

# anarchist fortnightly Freedom

Vol. 54 No. 2

23 JANUARY 1993

FIFTY PENCE

*"We anarchists do not want to emancipate the people. We want the people to emancipate themselves."*

Errico Malatesta

## Reflections on Freedom of the Press OUR UNFREE PRESS

Our daily press – 'gutter' and 'quality' – are up in arms at the threat of legislation to curb their free-for-all reporting, especially on the private lives of royalty and politicians. So far as we are concerned they can go on doing so to their hearts content. We are in principle and for obvious reasons opposed to all forms of censorship of the press. After all, the first victims

are always the minority, alternative press.

As to legislation to prevent phone-tapping, bugging and long-focus camera photos, we find this ironical in view of government phone-tapping 'in the public interest' – which means tapping telephones of political minorities such as the anarchists and at one time of CND officials, and of police photographers at demonstrations against the poll tax and of the CND.

We couldn't care less about scandals affecting royalty and ministers, politicians and priests. What does interest us is that we do not have a *free press*! We have a millionaire's press which is

concerned to maintain the capitalist system of privilege and production for profit at all costs. All the national press, apart from *The Guardian* (which is owned by a trust, but is nevertheless a staunch capitalist establishment organ) is owned by millionaires who are concerned to maintain the status quo and their personal influential position in the corridors of power. There is no alternative press in this country. The communist (?) *Morning Star* is the only opposition daily and probably has a circulation of 10,000 compared to the ten million daily-brainwashing provided by the tabloid press.

*(continued on page 2)*

### GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM IN IRAQ

On 13th January, United States aircraft, with a few token British and French aircraft, bombed anti-aircraft batteries and command-control centres in the 'no-fly zone' of southern Iraq.

Whatever the military objective, one result – one intended result – was that a lot of low-ranking Iraqi soldiers were killed. But there is no direct mention of this in the media briefings. There is something nauseating about the euphemisms in which the American and allied military describe their death-dealing activities.

"This was a spanking for Saddam, not a real beating." What this means is that only a few Iraqis got killed, rather than the thousands killed in the 1990 'Desert Storm' war. It is announced that on 13th January there were "no coalition casualties", and in 1990 there were very few coalition casualties. Iraqi casualties are just not mentioned.

We know from other sources that towards the end of 'Desert Storm' Iraqi soldiers were buried alive by bulldozers pushing sand into the trenches where they were sheltering. We know from common sense that command and control centres are staffed and that taking them out must involve killing the staff. But military propaganda is in terms of a political cartoon: killing a few of

Saddam's minions is represented as smacking Saddam's bottom.

We can find grounds for optimism in this. A few decades ago, Western governments at war would boast about how many of the 'enemy' they had slaughtered, confident that their populations would applaud. There are places where this is still the case, but the governments of America, Britain and France, evidently, can no longer rely on the bloodthirsty xenophobia of their subjects. They have to be mealy-mouthed about the killings because ordinary people do not like the idea of killing, even of foreigners. Good.

All the same, the euphemisms are disgusting.

### THE ALTERNATIVE TO UNEMPLOYMENT

The Burton fashion group has announced sackings affecting 933 buyers, merchandisers, personnel and financial staff, etc., in London representing a quarter of the head office workforce. They are also sacking 1,000 full-time shop-floor jobs all over the country. What is interesting in these decisions is that at the same time they are said to be

creating 3,000 part-time jobs instead.

Far from imagining that the Burton moguls are thinking of how to reduce the number of unemployed, they obviously see this as a money saving exercise. Indeed they have already worked out that including compensation for some of the top brass being axed, the cost of the redundancies will be £10-£15 million but will be paid back in the current year in savings on wages. Most of the 1,900 now being sacked will be "offered part-time work".

Patricia Hewitt, one of the Labour Party's gurus and deputy director of the Institute for Public Policy Research, in an article in *The Independent* looks upon the Burton group's announcement as "a harbinger of employment patterns to come". Among other considerations she believes that "there can be no return to full employment as we know it". She also maintains that:

"Most of those officially unemployed are men seeking full-time jobs ... [and] this cannot be allowed to continue, if only

*(continued on page 2)*

OUR UNFREE PRESS

(continued from page 1)

So to talk of a free press is nonsense. We have a capitalist press which serves up the 'news' which suits their interest. Reuters and other press services produce a million words a day for them to choose from. Even assuming Reuters to be neutral in its approach (which we doubt since Reuters' shareholders are the press millionaires) the general uniformity of the front pages, and this includes the so-called 'quality' broadsheets, gives one the impression of some kind of collusion among the editors. Except of course when they have a 'scoop' - generally a scandal - which they think will boost circulation. It is surely ironical that this millionaires' press is currently giving the Labour Party advice on how it should go about winning elections! Last Sunday (10th January) all the 'quality' press were doing just this. The most blatant was *The Sunday Times* which, apart from an extraordinary editorial, employs people like Roy Hattersley the former Labour Deputy Leader, Martin Jacques the editor of the now-defunct coffee table monthly of the Communist Party *Marxism Today*, and Peter Kellner, a typical professional hack who is obviously doing very well pontificating on television and elsewhere from what should be an uncomfortable seat on the fence. *The Sunday Times* editorial 'Labour's Lost Chance' is a perfect example of the arrogance of the media who, as ever, are convinced that they alone have the secrets for good government and prosperity. What that editorial is proposing is that a Thatcherite Labour Party led by Tony Blair could well put the present government out of business. Obviously the Labour Party must rid itself of unions, should adopt proportional

representation and "... in a country weighted down by the past and replete with ossified institutions, practices and beliefs, the importance of radicalism is obvious. What moreover is the point of a left-of-centre party that is a pillar of conservatism and the status quo? It would be a contradiction in terms, and yet that is what the Labour Party has become over the past two decades." But if one got the impression that the slimy Tory editor Andrew Neil was going 'bolshie' the following will reassure the county readers of *The Sunday Times*. "The last decade has seen the collapse of socialism and the effective disintegration of the left as a coherent political force. In other words, a unique opportunity presents itself for Labour to break free from the shackles of the past - the dogma, the shibboleths, the slogans masquerading as thought. They are paper tigers that should be consigned to the dustbin of history." Socialism has not failed. It has not been given a chance. The Second International abandoned revolution for the ballot box and we have the results in the Labour party and all the 'socialist' parties of Europe a hundred years later and with two world wars and capitalism unchallenged. The Third International in the Soviet Union was revolution and 'socialism from above' and after a political strangle-hold lasting more than seventy years has collapsed - possibly from bad to worse, as it flounders in the free(-for-all) capitalist market. So far as political and social ideas are concerned there is no such thing in the Western world as the fashionable 'level

playing field'. Far from newspapers such as *The Sunday Times* proposing an exciting alternative society they are simply advocating a consumerist society of 'ideas' but well within the confines of the capitalist prison. There is no escaping so long as all communications are in the hands of the capitalist moguls, quite apart from the multi-nationals owning and controlling all our basic needs. So long as the genuine Left goes on relying on the political party game, all politics boils down to vote-catching and office at the expense of the abolition of the capitalist system which perhaps many people calling themselves socialists may have forgotten! The Labour Party spent millions last April to buy votes. They apparently haven't a penny to produce a newspaper which will honestly explain what socialism is about. *The Labour weekly* was axed when they had to make cuts to make ends meet. Then there was a *New*

*Socialist*. That collapsed. Then there was *Socialist* and that faded out - it started as a fortnightly, then a monthly and then nothing! Now the best that can be done is a posh quarterly at £7 a copy. We have yet to see the first issue. And how long will that last? To conclude, we must come full circle. We oppose all censorship while at the same time we would like to see the 'gutter' press in the gutter. So long as millions of people are prepared to buy the tabloid press it will go on being published, just as the politicians go on ruling our lives so long as most of us vote for them. The anarchists call on people to run their own lives and not vote for others to do so. The pattern of the press will only be changed when enough people stop supporting the gutter press but also are prepared to create and to support an alternative press. At present, all the indications are that they are not. This is the tragedy of our time.

Poisonous effluent from newspapers

We hear a lot about newspapers polluting minds, but not so much about them polluting the natural environment. Certainly we do not think of them as producers of radioactive waste. However, the radio-isotopes cesium 137, cobalt 60, potassium 40, strontium 90, radium and even plutonium have been detected in the effluent of newspaper printers in the United

States. The source is believed to be trees contaminated by the Chernobyl accident used in the manufacture of paper. The largest concentration of newspaper factories in the world is in the docklands area of London. They discharge enormous amounts of effluent into the Thames, but the level of radioactivity and toxicity is not known, because the effluent is not precisely analysed. It does not poison fish, and this is apparently all that Thames Water requires for Trade Effluent Consents. But London's drinking water has four times the level of radioactivity recommended for drinking water by the World Health Organisation, some chemicals used in printing are known to be carcinogenic, and there are those who call for the effluent from Docklands to be scrutinised more closely.

Londoners Against Media Pollution  
92 Nightingale House  
Thomas More Street  
London E1 9UB  
Tel: 071-481 0766

NHS versus Bureaucracy

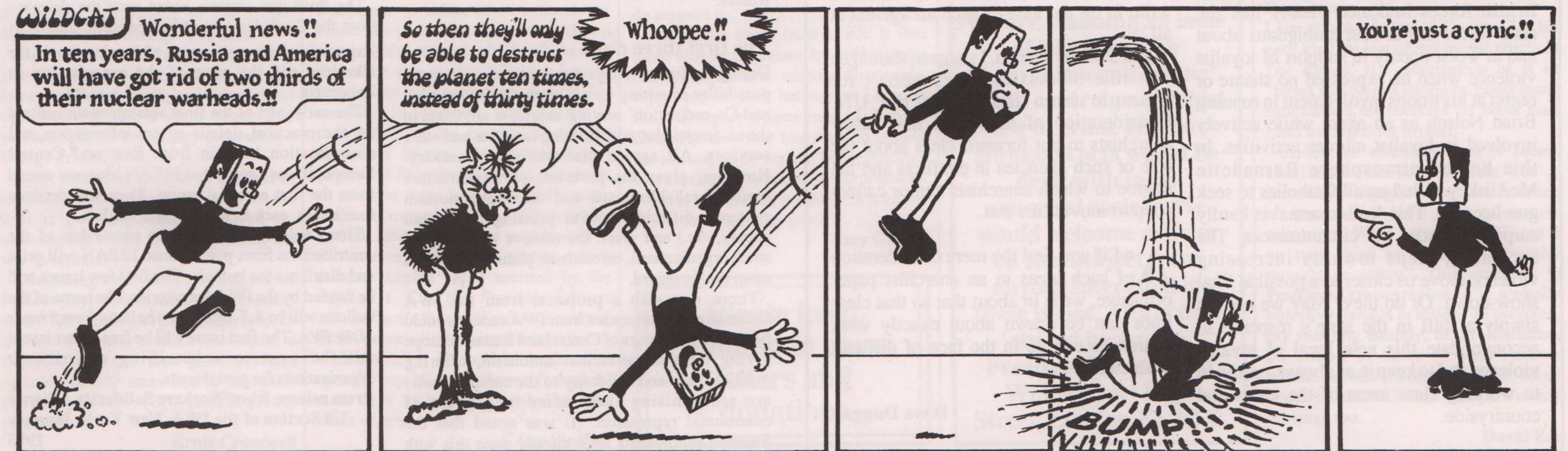
Whatever one can say by way of criticism of the original NHS, there is no doubt that since the government introduced its 'market-style health care system' things have gone from bad to worse. A parliamentary question six months after the introduction of the market and the creation of the first 57 opted-out hospital trusts has produced the most extraordinary and significant reply by the government. The bald figures need no comment. The number of managers has almost tripled to 12,150, a rise of 7,610 since September 1989. The number of administrative and clerical staff in the same period have risen by 10,500 to 116,420. But the number of nursing and midwifery staff has fallen by 8,450. There is a lot more to be said, but surely these figures must give us all food for thought - especially those of us who are candidates for the 'market' NHS!

THE ALTERNATIVE TO UNEMPLOYMENT

(continued from page 1) because we cannot afford it. neither the unemployed nor the taxpayer, Neither families nor communities, can bear the weight placed on us all by three million unemployed." Nowhere in Ms Hewitt's article does one find her suggesting that full employment should be limited to a three-day week of eight hours. What she hopes is that people in full employment in their fifties and who "want to cut their hours" will make it possible for unemployed people wanting full-time jobs having at least a part-time job. But they would only be considered as part-time workers and would not enjoy the same pension and other benefits. Again, she points out that: "Cuts in hours for full-time workers may help to maintain the number of jobs available, but enhanced productivity resulting from high technology is inexorably reducing the demand for labour." Her conclusion is that: "Voluntary cuts in hours and income appall those for whom full-time work is the only real work. For some, however, full-time, lifetime work means servitude. Full employment in a flexible society can mean different people, at different stages in their lives, wanting to work and being able to work different hours. Of course, flexibility itself is not a cure for unemployment. Investment in education and training is essential; in part to ensure that

those now unemployed have the skills that employers increasingly need. But flexible employment would mean that we could start to offer some practical hope to those for whom there is now precious little hope at all." Unfortunately the capitalist system is not flexible and not only does the government refuse to accept the community social chapter dealing with working conditions and limiting working hours to a maximum of 48(!) in a week, but is also dismantling the wages boards which have hitherto dealt with the wages of millions of low paid workers. Within the capitalist system (even if Labour were to be in government) the initiative for a shorter working week must come from the employed and this will only come about when they look upon their leisure hours as being as valuable as their pay packet. Their material standards will inevitably prevent them from flashing their plastic cards on useless gadgetry, and there will be fewer take-away meals, and useful gadgets will be made to last longer. But think of all the things one could do, and make, in those leisure hours! In fact we might even start running our own lives instead of leaving others to push us around.

New title from Freedom Press  
**DEEP ECOLOGY**  
&  
**ANARCHISM**  
A POLEMIC:  
Murray Bookchin,  
Graham Purchase, Brian Morris,  
Rodney Aitchey  
— with —  
CAN LIFE SURVIVE?  
by Robert Hart  
— and —  
THE APPLE FALLS FROM  
GRACE  
by Chris Wilbert  
£2.50 (post-free inland)



## Looking at the Land

A recent public opinion poll found that around 70% of the Great British Public wished to live in the countryside. But what do these people understand by 'the countryside', of the history and development of villages, towns, cities and agriculture in these isles?

From Alport Heights, 1,040 feet above mean sea level, in the Parish of Alderwasley, Derbyshire, it is possible to look over a vast tract of Middle England. On a clear day you can see forty to sixty miles west to the Wrekin, Long Mynd and even Wales; to the north twenty to twenty three miles to the moorland at Beeley near Sheffield; to the south thirty miles to Ironville, Leicestershire; to the east beyond Nottingham thirty miles to the Vale of Belvoir.

Looking down into the Ecclesbourne and Derwent river valleys, which lie west and east of the Height, you could be forgiven for wondering whether the much-talked of ecological crisis exists at all. To a casual glance, little of this crisis is apparent. Over the whole view from Alport much of man's activity appears agricultural and benign – by day that is! But at night when street and house lights are turned on, vast stretches of Derby and Nottingham, towns, villages and roads become all too apparent. And the pollution we, the people of these places, cause – nitrates, sewage, waste and rubbish, CO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, CFC's, etc., are all there.

The farming landscape visible from Alport illustrates the transition from 'Upland' to 'Midland Plain', from sheep farming and forestry visible to the north, to arable crops and flatter country which stretches south to the edge of London and the South East, to East Anglia and the Fens.

Viewed from a height, or via a map such as the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 series, the

landscape of Britain is like a book. You can see much of what people have done in the past, as well as what we are doing now. This is well illustrated by the ground around Middleton Top with its narrow stone-walled fields which mark out the 'strips' of the pre-enclosure open field agricultural system, which once covered most of the 'Midland Plain'. Closer to Wirksworth the quarries continue to nibble away at the hillsides, the bulk of the material being road stone for motorways, etc., while new housing estates spring up at the edge of the town. This Derbyshire landscape has seen Roman lead mines, roads and settlements; Saxon and Viking founded towns, i.e. Derby; the transition from medieval to 'modern' farming, and the Industrial Revolution itself, and the ever-growing modern urban sprawl around Nottingham and Derby.

The fields to the south around Derby and the Trent Valley are 'late enclosure', being larger and often more square in shape than the narrow long strips of fields in the white peak. These larger fields were mostly enclosed during the eighteenth century up to and including the Parliamentary enclosures around 1790.

The evidence of early Industrial Revolution activity covers the landscape around the north of Alport: lead mining, quarrying, water-powered mills such as the textile mill at Cromford, linked by canal to London – a sort of eighteenth century M1! water-powered mills line the banks of the Derwent as far as Derby. Arkwright's Mill and company town at Cromford mark one of the early attempts by mill owners to provide for, and dominate, their

workforces. Housing, chapel, shops and workplace, are all together under sight and control of the owner.

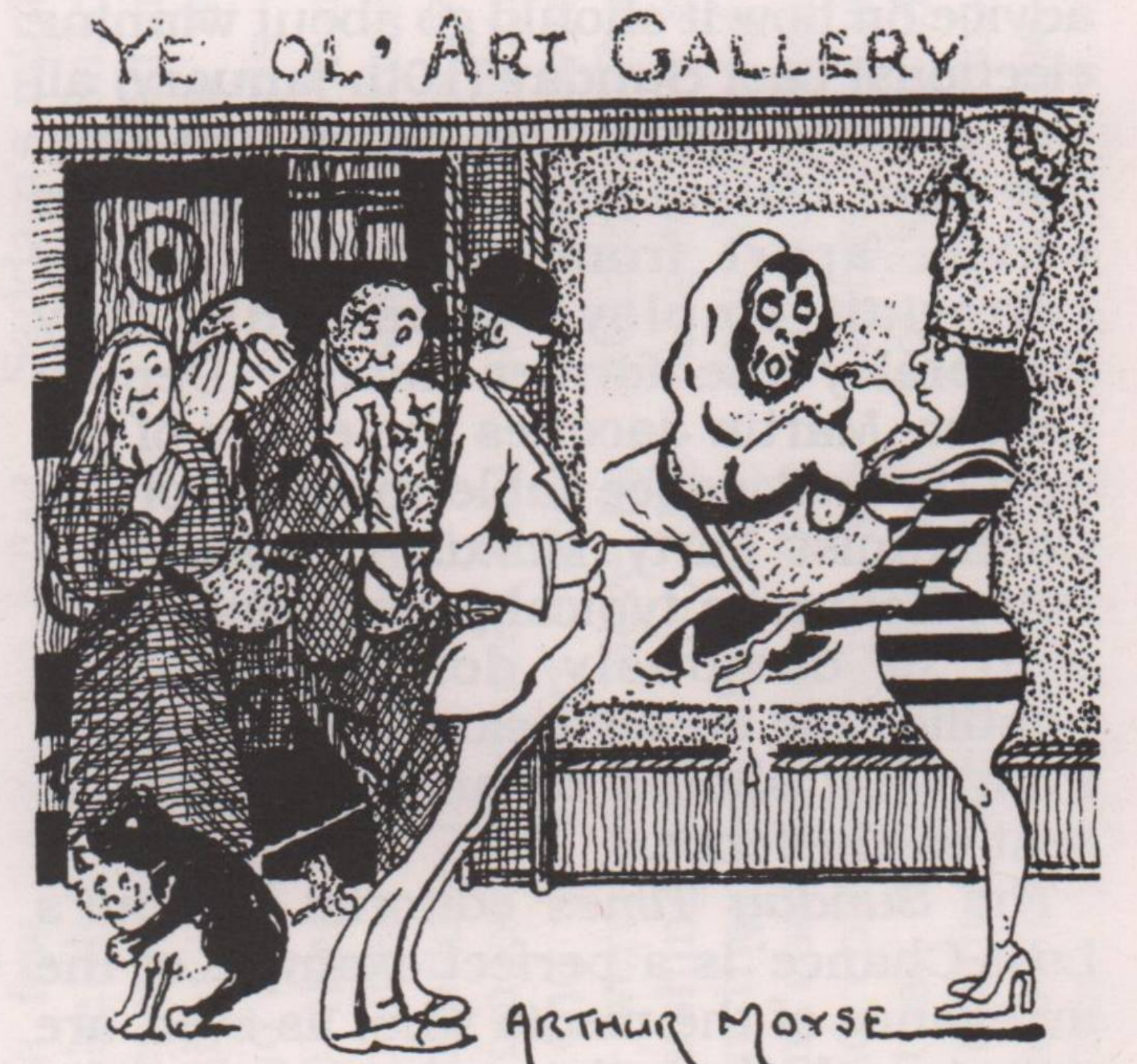
You can analyse landscape in this way from any high place or map. It is clear from the evidence which you can see in front of you, our landscape, from Scotland to Cornwall, is largely man-made, manufactured landscape. Very little is wilderness. It is what it is because of human hands clearing the forests, ploughing the fields, building the villages, towns, canals, railways and cities.

Freedom editorials on land use have advocated that the unemployed and mal-employed city dwellers of today take up, in a modern way, Cobbett's 'Two Acres and a Cow', but I hope that if ever this new re-population of the land takes place, that people will build with a realisation that they are not the first hands to till this landscape nor will they be the last.

There are three authors in particular whose

works can help our understanding of these matters. John Seymour's *Understanding the Countryside* gives a good over-view of the geology, the soils, plants both wild and 'crop', animals, woodland and man's use of these. W.G. Hoskins *The Making of the English Landscape* gives the historical perspective from initial clearance to modern times with a good look at everything in between! R.W. Brunskill's *Traditional Buildings of Britain* takes a scholarly look at the regional variety of 'vernacular' architecture, i.e. buildings people have built for themselves to meet their needs using locally available materials. Hoskins and Seymour are published by Penguin/Pelican, Brunskill by Collanz.

J. Simcock



"I told them straight that I'd no intention of paying £1,000,000 for that Francis Bacon painting."

"Why, beloved?"

"Because the damn thing hasn't got a bloody frame."

### New FREEDOM PRESS Titles

– JUST OUT –

*What is Anarchism? An Introduction*  
80 pages ISBN 0 900384 66 2 £1.95

*Love, Sex & Power in Later Life: a libertarian perspective*

by Tony Gibson  
104 pages ISBN 0 900384 65 4 £3.50

*Freedom to Go: after the motor age*  
by Colin Ward

112 pages ISBN 0 900384 61 1 £3.50

available from FREEDOM PRESS (post free inland)

## News from Northern Ireland

The attempt by the UVF to wipe out the Shields family just outside Dungannon in Tyrone failed because the mother, a son and a daughter barricaded themselves into a downstairs room. The gunmen did manage to kill a young man and his fifty-year-old father. The MP for the area, an official unionist, condemned the murders and the deputy leader of the SDLP said he was prepared to talk to the UVF to bring an end to these killings. The UVF refused to meet with him, condemning him as a lackey of the southern state.

Thus 1993 opened with a vengeance. And vengeance is the highest item on the military agenda at present, although the IRA have said they won't adopt a 'free target' approach in response to the plan by loyalist paramilitaries to increase the ferocity, spread and frequency of their activities. The officer in command of the British forces indicated clearly that the state forces are at best ambiguous about, and at worst openly in support of loyalist violence when he expressed no shame or regret at his troops involvement in running Brian Nelson as an agent while actively involved in loyalist murder activities. In this heated atmosphere Bernadette McAliskey called on all Catholics to seek gun licences. This 'call to arms' is hardly surprising under the circumstances. The escalating steps towards increasing violence move us closer to a possible final show-down. Or do they? May we not see simply a shift in the state's response to accommodate this new level of loyalist violence and to keep it, as always, confined to working class areas of the cities and countryside.

Dave Duggan

Considerations such as these bring me back to the notion of an 'anarchist agenda for Ireland now', first mentioned in November. I've already put forward two items: 'total demilitarisation in Ireland' and 'freedom to express differing cultural traditions'. As mentioned then, I may be trying to ride two horses at the same time – on the one hand promote anarchist thinking and action and on the other locate discussion in the messy realities of the here and now. And yet I feel it's important for readers of *Freedom* to give attention to the current situation. By focusing some hard-nosed anarchist thinking on a difficult problem, as the war in Ireland is, not only may that situation be addressed but also anarchist theory and practise itself will be enhanced.

With that in mind I'm adding another item to the agenda. feel free to write in on this one, or the other two above, or on any additional items you come up with. Or write in on the idea of such an agenda at all.

Item 3 on the agenda, I suggest, should be 'the role of outside intervention', for example from the EC or the UN. Consideration of this point may allow anarchists to put forward ideas about the role of such agencies in conflicts and the degree to which anarchists can or cannot support moves like that.

And if you find the mere consideration of such ideas in an anarchist paper offensive, write in about that so that clear lines can be drawn about exactly what anarchists can do in the face of difficult problems.

## East-West Anarchist Unionists meet to discuss The Prospects for Anarcho-Syndicalism in Eastern and Central Europe

Between 25th to 29th November 1992, Anarcho-syndicalists (anarchist unionists) from several countries met in Berlin, Germany, to discuss 'The Prospects for Anarcho-Syndicalism in Eastern and Central Europe'. Delegates from anarchist unions and anarchist groups came from Bulgaria, Hungary, Russia and the Ukraine to be guests of the Free Workers Union (FAU) Berlin local. Also present were members of the FAU from different parts of Germany and the current Secretary of the International Workers Association (IWA). Guests from other organisations were also present at various times, including a delegation from the Swedish Central Workers Organisation (SAC) and members of a couple of German anarchist groups and periodicals. Greetings were received from the Workers Solidarity Alliance – IWA (USA), from a Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists (KAS) group, from the FAU Co-ordinating Commission, the Workers Solidarity Movement (Ireland) and from a group in White Russia.

### The first three days

During the first two days discussion centres on the possibility of setting up a 'Centre for Information and Co-ordination' serving anarchist unionists in the ex-Soviet bloc with printing facilities and other services. All agreed that this was necessary. However, given the problems of infrastructure there (unreliable postal and telecommunication systems, difficulties with printing paper and supply, etc.) and given the relative instability of some organisations, no concrete plans were agreed upon in this regard.

There was also a proposal from the IWA Secretariat that comrades from IWA sections could be invited to do tours of Central and Eastern Europe giving talks on anarchist unionism, offering practical help and solidarity to the comrades who are reorganising there after long years of communist repression. (It was noted that the Swedish syndicalists have already done this with

mixed results.) It was agreed that such speaking tours could go ahead if suitable speakers and translators could be arranged.

On the third day, the early discussion touched again on both of these points, as well as on the more detailed problems involved in setting up projects. Information was exchanged about the needs of different organisations and how the IWA and Western organisations could help effectively. It was agreed that the first step would be to start an Information and Co-ordination Bulletin. The Initiative of Revolutionary Anarchists (IREAN, Russia) have already issued two numbers of a Russian-language *A Info* bulletin, sent to groups outside Russia. There are also other publications, but nothing specifically for the anarchist unionist movement. During this discussion it was also suggested that it was necessary to have some East European language pamphlets too, such as the classic text *The Principles of Anarcho-Syndicalism* by Rudolf Rocker.

The third day session ended with the delegate from the Confederation of Independent Unions in Zaporozie giving a summary of the situation in the Ukraine, and the state of the organisation in Zaporozie.

The early part of the final session again centred on the practical details of an information and co-ordination bulletin from East and Central Europe. It was agreed that IREAN Moscow would form the first editorial group. They will produce four issues, each in Russian and English.

There will be no editing or censorship of the contributions from participants. IREAN will print and distribute the bulletin. The first few issues will be funded by the IWA Secretariat. The name of the bulletin will be *A.S. Info: open bulletin from friends of the IWA*. The first issue will be free. Later issues will be sent to subscribing contributor organisations for postal costs.

Press release from Workers Solidarity Alliance  
US Section of the IWA, New York, January 1993

## The attacks on refugee centres

Most of the recent attacks on refugee centres have been done by young people of 20 years or younger. A sizeable minority of these are members of the various neo-Nazi or racist and nationalist organisations which exist in Germany. The majority are not members of specific organisations, but are part of a 'right wing youth scene' which is sometimes hard for the leaders to discipline and keep in line. The reactionary values held by the young people in this sub-culture often come from the widespread playing of racist computer video games (such as 'KZ Manager' banned by the German government) which create and reinforce racist and nationalist ideas and promote an acceptance of violence. Also part of this sub-culture are the skinhead rock bands (about fifty in Germany) and their 'fanzines'. The aggressive music and lyrics against foreigners and 'leftists', combined with lots of alcohol, put the youths in a state where they are ready to go out and attack people.

However, the tolerance for the attacks goes far beyond this youth scene. Xenophobia, racism and authoritarian attitudes are now widespread in German society, both in the old and the new Federal States. The major political parties recognise and partly accept these attitudes. They are changing their policies on political asylum and who is considered to be a refugee to keep up with the spirit of the times. Thus the effect of the attacks is for the mainstream politicians who run the state to give in to the demands of the racists by starting to discuss a change in the German constitution. This would limit the number of refugees entering Germany and result in the expulsion of many already in camps here. A further effect of the attacks could be a growth in the authoritarian nature of the state. Laws limiting the right to demonstrate were proposed by the CDU Interior Minister on 9th October in a special conference on right-wing extremism, a problem which they have finally recognised as existing.

# Racism and Nationalism in Germany 1992

## The anti-fascist movement and the state

Since the collapse of state socialism in eastern Europe and the annexation of East Germany, the marxist left has had a crisis of identity, many people are demoralised, with many members leaving organisations and some organisations disappearing. For the first time since the start of the federal Republic the annual report on constitutional security notes a greater number of 'far right' activists than the number of 'far left' activists. This has clearly given the nationalists and racists more confidence and had an effect on the anti-fascist movement as well. The movement is not unified and there is no clear strategy apparent. The various immigrant communities are divided by barriers of language, religion, ideology and race. And the Germans themselves are divided between different sorts of reformists and revolutionaries.

There are a large number of people in Germany, in the churches, in the mainstream parties, in the unions, and in the immigrant communities, who don't like the growth in racist nationalism. But many are passive or limit activity to peaceful demonstrations in solidarity with the victims of racism, demanding action from the state against the neo-nazis. A smaller number of people, mainly autonomists and revolutionary marxists, are willing to oppose the neo-nazis when they take to the streets or attack refugee centres. The state is able to marginalise this second group by condemning all violence and describing them in the same terms as the neo-nazis, for example after the big demo in Berlin when stones were thrown at the President. The large numbers of passive anti-fascists help the state in this process of divide and conquer by their demands for tougher laws and with the uncritical

acceptance that all violence is bad. Similarly, calls from some marxists to ban neo-Nazi groups can only lead to a more authoritarian state.

## The state and opposition to it

The German state is already a well organised state, with a high level of control over its citizens. It has been described as a model state, with an efficient federal and democratic system. For many people the democracy is just a facade. The system is, in reality, highly authoritarian and centralised. Clearly the autonomists, libertarians and anarchists would like to change this system for one which was basically democratic, ecological and decentralised. These same groups naturally oppose any changes to the state which make it more authoritarian and centralised. Therefore they oppose the neo-nazis who seek to bring about these negative changes. This opposition must sometimes involve physical confrontation. When people are being attacked and sometimes killed, organised self-defence is a priority. But it is equally important to oppose the reactionary ideas which are held by people across German society, and not just by the neo-nazis. The struggle for a society which is not capitalist, patriarchal, nationalistic and centralised is already an anti-fascist struggle. It must be against all states, not just against a national socialist state.

## A strategy of tension?

At present it is not clear how much of the activity of the racist, nationalist and neo-Nazi organisations is 'sponsored' by elements in the German state. After 1945 large numbers of nazis were accepted back into the system. For example, the BND (Federal Intelligence Service) was based on the USA-sponsored 'Gehlen organisation' led by military intelligence officer Reinhard Gehlen.

was sorted out. we found a new place, which is the former seat of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the only moment of which we have kept is the sign 'Prelate's Office' which we have stuck on the toilet door.

**HS:** And apart from being an archive, what other activities does CIRA participate in?

**RB:** We regularly publish a bulletin cataloguing our collection, updating what we have bought or received. Early on we decided to publish thematic bulletins ... We have produced these on The Marseilles Congress of 1879 ... another on the Marseilles section of the International, then themes like anti-militarism, Spanish anarchists from 1880 to 1914 and the inter-war years, the Social Theatre of Louise Michel in Provence. All these bulletins relate to the region around Marseilles. There was also an edition on the Spanish anarchists during the turbulent 1939-45 period, prepared by our local correspondent in Paris ... before that we had published an edition on anarchist involvement in the Resistance (out of stock) of which one part traced the activities of the clandestine international anarchist group from 1941 to '43, when André Arru was arrested and the group made up of militants of all nationalities, including Voline who still insisted on billboard posting at the age of 60-plus. At the same time we have published special editions on the libertarian movement in Bouches-du-Rhône ...

**HS:** What are CIRA's aims for the future?

**RB:** We shall soon be publishing following the route taken by one of our members from marxism to anarchism. We also monitor the appearance of periodicals and books about anarchism. There will be an edition on ten years of the anarchist press in France, which is being put together by a comrade in Orléans, and which forms the follow up to my thesis on 'A Century of the Anarchist Press in France (1882 to 1982)'. Another will deal with the underground Spanish movement. Finally one on libertarian camps, anarchist postcards and on the congresses and meetings of the anarchist movement (particularly the Congress in Carrara in 1968).

**NB:** The cassette of this interview will shortly be available from Radio Libertaire Productions.

**Useful addresses:**

CIRA de Marseilles, BP 40, 13382 Marseilles Cedex 13.

CIRA de Lausanne, 24 Avenue de Beaumont, CH-1012 Lausanne, Switzerland.

Centre de Documentation Anarchiste, 145 rue Amelot, 75011 Paris.

## A look at the International Centre of Anarchist Research (CIRA) in Marseilles

In 1964, CIRA was founded in Marseilles. Since that date, this centre of libertarian documentation has succeeded in drawing itself to the attention of militants and other sympathisers. Sylvain Eischenfeld interviewed René Bianco, one of its main activists, for the programme 'Histoire Sociale' on Radio Libertaire.

**Histoire Sociale (HS):** When and how did the International Centre for Anarchist Research (CIRA) come into being?

**René Bianco (RB):** CIRA Marseilles was an offshoot from CIRA Lausanne, founded in 1957-58. Our centre was set up at the end of 1964. We brought together a small group of comrades, mainly members of the French Anarchist Federation, and it was along with them that we founded the Marseilles annex.

**HS:** What were your aims?

**RB:** At the time regional and national. We were all living in Marseilles, about fifteen of us, and the anarchist movement was made up of a few dozen individuals. It was very hard to find texts by Kropotkin, Malatesta, Bakunin and other founding figures of the movement. The aim of the centre was to set up a library and also to scrounge material - newspapers, periodicals, manuscripts, letters - from old friends we came across here and there, many of whom had abandoned the struggle after World War Two.

**HS:** How did CIRA develop?

**RB:** To start with we didn't have very much, and we pooled together our resources. Then we gathered together batches of periodicals we found here and there - often at the local Trades Council where a comrade had set up a collection. This allowed us to set up the base.

**HS:** During the course of its history has CIRA faced any major problems which threatened its actual existence?

**RB:** I could say it has never been easy. The first problem was simply functioning, we survive thanks to contributions which we receive, which limits our activities. The second snag was the volume of documents being acquired. For a long time the centre was located in a basement, and therefore in a fairly humid atmosphere. It was vital to move from there or else the documents we had brought together would have been lost ... Thanks to E.

Témine we found a large place in the town centre where we could organise meetings, seminars and a conference ...

**HS:** Were there any personality clashes or other problems? Is membership of CIRA open to anybody?

**RB:** Yes there were clashes. Yes, it is desirable that as large a number of anarchists as possible should join. We do not close our doors to sympathisers. We are a research centre, and in principal the documents we have are not secret and can be found elsewhere. Only private documents can pose problems and we apply the rule, common to any archive centre, that these are only released with the authorisation of those people or organisations with an interest in them ...

Some people have managed to join CIRA with the intention of changing its objectives, but with a little goodwill we manage to stay within the framework we have set ourselves, that it to say documentary research, classification, storage and making documentation available.

**HS:** For someone today with an interest in the history of anarchism, how does CIRA work?

**RB:** Anyone can use CIRA's resources, even without being a member. We reply to specific requests for information. If the research requires a lot of time, we ask the interested party to come and do the research themselves. But the member can expect something else, which is a lending library: we send the document and the interested party sends it back ... We also do lots of photocopying and the centre publishes internal circulars, as well as a bulletin. Meetings and conferences are also held, and we have noted that many centre members come from quite far afield to attend these.

**HS:** Why are periodicals and posters kept at the county archives in Bouches-du-Rhône?

**RB:** The main reason was when we were evicted. We had to ensure the safety of the documents (periodicals and posters) which had already been classified. That is why they were kept there and preserved in the best conditions where they are still the property of CIRA. Moreover, the documents can be consulted any day, which previously had been impossible as we were only open two days a week.

As far as premises were concerned, everything

Similarly, many of the industrialists and capitalists who have funded the national socialists were left in control of their businesses. These people, or their heirs, are high up in the establishment. Their influence is still important. Some capitalists, such as media boss Frey, sponsor of the DVU (German People's Union), openly supports racist and nationalist organisations. Others do the same less openly. As well as these people there are a large number of 'new right' intellectuals whose influence spans the political spectrum from conservatives to neo-nazis. Revisionist historians such as David Irving are accepted as serious by many people in the establishment. How many of this wide range of people are willing to be involved in a German version of the Strategy of Tension operated by elements of the Italian state is unknown.

In Italy during the '70s a 'parallel' state involving some top politicians, freemasons, secret service and military leaders, was responsible for organising a series of neo-fascist terrorist bombings and shootings. Their aim was to have an excuse for stronger laws and therefore a state which was more and more fascist in character without an open take-over by a neo-fascist party. Many of the Italian neo-fascists were unknowing puppets in this plan. Just as in the past, the young men were being used by the older men as 'squadristi', the Italian version of the Nazi SA. History shows what happened to the SA and to the 'leftist' Strasserite faction of the Nazi Party. Now the young skinheads are being used as expendable storm-troopers by the older neo-nazis.

Extracts from the FAU-IAA Newsflash  
Kassel, Germany, December 1992

THE RAVEN - 20

ON

KROPOTKIN

96 pages £3.00 (post free)  
from FREEDOM PRESS

## Direct Action Against War

At 4am on 6th January, Chris Cole, a Christian anarchist, walked into the British Aerospace factory at Stevenage wearing a white coat with 'BAe Bomb Disposal' stencilled on the back, and pinned to his front a BAe-style identity card identifying him as 'Chris Cole, Disarmer'.

He was arrested half an hour later. In the interim, he had wrecked the nose-cones of several Hawk strike attack aircraft and several prototype European Fighter Aircraft, and poured blood into some of the manufacturing equipment. Damage is estimated by BAe at £475,000.

The action was a symbolic demonstration; one of the hammers used by Chris had earlier been used in a similar action in the United States. But it may also have a direct, practical effect, beyond the money lost. The Hawks whose production is delayed were part of an order for Indonesia, currently occupying East Timor in circumstances similar to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait (except that East Timor is not an oil producer so the US is not calling for war against Indonesia). An attempt is being made in a Parliamentary committee to get the Ministry of Defence to withdraw the export licence for Hawks to Indonesia, and it is just possible that the delay will give time for the attempt to be successful.

Chris Cole was last mentioned in our columns in 1990, when with three others he walked into the US base at Upper Heyford and attacked some F1-11 aircraft.

6th January is the day the Roman church and its offshoots celebrate Epiphany, the occasion in Christian myth when the magi brought gifts to the infant Jesus. Chris Cole's statement says 'my gift of disarmament for is for all infants threatened by BAe weapons, from Northern Ireland to East Timor'.

Hebe, our cat, is in her 23rd year and enjoying Christmas with the rest of us. But her drinking problem is rather worse than ours because she is affected by that old cat trouble, kidneys.

To cope with her uncontrolled urinations I have to find a constant supply of old newsprint to cover her favourite hearth tiles. Occasionally an old copy of *Freedom* surfaces and catches the eye. Some of the summer issues got scant attention at the time – the headline in one of them, 'Getting Anarchism Across', caused me to rescue it and reflect on this perennial problem. John Griffin wrote (19th September 1992) that 'libertarian practise' spoke louder to his conventionally political workmate than theoretical exposition. He went on to conclude that most people have little interest in polemic, and consequently there wasn't much value devoting our greatest efforts to the production of magazines, pamphlets, etc., which were not going change anybody.

My own experience both confirms and contradicts this. My acceptance of the anarchist position did originally come from (chance) reading copies of *Freedom* passed on by a fellow worker. At first I scoffed, then laughed, then said "but how true".

What the printed word did for me was to open my eyes to the significance of the anarchistic activity I began to recognise all round me in what I had thought to be an essentially hierarchic mode of life. But the confirmation of John Griffin's theory is that it didn't seem to happen to everybody. There were plenty of copies of *Freedom* and *Anarchy* lying about in our house and thousands of people must have browsed through them but 'converts' did not flock in.

True my ten-year set of *Anarchy's* is somewhat depleted by loans not returned, and I soon learnt *not* to lend my sole copy of any of Colin Ward's books. Now there is a persuasive writer who must have done more than anyone else in this country since Kropotkin left Bromley.

We come closer to libertarian practice with Colin Ward in that this is his principled subject matter – both to record it happening (in unlikely places sometimes) and to inspire it. He is overtly influential though his propaganda is never hectoring or even

## Getting Anarchism Across

prescriptive. Those of us not gifted with such style, and not applying ourselves professionally to writing, have to take a more modest course. Covert influence is an essentially small-scale, person-to-person matter, such as one tries to exercise at home. I have always tried to be a loyal, while disobedient, child and a non-judgmental, while caring, parent. (Even here Godwin rather shook me by asserting that if we are to dispense with a law-and-order establishment we must be prepared to be constantly judges of one another.)

In the public sphere, ones anarchism tends to be covert in order to allow the possibility of making a living within the system. My own professional life as an architect has always been rather difficult to reconcile with anarchism.

The cult of the arrogant prima-donna professional imposing his (usually) own self-indulgent whims on to a suffering lay public is well known, and had in my time (and still has, I regret) a real core of truth. It is surprisingly difficult to get away from.

The expectation that as an 'artist' ones work should be original and individualistic is inculcated at architectural school. In practise, a further difficulty is that one has to work on a provided belief which rarely has any libertarian or even social component. Most buildings are put there to make money for someone, or to coerce people.

I sought employment with a London borough council where the intentions were good, but even there I found that the patriarchal attitude to housing and the hierarchical nature of local government administration was a serious obstacle. The best we seemed to be able to do was to design 'stage-set' housing for generalised clients.

However, as I reached a position of some seniority in the department (and had by then shaken myself free of my grandiose 'architectural' ambitions) I did at last come close to an anarchist work of architecture. I steered the council towards supporting a self-build group.

I have described the triumphant

achievements of the Lewisham Self-Build Housing Association in *The Raven*, and with Jon Broome have written *The Self-Build Book* which, drawing on that experience, goes at proper length into the joys, tribulations and ultimate satisfaction of building ones own house. We conclude, with justification, that self-build generates empowerment.

The connections between self-build and 'anarchy in action' are strong, and the practise and advocacy of it has come to be my principal way of 'getting anarchism across', to come back to John Griffin's plea for more ideas please!

If one can afford to do so without contradicting terms, I assert that everyone's first responsibility in life is to look after oneself. Not in all detail all the time, but overall ones lifetime. Not to be a wanton drain on society, but to contribute just that little bit more than one draws out ensures that everyone else has the opportunity to look after themselves too.

This is not in the spirit of 'I'm alright and the devil take the hindmost' but on the contrary, to lighten the burden one's existence puts on

the world. Looking after oneself in all the ways one can is in harmony with the socio-political principle of subsidiarity; everything that you *can* do without putting demands on others, you *should*.

Just as children like to tie their own shoelaces (do it *self!*) we can enjoy and profit from doing our own housekeeping, growing as much of our own food as our vegetable garden will produce, and looking after our own health. It comes naturally to me to go a little further – to the modest lengths of baking my own bread, brewing my own beer and building my own house. These occupations are quite convivial. Self-build is infectious. People love joining in each others projects and the tangible achievement is a shared satisfaction.

In our neighbourhood there has grown up a circle of people who share tools, pass on surpluses of material, contribute special skills, and are all available to be drawn on for the 'barn-raising' occasions when the job wants many hands for a short time. behind their backs I call them an anarchist group. Nobody is in overall charge, leaders spring up according to the nature of the job (it is usually the role of the individual who is owner-builder, but not necessarily so for each operation).

What I like about this is that we can behave anarchistically in this important sector of our lives without waiting for the revolution. We do not even completely dispense with capitalism as a way of getting buildings – we use the ordinary trade channels for those materials we cannot barter, and can even hire in commercial firms for specialist parts of the work that would cause us problems.

We do not have to claim parity for our actions, but we can all sense clearly enough that we have put ourselves in control of the operation.

I do not find I need to ram anarchist theory down people's throats to make them see the merits of self-build. I do not claim too much for it. It is not a panacea for all ills, nor even the only way to get a good building, but it is an eye-opener as to what is possible.

'Do it self – get building!'

Brian Richardson

*The Self-Build Book* by Jon Broome and Brian Richardson, Green Books, £15.

### New FREEDOM PRESS Titles

– JUST OUT –

*What is Anarchism? An Introduction*  
80 pages ISBN 0 900384 66 2 £1.95

*Love, Sex & Power in Later Life: a libertarian perspective*  
by Tony Gibson  
104 pages ISBN 0 900384 65 4 £3.50

*Freedom to Go: after the motor age*  
by Colin Ward  
112 pages ISBN 0 900384 61 1 £3.50  
available from FREEDOM PRESS (post free inland)

## FREEDOM'S READERSHIP SURVEY

(continued from previous issue)

There were many valid suggestions about variety. Some say more industrial news, others more international news, and still others would like to see news of the "international anarchist movement". We too would like all these important features to appear regularly in *Freedom*, but what our friends don't realise is that the capitalist press mainly relies on the news and features agencies supplying them daily with millions of words from which they can select and produce their papers. The alternative press if it is ever to be other than a very minor influence politically and socially, *must create its own news gathering and commissioning organisation internationally*.\* This requires finance, which is not available to us alone at Freedom Press but could be if all the anarchist journals and groups worldwide were able and willing to co-ordinate their efforts.

As to distribution, apart from a few alternative bookshops (and more and more are giving up, for all kinds of reasons) neither the wholesalers nor most booksellers or newsagents will carry *Freedom*, not for political reasons but because they 'don't pay for the space they occupy'. It's not just *Freedom*. *Tribune* is no longer handled by WH Smith's, so there again we have to create our own distribution. Some newsagents/bookshops will stock it if somebody is responsible for delivering the new issue, collecting any unsold copies and the money for those. We have mentioned this in *Freedom* without any response. Again, if we are to attract the well-meaning socialists who feel they have no

alternative but to be part of the Labour Party or Socialist Workers Party, we should have *sellers at meetings*. Years ago this was a normal routine, as were outdoor meetings in Glasgow and at Marble Arch in London where hundreds of copies would be sold on Sundays.

We have also suggested in *Freedom* that we would be willing to provide the literature and helpers with experience for local mini-bookfairs. That suggestion too was not taken up (though we should draw attention to the initiative of a friend in Aberystwyth, see contact page). Among those replying, a few say we ought to bring back the Contacts Column. They don't ask us why we removed it! Would you have a contact column with individuals and groups who didn't even take *Freedom*? That's the reason.

A brief analysis of the replies about Freedom Press titles: How useful or otherwise are they. Most of you think they are useful. One critic in the 20-40 group who honestly describes himself as "an armchair anarchist" likes "pamphlets" such as our latest *What is Anarchism?* but has no interest in "nineteenth century anarchists and the bloody Spanish Civil War (yawn!)". But he is an exception. Colin Ward's *Anarchy in Action* is popular and considered useful for introducing non-anarchists to our ideas, as are also Malatesta's *Anarchy*, Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* and Berkman's *ABC of Anarchism*.

Well wishing readers who despair that anarchism just reaches only the readers of *Freedom* will be encouraged when we tell them that we lost count of the number of copies sold of Berkman's *ABC of Anarchism* when we got to 20,000 copies. In that connection they will also be interested to learn that in 1992 in the year of 'recession' we sold at retail prices more than £20,000 worth of Freedom Press titles (not to be confused with the other anarchist titles we distribute). We are not resting on our laurels – far from it!

## – first impressions

Money is obviously a permanent problem – we produce as many publications as we have money to pay for the printing and binding (we are old fashioned anarchists who pay their bills as well as wanting to abolish the capitalist system, which probably explains why Freedom Press goes on producing more propaganda and our traducers go on producing very little apart from denouncing Freedom Press at every opportunity!)

But this is where you, our sympathetic readers, can play a major role in furthering anarchist propaganda at a time when the authoritarian left is bankrupt. Can we not establish local groups engaged in discussion, practical initiatives and involved in local affairs *as anarchists* and reporting for *Freedom*? And what about mini-bookfairs? You need to find a local newsagent who will stock *Freedom* and we advertise in the most suitable local paper that *Freedom* is on sale there. Freedom Press will pay for the advertisement(s), *but the local initiative must come from you the readers!* Do you not think that we at Angel Alley are doing as much as a handful of people can do in bringing out *Freedom* (almost) every fortnight and five or six Freedom Press titles as well as running the Freedom Press Bookshop (where we sold £15,000 worth of books in 1992).

This is only an interim *aperçu* of the *Freedom* survey 1992 by one of the editors with some suggestions as to how our work can be more effective *with your collaboration*. A lot more completed surveys have in the meantime reached us, and if you haven't sent yours we hope this interim 'report' will encourage you to do so so that we will be able to present a more complete picture of what *Freedom's* readers think and want to do. And we will take note, while obviously retaining our independence as the group that keeps Freedom Press alive twelve months of the year.

\* Interested readers are referred to *The Raven* number 12 'On Communication' and the Freedom Press Discussion Notes on Communicating (pages 377-383). Further comments appeared in *The Raven* numbers 14 and 15. All are still available at £3 (post-free).

# Against Reformism

Reformism is the idea that the political system can be improved, that the political realm itself provides means whereby abuses of power can be addressed and changes made to redress the 'democratic deficit'.

The reformist is a threat to those who are truly opposing the problem of the political, because reformism is a distraction. They make it possible for people to go on making excuses for the system, and they provide the potential dissident with an easy way out – play the system – that in fact is no solution at all. Reformism is a blind alleyway.

The reformist has a false view of the political. The electoral charade and parliamentary puppet show are taken for the decision-making process itself, rather than seen as a mere by-product of it. The reformist is defined in relation to government, while the unseen processes behind the puppet show are ignored. Thus the reformist's method of dealing with the problem is fundamentally flawed. They never face up to the fact that the visible farce is not the decision-making process but merely the method whereby the fact of control is publicly presented.

The reformist will never acknowledge that the swirling but insubstantial coloured patterns of party politics are simply the icing on the turd. We cannot accept that the circus, with its empty agenda, makes any difference. We cannot accept that voting Labour or Tory is the whole range of possibility. We cannot accept these, but the reformist believes the 'myth of democracy'. If playing the electoral lottery is our best hope, then we might as well pack it all in.

## Motives

The reformist is motivated out of inappropriately places moral concern. Reformists cling to the mistaken belief that the political responds to the ethical. It does not. Anarchists are motivated out of self-interest. The reformist believes that people matter to the political machine. They do not. Reformists think that votes count, that the system

responds to the wishes of people. They are wrong. People do not matter to it. Anarchists have few illusions about the dictatorship of the majority. There is nothing intrinsically correct about democracy. Thirteen million Tory lemmings cannot be right.

The reformist has this naive belief in 'the myth of democracy'. If enough people can be persuaded to push the democracy button in a certain direction then the problem will be solved. The reformist believes in the wisdom and power of the mass, the folly of faith in the crowd, rather than seeking to strengthen their own wisdom, and making their own efforts to find solutions.

The reformist believes in the system. They subscribe to the rotten apple thesis. If only the MPs and civil servants did their jobs correctly, if only we had a different government ... then everything would be fine. For the reformist, only the *details* of the decisions made are wrong. As anarchists we reject the whole system. The *whole barrel* is rotten, not just the individual apples.

## Compromise

*Story of a reformist.* Once upon a time there was a woman who saw the problem of the political, and decided to act. She saw the power-structure, and thought that the answer must be to influence the machine, so she joined a political party.

Months passed, committee meetings came and went. Eventually she became a candidate in a council election. With her commitment and drive, she is elected onto the Borough Council. Now, at last she is in a position to make a difference.

The machine is adept at manipulating people. When the time comes to make a stand she finds the whip of her party against her. She must decide between her interests and those of

her party. To stay on the treadmill of power, she compromises, rationalising 'I must retain my position within the party to influence it ...'

The reformist might as well not be there, the truth is that she has *no* influence. She mistook the power-spectacle for power itself. The visible machine is not the locus of decision – that itself lies elsewhere, behind closed doors. The problem with the reformists is that they are *all* compromising. Somewhere along the way the radical reformers are swallowed whole. Only the scheming, manipulative, double-crossing politicians prevail. The reformists always compromise, never the system.

## Betrayal

Or, take union disputes. Long ago, when trade unions took industrial action, they would appoint union bureaucrats to run the strike, and act as negotiators. Eventually a compromise deal would be worked out. Everybody would go back to work, only to find in the small print of the deal that the bosses and bureaucrats had stitched them up. *Betrayal is an implicit part of representation.*

The reformist may share the anarchist's critique of the political situation. This is part of the deception inherent in the reformist's position. Perhaps more importantly, the

reformist is self-deceived, for even under its own terms, when it uses such terms as democracy, representation and freedom, the system fails.

The reformist position is all the more deplorable because of this deception. 'If only we could change the government ...' An examination of history shows that the leopard of government has never changed its spots despite the best efforts of reformists from the anti-slavery struggles to the 1992 Los Angeles riot; from the efforts to bring in the universal franchise through to mass poll tax deregistration; from the fight of the suffragettes through to Margaret Thatcher. The reformist always pleads that we give the system 'one last chance'. People have been giving the system one last chance for years, and we are no further on. See for yourselves how every reform is subverted and negated by the corruption of the political system.

The reformist takes the easy way out, but worse than this lends his or her dwindling external credibility to the closed world of the circus. The reformist lends succour to the myth that all viewpoints are 'represented' and listened to in parliamentary 'debates'. Arguments and opinions make no difference, so long as the cosy little power game continues.

Reformism is useless. As a response to the political situation it is empty. Reformism has got to go.

Steve Booth

# Bishop on Bail

The state has an increasing power to intervene in the lives of children and their families. The state claims the right to ensure that children are nurtured and protected so that they grow into 'normal' law-abiding adults. Parents who are accused of failing to bring their children up in line with social norms are increasingly 'at risk' of state intervention, including taking children away and convicting parents of a criminal offence.

In seeking to protect helpless children, the rights of parents are often ignored. In one American study of a hundred falsely charged parents<sup>1</sup> ill health, family breakdown, loss of employment, loss of saving and depression were the norm. Yet in most cases there is no compensation for falsely accused or falsely convicted parents.

In the last decade there has been a huge increase in the number of prisoners on Rule 43, that is those who are segregated in prison for their own protection from 'normal' prisoners. The major cause of this increase is the growth of the child sexual abuse industry. There are many new books and magazines on this subject, greater media coverage and regular propaganda encouraging children to

gain attention by naming adults as their abusers.

In a recent British study<sup>2</sup> of parents falsely accused of child abuse, families were split up for a year or more, parents became contemptuous of the professionals involved, children lost faith in their parents' ability to protect them, and whole families became scared of any form of physical closeness. Those with power were seen to make quick judgements. Instead of looking at the strength of existing family relationships, those with power viewed the individuals in isolation.

It has been estimated that one in ten men is going to sexually abuse children. Do we really want two million men in prison for this offence? With less than two thousand in prison at the moment, there have already been many who have later been proven to be innocent. And for every man sentenced many more suffer months of misery before trials when they have to prove their innocence.

Nobody is safe from the present witch-hunt, not even Bishops, and certainly not anarchists or anyone who believes that non-sexual physical contact between adults and children is essential for health human development.<sup>3</sup> When the state fails to provide prosperity, it looks for scapegoats to distract popular attention. James I attacked the older women as witches. Now it is the turn of older men, especially those of a liberal or intellectual temperament.

John Myhill

1. LeRoy Schultz, 'One Hundred Cases of Unfounded Child Sexual Abuse' in *Issues of Child Abuse*, 1989.

2. Dr J Prosser, *Child Abuse Investigations*, Parents Against Injustice, 1992.

3. Jean Liedloff, *The Continuum Concept*, Penguin, 1986.

# Leah Feldman

Our comrade Leah Feldman died on 3rd January 1993, aged 94 years. She was forthright in her opinions and given to quarrelling, but will be remembered with affection for her freedom from spite or vindictiveness. She would criticise anyone to their face, but would tolerate no criticism of friends or comrades who were not there to defend themselves. Many an argument started, indeed, with a fierce debate of some figure from the anarchist past whose perfection had been questioned.

Amusing anecdotes are told of her refusal to compromise and her fluent but idiosyncratic English. One story she told about herself was how she stormed out of a job when PAYE was introduced and she found income tax deducted from her wage packet. Her employer was the Co-operative Wholesale Society, which she thought should have made a stand against the order to collect taxes from the workers. "This is none a workers' society," she told the manager, "It is become a

directors' and managers' society. Would the Rochdale Pioneers be alive today, they would turn in their grave".

Leah was born to a Yiddish-speaking family in a part of Poland at that time part of Russia. She remembered at the time of the 1905 risings asking her father to explain why God permitted such suffering. Before long she was an atheist and an anarchist, and fled to London where she trained as a furrier, and was a trade union activist and a member of the famous Jubilee Street anarchist club.

She returned to Russia in 1919 to support the revolution. A cutpurse in Moscow stole her shoulder bag containing everything she owned, and she was forced to turn to the police for financial assistance. Leah was impressed by the kindness of the Communist police, but unlike some Western anarchists of the time, she did not make the compromise of supporting the Marxist dictatorship as a lesser evil than capitalism. Seeing that the revolution had failed, she returned to London via jobs in Berlin and Paris, and acquired a British passport through marriage to her lover Philip Downes.

In 1936 she participated in the decision of the old Freedom group, at that time almost defunct, to use the remaining assets in support of *Spain and the World* (now reverted to the old name *Freedom*). Always a keen, though vociferously critical supporter of Freedom Press, in the 1950s she was one of the two regular *Freedom* sellers (with Lilian Wolfe) at Hyde Park speakers' corner. The police on duty often engaged newspaper sellers in peaceful conversation, but if they approached Leah she always amused them by saying "Will you please move. You are wasting mine time".

Her eyes were injured in a bomb blast during the war, and the injury compounded by an accident in emergency surgery. From then on she was registered blind, but refused to compromise with her disability by carrying a white stick or anything of that kind. Late in her life she did not often go out after dark, but eagerly attended anarchist events which took place in daylight. We will remember her at the Anarchist Bookfairs, sitting at the Freedom Press counter talking to friends all day.

Sprightly, outgoing and argumentative to the end, she will be missed by London anarchists old and young.

DR



Leah Feldman at Gairlochhead, after the Glasgow Anarchist Summer School 1951. Left to right: Donald Rooum, Frank Leech, Arno Pomerans, Tony Gibson, Leah Feldman.

Books reviewed in *Freedom* can be ordered from  
**Freedom Press**  
**Bookshop**  
 84b Whitechapel High Street  
 London E1 7QX  
 Open  
 Monday to Friday 10am-6pm  
 Saturday 10.30am-5pm

— AN ANARCHIST'S NOTEBOOK —  
**NEWS FROM OUR CRAZY WORLD**

A 17 YEAR OLD GREEK LAD WAS ARRESTED FOR distributing leaflets saying Alexander the Great was a war criminal. An Athens court found him guilty of disturbing public peace. The leaflets showed a sketch of a 'barbarian' next to the words "This man was a megalomaniac". Other statements included "Don't consume nationalism" and "There are no clean races in the Balkans, we are all mongrels". The court sentenced Michalis Papadaki to a year's imprisonment!

MUSIC LOVERS IN ISRAEL HAVE FOR THE PAST 45 years been deprived of the works of Richard Wagner on the grounds that he was Hitler's favourite composer and also that his writings were anti-semitic. Since Bakunin was also accused of being anti-semitic, and Freedom editors likewise, by some readers who cannot accept any criticism of Israel or the Jewish lobby in the USA, one would like to know more about Wagner's anti-semitism.

Anyway, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra has decided it will not "under any circumstances" play Wagner's music in spite of conductor Daniel Barenboim's appeal on the grounds that "Wagner's works were too important to neglect". The refusal by the orchestra's public council was decided upon in spite of the fact that a survey taken of subscribers last December showed that only 30% opposed hearing Wagner. So much for democracy! Wagner won't mind!

ACCORDING TO A REPORT PUBLISHED IN A RECENT issue of Money Week the pay-outs on suicide-related insurance policies increased from £4.3 million in 1979 to £44.6 million in 1991. The number of claims rose from 908 to 2,218. The Independent's Business Correspondent points out that "contrary to popular myth, most life insurers payout on suicides, partly because of pressure from building societies, which want to ensure that their endowment-linked loans are secure even in cases of suicide" (our emphasis). You may agree with us that that is pretty cynical, but what about the

insurers asking themselves whether this tenfold pay-out may have something to do with the way policies are rewritten. They suspect that "they may be encouraging people to kill themselves to ease their dependents' financial difficulties". What a thought!

SOMETHING LIKE £20 MILLION WAS SPENT IN television advertising on cheap deals for mobile phones for domestic customers and it resulted in nearly 100,000 punters falling into the status trap. According to a Sunday Times investigation (10th January) these people "will face bills hundreds of pounds higher than if they had subscribed at standard business rates". This is explained by the fact that though connection charges and rental are less than standard rates, calls are more expensive and any savings are cancelled out by using the phone for 20 minutes ... no, not per day but in a week! In fact, according to the pundits the average mobile phone is used for 35 minutes a week. Can you imagine what this latest status toy costs for only 20 minutes use per week? The standard business rate works out at £518. One can imagine that a mobile phone is an asset for disabled people, but we can't imagine that the 100,000 who fell for the television campaign were anything but the victims of our consumerist society.

For them it is now too late for us to advise them that in America you can now buy plastic mobile phones which look just like the real ones. They don't work, they are hollow inside - as are many of their owners.

JUST AS THE SCIENTIFIC STARGAZERS HAVE NOW reassured us that the possibility of the end of the universe won't happen in so many million years time but in billions of years time. We can't recall the exact figures. It doesn't really matter all that much for the human race will have successfully destroyed itself in hundreds of years if it continues to assault the planet and its non-renewable resources even at the present rate.

Another bunch of nutters at the

Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, who declared that Domsday - the end of civilisation - would come to an end in 2126 (they even have the date, as if it mattered, as 14th August) in a collision with a six-mile wide comet called Swift-Tuttle, have now revised the date. According to the chief nutter Dr Brian Marsden, "We are safe for the next millennium". That good news should surely relieve all the gloom. We can't imagine the starving people of Africa, the victims of the Balkan madness and those 413 Palestinian victims of the Israelis freezing in no-man's land in the Lebanon will all be encouraged by that good news!

ON RADIO 4'S EARLY MORNING FARMING programme we were taken to a huge 3,000 acre farm somewhere in Norfolk where vegetable and fruit production was on a massive scale and it included processing them for the supermarkets. Something like 800 people were employed and one can imagine that most were seasonal or part-timers engaged on the packaging of vegetables to the specifications of the supermarkets. The boss, or the manager, was explaining to the interviewer that when you had fields of 50 acres just growing carrots, you would have no carrots if you didn't spray them with insecticides and herbicides. So as much as he would like to grow organically it is impossible with monoculture, which is what a 50-acre field of carrots is. (For the benefit of our city-bound readers, that acreage will produce, say, ten million carrots, about 450 tons.) Now we come to the reason for including this item in the Crazy Capitalist World we live in is that in order to satisfy the supermarkets' stringent demands not so much for quality (most factory vegetables look good and have no taste) but for uniformity, size, so many to the pack. To achieve this requirement 120 tons of carrots from a 50-acre field had to be discarded, and what's more they had no commercial outlet for them and so they were simply ploughed in. But somebody had to pay for them along the line - the consumer!

**News from Angel Alley**

We have certainly been kept busy in the office this month and in December with subscription renewals coming in quite as well as last year, which is very encouraging since we imagine a number of our readers, who are claimants, are finding it more difficult to make ends meet in spite of the government's assurances that prosperity is just around the corner and that Sainsbury, Tesco and the other super-super grocers are making record profits!

We haven't yet finalised our accounts (yes, at Freedom Press we keep accounts, and our bills are paid up to date - which explains why Freedom Press keeps going and so many of our 'real revolutionary' critics make a splash and then drown leaving no trace!) but we shall be down on 1991 - not by very much and certainly less than we had thought earlier in the year. It probably won't be more than £1,000 and this certainly won't affect our publishing programme for 1993.

We had hoped to have new Freedom Press titles on *Technology and Anarchy* and *Anarchism and Economics* (surely two vital topics of our time) which were commissioned early last year. Alas we have been let down with two unfinished symphonies! Perhaps if the two young writers concerned happen to read these lines they may do something about completing their *magnum opuses* to everybody's delight, including Angel Alley.

The response to the Reader's Survey is, from our point of view, disappointing since so far less than 200 readers have bothered to reply. How can we ever develop an alternative press if most readers of even an anarchist paper cannot spare the time or the thought to reply to a few questions which were designed to ascertain their reactions to our journal and to our publications? In a way this problem is topical with the Caldcott Report now published. Our front-page editorial went to press before the Report appeared. Anyway, it makes no difference to our main theme, which is that we haven't a free press, only a millionaire press. But an alternative press is more than ever necessary since not even the Labour Party with its ten million voters can produce an alternative press!

One has only to glance at the donations list to appreciate that Freedom has readers all over the place and this year we are proposing to 'exploit' the wide distribution of our literature to see how we can introduce new readers. In the next issue we shall make suggestions as to the kinds of initiatives which we think will launch Freedom into being once more a weekly. It's not a question of finding 'an old-fashioned millionaire' to launch us. We just need to start with, say, fifty enthusiasts (convinced enthusiasts!) to explore local possibilities to 'promote' (to use the jargon) Freedom Press journals and titles. How many of our readers realise that there are now more than fifty Freedom Press titles in print as well as Freedom and The Raven? We shall issue our challenge in the next Freedom to our friends who say they want to further anarchist ideas in the capitalist jungle.

Last but not least, in this long-winded 'News', warm thanks to all who have contributed to our funds as listed below. So many renewals have been accompanied by encouraging words to all concerned with Freedom Press and the Bookshop.

As we have on many occasions pointed out, we can take the brick-bats (and try to do something about positive criticism), we confess to enjoying the bouquets that have accompanied so many renewals to Freedom. Thank you!

**News from 'Down Under'**

Because of the distance between us, contact with Australian anarchists is a rare thing. The following has been culled from an article by Graham Purchase which appeared in the libertarian Esperanto review *Liberecana Ligilo*.

1986 saw the celebration in Melbourne of the 100th anniversary of the Australian anarchist movement. Today the majority of those in the movement were born in Australia insofar as the movement is no longer made up of immigrants or political exiles. The organised movement is concentrated in the more densely populated area of the south east.

In Sydney there are two anarchist bookshops representing different viewpoints: Jura and Black Rose. Both of them play an important role as meeting points. Most of the books sold come from the US, because local production is still in its early stages. There are several anarchist groups functioning in the universities with regular bookstalls. Two publications appear regularly. These are *Red and Black* which has been coming out for many years on a biannual basis, and which is made up of lengthy, serious articles. And there is also *Rebel Worker* which comes out every other month. This is the organ of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation (ASF), affiliated to the International Workers Association (AIT). The reports that they publish are of a high quality. ASF also publishes two specialised publications. Firstly *Sparks* in the State of Victoria, which is worker oriented, and secondly *Unity* in New South Wales which is aimed at post office workers.

In Melbourne, dubbed by anarchists as the 'Australian Barcelona' due to its position as the main industrial centre of the country, the local section of the ASF plays an important role. It was

active during the Public Transport sector strike in 1990 and in supporting building workers it organised open-air meals once a week.

With the exception of *Sparks*, there is no regular publication, however, the Melbourne branch of the ASF financially supports *Rebel Worker*. In addition anarchists have access to the Free Radio Station 3 CR.

Outside of the ASF we should also mention the existence of an autonomous anarchist group which publishes *The Anarchist Age*.

There used to be a bookshop in Brisbane, Queensland, The Emma Goldman Bookshop. It isn't operating any more, but above the bookshop is the Institute of Social Ecology, a meeting place for many anarchists, as demonstrated by the

number of anarchist works to be found at the library of this institute.

As far as relations between anarchists and the ecology movement are concerned, we should mention the Rain Forest Action Groups. They are very active in the field of nature conservation, notably opposed to tropical wood exportation. But we should point out that their ideology is closer to that of the New Age theory than anarchism proper.

Finally, there is a very interesting journal with an anti-statist slant, which comes close to anarchism, the *Green Alliance Network Bulletin*. It supports bio-regionalist ideas: "The limits of the state must be suppressed and replaced by ecological limits, corresponding to climate, terrain, flora and fauna". These ideas are in part inspired by the French anarchist geographer Elisée Reclus.

Graham Purchase can be contacted at: Jura Books, 100 Crystal Street, NSW 2049, Sydney, Australia.

**DONATIONS**  
 1st - 14th January 1993

**Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund**

- Tewksbury PS £5, Erchstaat LK £2, London NIB £3, Malden EHA £2.50, London JPMcG £1, Newport FNF £3, London JAB £10, Castle Douglas MA £10, Kama Kura Japan TS £5, London KAB £6, New York PC £25, Liverpool MD £6, Cheadle CGJ £4, Pinner ROM £4, Newton Abbot GHE £7, London REM £3, Jamaica NY BP £7, Shrewsbury CJP £16, Hadleigh AH £5, Valparaiso Ind LO £30, London PW £3, Abingdon MB £10, Westbury JSD £1.50, Exmouth ABH £2, London MK £3.50, Hay-on-Wye BR £7, Albany AFS £7, Romford ACJ £3, Warham Wells MT £6, Bridge-of-Weir RG £5.

Total = £204.50  
 1993 total to date = £204.50

**Freedom Press Overheads Fund**

- Tewksbury PS £5, Malden EHA £2.50, Newport FNF £3, New York PC £10, Tewksbury PS £1.65, Pinner ROM £4, London REM £2, Keighley DG £7, London PW £3, Abingdon MB £10, London WG £6, Gothenburg JL £2, Cleveland Ohio TH £7, Aberystwyth BM £10, Hay-on-Wye BR £4, Belfast DD £1, Truro PS £10, Romford ACJ £3, Bridge-of-Weir RG £5.

Total = £96.30  
 1993 total to date = £96.30

**Raven Deficit Fund**

- Eastleigh CB £6, Vallejo California DK £12.50, London NIB £2, Castle Douglas MA £10, Kama Kura TS £5, London KAB £6, Troy New York DW £7, Edmonton Alberta HB £125, Cheadle CGJ £3, Pinner ROM £4, Newton Abbot GHE £4, Valparaiso Ind LO £30, Abingdon MB £10, Hay-on-Wye BR £10, Whitley Bay AP £6.50, Bridge-of-Weir RG £5.

Total = £246.00  
 1993 total to date = £246.00

**More anarchist comments on page 3**

## Defending the Social Sciences

Dear Editors,  
I wonder when I read the letters in *Freedom* about the social sciences whether people like Amorey Gethin (28th November 1992) inhabit the same universe as myself and the earnest if occasionally acerbic John Pilgrim. Gethin's picture of the social scientist sitting at the centre of a university-based web of world domination would be extremely funny were it not that we have learned, this century, of the destructive power of such paranoid fantasies.

Given the hostility to sociology of governments in general, and authoritarian governments in particular, it is surprising that anarchists have lost the natural sympathy for our field that appeared to be prevalent in the '60s. I would have thought there would be some fellow feeling. *Raven* 19 specifically mentions the Colonel's Greece, Stalin's Russia, and Thatcher's Britain. We are talking about more than an attack on funding or government restrictions on the collection of statistics. In Britain the government's attitude became frighteningly apparent during the attack on the Open University's Social Science Foundation Course. Even more sinister were the Parliamentary Bills of 1987/88

### Down with sloppy anarchist thinking!

Dear Editors,  
What a strange lot the critics of *The Raven* number 18 are? First Bamford maintains he didn't say what he clearly did say and then applauds *Freedom* for publishing it. Then Amorey Gethin, master of neologism, says it was the very hostility of Bamford's initial stance that qualified him to review *The Raven* number 18. Obviously the same set of journalistic values that prompted a Sunday paper recently to conclude that an authoritarian and reactionary historian was the best person to review a book on anarchism. The result was a travesty, both of anarchism as an idea and of Peter Marshall's interesting if flawed book.

There is every point in critical standards, there is far too much sloppy thinking around the anarchist movement anyway. There is little point in using a reviewer who will attack a publication because it is sociology, or anthropology, or whatever, rather than discuss the content on its merits. It's all rather like getting Mary Whitehouse to review *Empire of the Senses* - the result is merely silly.

Eric Bridgewood

### Down with Sociology!

Dear Editors,  
It should not go unremarked that all of the sixteen contributors to *The Raven* number 19 on sociology are male.

Anyway, is it reasonable to expect any significant results from sociologists who have qualified through, and lectured and operated within, a state-controlled institution upon which they depend for a living? I merely ask.

Apart from that, if I spared the time to unscramble some of the jargon (what the hell is post-modernism?) used by sociologists, would that help me stop the war in Bosnia?

Addressing the 18th World Congress of Philosophy, Professor A.P. Griffiths said: "The fact is that philosophy is quite useless. It doesn't make the world a happier place." Are professional sociologists any more useful than their philosophical (or theological) counterparts?

Ernie Crosswell

and 1991/92 that gave the government direct ability to intervene in course content. Neither is Britain alone in this. In Denmark the only full-time sociology department, at Copenhagen University, was ended by Cabinet order in the '80s. It has not yet been restored. Hostility to sociology teaching and research has joined the closure of philosophy departments (some twenty philosophy departments have either closed or are under immediate threat) as a measure of the march toward authoritarian rule.

So I find it curious that (some) anarchists have joined this philistine parade. Pilgrim rightly points out that we do not attack history in this way. Historians may be myopic patriots like Arthur Bryant, perspicacious but marxist like Eric Hobsbawm, or reactionaries like Norman Stone. We properly advise people to approach their work with some knowledge of their ideological bias, but we do not try to get history banned or visit E.P. Thompson with the sins of Kenneth Baker. We do not, as a rule, condemn history as a discipline for the sins of historians.

Even here though government intervention is showing itself. Not very long ago a senior Tory MP complained about the focus of modern history teaching. "Too much about the Welfare State and nothing about the Enterprise Culture" he complained. When the Enterprise Culture began falling apart the National Curriculum suddenly introduced an embargo on current history. The point is that governments do not like people asking awkward questions and that is one of the main functions of sociology as it is of philosophy.

We should of course be properly sceptical of any claim in the name of

sociology but that is what scientific method is all about. We do not serve the cause of freedom, free speech or understanding by building fantasies about the power of social scientists in the universities. Most of us are outside the university system anyway. Sociology (which in any sensible educational system would be read with anthropology) gives many people their first intimation that their received ideas about human nature, about types of social organisation, about the alternative possibilities for human society, might be limited or based on erroneous information. My own contact with the discipline came from the pages of *Anarchy* and I found it as liberating an experience as Kropotkin and Malatesta had been earlier.

I found the importance of organic solidarity in anarchism and rediscovered it later in Durkheim. I found the dangers of bureaucracy in Bakunin and found it confirmed in Michels and Weber. I found the celebration of community in Kropotkin, to have it reinforced later by Mannheim and Tonnies. Sociologists, contrary to received opinion, come from all parts of the political spectrum, but the core of anarchist ideas and those in sociological tradition are remarkably similar and its practice inimical to the delinquent patterns of centralised government.

Professor Downes, in his review of *The Raven* 19, pointed out that sociology's stock-in-trade was subversion. For this reason alone it is worth anarchists keeping an eye on it. I find it difficult to understand why any anarchist should be so keen to keep company with the likes of Norman Tebbit, but it certainly seems preferable to listen to the calm and reasonable tones of David Downes and David Lee than the hysterical conspiracy theories that Gethin puts forward.

John Ebbrell

## Why not a 'Men's Page'?

Dear Editors,  
On reading the letter by Mary Quintana in *Freedom* (9th January 1993) I felt rather like Donald Rooum's Wildcat when she explodes and hits the roof! Your correspondent writes: "*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."

While you are about it, dear Editors, why not have a 'Man's Page' devoted to

male problems and viewpoints? It would not have to be written by a man, as long as it gave the anarchist understanding and answer to a particular aspect of manhood!

Since when had *Freedom* been in the sexist business?

All the pioneers of anarchism and libertarian ideas in general have been men and women who have resolutely opposed sex discrimination. That there are very real differences between the interests, aspirations and endeavours of the two sexes is still glaringly obvious - but considerably less so than it was even half a century ago; we have made some progress. To claim that if *Freedom* "made more allowance for an intuitive spiritual approach to life ... then more women would be attracted to your illustrious works" is unfortunately only too true - the silly, sloppy, sentimental, anti-feminist, prudish, sanctimonious, intuition-guided bitches might flock to it - especially for the knitting patterns and the horoscopes. But *Freedom* might lose the readership of the more worthwhile, down-to-earth minority of women who do support it.

One of the tragic facts of life is that those who are oppressed by authoritarian institutions are among the main supporters of such institutions. Among the strongest opponents of female liberation are those women who uphold the stereotype of women being intuitive versus rational, spiritual versus practical. What is that distant rumble - is it Lilian Wolfe turning in her grave?

Tony Gibson

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

Ann Sinclair

## 'Class Struggle' Anarchists

Dear *Freedom*,  
I feel I must reply to the misleading article in *Freedom* (12th December 1992) on the discussion 'Whither Anarchism' at the History Workshop by your anonymous correspondent. Apart from his poncey use of 'Mr' which he attaches to people with whom he does not agree, he puts words into people's mouths. I never said that there was a significant following for the anarchist movement in the good old days. If there was then where is it now? I think the contributions to the alternative anarchist strand described in the article prove my point that it is impossible for class struggle anarchists to work with the likes of open admirers of Gandhi, Tolstoy and the Brotherhood Church. My approach to non-cooperation is not sectarian, because this implies divisive attitudes in one movement, and I have never considered such people to be part of the historic

anarchist movement that developed within the First International. This reluctance to work with pacifists and individualists is generally held by class struggle anarchists, not just in the Anarchist Communist Federation, but within Class War Federation and the Direct Action Movement.

Similarly the tactics of Hull Syndicalists in working within trade councils is a complete waste of time. These bodies are even more robbed of support from the working class than they were ten or twenty years ago. They are the fiefdoms of Labourites, Stalinists or Trotskyists, when they are not a battleground for these political tendencies. The discussion was initiated by Hull Syndicalists to help promote these tactics, which I and many other class struggle anarchists deem to be misleading and unprofitable.

Nick Heath

## Defining Culture

Dear Editors,  
The 12th December issue of *Freedom* has two articles emphasising culture and both using the same term - culture - with significantly different meanings. On page 4 EFC defines culture in the title of the article, 'Culture: the inculcation of hate' and cites important examples in which politicians and priests have encouraged animosities by manipulating people with their 'culture'. EFC also states: "For most practical purposes

culture is a form of behaviour which is determined by the nation-state ..."

On the next page in John Pilgrim's review of Barclay's *Culture: the Human Way*, culture is defined as "... the basis of any explanation of human behaviour" and "historically derived and learned ideas."

No more disparate and contrasting ideas of culture than these two usages could be imagined. And since any understanding of anarchism is intimately involved with an understanding of culture it would seem that a consistency of definition and usage would be essential in a journal devoted to anarchism. We might consider a basic definition of culture as the means by which we perceive, conceive, organise and communicate the human experience. Without culture all experience would remain raw, undefined and formless. Without culture we could never share or communicate our experience. Life would have no meaning. There would be no humanity.

Dorothy Lee in *Freedom and Culture* emphasised the central importance of symbols when she defined culture as a 'symbolic system'. This system of symbols gives shape, form and meaning to reality and makes it possible for us to experience reality. If the symbolic system is the tool that makes culture work then it would seem we should be careful of the words we use and how we define them. The power structure has long used the symbolic system to control and manipulate people who did not understand their own culture - their own words and their meanings. And if we are to communicate anarchism effectively we need a consistent symbolic system of words and their meanings - a consistent culture.

Lynn Olson

## On Direct Action

Dear Editors,  
Ernest Rodker's paper on the subject of 'Propaganda by Deed' presented during the history workshop in Newcastle (reported in *Freedom* 12th December issue) stated that direct action in this country began with the Committee of 100. This statement is quite inaccurate, as a number of readers will have realised.

The first direct action against nuclear weapons in this country involving civil disobedience occurred near Swaffham in Norfolk in the mid-1950s (I am uncertain of the precise date), when a group of pacifists obstructed the construction of a rocket base there. This was followed by a number of similar actions involving civil disobedience in various parts of the country, including two separate actions in the first two weeks of May 1960 at the AWRE at Foulness Island, Essex, in consequence of which a number of us served prison sentences.

It would be true to say that the Committee of 100 was formed as a direct result of these earlier small-scale actions, and its first demo, a sit-down in Parliament Square, constituted one of the first actions of mass civil disobedience in this country. But to claim that the Committee instigated civil disobedience in this country is quite misleading.

Peter Dodson

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.

## Correction

Dear Editors,  
I am grateful to David Downes for his very kind review of my recent article in *The Raven*. His description of it as "Essex sociologist taking on Essex man" summarised my message far better than I had managed for myself.

Under the circumstances it seems churlish of me to complain but ... somewhere along the line there has been an error and I have been grievously misquoted. What I wrote was "There is no such thing as a wholly subjective thought or action". This appeared in Professor Downes review as "... a wholly objective thought or action" so reversing my meaning entirely, to the confusion, no doubt, of those of your readers unfamiliar with the original. Okay, we all make mistakes ... that was part of my message too.

David Lee



## Anarchist Forum

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

### 1993 SEASON OF MEETINGS

29th January - General discussion  
 5th February - 'Anarchism and Feminism' (speaker Lisa Bendall)  
 12th February - 'Prison in an Anarchist Society' (speaker Peter Lumsden)  
 19th February - Open discussion  
 26th February - 'Extremism and Moderation in Anarchist Thought' (speaker Andrew Lainton)  
 5th March - Open discussion  
 12th March - 'Sexual Harassment and Feminism' (speaker Adrian Williams)  
 19th March - Open discussion  
 23rd April - 'Anarchism and the Collapse of the Cold War and the New World Order' (speaker Dave Dane)  
 30th April - Open discussion  
 Monday 3rd May at 2pm - May Day Picnic in Osterley Park, Hounslow. Details later.  
 There are vacancies for speakers from 7th May to 2nd July  
 9th July - Last meeting: planning the 1993/94 programme

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 be either speaker-led meetings or general discussions. Overseas or 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).

## FREEDOM fortnightly

ISSN 0016 0504

Published by Freedom Press  
 84b Whitechapel High Street  
 London E1 7QX

Printed by Aldgate Press, London E1

## The Anarchist Research Group

Saturday afternoon from 2-5pm

at the  
 1 in 12 Club  
 21/23 Albion Street, Bradford 1

13th February - Paul Rosen  
 'Anarchic Technology: Technics Out of Control or a Technology of Freedom?'

For further information contact David Goodway (tel: 0535 604049) or Jon Purkis (tel: 0484 847764)

## GREENSTREET Self-Build Housing Co-op BUILDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR RENT

**we need new members to join our housing co-operative**

For further information contact Mark on 071-708 0453 during the day and leave a message, or write to Greenstreet Housing Co-op, c/o 36 Ferguson House, Sparta Street, London SE10 8DR

## Red Rambles

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

Sunday 7th February - Hidden Valley Walk. Meet at 1pm at Dale End (half a mile west of Elton). Length 4 miles.

Sunday 7th March - Derbyshire 'Edges'. Meet at 11am at the National Trust Car Park (next to Robin Hood pub on A619 Baslow to Chesterfield road). Length 8 miles.

Telephone for further details:  
 0773-827513

## The Raven Anarchist Quarterly

number 20 on  
 'PETER KROPOTKIN:  
 150th ANNIVERSARY'

- out now -

Back issues still available:

- 19 - Sociology
- 18 - Anthropology & Africa
- 17 - Use of Land
- 16 - Education (2)
- 15 - Health
- 14 - Voting
- 13 - Anarchists in Eastern Europe
- 12 - Communication
- 11 - Class
- 10 - Libertarian Education / Kropotkin on Technical Education
- 9 - Architecture / Feminism / Sociobiology / Bakunin and Nationalism
- 8 - Revolution: France / Russia / Mexico / Italy / Spain / the Wilhelms-haven Revolt
- 7 - Alternative Bureaucracy / Emma Goldman / Sade / William Blake
- 6 - Tradition and Revolution / Architecture for All / Carlo Cafiero
- 5 - Canadian Indians / Modern Architecture / Spies for Peace
- 4 - Computers and Anarchism / Rudolf Rocker / Sexual freedom for young
- 3 - Social Ecology / Berkman's Russian Diary / Surrealism (part 2)
- 2 - Surrealism (part 1) / Vinoba Bhave / Walden School
- 1 - Communication and Organisation / Guy Aldred / History of Freedom Press

£3.00 each (post-free anywhere)  
 from

**FREEDOM PRESS**

## The Radical Reader a new bookshop stocking Freedom Press and other anarchist titles

at  
 The Mini-Market  
 The Old Sale Room  
 St James's Square, Aberystwyth  
 open Monday-Saturday  
 10am-5pm

## Freedom Press Bookshop 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

Open  
 Monday to Friday  
 10am-6pm  
 Saturday 10.30am-5pm

## FREEDOM AND THE RAVEN SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	inland	abroad surface	outside Europe airmail	Europe airmail
<i>Freedom</i> (24 issues) half price for 12 issues				
Claimants	10.00	-	-	-
Regular	14.00	18.00	27.00	23.00
Institutions	22.00	25.00	33.00	33.00
<i>The Raven</i> (4 issues)				
Claimants	10.00	-	-	-
Regular	11.00	12.00	16.00	14.00
Institutions	16.00	20.00	25.00	25.00

Joint sub (24 x *Freedom* & 4 x *The Raven*)  
 Claimants 18.00 - - -  
 Regular 23.00 28.00 40.00 37.00

Bundle subs for *Freedom* (12 issues)

	inland	abroad surface	abroad airmail
2 copies x 12	12.00	13.00	20.00
5 copies x 12	25.00	27.00	42.00
10 copies x 12	48.00	54.00	82.00

Other bundle sizes on application

Giro account number 58 294 6905  
 All prices in £ sterling

## SUBSCRIPTION FORM

To Freedom Press in Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

- I am a subscriber, please renew my sub to *Freedom* for ..... issues
- Please make my sub to *Freedom* into a joint sub for *Freedom* and *The Raven* starting with number 20 of *The Raven*
- I am not yet a subscriber, please enter my sub to *Freedom* for ..... issues
- I would like the following back numbers of *The Raven* at £3.00 per copy post free ..... (numbers 1 to 19 are available)
- I enclose a donation to Freedom Fortnightly Fighting / Freedom Press Overheads / Raven Deficit Fund (delete as applicable)

I enclose £..... payment

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....