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FIFTY PENCE

"The anarchists consider the syndicalist movement and the general strike as powerful revolutionary means but not as substitutes for the revolution"

International Anarchist Congress, Amsterdam 1907

ON MAY DAY 1993 WORKERS HEADING FOR THE SLAVE STATE IF ...

What with the railway workers and miners calling one-day strikes, the firemen threatening to do likewise and the teaching profession in open rebellion against the imposition of the curriculum tests this summer, it is not surprising that officialdom is taking counter-measures. The Rail Board, for instance, is proposing to

TIME IS MONEY - MONEY BUYS TIME - for the privileged

There is no doubt about it: the capitalist system is very rewarding for some entrepreneurs and these Thatcherite 'wealth producers' are obviously performing a valuable service for all concerned. For instance the airlines don't know what to do with all their planes, which explains perhaps why you can have a free trip to the USA if you buy a Hoover carpet sweeper (we should add that unfortunately more Hoovers were bought than there were spare seats available on the Atlantic airlines - but that's neither here nor there, except for the Hoover punters).

A real 'wealth producer' turned up the other day at the Paris airport. According to the *East Anglian Daily Times* (22nd April) a nameless Saudi prince (one of our allies in the Gulf massacre):

"after missing the supersonic flight to the USA [due to a Paris traffic jam] did not want to take the next Boeing 747 scheduled flight as it would have taken four hours longer than Concorde."

For the four hours saved for this princely life he paid £153,246 to charter a Concorde to New York and, according to the *East Anglian Daily Times*, "the prince paid in travellers cheques".

Since most of us cannot conceive of figures larger than 1,000, what this princely parasite decided on the spot, with travellers cheques he carried with him, was to charter a Concorde and

appeal direct to its employees behind the union's back, and has already intimated that it will refuse to deduct union dues from the wage packets, thereby hoping to bankrupt the union which has no organisation for collecting members' dues (which goes to show how far the unions have degenerated when they rely on the bosses to collect their members' dues!)

But as we go to press a copy of a confidential letter written by the Employment Secretary Gillian Shepherd to the Education Minister John Patten, with copies to Mr Major and other cabinet ministers, the

Attorney General and Sir Robin Butler the top civil servant, has been leaked to the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and received full treatment in *The Guardian* (23rd April). The headings splashed across the front page summarise the government's intentions: "Minister's letter reveals plan to limit action by public sector workers ... millions face strike curbs".

According to *The Guardian* no attempt to deny the authenticity of the document was made by Whitehall officials.

Those involved by a ban on industrial action would include
(continued on page 2)

VOTING? - WHAT FOR?

What are elections for? Surely only to decide which bunch of politicians shall rule over the voting sheep among us as well as over those, an ever-growing minority, who vote for neither either from apathy, fatalism (a change of government makes no difference to them since they 'count for nothing') and the growing number of conscious non-voters like the anarchists and a few independently-minded socialists

pay a sum equivalent to what nearly 3,000 state pensioners in this country are expected to manage on for a week. Our prince could afford to spend that money to save four hours of his precious life.

So long as these facts can be publicised and there is no massive reaction by the 'enlightened' people of the prosperous West, in our opinion there can be no future for a society which professes to be civilised. It will eventually be swamped by the billions of the third and developing world who are not accepting starvation to keep the prosperous elite commuting in chartered Concordes. And it will serve us right!

who have lost patience with the left parties.

Not only are elections won on a minority of votes - there is no shortage of examples, starting with Mr Major's victory last year with less than 45% of the votes cast but, whereas he ended up with an overall majority of 21 seats, at the recent French elections the right wing coalition won with a similar percentage of the votes and secured an overwhelming majority of some 300 seats!

If one takes into account that 30% of the French electorate didn't vote then the Baladur government enjoys the 'confidence' (that's the operating word in politics; 'confidence') of only 28% of the electorate, just as Major enjoys about 32%. And even the much-boasted Bill Clinton in the American presidential elections received well under 30% since most Americans don't vote!

In the past year as well as presidential and legislative elections, and referenda galore, the large and small political parties have
(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

for all kinds of different reasons been engaged in examining how best the voting system can be changed. In this country the Charter 88 folk think we need a written constitution (and we imagine that would require a Supreme Court à l'Americaine to decide on controversial 'constitutional' issues - but, as we have seen in the USA in recent years, when vacancies arose in the Supreme Court Reagan appointed his own boys and Clinton will do likewise if and when the occasions arise).

Anarchists are interested to publicise the fact, but unconcerned as to whether elections are rigged or that unions finance the Labour Party and international tycoons finance the Tories and a few domestic sentimental millionaires keep the Liberals going. Why? Because the real 'enemy' for anarchists is the capitalist system and its operators: the City, the bankers, the multi-nationals. All governments, Labour, Tory or Liberal, are

VOTING? - WHAT FOR?

playing their game in or out of office. Obviously one does not expect otherwise from the Tories and the Liberals, who are fervent believers in the capitalist system, the market and the unequal society.

As to the Labour Party, we can only repeat what we wrote in *Freedom* ('First Past Which Post?', 17th April). They have made so many concessions in order to win votes that one only hopes that they will come clean and finally repudiate Clause 4 and the unions.

Perhaps then not only will a new socialist movement arise from the ashes and which declares as its unequivocal objective the abolition of the capitalist system, but also in parallel a workers' union movement aiming at the abolition of the wage system and the market, but based not on a political party but on international solidarity among the exploited.

Yes, these are tall orders in a society in which all official organisations are rotten. The media concentrate on their reporting of corruption at the top level in Italy, France, the USA, Spain, Japan, etc. Only the sensational cases of fraud, 'sweeteners', directorships, bonuses for the bosses and special services for services rendered in this country are reported (and will not be reported by our 'free' press if you are on the right side of them).

In our opinion there is no reforming of the capitalist system nor of the political parties (including the Labour Party) which believe in the system. For anarchists there can be no compromise with capitalism. Obviously every anarchist has to survive in a capitalist world and to do so we must compromise or starve.

What we were discussing is the anarchist in the present political social world. Do we imagine that the capitalist world can be reformed by electoral sleight-of hand? Do we believe that our

political 'leaders' would not just consolidate *their* power if given the power? Do we imagine that we can persuade the 1% of our society who own 50% of the wealth that as reasonable people they should give it up for the growing army of the poor in our midst?

If we do we can go on talking until we are blue in the face or suffer the fate of the socialists of the Second International who, more than 100 years ago, were going to bring about a socialist world through the ballot box. We have seen what they have achieved. In fact the word 'socialism' is virtually banned from their vocabulary. All they are after is power. In fact all they will ever get is office. The power lies elsewhere, as we have already pointed out.

We shall be told that anarchists, by not voting, are conniving at the return to office of the Tories. We reply that by not voting and by making propaganda against the capitalist system in every way we can, anarchists are making a positive contribution to the alternative society based on those ever valid values of liberty, fraternity and equality!

WORKERS HEADING FOR THE SLAVE STATE IF ...

(continued from page 1)

teachers and other local government workers, nurses, doctors, dentists, etc., civil servants, hospital ancillaries, postal workers, railway workers, firefighters, ambulance workers, miners - in all some five million workers including a majority who provide us with the kinds of services we need in our day-to-day lives, and who therefore deserve our support.

Doug McAvry, the NUT's general secretary described it as "a sinister government plot", while one "TUC leader" is quoted as saying that the ideas in the letter revealed the extent of minister's determination to destroy the trade union movement. One teachers' 'leader' predicted "open rebellion".

What is certain is that in this period of recession and massive unemployment the government is seeking to deliver the *coup de grâce* to the already moribund trade union movement, reeling from previous anti-union government legislation which it did nothing to oppose by struggle, and from an enormous loss of membership as more hundreds of thousands of its members joined the dole queues and automatically ceased to be members of their unions. How much more stupid can you get?

Surely the most militant of the workers' movement should and could be those thrown onto the scrap-heap by the bosses? The unions should take advantage to make the unemployed the propagandists for a society in which all willing hands *cannot* be denied the opportunity to make their contribution to the commonweal.

But the trade union leaders (with the rare exceptions which are ignored by the media) are just another bunch of politicians more anxious to work with the bosses than to inspire their members and to encourage them to realise that all workers - dependent on an employer whether it be the state, a multinational or a flesh- and-blood boss - have a common

enemy: the exploiters of their labour, which will be discarded as soon as it ceases to be considered to be profitable. And perhaps at long last those workers who thought themselves a cut above the peasants and the road sweepers have learned that the capitalist system, as Mr Major reminds daily any willing audience, is 'classless' when it comes to eliminating the unprofitable enterprises and 'redundant' staff at all levels (top bosses always seem to manage a golden handshake however!)

May Day, in the bad old pre-World War Two days when unemployment was rampant and workers' conditions were much worse than they are now and there was no health service, was observed by workers throughout the world. One day of solidarity world-wide.

Today in Britain not only do the employers collect union dues (by deduction from pay packets) but the government (probably the Labour lot) decided years ago to make the first Monday in May a public holiday so that the workers could have their marches without upsetting the bosses by declaring 1st May a general strike. The Tories, concerned to exorcise any workers' connection with May Day, have also decided to transfer the May public holiday to August.

Surely the time has come for workers to act (if you work for a wage or a salary then face up to the fact: you are a wage-slave and it matters not whether you wear a tie and carry a briefcase - with your sandwiches? - or neither, you are still dependent on somebody else in a capitalist system for the means of survival so we all have a common enemy). We can only successfully fight that enemy by joining forces at the grassroots, in the streets. We have had enough of leaders and gurus. Let's start by reinstating 1st May as Workers' Day here and with our fellow workers worldwide. To hell with the government's official Labour Day!

DOGMA-SUPREME

As we write the Waco, Texas, compound has been reduced to ashes with some ninety human beings the victims of their dogmatic beliefs.

For more than a year citizens of the former Yugoslavia have been slaughtering each other for purely nationalistic dogmatic beliefs. All this is fanaticism at its worst and as usual the victims are the helpless civilian women and children and the old.

The Major government and its various political and economic advisers and gurus (such as the Adam Smith lot) are, so far as the market and privatisation are concerned, just as dogmatic as the Waco fundamentalists and the Yugoslav (Muslim, Croat and Serbian) nationalists: *unable to see beyond their narrow dogmas.*

The Minister of Education John Patten declares that his will shall be done in spite of the fact that *all* the teachers' unions are opposed. John McGregor, the Transport Minister, is insisting that the privatisation of the railways will go through, though not only the unions *but anybody knowing anything about the railways knows that it won't work.* Even the pro-privatisation campaigner David Campbell Bannerman says that:

"Railway lines are likely to close after the privatisation unless the government corrects the imbalance between road and rail ... the true cost of roads is not reflected in the amount paid by road users."

As if we had to discover this obvious fact. The government is in the hands of the road lobby. Corruption? Perish the thought. It's only in Italy that that kind of thing goes on!

The government is also determined, for purely dogmatic reasons, to want to privatise the postal services. After all, what

can one conclude from this parliamentary exchange early last month (*The Independent*, 3rd April):

"Rural areas will be protected under the government's plans to break the Royal Mail monopoly on letter deliveries, MPs were assured yesterday.

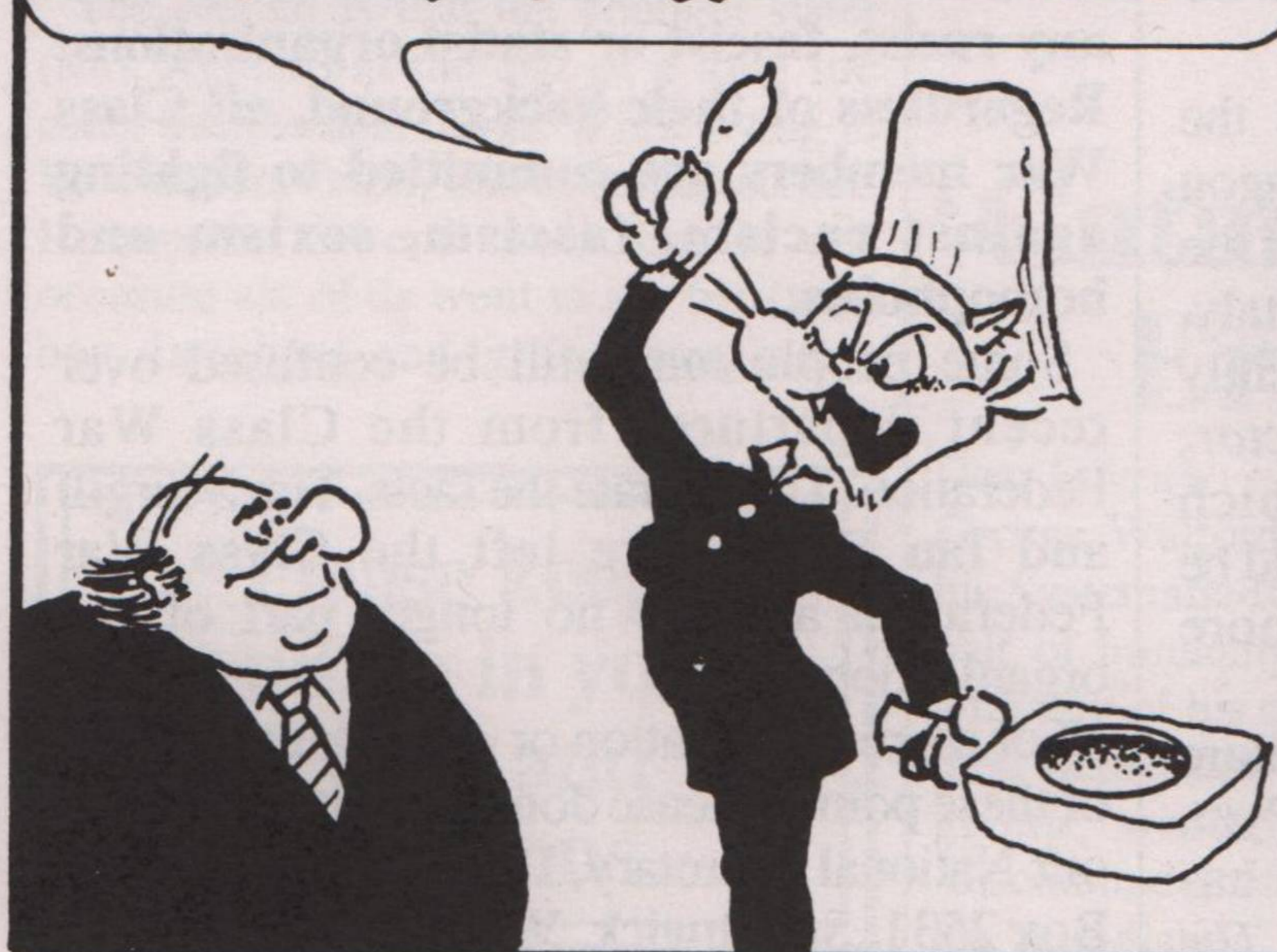
Edward Leigh, Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, made it clear that private competitors for the mail business will have to offer a national service at a flat rate. Bidders will not be allowed to cream off profitable business, leaving unprofitable rural areas at risk.

Mr Leigh, a former member of the free-market, Thatcherite No Turning Back group of Tory MPs, told the Commons that a 'free-for-all' market would push up prices and lead to a poorer service for some people. 'I do not think that full deregulation is appropriate here. Some routes would be inherently unprofitable and a free market would not provide them at an affordable price.'

In spite of this almost cautious approach, *The Independent* report suggested that Michael Heseltine would be, after the Easter recess, announcing the plans to privatise the letter delivery service. And in the debate the opening speaker for the Tories, John Marshall, called on the government "to sell all three Post Office services: Royal Mail, Post Office Counters and Parcelforce", a move which according to *The Independent* is "being considered" by the government.

Not only is the Post Office making money but when one considers the magnitude of the service and the fact that it works (this writer's *Freedom* was posted second class on Thursday afternoon and delivered in the backwoods of Suffolk on the Saturday - what better service, and what can you get nowadays from private enterprise for 18p?), why disturb it other than for political dogmatic reasons?

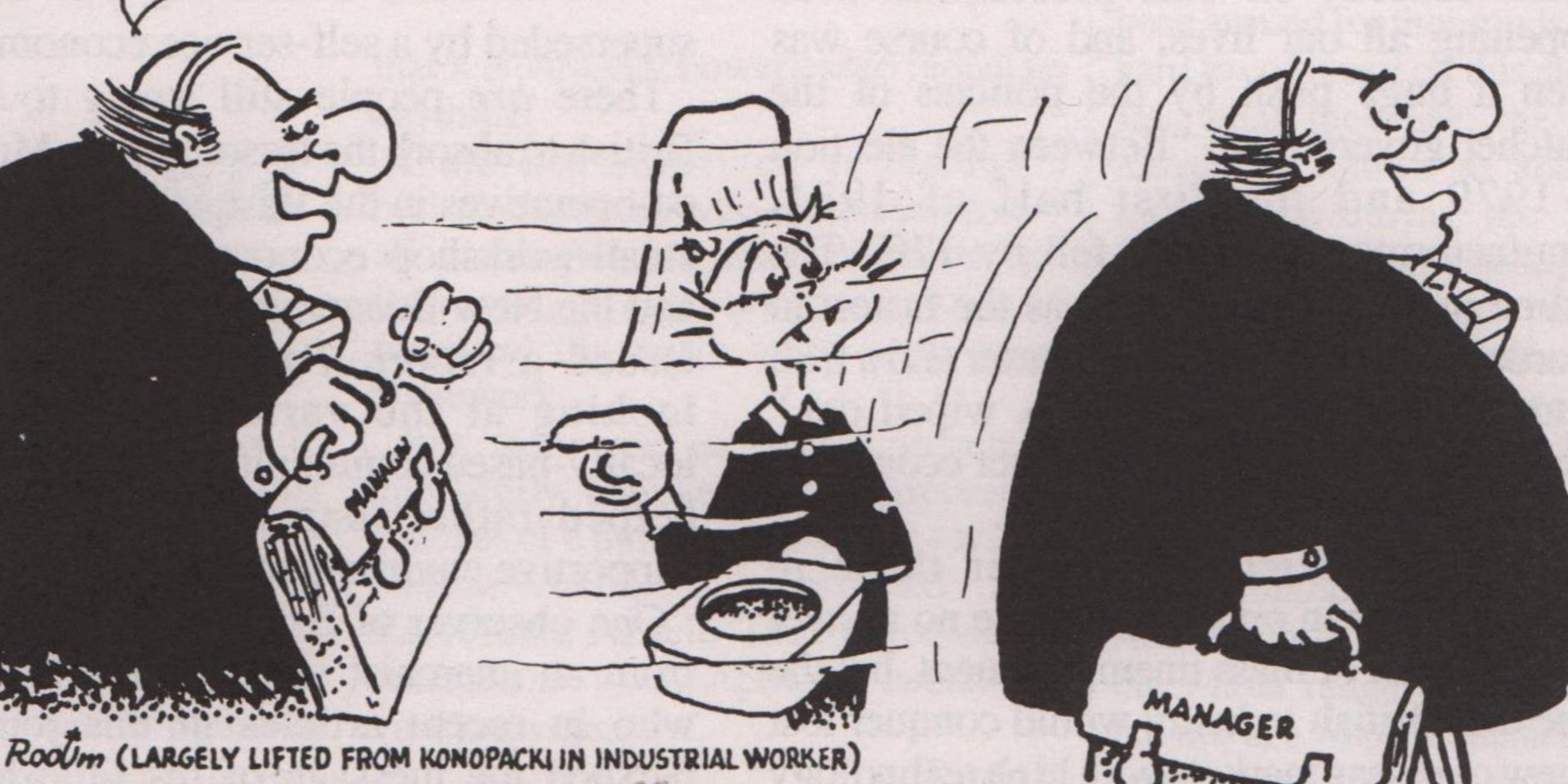
WILD CAT Nurses get 1½% backdated to 1 April. NHS Managers get 3½% backdated to 1 October. Equal percentages would give bigger rises to the higher paid anyway. Why give them more ???



Because we're worth more, Pussycat.

I'm carrying a briefcase. You're carrying a bedpan.

Obviously, therefore, I'm more use to the patients.



Room (LARGELY LIFTED FROM KONOPACKI IN INDUSTRIAL WORKER)

"I'm speechless!!"

No, you're not.



News and Views Scientific

Land contaminated by toxic chemical waste can now be built on by property developers for factories, offices and even houses. In Britain's inner cities there are about one hundred thousand such places which in the days of the country's manufacturing splendour were the sites of gas works, tanneries and heavy industrial plants. We don't know exactly how many or exactly where they are and we are not going to be able to find out. Part of the government's contribution to improving the quality of our environment and the public's health was a published plan to insist that all local authorities identify such sites in their area and ensure they are cleaned up. It was even going to be part of the Citizen's Charter to protect our rights which said "you can find out from your local council about contaminated land, ask the council to take action and complain to the person responsible". Such a process involving the removal, decontamination and replacement of tons of top-soil would have been very expensive for the developer, but that was not the only problem. Public knowledge that the land was contaminated would depress its value and thus the assets of its owner. So, faced with protests from owners and developers, the solution was obvious really. If the information is not published no one will know about it, and if no one knows about it no one will be the worse for it. That is until in a few years time people, and especially

children, start to develop the signs and symptoms of chronic poisoning – and just at the time that a run-down health service is unable to cope.

We are familiar with the concept of a two-tier health service in which the minority who can pay get priority, but the two tiers are now becoming three. Within the state health service a split is developing between the provision for those who are patients of budget-holding family doctors and those who are not. Hospital waiting lists started to lengthen almost as soon as the polls closed in last year's general election and are now at an all time high and, to avoid protests, the government has told hospitals not to tell patients how long they may have to wait. According to recent surveys by both the British Medical Association and the medical colleges, bed and ward closures have become more common, casualty wards have been shut and even some staff made redundant due to the need to balance the books at the end of the financial year this April. As a result, non-urgent cases have had to be restricted or stopped and even some urgent cases delayed admission. Money is the answer and patients of GPs who are fund holders are getting priority because their doctors can pay. The government has diverted funds from the hospitals to the GP fund holders to the extent that, in many areas, some hospitals in the next

financial year will only be able to accept non urgent cases if their GP is a fund holder. As an excellent example of Newspeak, the BMA, under pressure from the government health minister, changed the title of a recent conference from 'Rationing in the NHS' to 'Priority Setting in the Health Service'.

In the longer term the government clearly intends that most people should be dependent on medical insurance. Yet people of limited means who have struggled to keep up such payments have been told that they only have cover for the immediate curing or relieving of an acute episode of illness or injury and should use the state service for long term treatment, whilst others in need of an urgent heart operation have been told that if the operation were really urgent it was a matter for the NHS. The patient can really be pig in the middle and health care is going to be the next big money-making bonanza for the insurance companies.

Should anarchists be concerned whether health care is financed by capitalists or the state when it is the people who pay either way? Perhaps not, but they need to inform themselves of the enormous changes taking place in its provision whilst continuing to demand good health care for all, something as essential to living as food, water, clothing and shelter.

News that there may be sex hormones in our drinking water has sent macho males running for cover because, of course, the hormones are female. Just one more unanticipated side effect of the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960s associated with the availability of the contraceptive pill. Ten years ago fishermen in East Anglia found fish

with both male and female sexual organs and government scientists started to investigate this in 1987. Their work was kept very secret until a scientific report was published in October 1992, but with minimal publicity – out of a desire not to alarm the public, they said. In these experiments, male rainbow trout reared in treated sewage effluent suffered biochemical changes which caused them to behave as if they were female. The synthetic oestrogen ethinyloestradiol present in most contraceptive and hormone replacement pills has been found in all effluents examined and can often be detected in river water. Research is needed to determine whether this compound is present in drinking water and, if so, in sufficient concentration to have a biochemical effect. The pharmaceutical industry has claimed to know nothing about it, the Department of Health has said that there is no danger and that it is a scientific matter, nothing to do with them. The water companies who have the responsibility for ensuring that the water we drink is pure and wholesome do not consider that there is a problem or, if there is, it is not their problem. After all, doing something about it would dent their profits. The only suggestion they have is to ban the pill. Of course there may not be a problem, but if there is it would be nice to know. Meanwhile all involved are keeping their heads down and saying as little as possible.

HS

Harold Sculthorpe is the author of
Freedom to Roam
see page 4 for details

Hoover, the multi-national domestic appliance manufacturers, are in the news for three separate reasons. Firstly because of its offer of free airline tickets to purchasers. One of our readers, hoping to visit her daughter in America, made the right purchases, sent in the form and heard nothing. When she enquired she was told that unfortunately her application had been received too late. However, she had taken the precaution of posting it by recorded delivery.

According to *The Guardian* (1st April 1993) the free flights offer "was structured to deter people, and the company gambled on customers failing to read the small print in the offer". It reported that the company's Europe president and director of marketing had been dismissed, that Maytag, the US parent company, "is pouring in at least £20 million to save the offer".

The second report on Hoover comes from the April issue of *Which?* The Consumers' Association magazine published its findings on vacuum cleaners in which "Hoover is ranked among the least reliable in the cylinder vacuum section and both its upright Turbomaster models suffer from below average suction".

However, as a result of the free flights offer, "demand was so strong for appliances needed to qualify for tickets that Hoover's Cambuslang factory near Glasgow was put on seven-day working".

It was from Cambuslang that the most significant Hoover story came. The company has decided to transfer production of one of its models from its plant at Dijon in France to Scotland. In Parliament the Prime Minister welcomed the news that Dijon would lose 400 jobs and that Cambuslang would gain them, as a vindication of his government's approach to industry and its rejection of the Social Chapter and the Maastricht Treaty, accepted by every other EC government.

Radio 4 interviewed a shop steward at Dijon. She said: "We are proud of our achievements over the years, and of working conditions and benefits we have won. We cannot just abandon them". The radio interviewer then went to Scotland to talk to James Airlie, the union leader (who was famous years ago,

Sweeping the real issue under the carpet

along with Jimmy Reid, for his part in the workers' occupation of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders). He agreed that the terms of employment were not as good as those previously negotiated, but said: "We've got the best we could. You've to remember that unemployment is desperate in this area". He knows that if no agreement was reached Hoover would simply transfer production to a cheaper part of its empire, just as American firms have shifted factories from the unionised north first to the pool of labour in the south and now over the border into Mexico, or just as British firms have shifted production first to Malaysia and now to Indonesia. Those who enjoy rhetoric about working class solidarity can urge that the redundant Dijon workers should come to Cambuslang to picket the Hoover plant, just as the sacked Timex in Dundee are picketing the gates as the workers hired to replace them on cheaper conditions are bussed in.

Those with the luxury of observing long-term trends have to consider what is likely rather than what they would like. The collapse of international finance capitalism isn't on the horizon, but the further decline of British industry is. This process has been happening all our lives, and of course was given a huge push by the policies of the Thatcher government. "Between the election in 1979 and the first half of 1981, manufacturing production fell by 17%. The decline in industrial output was the fastest in recorded history. Between a quarter and a fifth of manufacturing industry was wiped out." The language of a "trimmer, leaner economy" simply means eliminating labour.

And the politicians, whether those in government or in opposition, have no answer to the disaster of mass unemployment, but the hope that British industry would conquer lost or new overseas markets with high technology

products whose most noticeable characteristics are that they employ much capital and few people. Meanwhile, so attuned are all parties to the language and theories of the market that they dare not even suggest the Keynesian solutions of the 1930s in big public works projects, since private spending is virtuous but public spending sinful.

It is left to people on the political, economic and social fringe to promote ideas for promoting useful work outside the multi-national jungle. What is worrying is that now the collapse of manufacturing industry has accelerated there is less serious discussion than there was ten or fifteen years ago about alternatives. In fact I actually know people who in the '70s were enthusing over the ecological symposium *The Limits to Growth*, who now deprecate the failure of the British economy to grow.

It is now a long time since the American Scott Burns wrote *The Household Economy*, prophesying that the family would be "revitalised as a powerful and relatively autonomous productive unit", and since Jonathan Gershuny noted that the service economy – in which politicians put such faith – was already declining but might be superseded by a self-service economy.

There are people still trying to urge the British to absorb the lessons of the Mondragon co-operatives in the Basque country, or of the small-workshop economy of northern Italy, and the New Economics Foundation recently issued a report, *Towards a New Sector*, looking at the various ways in which locally-based community enterprises could be helped rather than hindered by a more supportive environment.

One observer of Britain's economic failure from an anarchist standpoint is Denis Pym, who in recent articles in this journal has pursued the message of his little book *The*

Employment Question (Freedom Press, 1985). He questions the legitimacy of employing institutions in which politicians place their faith for the future, and the monopoly ascribed to them of creating wealth.

We already have a dual economy, he argues, with on the one side capital ruthlessly dispensing with labour while scouring the world for the cheapest labour market, while on the other is the unofficial domestic economy which "offers people the opportunity to reunite their social and economic lives and use the tools and techniques which suit their personal and social requirements". Pym's hero is the *bricoleur*, the local fixer, the man or woman who uses resourcefulness to cater directly and reciprocally for human needs in the interstices of the allegedly 'real' economy.

Colin Ward

Class War press release

We have reason to believe there may be an orchestrated smear campaign running against the Class War Federation. Rather than reply to a series of vague unsubstantiated and unfounded rumours, innuendo and conjecture, we have decided to re-state our position.

For the record, **Class War is an anti-capitalist working class organisation. Class War has no links whatsoever with any racist, fascist or statist organisations. Regardless of their background, all Class War members are committed to fighting against racism, fascism, sexism and homophobia.**

Some people may still be confused over recent departures from the Class War Federation. To reiterate the facts, Tim Scargill and Ian Bone have left the Class War Federation and are no longer part of our organisation.

For more information or clarification of any of these points, please don't hesitate to contact our National Secretary, Dave Johnston, at PO Box 2531, Smethwick, Warley B66 2NH.

Japanese companies do not recruit managers from the business schools they disdain and clearly have no need of, but nurture them over long careers rich in practical experience. At all levels in company hierarchy, gradual change and soundly based development are highly prized. Organisational structures are seen to be organic (yet another libertarian word) rather than merely functional, and within them the individual is well integrated and secure in his/her interdependency with others; independence implies a destructive egoism. Again these feelings are reflected in language: the word 'wa' encompasses unity, cohesiveness and team spirit.

Of particular interest to anarchists is the Japanese approach to hierarchy, or the sempai-kohai (senior-junior) relationship. Of course, this inevitably involves order giving and taking, but they make hierarchy almost analogous to what we would understand as a mentor-protégé relationship, and is thus a constructive force towards education and harmony, which counterbalances the potential for discord. It is a matter of both emotional and functional, and is seen to be of mutual benefit to both parties. The Japanese contrive to make hierarchy humane rather than alienating and humiliating, small wonder that workers are so willing, and that their personal aspirations often find fulfilment alongside the ambitions of the companies they work for.

Army Ants?

Matsushita is a huge conglomerate, but it harnesses the advantages of decentralisation. There is a fundamental belief that people can be trusted to make decisions, and divisional managers operate as fairly autonomous entrepreneurs. A lot of time is spent out of the office and in the marketplace, where individual initiative is used to spot and exploit gaps in consumer demand. Rival products which appear better than their own are quickly analysed, and passed on to research and development engineers to improve upon or make a similar product more cheaply. In sharp contrast in relations *inside* the company, no

quarter is asked or given in the battles with other companies for market share. Matsushita's decentralised units perform as multi-disciplined battle groups, which are quick to respond to opportunities without time consuming reference to higher authority. Alongside the Japanese capacity for deep contemplation, there is an ability to move with amazing speed when decisions have been made. Their behaviour on the economic battleground resembles that of German tank commanders in the last war: the likes of Rommel we well versed in overall strategy, but were encouraged to look for avenues of rapid advance on the ground as they rode in tanks close to those most advanced, exploiting weakness, when they found it, quickly and ruthlessly. And where Rommel would whistle up the Stukas to knock enemy strong points, so the Japanese whistle up their engineers to develop new, better and cheaper products leaving competitors gasping for breath. Banzai!

The above brings to mind the behaviour of army ants: highly co-operative within their own colonies, but prone to open warfare between colonies. To anarchists, the combining of Zen with economic imperialism smacks of the highest form of hypocrisy, even schizophrenia. However, we have to appreciate that the average employee of Matsushita is unlikely to feel the inconsistencies in Japanese culture, just as British people seldom appear troubled by inconsistencies in their own. Attitudes and behaviour which are internalised from birth to death will always be seen by the individual to constitute norms which are so ingrained as to seem *natural*.

Japanese schools provide a powerful contribution to the attitudes which the likes of Matsushita requires in their employees. Alongside highly co-operative group

— PART 2 —

BANZAI!

activities, which are strongly encouraged, there is strict discipline. Uniforms are even today modelled on pre-war German school uniforms, and there are army-style parades and inspections. There is fierce competition for university places, and to this end the unfortunate children often attend private crammer schools at night after day classes. The motto "Fail on six, pass on five" refers to hours of sleep per night! Not surprisingly, many children just cannot cope with these demands, and suicide is not uncommon.

In the country which is fast becoming the most wealthy in the world, the average life expectancy is only 66½ years; in the UK it currently stands at 72 years. Wealth does not always encourage health. Japanese culture is extremely stressful.

Japan is now the imperial giant she sought to become in 1941, but without firing a shot. Ironically, it has been low levels of

expenditure on arms which has contributed to that victory; investment capital was freed for other activities, as British and American companies have found to their cost. Whether Western countries will continue to allow still greater Japanese expansion is a moot point. Unlike the Japanese, they have the military strength to force a showdown, but perhaps the Japanese now have the atomic bomb. Alternatively crippling trade tariffs could be introduced, anathema to Thatcher and Reagan, but the new Clinton government shows signs of favouring the latter option. It would be prudent of the Japanese to cool the pace, but it seems to me that their psychological equipment is unlikely to be overridden by diplomatic reasoning.

John Griffin

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Back in the 1920s there was a very strong anarcho-syndicalist movement in Japan, which was presumably crushed by the militarists. Does anyone have information on modern Japanese anarchism?



'Japanese invasion beach-head, 1990s style'

— SWITZERLAND —

European Conference on Contraception and Abortion in Geneva

In September last year nearly 200 women met in Geneva at the invitation of ENWRAC (European Network for Women's Right to Abortion and Contraception) for a European conference. They came from 27 countries in Europe (but also from India, Israel and the USA) to discuss the reality of the situation in 1992.

The situation is different in Eastern and Western Europe. On the one side of the continent laws giving women control over their fertility are being called into question, as though women's rights are part and parcel of communism and should be rejected along with it. On the other side are those countries where some freedoms are slowly being achieved (Ireland still very reactionary however) but which are still very fragile due to religion, a rise in moral reactionism and welfare cutbacks.

In the East, and to Poland first, medical practices agreed by the Polish League of Doctors in December 1991 set in movement the development of 'gynaecological tourism' to Czechoslovakia, Lithuania and Germany. Not only do doctors refuse to terminate pregnancies (women requesting this in a hospital are sent away), but women are also denied pre-natal tests. Nobody is therefore surprised at the rise in the number of infanticides, all the more so due to the lack of education and unavailability of contraceptives. On 24th July the Polish parliament rejected a proposal for a referendum on abortion, the proposed anti-abortion bill will soon be debated by a 'special' commission.

In the former USSR women turn to abortion first then the abandonment of children and infanticide (300 to 400 cases of the latter every year). Abortion is resorted to for some 80% of unwanted

pregnancies, contraception prevents only about 20% given that it is available to only 10-30% of the population in the various regions. Today 500,000 children (who still have parents) are in state care. Despite legislation relating to abortion dating back to 1955, illegal terminations persist and represent about half the number of legal abortions. Abortion is free but is performed without anaesthetics.

In Estonia also, abortion is the main method of birth control. During the 50 years of the communist regime, sex education was virtually non-existent. Contraceptives are almost inaccessible due to scarcity and high cost.

If Lithuania has the lowest levels of abortion, maternal and infant mortality of all the countries of the former USSR, this is no doubt due to the high performance of the health services. But the church is aiming to re-introduce spiritual ideals in the family sphere and to ban divorce and abortion.

In Bulgaria the right to abortion was granted in 1990, but there was no back-up with information on health and sex education. Women are still the victims of prejudice depending on whether they are Bulgar, Turk, etc. The number of abortions has diminished since the ban was lifted, but there are still 900 children born in Bulgaria each year to mothers under the age of 15.

In the West equally perturbing cases were outlined. In Ireland abortion has been illegal since 1861, and an amendment in 1983 has made it unconstitutional. Advertising contraception and information about homosexuality is forbidden. Here you will find more and more under-age single mothers. It should be noted that in 1992 six out of ten Irish children were living with families 'below

the bread line'. Ireland has the highest level of unemployment in the EEC.

In Germany the 25th June 1992 saw the passing in the Bundestag of a law calling for "the protection of unborn life, the development of a society more in the service of children and the regulation of pregnancy terminations". A court ruling on this matter is being awaited in Bavaria. This is a big question mark for women who, in former East Germany, had a right to an abortion.

It is in this way that the pro-life campaigners use pressure to call into question pregnancy terminations, but also to change the law. In Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy, France ... such groups are on the increase.

Of these different aspects of a similar reality, most of the participants reaffirmed the determination of women to achieve a real free choice: to defend rights which have been won and/or seek support for sex education and abortion and contraception on demand. Also to decriminalise abortion and to enlarge contraceptive choice, notably with the availability of the abortion pill RU486 only allowed in France, Britain and Sweden.

Other women wished to see demedicalisation of abortion in order to be able to truly exercise control over themselves. Particularly when it is known that people of colour are sterilised without being told.

It was decided in Geneva to co-ordinate all the groupings who were calling for these demands and to develop this European network not only for information but also to exchange information about militant practices, heighten awareness of autonomous women's groups (centres, women's homes, etc.), non-governmental acts of solidarity (for example projects in Poland to give sex education and to form para-medical organisations) or even more institutional interventions (for example, didn't a European parliamentary Green group propose to guarantee immunity to any act of civil disobedience to do with the question of abortion when it gave its support to an Irish social movement?).

Next meeting: Strasbourg early 1994, on the theme of 'Those opposed to women's rights' whether extreme right/fundamentalists or simply governmental and mobilising women and all those

who would defend 'the right to choose'. The organisation of the conference will be carried out by the association's national co-ordinating body, trade unions and political organisations who support the right to abortion and contraception.

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Anarchism, Social Science and Propaganda

Imagine most anarchists have one – or both – of two main purposes: to make more anarchists, and a personal purpose. The personal purpose may be to enjoy being an anarchist and, as far as possible, living in an anarchist way, or it may be to let off steam by shouting protest and cocking snooks at the powerful and privileged who maintain the world's nasty ways of life.

One like me, with a privileged background, should be humble in criticism of the loud protesters. It is not for me to condemn outbursts of 'lower class bile' like Stephen Cullen's (*Freedom*, 14th November 1992). Rather, they produce in me, illogically perhaps, some feeling of shame. But Jake might be right to say (*Freedom*, 9th January 1993) that clenched fists and blowing up buildings and abusive language are not going to bring anarchism closer. It would be good to know, for instance, what the aim of German anarchists was in throwing stones at the German president at an anti-racist demonstration, apart from personal satisfaction. It will not have made many more anarchists.

Presumably people become anarchists mostly through example or propaganda, mainly written propaganda these days. And surely almost all anarchists would say that it is very wrong to impose ideas on others. Everybody should decide for themselves. And do not most, or at least many, anarchists believe that if 'ordinary' people have the chance to hear all sides equally, many will choose anarchist because it is more rational and moral?

But most people never get that chance. A large proportion of anarchists seem to be of an 'intellectual' bent – I mean people who need no outside encouraging to think, read, perhaps write about general questions. 'Intellectuals' tend to use language that probably more than half the population find difficult to follow; when writers are social scientists their language and arguments are frequently incomprehensible to nearly everybody. And even when these can be understood they are still usually in publications that most people do not even know exist. As Chris Platts said of sociologists (*Freedom*, 14th November 1992), social scientists all too often write for other social scientists. This means for those who are developing anarchist thought that very few people read them and fewer understand them. Is this perhaps the problem with publications like *The Raven*? I enjoy *The Raven* very much. But why? Because it is a way of

enjoying the company and encouragement of like-minded people. I fear this may be what *The Raven* and similar periodicals are doing for most of their readers: preaching to the converted.

Anarchist propagandists have a problem that faces few other movements. Almost all political, social and religious ideas that have been accepted by large numbers of people have been imposed, directly or indirectly. If they have not been imposed by military force, or terror, they have been spread by institutions, organisations or exciting leaders. These usually get people to 'believe' in their ideas by making promises or threats, or appealing to emotions. They do not gain millions of supporters by convincing each one by argument that their theory – whether it be Marxism or Catholicism or Liberal Democracy or Toryism – is rational and moral.

Such methods are forbidden to anarchists by the

The Raven

21

Feminism Anarchism Women

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ideals of anarchism itself. At present anarchists clearly do not have the organisations that could help them to make their ideas known to large numbers of people. But even if they had, it would surely still be very wrong to try to make new anarchists by writing articles that are difficult to understand and putting them all together in a separate journal. And it is also surely not a good idea to refer frequently to 'authorities'. What is the point of appealing to Durkheim, Michels and Weber, to Mannheim or Tonies, even to Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin and Malatesta? Does it not imply that you cannot be a proper anarchist if you haven't read them? Or at the very least that the writer's present argument is a good one because these impressive people said the same thing? That's an attitude as far from anarchism as you can get. Is not 'scholarship', in the sense of knowing who wrote in the past, largely irrelevant? I can think of two ways in which scholars might be useful. They can tell us facts about the past. And they can remind us of good arguments that earlier anarchists have put forward. But present facts are far more important. (I don't think history had any good use, as opposed to interest, except for knocking down all the various myths humans set up for themselves and others. In practice history is probably not of great use even for that, since you won't use it that way till you have become suspicious of the myths anyway.) As for the good arguments, it's not much of a movement that can't constantly renew and develop arguments for itself.

I am very glad to hear that sociology – or much of it, or at least its spirit – is subversive. I want to believe that, because it is obviously very important. (Things like anthropology and sociology should of course be discussed with children too, but, like any other subject, should never be compulsory.)

The trouble is that most of the millions of the world do not know that sociology is, or might be, subversive. And they do not know because the social sciences are essentially closed away inside the universities; social scientists do not much share their thoughts and discussions with 'ordinary' people. Or if they do occasionally, they normally deny that that gives outsiders any right to take part in the debate. I believe most readers will have seen examples of how contemptuous academics are about 'popular' accounts of their work. Every time I write something about social science, I get thrown at me the same emotive words whose purpose seems to be to dismiss my criticism with little or no attempt at rational argument: conspiracy theory, rant, paranoid, ignorant, demented, hysterical, arrogant. This I expected and have got used to.

(You could of course argue that the constant recurrence of these words shows there is obviously truth in the accusations!) But I am sincerely sorry if anarchist social scientists feel that what I say attacks them personally, and if I feel that they must, in order to defend themselves, defend a whole group by using such language and such a method of debate. Every time they respond in this way social scientists seem to confirm some of my charges against them.

It would surely be odd if universities were the only human establishments free of the corruption of power – in this case intellectual power. (When governments interfere with universities by closing departments, or in other ways, they may well increase, not decrease, academic power over thought about such things as economics, psychology or education, because the result is less dissent even within the universities themselves.) But if I am wrong about the universities' intellectual rule (I have never suggested a conspiracy) then I ask to be put right by reasonable discussion, not rude words. In the cases where I have myself used such words in the place of argument, I admit fault and apologise.

Social scientists should lay their facts and basic ideas in simple and clear language before everybody who is interested – and there might be many more interested if they did that. They should then let all those interested people take part in judging what has and what had not got worth in the social sciences, and respectfully let them contribute their own ideas.

Many people may appear to have weaker intellectual power than they really have because they live in a world largely cut off from the world of thought. Many have never been encouraged to think for themselves, get no practice in thinking, because the 'brainy' can't be bothered with them. They believe they cannot question the brainy world, and so insist on the comfortable conventional beliefs handed down to them by those who are supposed to know.

What I am asking for is more thought for more people. I would like to suggest that publications like *The Raven* are perhaps not the best places for achieving this. I am not saying they are pointless. But I doubt if they make new anarchists. The problems of making anarchist thought known to more people are bad enough as it is. So don't hide it away. The articles in *The Raven* are often very important. Do they not often concern basic anarchist ideas? If those ideas could be shown clearly in simple language, would not the right place for them be papers like *Freedom*?

Amorey Gethin

Libertarian education is a theory and practice that recognises the controlling tendencies of national state systems of education. In 1791 William Godwin warned the campaigners for a national system of education in Britain that government would take it over and use it for its own ends. His predictions came true. While we cannot ignore the passion and commitment with which working class people fought for a state system of education that was equal to that of their upper class peers throughout the twentieth century, the fact still remains that it is government who owns the educational system, not the people.

Evidence of this emanates from almost every piece of government educational legislation introduced since 1870. In this context a reminder of the words of a senior official in the Department of Education and Science speaking after the 1981 inner city riots is illustrative:

"We are in a period of considerable social change. There may be social unrest, but we can cope with the Toxteths. But if we have a highly educated and idle population we may possibly anticipate more serious social conflict. People must be educated once more to know their place."

This was the backdrop of the Conservative Government's legislation of the late 1980s, the Local Government Act and the Education Reform Act.

There were those who believed that the legislation would give those seeking choice in education far greater opportunities. Some, indeed, anticipated an emergence of more libertarian alternatives. Yet it soon became clear that a concentration of power in the hands of the Department of Education and Science was the primary objective.

Libertarian education also has strong roots in basic human rights. It apportions to learners a degree of independence that is grounded in the belief that they can manage their own education. Furthermore, it is a set of educational beliefs that seeks to break down the boundaries between teachers and students, that is grounded in a desire to construct non-coercive and anti-authoritarian pedagogies, and that is not concerned with systems of reward and punishment. It is an all-embracing philosophy of education and learning that is

THE LIBERTARIAN TRADITION Rooted, developed and to continue in dissent

compatible with anarchist views of freedom.

There is a rich tradition of libertarian educational practice in schools in Britain since 1890 based on this philosophy which has emanated from a wide variety of dissenting practitioners. This practice has been a product of particular historical circumstances and is evident in three eras: the period immediately before and after the First World War, a similar period between 1940 and 1950 and the late 1960s and 1970s. All three eras witnessed a considerable debate about the purpose and nature of education, a debate which mirrored a more general and profound questioning of social values.

The actual practice exists in three areas. Firstly, it is found in a variety of free-standing alternatives which were born of a particular culture and occupied the ground between the public and the private sector. They represent a complete challenge to the national state education system. Secondly it exists in a series of 'private adventures' in education, usually the inspiration of an individual or group of educational thinkers, many of which for a variety of reasons were recognised by the state. Thirdly, it has roots inside the state system.

As far as the free-standing alternatives are concerned, they belong mostly to the early part of the twentieth century and the 1960s and 1970s. Louise Michel established a libertarian school at Fitzroy Square in 1890, although it did not have a long life, but between 1907 and 1921 a series of International Modern Schools influenced by the educational ideas of Francisco Ferrer emerged in London, Liverpool, Swansea and Cardiff. Most were in London in the Jewish East End and grew out of a working class culture that was turning its back on orthodox Judaism and on the demands made by the national state education system. One such school was established in 1907 in Whitechapel by a group of children led by a young girl of thirteen named Naomi Ploschansky, later

called Nellie Dick, born in the Ukraine in 1893, and demoralised by national state schooling and by the lack of facilities for young people in the working men's institutes of the East End. To begin with she helped set up a Sunday School which was to grow into a larger and more regular International Modern School later on. The history of such schools is largely unrecorded and constitutes a dissenting movement against the national state education system.

Also largely unrecorded is the history of the free school movement of the 1960s and 1970s. In the early 1970s there were over twenty such schools mostly in inner cities and again rooted in an essentially working class culture, although usually the inspiration of educationalists and teachers completely dissatisfied with the national state school system. The most famous of these schools was the White Lion Street Free School. It was born in 1972 in an old derelict house near London's Kings Cross station. From the beginning the idea was to create a space in which local children could learn without the regimentation, boredom and fear that by the 1970s was the usual experience for most children in traditional schools. Many local children were involved in renovating the building and when the school opened in September 1973 a lot of the children had not only discovered the school themselves, many having just 'wandered in', but to some extent had physically created it.

Turning briefly to the private adventures in education, there are a number of initiatives which warrant consideration. When the Little Commonwealth, a self-governing colony for so-called 'delinquent adolescents' appeared in July 1913 under the guidance of Homer Lane, inspiration for various experiments took root. Even before he broke away from the private sector based New Education Fellowship and the magazine the *New Era* to eventually set up Summerhill in

— OBITUARY —

Bill Christopher: a mate and comrade

The sudden death of Bill Christopher was a tremendous shock to all of those who knew him. Bill died after a fall at his home in Todmorden, Lancashire, in what was a tragic accident.

I knew Bill as a tireless campaigner for social justice and one who believed in the class struggle. He believed that struggle would lead to a classless society where people would be free to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

Before Bill came into the anarchist and syndicalist movement he was a member of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) — indeed, Bill had stood as a parliamentary candidate for them. However, like some other members of the ILP he believed that it was in the workplace, in the community and on the streets, rather than parliament, that change would come.

Bill worked in Fleet Street and was a member of NATSOPA. He was very active in his union and was the Imperial Father of his Chapel. I first met Bill when he joined the Syndicalist Workers Federation (SWF). He contributed to the SWF's paper *Direct Action* and with other members of that organisation, and with members of the London Anarchist Group he helped to organise the National Rank and File Movement (1960-62).

This movement was an important event in that it attempted, with a certain amount of success, to bring together and organise active trade unionists in an unofficial grouping. The purpose was to combat the hold that the officialdom of the trade unions had over their members and their activities. 1961 was a time of rising expectation. Workers were flexing their industrial muscle and the employer feared the shop stewards and their organisations and saw the union official as the person to keep them in check.

The Rank and File Movement supported shop steward's organisations and combined to link up the struggles that were taking place. It was, needless to say, attacked by the press, the employers and the trade union leadership. One right wing trade union journal went so far as to publish the names of the national committee of the movement. I expect the Economic League still has them on file.

Bill was elected to that committee. Among its

activities it published a newsletter. I soon not only worked very closely with Bill, but we became mates. The term 'mate' for us indicated something even closer than friend. It was a bond that encompassed both our political activities, working together on *Freedom* and, just as important, our social activities. It was but a little inconvenience to cross London for an evening of jazz, food and drink, and lots of chat with Bill, his wife Joan and their two daughters (and there was no Victoria line to Walthamstow then). Those evenings were enjoyable with other members of the London Anarchist group and Bill's comrades from the ILP.

At the time, except for my own contributions, *Freedom* lacked any coverage on the industrial struggle and trade union affairs. For me this had always been a weakness of *Freedom*, as it is now. However, in the re-organisation of *Freedom* Bill and myself were responsible for a full industrial page. To launch it we reprinted over a period of three months an updated version of Philip Sansom's excellent pamphlet *Syndicalism: the Workers' Next Step*. At that time *Freedom* was still a weekly with an editorial board. Bill often arrived a little late for editorial meetings. It was usually because of negotiations at work over extra copies or a dispute — but Bill was always cheerful and raised a laugh at our working meetings. He was great at the banter, that friendly piss-take that workers adopt to ease a job — something which workers use but without malice.

I lost contact with Bill and his partner Joan until last year. Having made contact again I did spend a short weekend with them.

During this intervening period Bill had studied and had become a lecturer. After retiring he did voluntary work for the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

My memories of Bill are working on *Freedom* and the many evenings we all spent together; with Joan and their two daughters; of the cold night we slept on the Committee of 100 sit-down outside a US base.

Bill will be missed not only by his family but by all those who knew him and worked with him for a free and just society.

Pete Turner

Food for Thought ... and Action

More ideas to chew on at the bookshop.

*No Master High or Low: libertarian education and schooling in Britain 1890-1990** by John Shotton, Libertarian Education. This book deserves to become a classic in its field. Not only is it an excellent history of a century of libertarian alternatives in education, it is also well-written, well-produced, and a handsome book. Colin Ward contributes to the foreword. To be reviewed at length in *Freedom*. 291 pages with 10 photographs, £7.95.

The following books, in the same series and already stocked in the bookshop, are now available post-free (inland) and are both highly recommended as complementary reading:

*Free School: the White Lion experience** by Nigel Wright, 73 pages, £3.95.

*Freedom in Education: a do-it-yourself guide to the liberation of learning**, 55 pages, £3.95.

Earth First! the radical environmental journal, Earth First!, Montana USA, December 1992 issue. The original flagship journal of the American Earth First! organisation which in the current issue devotes considerable space to re-affirming its commitment to social justice as well as to ending the human destruction of nature. The former was put in considerable doubt following Dave Foreman's outburst on population control, starvation in the third world, and AIDS, in 1987, prior to him leaving the movement in 1990. Most of those sharing racist or fascist views left with him, and Earth First! while maintaining its adherence to *deep ecology* still recognises the importance of the social, and in a nice touch reprints one of Foreman's own earlier speeches as a reminder of Earth First!'s principles. Same format as *Freedom*, though printed on lower quality recycled paper, 40 pages, £2.95.

Do or Die: the voice of the British Earth First! movement. On this side of the pond Earth First! is still in its infancy, but has now got its own journal. Although British groups have been accused of being tame in comparison with their US counterparts, their magazine seems much more lively, though suffering — in this issue at least — from inferior production methods. To be fair they do claim that this is due to a rush job "as the layout staff found themselves lying under bulldozers at

Twyford". An interesting article on the Twyford Down struggle against the M3 calls for radical action against Tarmac, one of the main culprits. If anything, the attachment to social justice in British Earth First! is stronger than that in the US, with articles on Green Fascism and on the recent establishment of a British section of the Wobblies (IWW). A4 size, 20 pages, 75p.

No Comment: the defendant's guide to arrest, Clever Rebel. Along the lines of the *Bust Book* published in the '70s, this little pamphlet gives sensible advice on what to do if you're arrested by the blue meanies. The two authors — anonymous — claim to have been arrested ninety times between them and never to have served any time in prison, mainly by adopting the advice in the title and exercising their right to remain silent. A useful publication. A6 size, 14 pages, 60p.

Processed World number 30, Bay Area Center for Art and Technology, San Francisco. Sadly, this issue is probably the last we'll be getting as the British distributors are no longer handling periodicals. So make the most of it. The best article in this issue is a hilarious piece by a British contributor who recounts his experiences as a sperm donor, a job he took in order to supplement his meagre income. "Job!" I hear you say, "Come again?" (Hmm, don't mind if I do). There's also the usual selection of articles on dehumanising and pointless work and people's attempts to spice it up or sabotage it; a piece on American racism and the Los Angeles riots; a debate on 'Intellectual Property Rights' or patents; a paean to the Chicago river flooding last year from the city's Surrealist Group; and as always an excellent crop of letters, plus much more. We also have quite a few back numbers of *Processed World* in stock. 80 pages, A4 size, illustrated, £4.50.

LATE EXTRA: please note that *The Modern School Movement* by Paul Avrich (Princeton University Press) and *The Revolution of Everyday Life* by Raoul Vaneigem are now both out of print, although the latter may be reprinted this year.

KM
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1924, A.S. Neill always recognised the influence that Lane had on him.

Lane's was a private adventure, so was Neill's, and there was a link between the two. Lane's initiative also had a great influence on a series of other initiatives which emerged after the 1920s. These were the 'schools for the unschoolable', self-governing communities like Red Hill School (1934) where a libertarian philosophy and practice developed for the supposedly 'maladjusted' children who attended them. There is something interesting about a state which will resist dissent in education at all costs except where there apparently seems no alternative. Other private adventures which are part of the libertarian tradition are Dartington Hall (1926) and Beacon Hill (1927), the Forest School (1929), Burgess Hill (1936), Monkton Wyld and Kilquhanity (1940) and Kirkdale (1966).

The history of libertarian education in state schools belongs

mostly to the 1960s and 1970s at Braehead (1957), Risinghill (1960), Summerhill Academy (1968), Countesthorpe College (1970), the Sutton Centre (1972), and William Tyndale (1974). All these schools developed libertarian practices but most significantly the experiences of children at the schools appears to have been libertarian. The same is true of Prestolee School in the 1920s and St George's-in-the-East School in the 1940s and 1950s, two state schools influenced by libertarian principles and founded in earlier eras.

It is impossible in such limited space to examine the history of any of these schools in even the slightest detail. All I have tried to do is name them and give some indication of the philosophy that guided them and the circumstances in which they emerged. I want to conclude, though, with a consideration of what the clear existence of a libertarian tradition in education and schooling in Britain can contribute to the current education debate.

Libertarian education is synonymous with basic human rights emphasising the learner's capacity to determine and claim those rights. With this in mind let us consider the buzz phrases of the current educational debate and consider the possibilities of a libertarian alternative.

Parental choice really means giving parents the right to maintain inequality by choosing comfortable schools rather than run-down ones, or to opt out into the independent sector, leaving the unprivileged even more deprived of resources. Opting out of local authority control is really about dismantling the power of the local authorities, preparing the ground for future privatisation, reinforcing the movement towards centralised control and dramatically increasing the dictatorial power of the Secretary of State for Education. Discipline really means introducing an authoritarian relationship between teachers and learners that instils the attitudes needed to run a divided society. Standards are really the government's favourite way of attacking public education, and forcing the opposition on to the defensive.

Basic skills really means reducing 'skills' to a technical competence, to be mechanically ticked off in a check-list box. Basic skills, in this sense, become a central part of social

discipline. Benchmark testing at 7, 11, 14 and 16 really means an intimidatory way of arranging pupils, schools and local authorities into a competitive league table of results, not for the benefit of the children but to promote the forces of selection and privatisation in the country at large. A relationship between schools and industry really means finding covert ways of socialising disaffected youth into the habits of deference and docility. The National Curriculum really means grabbing power away from the local authorities to reinforce the move towards a greater, centralised control. It also means perpetuating elitist, tiered schooling by reinforcing the narrow, traditional subject-base of the foundation curricular structure.

The kind of education policy that has emerged from government in the last ten years will continue as a dominating force in British education as long as there is no alternative posed. Drawing on the libertarian tradition those of us interested in education, and particularly in the lives of young people, could infuse the current debate with a little dissent, with discussion of autonomy, of an individualised approach to learning, of anti-authoritarianism, of non-coercive pedagogies and most of all of fun and freedom. With this in mind we could draw on the words of James Guillaume writing in the late nineteenth century and seeking an alternative approach to that of the national government bent on introducing the 1870 Education Act:


"No longer will there be schools arbitrarily governed by a pedagogue where the children wait impatiently for the moment of their deliverance when they can enjoy a little freedom outside. In their gatherings the children will be entirely free. They will organise their own games, their talks, systemise their own work, arbitrate disputes, etc. They will easily become accustomed to public life, to responsibility, to mutual trust and aid. The teacher whom they have themselves chosen to give their lessons will no longer be detested as a tyrant but be as a friend to whom they will listen with pleasure." (Quoted in *Bakunin on Anarchy* edited by Sam Dolgoff, New York, 1972, pages 373-374.)

No Master High or Low is available from Freedom Press priced at £7.95 (post free).

John Shotton

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The media have a knack of plugging issues to the point of public exhaustion! The harrowing scenes and pictures on television and in the daily press eventually accustom those who go on watching, having in the meantime chased away those of us who simply cannot go on being spectators at the carnage (a one-sided carnage as presented by the Western governments in connivance with the media).

The hype publicity given to Thatcher as to what should be done to end the conflict in the former Yugoslavia is more a reflection of a jaded press looking for a bit of sensationalism rather than an attempt to seek a genuine solution to what is a complex situation which neither the Vance/Owen partition plans or the sales of arms to the Muslims by Thatcher (good business plug for son Mark perhaps?) to better defend themselves, nor the latest Labour-supported proposals to bomb the Serbian supply lines. And as we write the Croats and the Muslims are killing each other.

The official Western line that all the aggression, rape and genocide is Serbian is beginning to wear thin and one is now learning that the Serbs are as much the victims in the areas where they are substantial minorities as are the Muslims and Croats in Serbian-dominated areas.

A letter in a recent issue of *The Guardian* presents quite another picture from that with which we are daily bombarded by television and the press:

"Baroness Thatcher's advocacy of military strikes against the Serbs is informed by her enthusiasm for the Croatian leadership of Franjo Tudman, whom she regards as a free marketeer fighting the Socialist (sic) Party of Slobadan Milosevic.

Both Tudman and Milosevic are ex-party bureaucrats committed to increasingly painful market reforms, who have invoked virulent nationalism in order to redirect the resultant

economic anger and maintain their fellow party colleagues at their desks (now as managing directors rather than as factory managers).

Although Serbian forces inflict most casualties now, it was the sacking and disenfranchising of Serbian minorities in Croatia by Tudman's HDZ government which precipitated the conflict. For every Serbian 'chetnik' there is a Croatian 'ustasha'.

The best hope for stopping the slaughter lies in the growing disenchantment among the ordinary people of urban Serbia and Croatia. In Serbia, mass unemployment, monthly inflation of over 200% and now the collapse of one bank and the imminent collapse of another have fuelled growing anger against the Serbian authorities.

What holds back that anger are the Western sanctions and anti-Serbian rhetoric which enable the Serbian demagogue, Slobadan

Milosevic, to appeal to nationalist sentiment and defuse economic discontent.

Only two years ago, crowds of up to half a million anti-Milosevic demonstrators occupied Belgrade's main thoroughfare for days. Only the inexperience of their student leadership prevented them from unseating the Serbian hierarchy. By ending all Western sanctions and military presence in the Balkans, that one real force for peace can be released again.

Perhaps Nato's air power can blast Serbian artillery into silence. The most likely effect will be Serbia's ignition of conflict in Kosovo and Macedonia. Even if the conflagration did not spread, a Western military presence would only replicate the role of Tito's Yugoslav police state by holding the virulent nationalisms in cold storage while repressing the economic oppositions which can unite people across the national divides.

The West has no solution. The killing goes

on in Somalia, the US has greased the path of Pol Pot's return in Cambodia. Western interference will mean no better for the balkans.

Horror at the inhumanity of the siege of Srebrenica and the desire to do something is no excuse for doing the wrong thing. Doctor Owen, Baroness Thatcher, UN troops and US air strikes are all part of the problem.

They must be removed to allow the economic oppositions of all Balkan countries to make the solution."

We offer this, in our opinion, valuable alternative interpretation of the Yugoslav crisis from Phil Smith of Bristol, which confirms our view at *Freedom* that the media have followed the American, British et alia line that the Serbs are the *baddies* and the Muslims and Croats are the *goodies*, to the extent that they are now recognised as sovereign states. The Russians are not so convinced.

There is no such organisation as the United Nations. How can they be when they are not even united within their own nation? And we are not just referring to Yugoslavia.

One major problem of the way we currently live is authoritarianism and the requirement of obedience which it requires to function to any degree. Some say having hierarchies is part of the 'natural order', but history does not show this any more than it shows women as 'naturally' subordinate. In *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* Erich Fromm argues that early humans must have surely co-operated in hunting and gathering in order to ensure survival and maximise effort and resources. And pointing to many cultures (often referred to in our culture as primitive) he showed that many did not and still do not have permanent hierarchies and authoritarian values.¹

(History, as with the present, is often distorted

1. Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, Penguin, 1974, chapter 8.

Obedience

and censored by current values. For example, in the ancient Greek state of Sparta sex between men was encouraged as it was said to provide strong bonds for men fighting side by side in war. And the history of American Indians as told by the Euroamericans does not tell us how much women were respected and not considered or treated as inferior – the term being so complementary to the Delaware people, or 'tribe', they generically referred to themselves as women. Gone from history are women as warriors leading the resistance against the European invaders and in their place are docile 'squaws'. The past is swept clean of awkward issues to help maintain domination in the present and so cultures that did not denigrate women or engage in mass slaughter are largely ignored and liberation decried as an impossibility, a pipe dream.)

The problem lies in how power and obedience are accepted as part of our way of life in the so-called advanced cultures. From our earliest years we find, as a rule, that obeying commands is expected and rational discussion is not. Many as children hear the phrase 'do as I say, not as I do' and find when they try to argue their point are told they are answering back, being cheeky, insolent and may well be punished for infraction of rules. No one would deny the need to stop a child from hurting themselves and would intervene, yet so often – as one can observe in everyday life – there is expectation that children obey all commands. Physical and psychological pain are used to sanction the will of parents/guardians and being slapped is a clear indication of the demand for conformity. What happens in our childhood is mostly about learning to obey, that explanation need not be given to you and sanctions may be used for infractions regardless of your reasons (which are not heard anyway). Whilst this picture of childhood is not detailed I'm sure many readers can think of personal experiences and have seen examples around them which illustrate the dominant ethos is of authority-obedience, of the regulation of our lives.

Schooling is a similar process where one finds again discussion is not the issue, rather obeying commands is, a process that is implicit as much as it is explicit. Our days are organised and regimented as are our clothes in many cases. Uniforms deny greater individuality, make you less discernible from others and identify you as part of the establishment. At school we find rules governing the way we speak, the way we can dress, what time we can eat at, where we may run, play, and all the rest. We may find ourselves in trouble and before an uncompromising teacher. A teacher who listens and talks to rather than at you is rare, for they are part of an establishment and the rules are the rules regardless of what they themselves may feel about them. There can be few of us who engaged in discussion within the formal classroom structure, for governments do not want dissent but conformity and as they control most of the education system it will ultimately serve their ends.

But this dulling, regimented way of life is not inherent, for if it were we would not have to learn it. It is the product of a way of life that requires people to be cowed and obedient. We are expected to believe humans by nature are self-serving and

competitive rather than seeing such behaviour as springing from the cruel and greedy way we live. Given the number of struggles for freedom, from mass revolutions to an individual's fight for dignity against the oppression of parents or state bureaucracy, it seems, if anything, it is the desire for freedom which is inherent.

But the danger to the state and the economic process which supports it is questioning and dissent, for if people grew up engaging in debate and trying to come to their own decisions it would undermine the very nature of power and obedience. Power over others can only exist if most are obedient and do not challenge the existing order. So discussion, debate and argument are stifled and we grow up learning to obey, even if dissatisfied, and knowing any major act of non-conformity will likely suffer punishment and condemnation. The danger of obedience and authoritarianism is people learn to obey commands which may be against their own interests and those of other humans. Thus we should not be surprised when young men are led to the slaughter in trenches and revolted only in the last months of the First World War, gas human beings, drop millions of tons of bombs on defenceless peasants, and so on throughout the history of 'civilisation'. (The only difference between a despot and an 'elected' leader is degree and our perception of them.) The Gulf slaughter and the US invasion of Indochina show us how easily 'free' nations become barbaric. Such atrocities could not be so easily perpetrated if obedience was not inculcated in society and if people questioned rather than conformed. Milgram's classic experiment on obedience illustrates how people brought up in a society where they learn to obey authority can put obeying commands of an authority figure before their moral concerns.²

It is a larger case than I can argue within limited space, but it seems clear that blind, unquestioning obedience is a denial of reason, of our ability to think and discern. Whilst most obey commands as the norm others can maintain power, for authoritarianism relies on obedience (usually termed loyalty and patriotism), and we will continue to lead unfulfilling, controlled existences which grow more regulated, more automaton and more violent as power and greed continue to extend their hold.

Ian Borrows

2. Milgram's experiment involved asking people to give what they assumed to be increasingly dangerous electric shocks to someone in another room. In reality the 'victim' was acting, part of the experiment, but as far as the people were concerned they thought it was real and many continued to increase the level of the shocks at the request of the authority figure (a scientist in a white coat) when the 'victim' began crying, screaming, and then fell silent.

Northern Ireland: routes to peace

As the situation gets worse, so it gets clearer. Warrington was a turning point, putting mass action back on the agenda in Dublin, Belfast and London. Thousands took the place of dozens. Of course, it may well all relapse, but that is unlikely. A chemical change cannot be reversed. So what are the options in the light of this new situation?

1. Personal confrontation of the paramilitaries. It was Peter Bottomley who put this case to a meeting called by New Consensus on Tuesday 6th April. I cannot quote him verbatim but its substance is that steps be taken to get to the paramilitaries personally so that IRA members find themselves surrounded by fellow-nationalists, especially their families and friends, who say 'put your guns away' so effectively that they have no option but to do what they are told. Likewise, the Loyalists surrounded by fellow-Loyalists insisting on the end of violence. This is the ideal solution but not in the sense of being impractical. It could actually happen. The change in the tone of the Sinn Fein public pronouncements over the last year underwrites the idea. They speak and write constantly of 'peace'. It turns out what they mean by 'peace' is the acceptance of their terms – but open support for the armalite-and-ballot-box days is over.

2. The Conor Cruise O'Brien case for selective internment. If 1. above does not happen in time and if there is another Warrington (as is more than likely) the governments of London and Dublin are going to be under massive pressure to 'do something' and have no option but to implement joint selective internment on both sides of the border. Given the sophistication of current intelligence operations it is beyond reasonable doubt that, near as makes no difference, all the godfathers could be picked up. The well-known trouble with this course of action is that it would give the IRA, at least, a new generation of martyrs that it so desperately needs. They have squeezed all they can out of the Bobby Sands generation. 'Blood and sacrifice' has to be seen to be believed. It is on

the cards that internment will give them what they want.

3. A new political initiative – talks that work. Unhappily this is very unlikely. It will remain so until there is something new on the table and there is no sign of that. There is something 'new' in the air but it is nowhere near the table. There is a political veto on it from all sides. It involves bringing the EC in as a fourth party to the talks and applying the principle of subsidiarity to Northern Ireland, yielding a new autonomy within the UK as a region of the EC. The hates and fears between the two communities are such that there appears to be no hope in effective dialogue unless, by means of a third party, the discussion can be effectively raised above the internecine level. Furthermore the contentious issue of Articles 2 and 3 cannot be dealt with in singular isolation. There has to be a *quid pro quo* and only a package will handle that situation.

4. Muddling through, as at present. This is what Warrington changed. The 'not in my time' view, common in the North, has suggested that the solution might have to wait for twenty to thirty years and the arrival of a new generation under new conditions. This meant the fatalistic acceptance of endless deaths. It has ceased to be 'on'.

There has been a massive shift in the background over the last two or three years. Previously Europe knew only Northern Ireland and the Basque country as sources of 'ethnic' violence. Now we have the trauma of Bosnia and threats over Kosovo and Macedonia – and Croatia again. Czechoslovakia has split and the former Soviet Union is threatened by multiple civil wars. The UN and the EC are massively engaged. Northern Ireland is no longer to be discounted as some kind of alien irritant. It is a test case for the future of Britain and the EC, and is ever more likely to be recognised as such. That makes for hope.

Peter Cadogan
Northern Ireland Project, The Gandhi
Foundation

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(and some men)

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Solidarity from *Freedom's* readers

Dear *Freedom*,
Both saddened and angered to hear of your recent troubles ... Please find enclosed payment for a subscription ... and a modest donation.

Carl

Dear Friends,
We have read with great dismay in *Freedom* about the raid of your office. We enclose £10 to help in alleviating the situation.

Helga and Wolfgang, Germany

Dear Editors,
Distressed to hear of the attack on the bookshop. Enclosed is a small donation towards your repairs.

Northern Herald Books

Dear Friends,
What is the situation in regard to the premises? Is the physical damage going to be covered by insurance? I know quite a number of people who, though nervous of being thought 'anarchist' are nevertheless sympathetic.

M

Dear Editors,
What a great (unasked for) response to the bookshop break-up. Yep! A strong case of mutual aid in practice ...

JL

Dear *Freedom*,
I was distressed to hear of the attack by C18. Please accept this small donation.

Mark

Dear Friends,
I was upset to read of the assault on *Freedom's* offices, but it was good that no one was hurt.

Freedom is the best radical paper I have ever read. The lead front-page articles about capitalism are excellent analyses. Right on target!

Enclosed is my check to be used however you wish.

TH, Ohio, USA

Dear Comrades,
They must be really frightened of *Freedom* these days to send in the heavy mob.

Peter

Dear Comrades,
Enclosed a donation ... Keep up the good work.

Ruan

Dear Friends,
Sorry to hear about the attack on your premises ... please regard the enclosed as a donation.

Andrew, Liverpool

Dear Editors,
"Thugs attack *Freedom*" was depressing news. Here's a tenner to help a little bit.

TE

Dear Sir,
Please accept the enclosed - a contribution towards your recent troubles.

M. Clark

Dear Comrades,
I was very distressed to read of the recent attack on the bookshop. I hope that no one was seriously hurt, and I hope the experience will not deter you or your neighbours in Aldgate Press from continuing with your efforts.

AJ, Romford

Dear Editors,
Hope all is going well ... As is obvious, Class War had absolutely nothing to do with the attack on yourselves, and despite our serious differences with Tim Scargill's lot, we're sure he had nothing to do with it either.

We may disagree on many political points, but nobody in the revolutionary movement will benefit from an attack on *Freedom*.

Class War National Secretary

Dear Editors,
Very sorry to hear about the aggravation. Love and solidarity.

Leicestershire Miners Support Group

Dear Comrades,
Sorry to hear about the fascist attack against *Freedom* Bookshop. I hope no one was injured and the damage is not too bad.

Kathrein, Germany

Dear Comrades,
I was disturbed to hear of the attack by C18 on the shop and press, however I take heart from your response outlined in *Freedom*. The 'left' has always been able to muster its own thugs in the name of 'justice', 'freedom' or whatever else. The trouble is, we still have fascists, we still have injustice and we still have people living in chains. A quick look around the world will show the 'left' as guilty as the 'right'.

Nick, Yorkshire

Hello *Freedom* folks,
Sorry we were to hear of your recent adventures with the lunatic fascist fringe. We hope everyone is alright and no serious damage occurred. Are you needful of anything? If you are, let us know.

Left Bank, USA

Dear *Freedom*,
I only just heard about the attack on *Freedom* Press. Congratulations on your staunchness in continuing undismayed to get *Freedom* out to us.

Here is a very modest contribution to the repairs.

AG, Cambridge

Dear Comrades,
I enclose a cheque for the damage fund. I feel very upset about the fascists' attack on the bookshop, which I visited just a few days before this happened.

Raimund, Germany

News from Angel Alley

The *Raven* 21 which we announced in the last issue of *Freedom* would have eight extra pages and be with subscribers by now, was held up at the printing stage and though all the material, including the eight pages of photographs, is included it will be the usual 96-page issue. And subscribers will be receiving their copies either before or a day or two after this issue of *Freedom*. Sorry, but at the moment life in Angel Alley is not quite back to normal.

We publish more extracts from letters received from our readers expressing their disgust at the violent attack in Angel Alley and their generous practical support is swelling our Damage Repair Fund.

At the time of writing, no special news to report from the insurance people.

The month of May will see the publication of three new *Freedom* Press titles (see advert on centre

pages). Obviously we are publishing them because we think they contribute to anarchist propaganda and the discussion which *Freedom* Press seeks to encourage in order to clarify our ideas and our objectives.

We hope to acknowledge all donations to all our funds. If you haven't been then please accept our collective acknowledgement and warm thanks in this column. We are

in the process of reorganising the administration of *Freedom* Press and haven't yet allocated 'beyond question' who deals with what! But it will all sort itself out in due course. And in the meantime, acknowledgement or none, rest assured that we at 84b have been deeply moved by the messages of sympathy and encouragement that we receive daily. And on our part we are not giving up!

DONATIONS

8th-24th April 1993

Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund

Rugby, DR, £6; Wolverhampton, JL £2; London, DR, £100.

Total = £108.00

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(Including donations to Damage Repair Fund shown with an asterisk*)
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NL, £10*; Croydon, MC, £10*; Wolverhampton, JL, £2; Oxford, MH, £20*; Bradford, BJ, £5.50*; Liverpool, RE, £10*; Harrow, MB, £10*; Cambridge, ASW, £7*; Douglas, Isle of Man, JPC, £10*; Wellington, LO, £10*; Newport, NF, £100*; York, DC, £3.60; London, DR £50*; Cambridge, AG £5*; York, AR, £10*; Brighton, AG, £3.55*; East Barnet, DD, £5*.

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which includes £648.05 in donations to the Repair Fund.

Raven Deficit Fund

London, DR, £50.

Total = £50

1993 total to date = £474.50

The Rossetti Girls

Dear *Freedom*,
In case David Goodway doesn't see the current edition, there is a postscript that ought to be added to DR's article on the Rossetti girls (or perhaps in honesty two postscripts).

The first and less palatable one is that the elder sister and her - until then anarchist - husband supported Mussolini, writing a pamphlet at the time of the invasion of Ethiopia effectively entitled *Don't call it invasion, call it liberation*.

The second is that the younger sister (Mrs Angelli) at the end of a long life came back to anarchism. While living in Woodstock, Oxon, David contacted her. He met her several times, but on one occasion six of us went to see her (with her daughter and grand-daughter):

David, Nick Gould and a third from the university anarchists, and Celia, Fiona and I from Witney.

She was of course then very old, and when we saw her not able to say much more than that Kropotkin was a fine man, but some of David's conversations were more productive and ever since he has had in draft form, but never completed (at least up until the last History Workshop), an account of her life and political evolution.

Laurens Otter

A 'Catastrophic Error'?

Dear Editors,
George Walford's catastrophic error in his Systematic-Ideology is to ignore that half of humanity which does not fit in with any of his categories - mothers and their dependent children. This majority group, which could be called the 'discounted' category, would figure in his 'repudiation' category but for the fact

Dear Editors,
The review of my book *Beyond Politics* by Jonathan Simcock (17th April) has to be taken seriously. May I correct a couple of factual details and comment briefly on one or two issues that touch anarchism?

The theory now known as systematic ideology (a coinage of my own) was founded by Harold Walsby (not 'Walesby'), an Englishman. Although his one book, *The Domain of Ideologies*, appeared in 1947, he had been working on the theory since about 1938, calling it first 'psycho-politics' and later simply

that it is virtually powerless to repudiate anything.

I am not surprised at George's omission; anyone who cannot see that, if all ideologies are male-invented and imposed, males are the cause of societies' ills, needs to do some more homework.

But, there you go - some anarchists apparently believe in the impossible concept of a human matriarchal society! Meanwhile, I commend Zeb Korycinska's article 'The Role of Men in Anarchism' (17th April); it contains a vital message.

Ernie C

'ideology'. (At the time this concept was little known, the flood of interest not starting until the late '60s.) For most purposes the overall pattern now formed by the ideologies can be taken as stable, but it is not 'rigid'. It's just that different parts of the system change at different speeds, the overall outline more slowly than the details. People divide themselves into groups according to their ideologies. *Beyond Politics* does not present the non-political or expedient group as a majority of the population, only as the largest of the major ideological groups.

The reviewer speaks of "ideas similar to anarchism and communism [that] have been around for thousands of years". It is hard to comment on this since he doesn't say what they are; the (fragmented) movement known as anarchism today took shape during the 19th century, largely following Bakunin's struggles with Marx. It is the presence of the great majority towards the authoritarian end of the ideological range that keeps anarchism weak; when Jonathan lists some of the forces working against anarchism he is naming ways in which these numbers exert their influence. Anarchism is, as he says, different from the whole range of 'statist' ideologies, but not in a way that detaches it from the series; a tendency to criticise the state,

which has been strengthening all the way along the range, here develops into outright opposition. The anarchist attitude towards economic affairs does, as he shows, appear in a variety of proposed schemes but (unlike those of any other movement) these all aim to suppress the use of economic power as a means whereby some individuals may dominate others.

He is right in saying that many anarchists take positive, constructive action in social, economic and political affairs. They do so, however, in common with communists, socialists, greenists and liberals, acting in these capacities rather than in any particularly anarchistic way. The distinctive features of anarchism appears in Jonathan's phrase: "All anarchists reject government and the state", and this rejection remains almost wholly a matter of theory and aspiration; in present practice anarchists accept or submit to government and the state, even supporting them with taxes; they have little choice. People who retreat to a commune, far from gaining the freedom anarchism seeks, are accepting unusually severe limitations. Theory is supposed to tidy up reality, presenting a simplified, more systematic version; that's a large part of its job.

George Walford

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

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

- 30th April** - Open discussion
- 7th May** - 'A New World in Our Hearts' (speaker Chris Draper)
- 14th May** - Open discussion
- 21st May** - 'My Fifteen Minutes of Fame: The Challoner Case' (speaker Donald Room)
- 28th May** - Open discussion of 'The Moral Collapse of British Society: the problem'
- 4th June** - 'From Anarchism to Ideology' (speaker George Walford)
- 11th June** - Open discussion of 'The Moral Collapse of British Society: the solution'
- 18th June** - 'The Return to the Region' (speaker Andrew Lainton)
- 25th June** - Open discussion
- 2nd July** - 'Anarchism and Creative Unemployment' (speaker Michael Murray)

London Anti-Nuclear Network are holding a public meeting and showing of the video

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— ALL WELCOME —

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For more information write to:
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Osterley Park
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at 2pm

Welcome to another May Day Picnic. Please bring food and drink for sharing and a bag for refuse.

Entry to the park is free between 9am and 7.30pm. The car park is £1 to non-NT members, although free street parking is available outside the gate (half a mile). The house, entry optional, is open between 11am and 4.30pm (for 5pm), £3.50 for non-NT members (members free). A pleasant airy cafeteria is near the house, as are conveniences.

Suggest we meet north of the lake on the south side of the house and we can then wander to find a more secluded place further in, say next to The Orangery to the north west of the house. Access by London Transport Piccadilly line (Heathrow train) alighting at Osterley, left and left again at Thornbury Road (a mile). Network Southeast from Waterloo

Peter Neville for LAF

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