should he be so unfortunate as to get on fire, he will be put out by a municipal fireman, using municipal water, after which he will perhaps forego the enjoyment of a municipal bath, though he may find it necessary to get a new suit in the municipal old clothes market."

Meanwhile the Fabian Society had been founded in 1884. I often find myself quoting the 4th Fabian Tract which remarked that "English Socialism is not yet Anarchist or Collectivist, not yet defined enough in point

— AN ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK — THE POLITICAL PENDULUM

of policy to be classified" and it suggested that when the unconscious socialists discovered their position, they would "probably fall into two parties: a Collectivist party supporting a strong central administration and a counterbalancing Anarchist party defending individual initiative against that administration".

When a Labour Party was finally formed in 1906, there were still several streams of opinion in it: those who favoured municipal control of essential services, the syndicalist element fostering workers' control, and the mainstream who by 1918 thought that public control meant government control. After unhappy experiences as a minority government came the landslide Labour electoral victory of 1945, putting into effect the nationalisation of the Bank of England, coal, iron and steel production, hospitals, transport, electricity and gas.

We anarchists derided it at the time, but just because the swing of the pendulum, it seems to most socialists, an unbelievable achievement in the light of their limited hopes today. In fact, nothing much was changed, especially in industrial relations, and in the succeeding decades there was a consensus between the political parties, known as Butskillism, where the structure of central government control was unchanged, apart from an expensive de-nationalisation and re-nationalisation of the iron and steel industry. In fact, in later decades government felt obliged to nationalise the water industry as well as that part of the car-making and aircraft industry which was not under American control, to save it from bankruptcy.

It should be noted that much of the nationalisation policy took away from local

authorities municipal control of, for example, local hospitals, gas, transport, electricity and water undertakings, most of which were generators of income as well as expenditure for the councils. By the time of the election of the Thatcher government of 1979, the pendulum had swung far enough for the free market ideologists to take over politics. The defence of 'individual initiative' against 'strong central administration' had become a battle-cry, not of the anarchists but of the Conservative Party. And it won votes. Services which had been bought by government at huge expense were sold to speculators, and the free marketeers persuaded government to explore the sale to private enterprise the management of, for instance, postal services (a government activity since 1516) and prisons (a government alternative to execution all through history). The pendulum swing had reached absurdity.

Meanwhile local authority activities from refuse collection to managing schools, as well as the right to be housing landlords, were taken away under the slogan of 'setting the people free'. Ultimate control of any council function was seized by central government.

The triumph of ideology is as predictable as it was in the early nineteenth century: more homeless, more untreated sickness, homelessness and poverty all around. But we would be mistaken in attributing the resulting misery to the British Conservatives alone. For the same tendency can be seen in the Reagan period in the United States, as well as in most of Europe and Latin America. Above all it is the story behind the collapse of every kind of socialist government in Africa, and of the dissolution of the Soviet Empire.

In Britain, just as in the 1840s, the 1980s produced a new impoverished class,

deprived even of the services that might alleviate misery. Elsewhere in the world the results have been more disastrous. In Russia, and its former subjugated satellites, the same economic advisers are telling the local ex-communist bosses how to get on-stream with market forces and compete with Taiwan and South Korea in world markets. Nobody is advocating that in terms of avoiding misery the best thing is to meet local demands for local goods and services.

Let's admit that for anarchist propagandists the current situation, at home and abroad, presents problems. For one thing, we never took into account the malignant growth of religious fundamentalism and nationalism. All our predecessors took it for granted that these were simply exploited by international finance-capitalism. For another, our anarchist precursors, except for Proudhon, despised the individualism of the peasant or artisan producer. They had the same faith in collectivism as their socialist opponents. And yet for another, we haven't found the right weapons for fighting the sinister centralisation which is the result of the Conservative determination to erode the power of local authorities in Britain. Even I, an endless critic, find myself defending the council against the ministry, though this is far from my inclinations.

The rejection of socialism, even in Sweden, a model for humane social-democracy, is not a triumph for an anarchist approach, because you know just as well as I know that it is replaced by that crude faith in market forces which our great-grandparents rejected.

What we can accurately predict is that the swing of the pendulum will be replaced by a Keynesian public works programme, centrally administered for the sake of efficiency, and that the underlying issues raised by 150 years of anarchist propaganda will be swept out of the way, once again. But is this other people's fault or ours?

Colin Ward

More on 'Class'

Dear Freedom,

Although I agreed with much of Stephen Booth's criticism of a class-based approach to anarchism (*Freedom*, 14th November 1992), and like him feel that 'classism' is a chimera which anarchists would be best not emphasising too much, I feel that in many respects he pushed his argument too far. The narrow, entirely economic definition of class is far too brittle and uni-dimensional to support any degree of analysis of late 20th century society, but 'class' can encompass much more than this. It is clear that Britain is a sharply class divided society. The fact is that social mobility is low, and between widely separated groups is virtually zero. Class differences are evident in access to and progression through the educational system; there are even significant differences in health and mortality rates between the classes among all age groups. So, class differences are a reality, and a grim one, for millions of people in Britain (I will make no mention of international class differences). Of course, in the context of the impersonal machine everybody, exploiter and exploited, has little relevance. But the option to drop out (and there could be a question here about the usefulness of 'dropping out' in a wider context) of the system is sadly limited for those who in fact have little contact with any positive aspects of the system at all - to use Stephen Booth's example, a computer executive on £60,000pa may well be as worthless and insignificant as an unemployed person, but s/he is also in a lot better position to do something about it, both in terms of means available and

the differing approach to opposing a system that is made both recognisable and understandable through a greater degree of participation - what is often referred to as 'middle class confidence'.

The idea that meaningful change can only come from below is one that is in fact valid when not purely a feature of radical chic dogma. The principal of self-liberation is one which is central to anarchist thought (and hopefully practice) but the question arises, liberation from what? Again, though the need to shed the chains imposed by forced membership of machine society is real, the need for decent housing and the avoidance of malnutrition would seem a much more pressing concern for thousands (millions?) of others. Often, middle class politics is concerned with issues that appear far distant from the immediate concerns of those at the sharp end of exploitation, and their involvement less serious because they have less to lose - it is easier to dabble in politics from a middle class perspective. Maybe it is a form of romanticism, but personally I would gain much greater satisfaction if a group of unemployed and low-paid workers said 'Up yours!' and started a self-housing scheme, than if a group of computer executives did the same - but which would be more likely to succeed? I suspect that even if resources could be found for the first group, if it got too successful it would be closed down - this has certainly happened in the US. Such a move offers a much greater threat to the system, and in that respect is probably more productive on a wider level (though to the people involved, I've nothing against

computer executives being liberated!)

I would also question whether proximity is the only relevant factor in a relationship. Of course, I cannot claim to have any sort of 'relationship' with anyone that I do not know, but as a human being I have a capacity to empathise, a capacity which is enhanced when in proportion to my understanding with the other party. This understanding will involve a combination of many factors, but given that class as a social division exists, and also that it is prominent in our early years, class sympathy can be a genuine experience. In many, though not all instances, I have found myself feeling comfortable with particular people and in particular households because they are working class. This is not to say that this was the only factor involved, but it existed and it mattered. In this context, it is not just a socio-economic categorisation that is important, but a sense of shared identity, which often is rooted in the overwhelming reality of the exploitation and in many cases deprivation that characterises working class experience. This experience transcends narrow economics, and resides instead in a cultural and social-psychological milieu, it could be called 'Class Consciousness', though this often carries negative (for anarchists) Marxist connotations. But if it occurs it actually implies the beginning of an awareness of the obscenity of the existing social structure and the necessity of change. This is not the only avenue for such awareness, nor is it necessarily the most productive, but it is one, and has a validity and context of its own.

Human value is a property of humans and not of any particular social class or other grouping. Messianic claims for the working class have to be avoided since

they at best are a distraction and at worst provide the blueprint for yet another repressive regime. But class is a reality of the current social system, and a source of oppression and exploitation which needs to be recognised, criticised and

attacked wherever possible.

I will finish since I have already written at greater length than I intended, and have probably left more loose ends than I have tied up.

SM

Should we woo the 'female sex'?

Dear comrades,

Not many women seem to appear or get a mention in your excellent newspaper that is of interest and value to all women. Women are natural and potential anarchists even if they do not know it. Anarchists would do well to woo and support the female sex. I cannot think of any woman in her right mind or senses who could not at least sympathise with the anarchist analysis and approach to the ills and failure of a statist society in which they are the main victims and losers. If *Freedom* made more allowance for an intuitive spiritual approach to life instead of merely grinding out a socio-political standpoint, then more women and not a few men would be attracted to your illustrious works of which I am an avid reader and admirer. *Freedom* should have a women's page devoted to female problems and viewpoints. It does not have to be written by a woman, as long as it gives the anarchist understanding and answer to a particular aspect of womanhood. We are half of mankind and always will be.

I am not the best female correspondent that you could hope for. My oratory skills fall far below my literary talents, and I feel the water closing over my head at some anarchist debates. There seems to be a tendency to professional jargon and in talk instead of concentrating on human and basic problems, e.g. work in a mechanical world and transport in cities,

and loneliness in our modern era which we all understand and would love to hear a simple and clear anarchist answer to.

To end this tirade, I want to make a statement that is absolutely true and simple, and deserves a place in your worthy organ no matter how simple-minded it may appear in comparison with so many sermons on your mount.

I have read with a free and open mind social, political, biographical, psychological and historical literature. I have met, mingled with and accepted many diverse and often tragic characters of all classes. I have sympathetically and objectively observed a cruel and chaotic world that seems to lack even basic justice and simple kindness. I have only one conclusion politically: capitalism is morally and humanely indefensible, and does not survive even basic intellectual examination and criticism. At least as far as society and the happiness of the individual person goes (not excluding our poor, long-suffering planet) anarchism is the answer, or if it is not the answer then there is no answer and it should have been the answer. And why not then who knows? I don't and neither do you. All other issues are in ruins and disrepute. Anarchism alone survives and stands up under the spotlight. Win or lose, let us keep it alive if only as a personal enlightenment.

Mary Quintana

Down with 'Class Warriors'

Dear comrades,
I was glad to see Stephen Booth's article on class in the last issue of *Freedom*, at last somebody has some sensible ideas on the matter. I was angered by Steve Cullen's 'Lower Class Bile' however, so here, for what it's worth, is some 'middle class bile'.

Few things annoy me more than 'class warriors', those whose fists are always

clenched and whose arms are always bent at the elbow. These people annoy me because although they claim to love the working classes and that they struggle for their liberation, they treat all working people with apparent contempt. They assume that working people have little intelligence to understand the politics and so boil down anarchism or socialism or whatever into a simple slogan: 'It's all the fault of the middle class'.

Such statements have an eerie familiarity to fascist propaganda - 'It's all the fault of the Jews' - few people (except the fascists themselves) deny the ultimate logical outcome of such a philosophy, witnessed by the gas chambers and mass graves of the Nazi death camps.

Pol Pot's 'killing fields' similarly are a testament to the logical outcome of 'class war'. Pol Pot despised the middle classes, the 'soft cops' (as I have heard them called), teachers, doctors, engineers, students, etc., and so decreed their deaths a glorious start to revolutionary 'Year Zero'.

I don't just say this because I don't fancy having my head stoved in with a shovel 'come the revolution', but also because such arguments quite simply are not anarchism. The state is your enemy. The continued existence of the state does not reside in a particular social class or building, shooting people or blowing up government ministries or any other similarly pointless act will not cause the state to die. The state exists in the minds of every person on this planet and the acceptance of the necessity of the state is what permits its continued existence. Until this idea is purged from our minds anarchism will never be possible.

Telling people to direct their anger at the middle classes or bosses or monarchy or Jews or Pakistanis or anyone else is firstly diverting their attention away from the real enemy and secondly, and more importantly, discouraging them from thinking about these things themselves. It was Socrates who said "We only begin to live when we question everything that came before us". As anarchists we should be encouraging people to think for themselves, not providing them with scapegoat hate figures.

Jake

Down with Technology?

Dear *Freedom*,

There are certainly no capitalist solutions to the recession but your faith in technology as an essential element in a future anarchist leisure society is puzzling. Is this the same technology being used to dam the Narmada river in India pushing 60,000 people off their land, or the technology that allows American grain farmers to produce mountains of food but lose 4,000 million tonnes of topsoil per annum; or is it the kind of technology that requires the strip mining of jungles and the building of nuclear power stations to provide the iron ore and power with which to construct its constituent parts.

Today's technology is the result of an industrialisation that is destroying the biosphere and that is not only unsustainable but also non-transferable on a global scale. It is not unreasonable to suggest that people are starving and living in poverty because of the manufacture and use of technology. Sustainable organic agriculture is surely labour intensive and very low tech, and requires land reform more than machinery and expensive fertilisers.

According to many ecologists, a rapid process of de-industrialisation is essential for the earth's survival, this would make the presence of anything but the most primitive technology impossible in any future natural society.

John Rogerson

Bookchin & Deep Ecology

Murray Bookchin (letters, 12th December) rebukes me for saying I understood the essentials of Social Ecology from only three or four lucid pages by Peter Marshall, including only three sentences from the master himself. But my experience is that the essentials of anarchism, fascism, thermodynamics, palaeontology, ecology, Deep Ecology, Christianity or Renaissance humanism can indeed be put in a few hundred words. Books are needed to describe the complex ramifications, but the simple essentials can be summarised concisely.

Somewhere in Bookchin's vast output must be a concise account of Social Ecology, but I gave up looking for it in 1987. In that year I studied his essay 'Social Ecology versus Deep Ecology: a challenge for the Ecology Movement', first published as *Green Perspectives 4/5* and reprinted as an article in *The Raven*

number 3. The essay is mostly a denunciation of Deep Ecology, but it includes a passage headed "What is Social Ecology?" to which I turned in hope of an informative answer.

"Morally," I read, "it is avowedly humanistic in the High Renaissance meaning of the term, not the degraded meaning of 'humanism' that has been imparted to the word by David Foreman, David Ehrenfeld, a salad of academic 'deep ecologists' and the like."

I knew, of course, that the humanists of the High Renaissance were the scholars who revived the secular learning of the ancient world. I checked the dictionary to make sure: "humanist ... at the Renaissance, a student of Greek and Roman literature". So Social Ecology includes the study of ancient writers, but why "morally"?

I may be wrong (and if I am shown to

Has Class Homogeneity?

Dear Editors,

I wish to take issue with some of the points raised by Stephen Booth in his *Freedom* article 'The Dogma of Class Denied' (14th November). He denies that class has homogeneity, but does he analyse class correctly? He certainly does not view class in the same way as I and many others do. For me class is a social and economic relationship between those who own society's productive means and those who have been dispossessed of them, I'm sure Stephen Booth would agree that the private-property and the money-system which today dominate most of the globe as industrial capitalism are not the product of a god's will, or the result of our human nature. Surely he would have to accept that access to the world's means of providing for our essential needs (land for the growth of food, raw materials for providing us with shelter and the production of useful tools and machines) have been expropriated and monopolised over many centuries by a relatively small proportion of the human race. The result

of all this is that today the vast majority of us (the working class), in order to provide for our needs, are forced to sell our mental and physical labour through capitalism's system of wage-slavery. Admittedly this is a little simplistic, but it demonstrates the basis of economic organisation in society today. Also, how could such wealth have been channelled into the hands of so few, if not by the wholesale exploitation of those who have been denied free access to the world's productive means? Herein lies the homogeneity of class: our exploitation by those who monopolise society's productive means, and our collective exclusion from those means.

Having said all this I do not deny the great conflicts of interest within the working class. The working class certainly is not homogeneous in its actions, beliefs and behaviour. Far from it! Although our relationship to the capitalist system defines us as a class, the same capitalist system divides us and sets us into competition against ourselves. Within capitalism workers often follow a narrow individualism (competition for jobs, housing, etc.), at other times workers identify solely with their family, their local community, their place of work, the state, etc. Others associate their interests with religions or with reformist social and political campaigns which hope to ameliorate the hardships of life within capitalism. A few others, regrettably, follow the self-appointed leaders of Leninist, Trotskyist or Maoist sects. I agree with Stephen Booth when he says: "how can anyone be said to live at all under capitalism?" That is why so many libertarian socialists and anarchists seek to highlight the social and economic relationships present within capitalism and try to convince other workers of the necessity of working towards capitalism's downfall. Capitalism is not going to collapse of its own accord - the vested interests of those who monopolise the access to the world's wealth will have to be challenged politically by the rest of us!

Finally, I would also question Stephen Booth's comments on the relationship between what he terms "vanguard revolutionary groups" and the working class. Because his analysis of class is similar to that commonly espoused by liberal sociologists, census analysts and the marketers of consumer goods, he confuses himself on the relationship between the two. Why are those who are members of political groups not also members of the working class? I agree with Stephen Booth that such groups should not dictate to, or speak on behalf of, the wider community (who wants to see any more Bolshevik-style parties? certainly not me!) But why shouldn't a group with a class-based analysis of society try to spread its views by means of open and non-coercive debate? Looking at the issue like this clearly refutes Stephen Booth's statement that "no anarchist could hold the dogma of class".

Peter Owen

be wrong I will apologise), but I came to the conclusion that Murray Bookchin did not mean anything in particular by "High Renaissance", that he used the phrase for no other reason than that it sounded good. The rest of the passage is similarly high-sounding but insubstantial, "Socially, it is revolutionary, not merely 'radical' ... Politically, it is Green - and radically Green", and so on. Bookchin's answer to the question "What is Social Ecology?" amounts to 'Social Ecology is good' expanded to five hundred words.

This is windy rhetoric, and by all means insert an exclamation point in parenthesis if it makes you feel better.

There is an orthodoxy that the world may be put to rights by a thorough reading of Murray Bookchin. But after a thorough reading of that one passage, I embraced the heresy that life is too short for any more.

Donald Room

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

On *Freedom's* negative criticism

Dear Editors,

Like your correspondent P.A.T. Clarke (12th December) I too read *Freedom* for the accuracy of its negative criticism. I shall continue to read *Freedom*, even if the world is going to hell it's still best to have your eyes open.

But in an attempt to answer Mr Clarke you list seven demands made by Italian anarchists in 1920. Please discuss them more fully. Here are some obvious questions:

Number two says there is to be no coercion. Number three says that everyone voluntarily submits to free associations. What happens to people who do not agree with free associations? Are they or are they not coerced?

Number six would result in a truly massive immigration into the country or area that first began to set up numbers one, two, three and four. This immigration would be so massive as to utterly swamp any chance of social betterment. Is this not so?

In the case of number five, who decides where truth lies? If there wasn't any more than one possible (scientific) opinion there wouldn't have been controversy in the first place.

There's three simple questions. Answers please!

Mike Montrose

We are planning an issue of *The Raven* on 'Anarchism and Crime'. It will cover an anarchist view of crime and how antisocial acts would be dealt with in an anarchist society. We would welcome articles on this subject from anyone interested in these issues. Any article should be sent to Freedom Press at 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

Warm greetings to all our readers, friends and critics! This issue of *Freedom* has been largely compiled by the end of December because of the Xmas close-down of our printers and everybody else, so some of our topical pieces had to be written in the last week of December and may be out of date for the facts, but we don't think it will affect our conclusions!

If you haven't completed and returned the **Freedom Survey** please do so now. We have published one editor's reactions to the first 100 replies received. It is an interim report. We shall in due course, when we hope many more surveys will have been returned, publish a more representative report and comments on it.

Copies of *The Raven* number 20 in fact came back from the binders on Xmas eve, but too late to dispatch before the great 'close down' of the postal services. However, by now *Raven* readers should have received their copies. If you haven't, let us know.

Subscription renewals which have been coming in fast and furious are now being dealt with and acknowledged by Harold Sculthorpe. As we have introduced a new system in the office for dealing with them, if your renewal has not been acknowledged please let us know. You can also check by the address

News from Angel Alley

label. If your subscription to *Freedom* expired at the end of 1992 the number above your name will be 5324, and if renewed for one year it should now read 5424 or if for six months 5412.

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* For convenience sake we closed our books for 1992 on 22nd December. All donations received after that date will be included in January 1993.

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

1992/1993 MEETINGS

8th January - 'An Anarchist Daily' (speaker John Rety)

15th January - General discussion

22nd January - 'Whitewav 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

We are now booking speakers and topics for the 1992-93 season. This is from 25th September to 11th December 1992, then from 8th January to 26th March and 23rd April to 9th July 1993. If anyone would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, please make contact giving names, proposed subjects and a few alternative dates. These can either be speaker-led meetings or general discussions. Overseas and out-of-town speakers are particularly welcome. Friday is the only night available for the meetings as the centre is booked up for classes on other nights.

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

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

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